

Chiron conjunct Jupiter and Neptune

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ON 20TH JANUARY 2009, millions of people, just like me, were touched by a tremendous spirit of connectedness. From the dancing villagers in Kenya to the prisoners of Guantanamo Bay, the inauguration of Barack Obama saw the beginning of a new era of hope. The world had received a powerful new mantra: “Yes, we can”. It is even possible that we need to go back to the end of the Second World War to find a period imbued with the same high degree of emotional intensity and significance for the planet as a whole. Is it merely an interesting coincidence that Chiron was conjunct Jupiter and Neptune in Libra in 1945, and that the first conjunction of these planets since then takes place in 2009, in the sign of our common humanity, Aquarius?¹

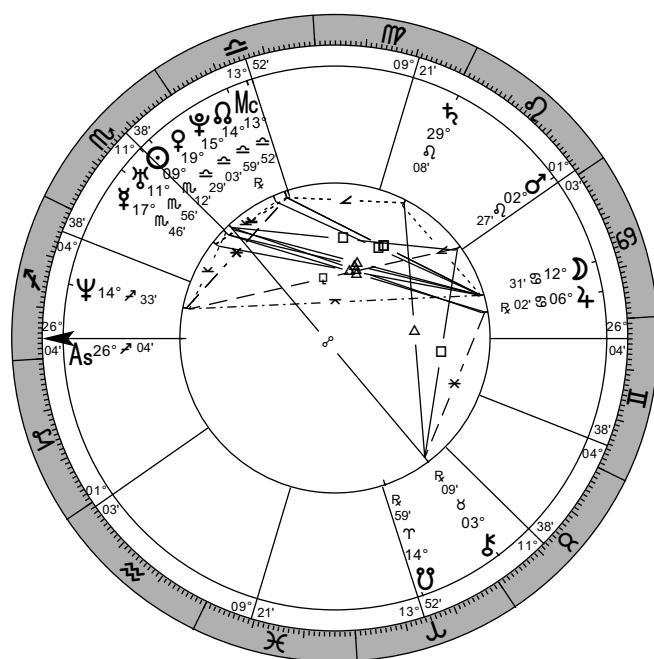
The triple conjunction

Conjunctions are seed moments that signal both the end of an old cycle and the start of a new one. “There is a very important sense in which we need to understand each pair of planets as a dual-unity which expresses the unfoldment of a *single* complex idea.”² This same principle applies when three planets are involved, only the search for that *shared core of meaning* presents us with an even greater challenge. Interestingly, the year midpoint between the previous triple conjunction in 1945 and the current one in 2009 is 1977, which of course is the year in which Chiron was discovered.

The Chiron horoscope

Chiron entered our consciousness on 1st November 1977, and as a relative newcomer his calling card ‘birth chart’ remains a major point of reference. In the discovery chart all the planets with the exception of Chiron are above the line of the horizon. Chiron in Taurus is a singleton and the only planet in the element earth. His position in the fourth house further alerts us to the fact that some real effort will be needed to integrate him.

With such a birth chart, it would be just as easy to turn your back on Chiron and get on with the order of the day, and that is exactly what I did. Despite reading a few excellent books, my own attempts to accommodate Chiron floundered.



Chiron Discovery: 1 November 1977, 10.00 PST, Pasadena, USA.

I believed that here was one feature on the astrological landscape I could easily do without. That is, until 2004, when Chiron’s transit in conjunction to my natal Sun awakened something in me, that Dennis Elwell in his informative study on Chiron calls the “immigrant mentality”.³ In 2004 I learned to ‘think outside the box’. So though I might still struggle with the planetoid/comet Chiron, I know from direct personal experience that he does have an important message for us.⁴

To get some angle on the mundane significance of this triple conjunction, I would first like to look back at the cycle that is now coming to an end.

The question of meaning: 1945-2009

In 1945 the world emerged from the shadow of war. Nations could finally regroup, and new allegiances were formed.

The war had changed the political map of the world. Sandwiched between the two emerging superpowers, Russia to the East and the US to the West, Europeans were given a huge incentive to work together. The EEC also has its roots here. However, the new bonds within Europe itself did not undermine the very strong allegiance between the US and its allies. It was US dollars that won the war and US dollars in the form of the Marshall Plan that rebuilt Europe.

“By 1945 the foundations of the United States’ economic domination over the next quarter of a century had been secured... [This] may have been the most influential consequence of the Second World War for the post-war world”⁵ The economic *dependence* of Europe guaranteed the successful importation American products. The brighter future opening up before us would ultimately be about television and its spawn, advertising. Big cars, refrigerators, gadgets and gizmos, you name it, and if you didn’t have the cash, just “buy now and pay later”.

In 2009 the world is reeling from a different sort of tragedy, and in many ways what is happening today is tied up with what happened in 1945. Thousands now stand to lose their jobs and sense of life purpose, and on top of that each day we are subjected to a further collective dose of bad economic news. In 2009 we are suffering the effects of a **global** financial meltdown.

Old and established allegiances are suddenly under question. It cannot go unnoticed that the first trip the new US Foreign Secretary Hillary Clinton made was not to Europe but to Asia. This seems to signal the start of a new era of trans-Pacific relations. Europe felt snubbed. Furthermore, throughout the EEC politicians are asking, “How together is Europe?” If the going gets really, really tough, will the idea of a ‘United States of Europe’ be strong enough to survive? Already a divide is opening up between the economies of the old established members and those of the newer Eastern European states.



Chiron

Conclusions

The whole period, now seemingly coming to an end, has been hemmed in on both sides by Jupiter, Chiron, Neptune conjunctions. What meaning can we attribute to this? Well, if we draw a parallel with 1945, we might conclude that the worst has already happened, that in fact what we now see as a crisis might simply be the first indication that the healing process can begin. After all, the darkest hour is before the dawn. Everywhere the housing market seems to be a major source of the problem, strangely reverberating back perhaps to that tricky radix Chiron position in the fourth house!!

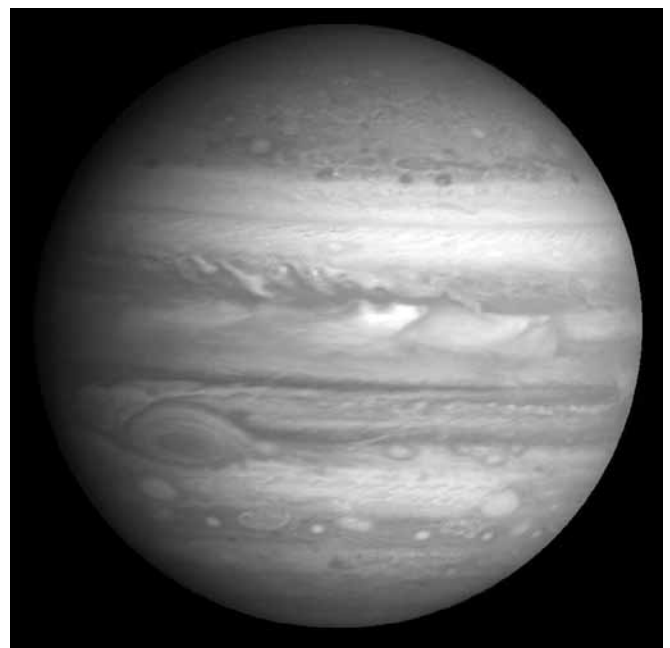
I believe that this triple conjunction is connected to issues of concern to the world as a whole. It has a global character. Interestingly in the heliocentric chart for the discovery of Chiron, Chiron is conjunct Mother Earth, which seems to lend support to this idea. The next conjunction between these three planets will not take place until 2239. It could be that Chiron is playing a significant role in shaping our ideals and relationships at this particular junction in history. We can see the link very clearly between 1945 and 2009 by looking at what is going on in the world around us.

The collective need to revisit the past

Everywhere I look these days, I am confronted with evidence of a collective need to revisit the past. It seems that there is still a lot of unfinished business concerning the Second World War. Some examples:

- In January 2009, an international fund was set up for the maintenance and renovation of Auschwitz, which is in a bad state of repair. German Prime Minister Angela Merkel felt compelled to admonish Pope Benedict XVI after he lifted the excommunication of the traditional British Bishop Williamson, who denies the holocaust took place.
- A law case brought by the daughter of a victim forces French President Sarkozy for the *first time* to acknowledge the role that the French wartime government played in the deportation of French Jews. The release in Europe of the German film *Anonyma* gave German women permission to talk about their suffering at the hands of Russians soldiers in Berlin at the end of the Second World War.
- The film *Valkyrie*, about the attempted assassination of Hitler in 1944, by Graf von Stauffenberg and a group of high-ranking German officers.
- German Minister Erika Steinbach’s conflict with the Polish Government concerning the plight of Germans driven from Poland at the end of the Second World War
- The BBC’s recent powerful dramatisation of *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Children are outsiders, they have very little power and no voice in society, yet Anne Frank’s diary continues to move us with its honesty, humility and perception.



Jupiter

By revisiting the past, we can bring about some change in consciousness and allow some old wounds finally to heal. Perhaps only by doing this shall we be fully able to understand what happened during the war and in the period immediately after it. Maybe in one very important sense, our understanding of the aggressor and victim is in need of revision. By paying more attention to the role of individuals, we are forced to conclude that not all the German people were 'bad' and everyone else 'good'. In the end, it could be that what really matters is the journey and the choices that individuals made. The collective is 'US'; and we are individually responsible for what happens within it.

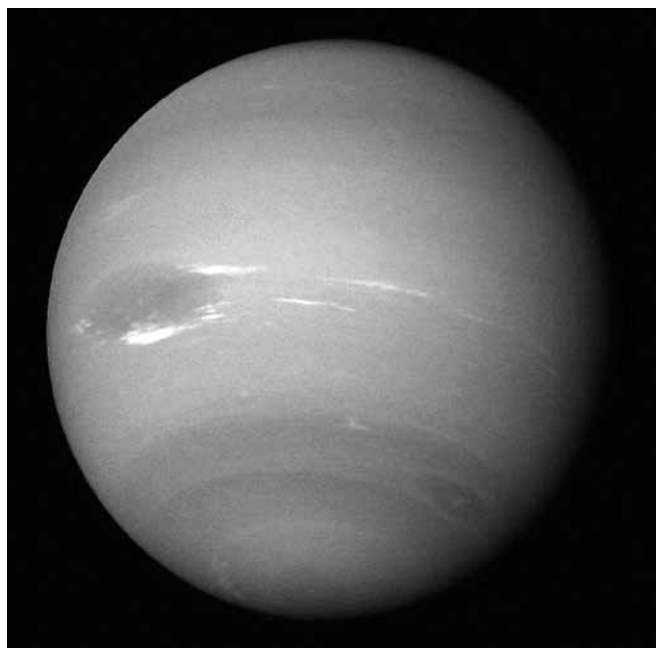
Chiron, Jupiter, Neptune, the God thought

The planets Jupiter and Neptune are both bound up with concepts of religion, faith or the 'God thought' and this would seem to give Chiron –through his association with shamanism – a natural affinity with both planets. The 'God thought' has a tripartite nature: Father, Son, Holy Ghost; Body, Soul, Spirit. So here they share some common ground; or do they?

"It is important to realize in our society, whose religious forms are most often based on a remote historical revelation and the written word, that shamanism everywhere clings to a nucleus of direct, intense and numinous personal experience.....The oldest Orpheus tale was probably the narrative of a shaman's ecstatic journey to the land of the dead to fetch the soul of a seriously ill person".⁶

So while all three planets have religious significance, Chiron's energy is definitely more primordial and related to the direct inner source of revelation.

Increasingly, our dependence on the world and thought forms outside of ourselves is crippling the human spirit. Chiron's aim it seems is to point us inwards towards the inspiration that can be found by tapping into the rich veins of our own inner life. What we are witnessing at the moment is the ascent of individuals who it seems have undertaken this inward journey and who as a result have a strong sense of conviction. These are people whose perception of themselves is not dependent on the good opinion of others and who refuse to allow their inner journey through life to come to a halt at a glass ceiling.



Neptune

The collective vibe

Once again, we can clearly see the energy of this triple conjunction manifesting itself in the world around us. Keep your eye on the outsider, the immigrant, the last person you would expect to win. These people – who perhaps have nothing to lose – are prepared to stick their neck out. A few examples:

- The Dutch politician Geert Wilders has clearly enjoyed more than his usual share of limelight of late. The publicity he was afforded when he was denied entry into the UK has placed him at the top of recent political opinion polls in the Netherlands.⁷ While the Dutch elite might frown on Wilders, he is clearly in tune with the spirit of the times.
- The Best Actor Oscar this year went to Sean Penn for his role as homosexual activist Harvey Silk. Silk was a community worker and the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California. Silk was told that no openly gay man could win political office. He proved his opponents wrong. Silk was murdered a year after Chiron's discovery.
- The Best Film: *Slumdog Millionaire* is a remarkable story about a poor Muslim boy from Mumbai, who – poised to win millions of rupees on a TV game – is arrested and accused of cheating. The film explores Jamal's life story, which explains why this most unlikely winner is able to answer the questions correctly.
- In the Netherlands, we have our first 'New Dutch' Mayor, the Moroccan-born Ahmed Aboutaleb.
- Last but certainly not least, we have Barack Obama. The title of one of his books, *The Audacity of Hope*, tells us an awful lot about Chiron's energy.

Conclusion

The position of outsider is usually linked to pain. In the words of Chaim Potok: "One learns of the pain of others by suffering one's own pain. It is important to know of pain... It destroys our self-pride, our arrogance, our indifference towards others...".

We should be aware that in our own lives, Chironic figures may also appear, even if only briefly. Though their lifestyle and background might be completely different from our own, and their energy might even be a little unsettling, these people could have something valuable to offer. We should remember that strangers can sometimes be *angels in disguise*.

The significance of Barack Obama

On 4 November 2008, the US was poised to elect its first African American President and Chiron was already conjunct Neptune and the North Node. Slowly but steadily, we move towards the mutation conjunction in December 2020⁸ of Jupiter and Saturn in Aquarius. The time is right, it seems, for the prophets of the New Aquarian Age to appear. If Barack Obama had allowed his journey through life to be determined by forces in the world outside himself, then under favourable circumstances he might still be a social worker in Chicago. His gift to the world is that he honoured the light within. He galvanised the ultimate tool of Aquarian communication – the Internet – and used it to bring millions of like-minded Americans into contact with close neighbours they had somehow never before had the opportunity to meet. His message cries out, "If I can do it, so can you". This quote from Barack Obama's inauguration address speaks volumes about the coming age.

“For we know that our patchwork heritage is strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus – and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.”

On an individual level: the inner journey

The year in which a conjunction of Jupiter, Chiron and Neptune takes place suggests a year of new global challenges and new allegiances. The major themes concern renewal, inventiveness, risk taking, power, and above all else, hope. As astrologers, part of our task is to talk about and raise awareness of such moments. We are more sensitive to Chiron in 2009 than in 1945, because we have seen him, and know the energy is out there. So while Jupiter perhaps encourages us to rush in where angels fear to tread, Neptune connects us through the world of imagination, myths and the spirits of our ancestors, it is Chiron who points astrologers to their most important task, that of Vision Keeper. At this time, circumstances are forcing us to take a very much needed reality check. Chiron's role is to remind us, and those people who come to us for advice, of the great power and endurance of the human spirit, which of itself is much larger than and wholly independent of the material world. It is, after all, the creative source of everything we see around us.

Endnotes

1. Note that triple conjunctions involving planets from Jupiter outwards are rare. There were only five in the 20th Century. Jupiter, Chiron, Saturn in 1901, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus in 1941, Jupiter, Chiron, Neptune in 1945, Jupiter, Saturn, Pluto in 1981, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune in 1989.
2. Charles Harvey: *Mundane Astrology*.
3. Dennis Elwell: *The Cosmic Loom*.
4. Keen for an opportunity to start lecturing on astrology – and with nothing at all to lose – I approached the largest and most prestigious spiritual centre in the Netherlands – De Roos – with an idea. I asked them to give me a room in which to hold quarterly astrological evenings in return for a percentage of the entrance fee instead of a substantial fee upfront. In January 2004, with Chiron conjunct my Sun, I gave my first lecture in the Roos. This was the first step in my astrological ‘coming out’.
5. Alan S. Milward: *War Economy and Society 1939-1945*.
6. Robert E. Ryan: *The Strong Eye of the Shaman*.
7. The Dutch newspaper *Trouw*, 2nd March 2009.
8. Jupiter and Saturn conjunctions take place in the same element for 240 years. Since 1842 – with the exception of a ‘maverick’ conjunction in Libra in 1981 – the conjunction has taken place in the earth sign. The first conjunction in a new element is called the ‘mutation conjunction’. For more on this cycle, see Baigent, Campion & Harvey’s book on mundane astrology.

Elizabeth Hathway DFAstroIS, QHP (and a Capricorn) is passionate about astrology. Born in Cwmrhdyceirw in the Swansea Valley, Elizabeth left the UK in 1980 and headed off to the Netherlands. Elizabeth first studied astrology in Amsterdam but went on to complete the Diploma course at the Faculty of Astrological Studies. She also studied horary with John Frawley. Elizabeth is editor of the Dutch Astrological Magazine *The ASAScoop*, and a board member of the ASAS Association of Astrologers. Elizabeth is an astrology teacher, lecturer and blogger. She also writes unique ‘Horoscope Tales for Children’. Elizabeth is herself a mother of two. Her practice is in Amsterdam. This year she will give her first lecture in English at the AA conference. Websites: <http://www.eclecticastronomy.nl> & <http://www.astrologie.blogo.nl>



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