

# ASTROLOGY: 2016 AND BEYOND

INTERVIEW WITH JOHANNA BLOK, A FAMOUS DUTCH ASTROLOGER

*Can you tell us something about yourself and your work as astrologer?*

I have been an astrologer for over 35 years, besides working as a writer and journalist. I have a scientific background, a degree in chemistry. The first twenty years I studied astrology, I was fascinated but, because of my scientific mind, also very sceptical. During the last ten years, I have learnt to accept that astrology is merely a wonderful fact of life. It is a very interesting field because it is about discovering repetitions and patterns in the planetary movements that coincide with patterns in our lives. Jung had a wonderful way to describe what he found in astrology with the word synchronicity. There is some hidden cohesion and, as an astrologer, you try to decipher its code. We have to try to forget the tempting but wrong idea that planets influence our lives. When we feel different under the full moon, that is synastry: we are all dancing to the same lunar rhythm. It is not because the full moon makes us do crazy stuff.

It is more like solving a puzzle, trying to find patterns, than being psychic, although many colleagues claim they have some psychic talents. I must confess I am totally not psychic. For me it works best to look at a horoscope using what I call my 'fuzzy logic', trying to distill the essence out of a complex pattern, without wanting to understand every detail. In this way, I might come to an analysis of a personality or an economic or a political situation. Most interesting is that, based upon a certain planetary composition from the past,

you might predict what happens in the future, or understand what is happening today.

Astrologers are eccentrics and Einzelgängers, but they are more or less organized into societies. The subject of science and astrology is very complex, so a lot of attempts to grasp astrology within a scientific frame are doomed. I would love to see a Scientific Astrological Future Trends Institute being founded somewhere soon. I believe there is more information hidden in the stars than even astrologers are aware of. Take, for example, the Kondratieff waves. They can be linked to planetary movements; my famous colleague, the economist Raymond Merriman did this, linking stock markets with planetary movements with amazing results.

## **Repetitions**

The number of combinations you can make in planetary positions is endless. The chance that you see the same chart (a freeze frame of the planetary sky) twice is very, very small, so that would mean 'no'. But the patterns that emerge have repetitions, and these repetitions have a certain periodicity. For example, Saturnus, a planet symbolizing hard lessons, austerity and authority, circles around the sun every thirty years. Jupiter, symbolizing growth and optimism, takes only thirteen years. So within thirty years, these two will stand several times in opposite positions, and several times they will be more or less at the same place. You can imagine that these moments in time have a connection to our behavior that repeats itself every so many years.

# ‘The need for people in leadership positions to be able to foresee the future is bigger than ever.’

*Is there a certain kind of universalism in this knowledge?*

I think there is. If you accept the idea that we can only know and understand what our brain can produce, then in fact everything we think we know is a matter of projection. We are only able to see in the outer world what is in us. I'll go back to Jung again: he defined archetypes, understanding that the Gods and Symbolic creatures our fantasy produces are, in fact, sub-persona of ourselves. It doesn't matter in what culture you look for ancient myths, religious characters and symbols, there is always the good, the bad, the father, the mother, the total destruction, the religious noble one, et cetera. Should we call this wisdom? I think it is 'recognizing the self' in everything that is surrounding us. And yes, I think you are right, it is universal. I got involved in the Santería religion in Cuba, and to my big surprise they have Santos (saints) that are remarkably similar to astrology's signs and planets. Ogun, for example, is a bit of a wild guy, a smith working with iron and wearing the color red. This is very similar to Aries and the planet Mars. And there is Changó, an optimist, equal to the sign of Sagittarius, et cetera. Maybe this is not so remarkable when you realize astrology was born in the African desert where nomads, traveling at night to avoid the heat, used the stars to navigate their way. And the deserts are very close to Nigeria, where the ancestors of Cubans (as slaves) came from.

*Astrology is very old and all over the place - do you think it is timeless? What can you tell us about important people following the stars?*

People in important positions live with tremendous stress and responsibilities. At the same time, they have to make decisions based upon enormous uncertainties. That is why, from olden days on, kings and politicians looking for clues to the future asked astrologers for their advice. Being an astrologer was a tricky job. If an astrologer announced something truthful that a leader didn't want to hear, it could cost him his life. Being wrong could also mean he would end at the stake. That is why Nostradamus wrote his predictions in mysterious poems. That is also the reason we can't verify if he was right.

## **Need**

When we look at contemporary times, leaders deal with greater uncertainties than ever, and change comes to us at a superfast pace. So the need for people in leadership positions to be able to foresee the future is bigger than ever. Look at the importance of economic, trend and climate forecasting. Like astrologers in olden days, today's forecasters can be right, but they can also be terribly wrong, since the amount of data they have to interpret is enormous. Computers can help make calculations, but computers still miss the human touch, the fuzzy thing ... in spite of predictions they would become humanized. Astrologers haven't lost the human factor and are therefore still being consulted. I know of many Dutch politicians and



company leaders visiting astrologers. But it is our professional code to keep this confidential.

*Pluto, Venus, Saturnus: what are the influences of these planets?*

Well, the answer to this question is worth a few books. All these planets have their own field of interest. Venus, for example, has to do with love and possessions and beauty. It is a fast planet that runs around the Sun within a year. It's meaning is very much connected to our personal circumstances and our personal life. When you look at trends, it

is more interesting to look at the slower planets that circle further away from the sun. I mean Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. Since they move very slowly, a whole generation is born under a certain constellation of these planets. Maybe some get more affected by it than others, but these 'generational' planets have a strong connection to the large trends we see. For example, the Hippy Generation shares the position of Pluto in the sign Leo: this means every idea we had of creativity and procreation had to be destroyed and built again from the ground up. The Hippy period meant a creative and sexual revolution. Also the idea of self and self-expression connected to Leo were reinvented. That is: connected to the transformative planet Pluto.

*Water and air, nature?*

For that we must have a look at Neptune, a planet connected to our collective subconsciousness. Neptune resides, during the coming years, in the also very watery sign of Pisces, where Neptune feels completely at home. I researched what happened in the last period that Neptune traveled through Pisces. It was the time the Titanic sank. But what surprised me is that, in the same period, many more boats sank to the bottom of the ocean.

I think there is a connection with this position and what we're seeing in the Mediterranean Sea. People are trying to cross it in boats and losing their lives. I also believe we might develop more empathy towards each other and other animals, since the last time Neptune was in Pisces was also the period in which most countries abolished slavery. And, yeah, I myself would not consider buying a house under sea level right now. But that is based more on climate forecasts than astrology.

# ‘When I look beyond 2020, I can see very positive planetary combinations, a pattern similar to Roaring Twenties, between 2025 and 2029.’

*What about the position of the stars now?*

If you realize that Pluto is now passing through the sign of Capricorn, which is connected to banks, authorities, fatherhood, ambitions and old structures (architecture and buildings, walls, securities), you can more or less feel what we are facing right now. Uranus is connected to revolutions, not in a destructive way like Pluto, but more in the way people cooperate to fight for a better world, like a social revolution. Uranus is now passing through Aries, a young impulsive and fiery energy. It makes people a bit egocentric but also willing to fight. Since 2010, Pluto and Uranus are making what we call a collision. Young people full of energy, wanting to survive, are knocking over our old buildings of power and security. Old structures and old authorities had to go. That is why Obama became president. Look at the mean age in the countries that people are fleeing from and the mean age in the countries people are fleeing to. It is young against old, and the young are going to win! We are facing chaos, but trying to hang on to what we have built will not help us. The chaos is not even close to coming to an end.

A similar planetary situation governed the time between the Great Depression and World War II. I hear many people telling me they don't feel right, something in the world is wrong, and they feel powerless. Our governments can tell us every day

that the economy is growing, but we all feel that this is just a facade, a cover up of something terribly wrong in our system. Sometimes people need a big disaster or a war to destroy the old, since repairing the old would take a bigger toll. That happened between the Great Depression and World War II; it might well happen now. In fact, it is already happening in Syria. We are still relatively unaffected by it, though this might change. But to keep our hopes high: after WWII we had a very constructive period in which we became more humane, building a new society. When I look beyond 2020, I can see very positive planetary combinations, a pattern similar to Roaring Twenties, between 2025 and 2029. The combination shows that we could see the end of poverty (because we finally understand how to solve it), people freed from religious dogma, and new developments in anti-aging, et cetera. Only climate change will not stop, so we had better prepare for that inevitability.

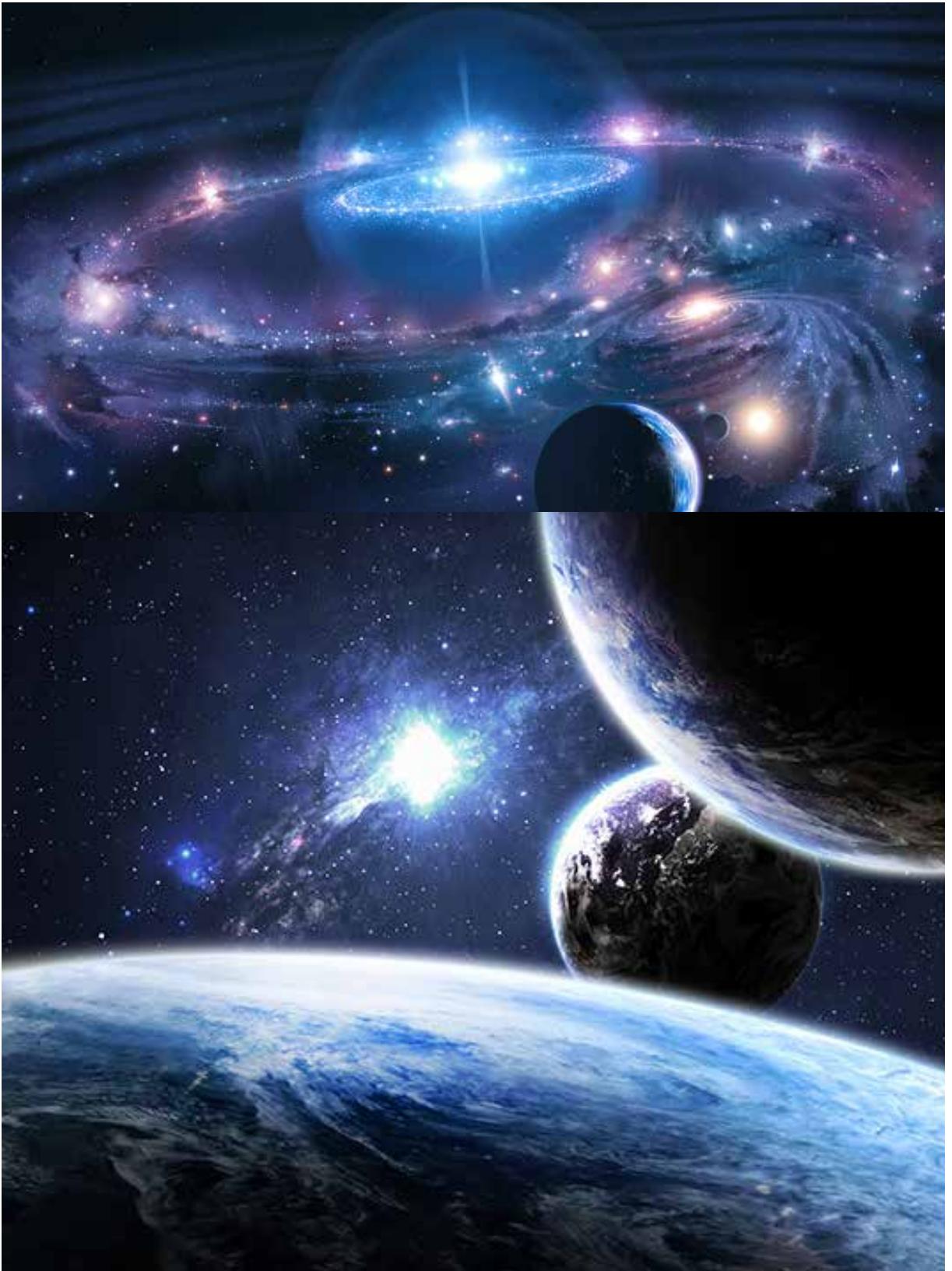
*What are the messages worth sharing?*

The message is a humanitarian one, as always. We have to learn that sharing our wealth, our knowledge and our freedom is the only solution to the world's problems. We have to understand that sharing doesn't mean we will lose anything. It means we will all profit, instead of just the 'happy few'. How can we be happy - however rich we are - while we're surrounded by suffering?

*And more? Religion, politics?*

A word on radicalism... the recent attacks in Paris, Beirut, Kenya. From an astrological perspective the generation that is fighting it's radicalist war was born with Pluto in its own sign Scorpio. The planet of fanaticism, obsessions and destruction in it's own powerspot: Scorpio. This means that some members of this generation are prone to extremes and destructive behavior and most of them will go through some extreme rites of passage early in life. We do not only see this in so called religious fanaticism, but also in extreme veganism, extreme hedonism. Going to extremes is in the eyes of the outer world scaring and terrifying, yet for the individuals it is a necessity. It is their path to discover what happens when you believe: it is all or nothing and I am willing to give my life for what I believe. When we look ten years further down the road, we will see some ex-radicals, who will have an important message for the world. There is no way they will conquer the world, no worries, with Pluto in Steenbok, they are digging their own grave.

But they will bring an important lesson to all of us. Not about religion, but about the fanatics in all of us, the obsessions in all of us, the fear of death we all harbour. And the psychological mechanisms of projection, a very Plutonic concept. Projecting the enemy outside of us on everyone we suspect. While the enemy comes mostly from within.



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