

aims. He loves to see pride come before a fall, and is a natural antidote to the self-importance, pretensions and inflations encountered in the quest for consciousness and integration. The more we endeavour to reach our highest, to become godlike, to actualize our potential, the more this figure constellates quietly underneath, ready to trip us up at any point should we dare to forget the chaotic origins of our hard-won sense of order, personal integration and consciousness. The Trickster is at work when annoying synchronicities, lapses of memory, misconnections and misunderstandings prevent us achieving goals dear to the ego. He can reduce to a shambles the most carefully ordered pattern of meaning, plan of action or contrived self-concept, as he especially resists being controlled, grounded, or owned. If we become too 'civilized', we may be inviting trouble from the Trickster, who will compensate for our pretensions by quickly showing up the emptiness of our façades and collective adaptations.

In his essay, 'On the Psychology of the Trickster Figure', Jung takes the somewhat linear view that 'the trickster is a collective shadow figure, an epitome of all the inferior traits of character of individuals'.⁹ Joseph Campbell has this to say in response:

Such a view, however, is presented from the ground of our later 'bounded' style of thought. In the palaeolithic view from which this figure derives, he was the archetypal hero, the giver of all great boons, the fire bringer and teacher of humanity.¹⁰

On a personal level, people with Chiron in aspect to Mercury are nobody's fools, and they see through pretences. Like the Trickster, they may enjoy putting people down with a well-placed comment that pierces the façade. Equally, they sometimes envy the clarity, panache and sophistication of others. They may find themselves taking the brunt of wounding remarks, but usually they enjoy being the one who refuses to join the bandwagon, the one who always finds the fly in the ointment. They may have a gossip-columnist attitude, always seeking out the juicy story that tarnishes the bright picture painted by others. Hedda Hopper, adept at 'minding other people's business', has Mercury in Gemini semisquare Chiron in Cancer.

With Chiron in aspect to Mercury we can be powerful and sometimes compulsive communicators either through non-verbal means such as music or mime, or through the traditional Mercurial pursuits such as writing, speaking, journalism, or teaching. Perhaps we want to challenge people into awareness and self-reflection, or feel we have important things to say; we may have a nose for controversy and enjoy stirring it up! Some people with Chiron in aspect to Mercury have a flair for languages; Maria Callas has Chiron trine Mercury, and learned several languages fluently in a short time. A sinister example of Chiron/Mercury is found in the horoscope of Joseph Paul Goebbels, with Chiron conjunct Mercury in Scorpio in the 4th house. As the official propagandist of Nazi Germany he helped Hitler to power, for a while controlling the entire German media network. His Chiron/Mercury in Scorpio here indicates the control of others' thoughts through disseminating wounding and irrational ideas. When the Nazi regime fell Goebbels committed suicide with his entire family. With Chiron in the 4th his identification with the 'Fatherland' was so deep that he did not survive its 'wounding'.

Those with Chiron/Mercury aspects often have a sharp intuitive mind, which, if permitted to express itself, may show great brilliance and originality of perception. The minds of these people operate in a direct and instinctive way, untrammelled by stale concepts and prejudices. They have the ability to get to the heart of the matter, and may be good mediators or debaters. They enjoy contentious issues, and can usually be relied upon to come up with original views and surprise solutions; they often have a knack for stating the obvious which everyone else is missing. Individuals with Chiron in aspect to Mercury may be very good at helping others to clarify their thoughts, and to foster people's ability to communicate.

Communication often takes non-verbal forms with Chiron in aspect to Mercury. For example, Meher Baba, the 'silent mystic' has a T-square with Chiron in Virgo opposite Mercury in Pisces, both square Pluto and Neptune in Gemini. After a realization which occurred when transiting Chiron was in Pisces, opposing his natal Chiron and conjunct his Mercury, and Saturn was transiting Pluto and Neptune in Gemini, Meher Baba went into