

# Re-Visioning Saturn

Jessica Garfield-Kabbara

## Prelude

Astrology is a soul-making practice. The astrologer participates in this sacred act by correlating experiences in the world with the movement of the planetary bodies. With its many incarnations, the soul passes through countless charts, each time living, growing, and creating from that chart's unique archetypal structure. Astrology is a process of remembrance of the soul's journey and calling. The natal chart reflects the soul's karma, story, and potential for embodiment and expression. But the way the soul lives through the chart, and thus the archetypes, is also informed by the historico-cultural context into which one is born—the collective karma of the human species at any given moment of time. Every astrologer has heard that “whatever is born or done at this particular moment of time has the quality of this moment of time.”<sup>1</sup> Every chart, whether for a person, place, or event, carries the archetypal qualities associated with the position of the planets at that moment. Perhaps less often considered is the way in which a new discipline is born out of its historical moment. Every discipline, like every person, comes from a tradition steeped in a rich and complex history. All things born during our current time are coming out of the tradition of patriarchy, thousands of years old, with its considerable gifts and immense challenges. Depth psychology and archetypal astrology, like most things born in our time in the West, have evolved out of the Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian patrilineal traditions. History and tradition deserve our careful attention, both our reverence and our critical analysis. Each age carries forward everything that has come before it while at the same time evolving that tradition. Each age undertakes the collective soul-making of our species.

After the birth of anything, whether a person or a discipline, there begins the sacred and arduous work of integrating the seeded potentialities of that moment. Through the practices of the discipline—expressed in its ideas, values, cultural norms, and community—a new tradition is created. The task of the new discipline, given to its scholars, visionaries, and practitioners, is to embody the intimations of its new world view. The ethical responsibility with which the new community implements its vision is paramount for determining whether the emerging field will experience sustained success or crumbling decay. Turning a curious and discerning eye toward the archetypal pantheon, it does not take long for anyone familiar with a feminist framework to realize that eight out of the ten planetary bodies are named after male, Greco-Roman gods. This is striking, as depth psychology in particular has shown that archetypes, gods, and people all have a masculine and feminine side.<sup>2</sup> Of course, some writers take issue with the essentialist tendencies that often accompany recourse to masculine and feminine principles. Briefly stated, the masculine and feminine principles that exist in all of us can too easily slip over into an understanding that exclusively associates the masculine principle with the man and the feminine with the woman. While aware of this difficulty, I find validity and value in speaking of masculine and feminine principles. Too quickly deconstructing these principles actually blocks the attempt to shed light on the dominance of the masculine and the patriarchal in our time. Every person, just like each planetary archetype, has masculine and feminine qualities, irrespective of one's gender identity. Feminine and masculine, similar to the eastern principles of yin and yang, are living energetic qualities inside each human being that are central to the composition of one's psychological, emotional, and interpersonal life. Why then are male gods' names and pronouns still used to describe the vast majority of the planetary archetypes? In particular, why is the planet Saturn, the archetype that governs the realm of time, space, materiality, and form—the manifest realm human beings are born into and out of—still so closely associated with the genesis stories of the Greek Kronos and the Judeo-Christian Yahweh, both of whom carry a strong senex component?

In searching for the feminine in the archetypal pantheon, some astrologers turn, for example, to the newly discovered asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. But to see the female goddesses relegated to this margin is a further segregation of the feminine archetypal principles—a well-intentioned but unconscious underwriting of the patriarchal values that centralize the masculine and cast the feminine to the periphery. Instead, one practical way to move the astrological tradition forward is for every astrologer to incorporate a balanced

view of dynamic and static masculine and feminine principles into their interpretations of each planetary archetype. The dynamic and static sides of feminine and masculine each have positive and negative qualities, just as every archetype contains both light and shadow expressions. The archetypal pattern is positive as long as it does not become one-sided at the expense of the other patterns of consciousness. The Jungian psychologist Gareth Hill beautifully articulates the qualities of the static and dynamic masculine and feminine in his book, *Masculine and Feminine*.<sup>3</sup> The dynamic masculine is most associated with phallic energy, penetrating forward toward goals and achievement, and is most clearly illustrated in Western heroic tales. The static masculine is more closely related to senex consciousness, which pertains to order, law, organized systems, and rational knowledge. The dynamic feminine, on the other hand, relates to the playful and spontaneous, a knowing through embodied participation. The static feminine, represented by the circle, relates to the mother's womb, gestation in the dark, and cyclical rhythms of nature seen in the seasons and impersonal acts of destruction and creation. Part of the contemporary confusion and debate around the meaning of masculine and feminine often derives from conflation of masculine with solely male, and feminine with solely female. This is because the principles of dynamic and static masculine and feminine derive, in part, from the physiology of men and women, as human life does come from procreation between woman and man, their genitals, and their reproductive systems. But note, even though we do not all have phalluses, the phallus is part of everyone's archetypal imagination and we all have phallic energy that is penetrating and driven. Likewise, one does not need to have a womb to understand periods of gestation or giving birth to projects in other areas of life. All people possess all four types of energy: static and dynamic feminine and masculine. My contention is that, for the most part, our contemporary understanding of the archetype of Saturn has overly identified the planet with its static masculine qualities: order, control, law, rules, and governance, at the expense of the other three principles. A similar re-visioning would need to address the repressed masculine qualities of the traditionally feminine planetary archetypes of the Moon and Venus.

Since Saturn governs the manifest realm of the Earth—the geocentric perspective from which astrology works—it seems crucial that any reevaluation of the archetype be given special care and consideration. In this exploration, I want to hold reverence and respect for the tradition from which we have emerged, with its profound awareness and gifts, as well as its destructive blind spots and shadow. What follows is a re-visioning of Saturn through a feminine

understanding along with a re-imagining of the role of death and suffering, both Saturnian experiences, in our Western cosmology. I will consider the feminine face of Saturn as mother through the incarnational process of birth, genesis, and the sexual side of creation, before considering what these renewed views suggest about what lies beyond death and our current conception of time.

## **Toward a Feminine Understanding of Saturn**

To participate in the values and deeply held beliefs, both conscious and unconscious, of one's own time is only natural as we are social creatures. As Jung said, the collective unconscious is the atmosphere around us, the water in which we swim. The depth psychotherapist Patricia Reis writes:

Patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men—by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male.<sup>4</sup>

The traditions of culture—which become established and ordered through repetition as laws, norms, and customs—reflect how we imagine and engage our creation story. How we imagine our gods and how we treat one another are intimately connected. A culture's understanding of the divine and the movement of time governs and shapes the family system, educational institutions, science, government, and religion. James Hillman elucidates this phenomenon for Western culture in his watershed text "On Senex Consciousness":

The main image of God in our culture: omniscient, omnipotent, eternal, seated and bearded, a ruler through abstract principle of justice, morality and order, a faith in words yet not given to self-explanation in speech, benevolent but enraged when his will is crossed, removed from the feminine (wifeless) and the sexual aspect of creation . . . this image depicts a senex god, a god imaged through the senex archetype. *The high God of our culture is a Senex god, we are created after this image with a consciousness reflecting this structure.*<sup>5</sup>

Hillman offers an emblematic expression of how astrologers often think about the planetary archetype of Saturn and how so much of our Western consciousness is structured to reflect this god. Take for example the rigid confinement of the prison industrial complex, capitalism's ruthless profiting on the backs of marginalized classes and ecologies, prevalent hierarchies of authority and power that do not adequately take into account the other, oppressed peoples and ways of knowing, a pervasive rape culture—the list goes on and on. Whether or not one sometimes encounters a more balanced interpretation of the Saturn archetype, the fact remains that we still live in a culture dominated by the senex god. But is senex the essence of Saturn or, as Hillman seems to suggest, is senex consciousness in some way contingent rather than essential, reflecting the cultural norms of our time?

The concrete inflection of a multivalent archetype is always situated within a historical-cultural context. Archetypes are always true to themselves formally, but manifest with different content in each era.<sup>6</sup> Consider Pluto, for example, as it archetypally relates to the principle of the taboo. What is taboo in one culture or era is different from what is taboo in another, yet the formal principle of the taboo always exists in the psyche. It is the content of the taboo that evolves and changes. Likewise, the principle of tradition associated with Saturn relates to senex consciousness *in our era*. The static masculine, closely associated with senex, and the patriarch, the tradition of male primacy, are not what Saturn inherently is, rather how it has been expressed by what has been valued in the traditional inflection of our time. Just as taboo can shift, so too can tradition. Not the archetype but our cultural consciousness is the limiting factor. In a Hillmanian fashion, I wish to invoke a multifaceted, even polytheistic Saturn. What are the other faces of Saturn we have neglected, just as Hillman suggests we have privileged the one God over the many?<sup>7</sup> The principle of senex does not exhaust the vicissitudes of Saturn's archetypal manifestation. Because we live in a participatory cosmos, our understanding and interpretation of Saturn have life-shaping and world-shaping consequences. Now, more than ever, there is a vital need to change the myopic and self-fulfilling prophecy that sees Saturn in solely senex and patriarchal terms so as to participate in an ontologically open, loving, and creative universe.

For every challenge presented by an archetype, there is also a homeopathic remedy living in the archetype.<sup>8</sup> We must invoke the other faces of Saturn to counterbalance the senex, without fleeing from Saturn itself. Instead of seeking the solution to patriarchy and our overly hierarchical ways of being in some other archetype, we need to look more deeply into the nature and potentials of a

multivalent Saturn. The medicine for the isolation and separation of an overly emphasized senex consciousness is, in part, the Saturnian feminine and the Saturnian mother. By bringing the feminine principle back to Saturn, the archetype is brought back into relation, allowing us to reimagine what this god and goddess serve. Instead of Saturnian hyper-separation eliciting a disconnected universe, Saturn as the container of a relational matrix suggests a metaphysics of communion in differentiation.<sup>9</sup>

One way we can clearly recognize the feminine qualities of Saturn is through the biological role of the mother in birth. As Hillman points out, the senex is devoid of the feminine and the sexual side of creation. But our most primal, symbiotic union is with our mother. Our bodies grow in and from her life-giving womb, the source of our physical origins, our genesis in space-time. The success of the growth of the fetus causes the excruciating birth contractions of the mother's womb, as literally thousands of pounds of pressure expel the fetus. We begin the journey of dying as aquatic beings so that we can become autonomous air-breathing mammals. From the baby's perspective, they are dying to the only home known inside the mother, while from the mother's perspective, she is giving birth, often through difficult labor, to a magnificent being. As Stanislav Grof repeatedly states in relation to his discovery of, and work with, the perinatal matrices corresponding to the stages of birth, death and birth are two different sides of the same coin.<sup>10</sup> The essential meaning a human attributes to this moment of creation, one's genesis story, fundamentally structures and guides that human being's cosmology—which is the Saturnian container for everything else that happens in life. Is the expulsion from the womb and the mother's body into Saturn's realm of space and time a cruel punishment or a sacred gift?

The Greek myth of genesis has Saturn eating his own children, including his daughters, out of fear of being overthrown by his creation.<sup>11</sup> Both the Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian genesis stories associate the moment of our birth, both collectively and individually, with themes of male domination and a glaring absence of the feminine as equal creator. Control, fear, punishment, sin, and the Fall, all the negative aspects of the static masculine Saturn, loom large. This cyclopean, one-sided tale has swallowed the feminine aspect of creation and a relational masculine, forgetting that there is a cyclical process to evolution, no matter how much control and repression are exerted on the natural rhythms of life and death.<sup>12</sup> How is it that human beings are born out of a mother and yet nowhere is her name spoken in our Western creation stories, especially in a

manner that truly recognizes and honors her central role in the process of creation?

The mother's womb is the sacred vessel through which we incarnate into the material world. In alchemy, the sacred vessel, or *temenos*, is the locus of transformation. Just as alchemists must work and refine their lead to create gold, so too must the mother labor to birth a new being. Can we begin to see how the macrocosmic solar system is like the mother's womb and the alchemist's vessel? Can we begin to see our life on Earth in physical form as the *temenos* of our soul and our psychic life? Can we see how our particular struggles and obstacles are necessary for our growth and creativity? I would suggest that by seeing love in our problems, staying close to our wounds, and finding beauty in our struggles, we can become conscious that the way we respond to our challenges shapes and makes us who we are. Saturn makes us real and is the bearer of what we come to treasure most in life.

Saturn is traditionally associated with Father Time, Chronos, the keeper of clock time and the daily motions of the Sun, Moon, and planets, maintaining order and structure in the cosmos. Scientific time is more quantitative than qualitative, measured in uniform increments, each hour the same as the next, and can be seen as more as an expression of the static masculine. Conversely, mythic or embodied time, can be seen as correlating with certain qualities, energies, and moods that inform and shape the atmosphere, both internally and externally, recognizing that some hours are more important than others, and this time can be seen as an expression of the static feminine. We often remember with distinct vividness certain memories that were important to us and then find there are other days or even weeks we cannot remember at all.<sup>13</sup> In his essay "Introduction to Archetypal Astrology" Richard Tarnas discusses the archetype of Saturn:

In an important sense, Saturn is the ruler of the birth chart itself, for Saturn is Time, Chronos, as well as that which fixes a moment in time, creates through birth a separate embodiment of reality, and then sustains and works out through time all the meaning and challenges of that archetypal moment.<sup>14</sup>

This description gives an intimation of the feminine side of Saturn. At the moment of birth, we are separating from the mother and her body. She is the place from which our bodies come. The birth moment is an emergence from the feminine, and carries the archetypal qualities of that moment in time. It is upon

leaving the mother's womb that we become archetypally imprinted for the rest of our lives. The celestial bodies seen in our birth charts contain an encoded creation story that unfolds in qualitative time through the rest of our lives, as correlated with the measured, quantitative movement of the planets. Saturn, then, seems to be both Mother Time and Father Time. Yet, nowhere in relation to the Saturn archetype do we ever hear her name spoken. The archetypal qualities of our birth moment point to a qualitative way of understanding time, in contrast to the more usual archetypally masculine and quantitative clock time of astronomy. In large measure, what astrology illuminates for us and for our soul's growth is the feminization of time, the opening to its qualitative dimension. While the quantitative is not exclusively masculine and the qualitative exclusively feminine, it seems worthwhile to consider the ways in which this is partially the case, especially in the modern era when our conception of time has been stripped of its interiority and begs for some corrective.

The archetypal expression of Saturn has become possessed by the senex principle over the last several thousand years. The absence of the feminine in senex consciousness reflects a certain archetypal possession state, a state of control and hierarchy. Hillman writes:

The principles by which we live, the limits we set ourselves and the world around us, the scale of values (less the values than their hierarchy) and, above all, the order brought through control, self-control and control over others, express this senex nature.<sup>15</sup>

The psychological implications of the absence of the feminine reveal themselves in a multitude of forms. The hyper-masculinized version of Saturn appears intrapsychically as the punitive superego, the internalized voice of patriarchy, the voice of the father who becomes inflated without the voice of the mother or the feminine.<sup>16</sup> A father who eats his children keeps those children small, scared, unable to flower and grow out of fear and contempt. We see this phenomenon pervasive in the Western psychological orientation to life and how we order our days. As the depth psychotherapist Barbara Stevens Sullivan describes:

Our resistance to a feminine orientation is tremendous. We are taught in every setting that we should be in control of our lives and that our lives will proceed in positive directions if we control them properly. We are urged to refuse to give in to depression and despair, to think



positively. In the face of the clearest, most consistent evidence, our culture insists denying the ubiquitous, inescapable fact of darkness and death and upon maintaining a fiction of the possibility of living happily ever after if we will only manage our lives properly. The consequence of this attitude is not an increasingly widespread incidence of happiness, it is rather a situation in which people feel guilty about their depression and despair, exacerbating their pain by struggling against the legitimate suffering that life involves and that, when submitted to, ultimately brings wisdom.<sup>17</sup>

Wisdom through experience and suffering, incarnation through the messy and painful process of birth, and embodiment in matter (from the Latin *mater* for mother), are all feminine elements one can see in Saturn. Reis speaks to the principle of wisdom in her groundbreaking work *Daughters of Saturn*:

The product of a feminine immersion in life is experiential knowledge. We call this feminine consciousness wisdom. It has been personified in Christian theology as Sophia and in Jewish mysticism as the Shekhina, God's feminine aspect. In Greek mythology, Athena as the goddess of wisdom.

These feminine aspects of the Saturn archetype highlight how the Greek god Kronos does not exhaust the potentialities of the planetary archetype of Saturn. Nevertheless, we also want to continue to think beyond these feminine images, as they have often been historically skewed by the patriarchal lens: the goddesses of the Greco-Roman tradition tell women less about who they are than what they have become through patriarchy.<sup>18</sup>

One significant aspect of Greco-Roman mythologies is their ancient mode of storytelling that personifies the archetypes or universal forms as gods and goddesses. Certain aspects of these mythologies correlate to each planetary archetype; however, never is every aspect of the god or goddess depicted in a planetary archetype, just as the whole spectrum of archetypal principles associated with a planet are not entirely portrayed in a god or goddess. Mythic gods and goddesses do not map one to one onto planetary archetypes. Therefore, it is a misstep to imagine that the myth of Kronos entirely or solely corresponds to the planetary archetype of Saturn. Accessing archetypes through the mythic imagination is certainly illuminating, however, to access archetypes only in this way decisively leaves out an evolutionary understanding of the

archetypes from post-Greco-Roman civilization (most notably the insights of psychology).

Furthermore, as many feminist scholars and mythologists have recognized, aspects of the goddess in patriarchal culture and mythology (such as those of the Greco-Roman traditions from which the planets are currently named) have been split off from prior meanings based in earlier matriarchal traditions. The recognition of such splitting suggests that invoking feminine goddesses, whether as asteroids or as aspects of existing planetary archetypes, is not a sufficient re-visioning. As the Jungian analyst Sylvia Brinton Perera writes in her masterful work *Descent to the Goddess: A Way of Initiation for Women*:

Most of the qualities held by the upper-world goddess have been sacralized in the West or taken over by the masculine divinities, and/or they have been overly compressed or overly idealized by the patriarchal moral and aesthetic codes. Thus most of the Greek goddesses were swallowed up by their fathers; the Hebrew goddess was depotentiated. We are left with particularized or minimized goddesses. And most of the powers once held by the goddess have lost their connection to a woman's life: the embodied, playful, passionately erotic feminine; the powerful, independent, self-willed feminine, the ambitious, regal, many-sided feminine.<sup>19</sup>

For example, the crone archetype, the Wise Old Woman, is usually described in astrology and psychology as being synonymous with senex. But the crone is ontologically different than senex. Crone gets subsumed under senex when senex is all one can imagine Saturn to be, similar to the way that woman is subsumed under man when the word "man" stands in for humankind. Even more, saying that crone is an aspect of senex is like saying that Hades, the Greek god of the underworld correlated with the planetary archetype of Pluto, is the same as Kali, the Hindu goddess of destruction and creation. Although both Hades and Kali are associated with the planetary archetype of Pluto, they inflect it differently. The same is true for senex and crone, which are both associated with the planetary archetype of Saturn, but which inflect it differently.

Integrating a feminine understanding of the planet Saturn, seen as regal, erotic, powerful, and many-sided, creates a foundation for reality that is more ontologically open in its participatory and co-creative nature. The shadow side of senex consciousness is separative, isolated, disconnected, and alone: cut off from relationships and therefore from love and purpose. What happens to a god

when it forgets its purpose? Catherine Keller writes: “The association in this epoch between separatism and masculinity is so tight that as long as God is imagined in mainly masculine metaphors, there is simply no chance for conversion to a fundamentally relational spirituality.”<sup>20</sup> The birth process we undergo with our mothers is the relational bridge between realms, not only giving us existence but connection, which is experienced as love. More than anything else, the process of birth shows us that all our relations are the birth canal of who we are, coming from a long line of beings, born into the middle of a much larger story. How we participate with the stories into which we wake up, to a large degree, comes from our cosmological understanding of the role of Saturn. If we see the world as separate, meaningless, material objects lacking intelligible purpose, then our suffering, pain, and dying are fundamentally stripped of their sanctity. Pain, suffering, and death become targets to conquer and control, to be avoided at all costs as meaningless and random acts of a mechanistic machine. This is a most terrifying world, one with no larger direction, care, or love. Ironically, the world view that tries to control life through domination gravely loses any sense of the intelligible order for which it yearns most. The archetypal patterns are lost to calculations and the imagination recedes in the face of another formulaic view on the greatest mystery we have ever witnessed.

However, as we move into a metaphysics of relationship and interconnection, where masculine and feminine rejoin after so many years of separation, where they move into a more life-enhancing partnership of equality and mutuality than ever before, we reawaken to new horizons of creativity and love. And if we do not embrace this reconnection of feminine and masculine, we simply will not survive as a species, for a father without a mother is no longer a creator. Tarnas describes our difficult task:

This is the great challenge of our time, the evolutionary imperative for the masculine to see through and overcome its hubris and one-sidedness, to own its mutuality with the feminine in all its forms. The feminine then becomes not that which must be controlled, denied, and exploited, but rather fully acknowledged, respected, and responded to for itself. It is recognized: not the objectified “other,” but rather source, goal, and immanent presence.<sup>21</sup>

## Death and Suffering in an Archetypal Cosmology

Feminine wisdom honors the central role of death and dying in the great round of life. The vital process that accompanies dying is grief, our ability to feel, acknowledge, and let go of what has happened to us. Grief is a purification process that, by honoring the past, allows us more fully to come into communion with the present. In this sense, grief is life-giving. Not grieving actually prevents us from being fully present for the next moment because we have yet to let go of the previous one. By grieving what we have lost, we are spurred to gratitude for what we have. By facing the disconnection brought by death, we are brought back into connection with the world around us.

The way grief, pain, and suffering are viewed and related to in any culture originates from that tradition's underlying view of death. Whatever one's cosmology may be, there is an archetypal resonance between what is happening to one and how one frames the cosmos. The fallacy of patriarchal consciousness is that if one keeps things under control and in order, and does a good enough job, one will not have to die. As Perera describes, "To the patriarchy death becomes a rape of life, a violence to be feared and controlled as much as possible with distance and moral order."<sup>22</sup> When we have forgotten the purpose of death, pain, suffering, and grief, they become meaningless and thus should be avoided at all costs. Such a world view has taught us that pain is punishment and happens because we have done something wrong. Of course, there is unnecessary pain and suffering and it is only natural for human beings to try and minimize pain and suffering. However, when we reframe pain as birth pain, suffering as transformative, and death as a passageway to new life, the problems we endure begin to have meaning. The feminization of time reminds us of the wisdom of the cycles of life and the necessity of death. Stevens Sullivan writes:

From a feminine perspective one sees cycles of fertility, growth, birth, withdrawal, decline, and death. Each of these kinds of time is equally valid, equally intrinsic and necessary for the wholeness of life. A feminine perspective recognizes the necessity of death for the continuance of life, and it consequently accepts all the metaphoric deaths that fill our days: the death of hope, the death of marriage, the death of a plan.<sup>23</sup>

The metaphoric deaths we experience in our lives—injury, failure, errors in judgment, the negative consequences of past decisions—are what allow us to mature and become real.

The placement of Saturn in the birth chart indicates to us how and where we will need to metaphorically die over and over again throughout our life for our soul to grow. The more we surrender to this dying, the more easily our being can move from a negating Saturn that cuts us off from our potential to a crystallizing Saturn that helps us form our being in full acceptance of the multivalent and multidimensional being that we truly are. The initiatory process is one in which we experience being blocked from entry into a place or state of consciousness until we are invited to enter. As Tarnas relays, “Saturn indicates that which we have chosen to work with and through in this life in order to achieve a higher level of spiritual awareness.”<sup>24</sup> If we can allow ourselves to open to the experience and teaching of metaphoric deaths, they can refine, mature, fortify, and deepen who we are, initiating us into our greatest potential and creativity. Seeing the intelligibility of the contractions and losses in our lives does not require a diminishment of pain and suffering, but rather an embrace and honoring of grief and loss. We must give ourselves the time and space required to feel every emotion and image that complexly attends the grieving process. Saturn is the gatekeeper to the rest of the archetypal pantheon, not only to the transpersonal realm of the three outer planets, but to each and every planetary archetype’s deepest expression. As guardian of the threshold in the chart, we must die into Saturn to access the breadth of multivalent expressions of the archetypes, so that our greatest seeded potential can unfold rippling waves of healing into our personal and collective histories.

The necessity of death, finitude, and the ending of things are primary to feminine wisdom. Death and pain are the price we pay for living. As Jung said, “there is no coming to consciousness without pain.”<sup>25</sup> This core truth, that we all suffer, is what gives us compassion, which literally means “to suffer with.” Viewing death through this feminine lens allows us to deepen our interpretations of Saturn, finding meaning in the ways life sculpts us through many metaphoric deaths, until the end of this physical incarnation.

In a paradigm in which many people believe they only live once, death becomes something to fear, control, and avoid at all costs. The feminization of time and death leads to a recognition of life as qualitative and cyclical. The meaning of death radically changes when one moves from a “one-timer” world view to a reincarnationist perspective. No longer is the time scale a lifetime, but lifetimes. The work begun here may take many lifetimes to complete. The

meaning of pain and suffering fundamentally shifts when seen as part of a larger unfolding story with no final end point, but endless transformations of consciousness. As the deep explorer into expanded states of awareness, Christopher M. Bache, shares:

After one has died and been reborn many times, eventually the very concept of death begins to lose its meaning. One learns through repetition that at the deepest level of one's being, it is impossible to die. The form that one is can be shattered, one's entire reality can be repeatedly destroyed, but one's innermost essence always reemerges. The phoenix always rises. *Death becomes simply a measure of the degree of purification being enacted.*<sup>26</sup>

Death is no longer an end point but a necessary and natural process of transformation, which inevitably leads to greater complexity and diversity of life. But essential too is *feeling* the pain, loss, and grief that happen with transformation. This feminine re-visioning of Saturn has direct bearing on how we experience and make meaning out of our pain and suffering. It is a re-visioning that belongs to every human being, because the feminine, like the masculine, always has and continues to live inside each one of us, regardless of gender identification. How each of us views death plays directly into how we live our lives.

## Conclusion

The archetype of Saturn relates to our ancestral roots, the invisible structures that shape and hold who we are, that which we have inherited consciously and unconsciously from our past. How an astrologer reads the placement of Saturn in charts intrinsically informs how the astrologer makes meaning of a person's suffering, struggles, karma, process of growth, vocation, and depth of ability to work creatively with life's circumstances. Psychologically, the effect of Saturn's interpretation directly informs a person's sense of fate, destiny, and degree of freedom and co-creativity with the rest of the archetypal pantheon. How we interpret Saturn sets the tone for interpretation itself, rippling out to every other archetype.

Saturn is not inherently a rigid prison to which humans are condemned, nor will the challenges of senex consciousness find their solution in an escape to

some new archetype. On the one hand, the astrological tradition carries a structurally deterministic fallacy that myopically sees Saturn as only senex, incapable of re-visioning or evolution; on the other, it carries a generative fallacy that impatiently flies toward half-imagined new gods. Rather, the homeopathic remedy is within the Saturn archetype itself. By bringing to light the feminine face of Saturn—embodied knowing as wisdom, meaningful suffering, death as purification, qualitative time, incarnation, and manifestation of psychic life—we stay close to the archetype while simultaneously helping to evolve it. This is the essence of participation: it is up to us to create new thought forms and morphic fields that we feel are life enhancing. And in this case, “life enhancing” extends all the way to suffering and death, recasting them as necessary agents of purification and growth.<sup>27</sup>

“He not busy being born is busy dying,” sang the great visionary poet of our time, Bob Dylan. As patriarchy is in its death throes after thousands of years of rulership—not just rulership by men but by a masculine mode of thinking and being that exists inside each of us—what is busy being born? Maintaining an open and curious posture to this question is essential—however, we know more about the answers than ever before. Any intelligent and aware person knows that the answers have a great deal to do with the feminine principle having equal value and importance in the human and collective psyche. My question then is, what does the masculine principle *inside each one of us* need for the feminine to be of equal ontological and axiological status, without further subjugation of the feminine and women? Is it a guarantee that the feminine will not take over in a reversal of power and influence? For nothing wants its sovereignty to be taken or to be subsumed in the transformation of energy from one form to another. How can the death of patriarchy be an honoring and a grieving—for there have been countless precious gifts cultivated over the past five thousand years, so much discovery and invention, but also unthinkable pain and suffering, requiring great fortitude and endurance. How can we embody and integrate all the lessons learned into the very fabric of our being so that we do not have to fear individually or collectively the Great Turning at hand?<sup>28</sup> Feminine consciousness and wisdom remember the cycles of life and energy, that things ebb and flow in a recurrent process. Masculine consciousness and wisdom remind us of the necessity for demarcation and exploration of ever new and evolving realities; they remind us that tradition, law, order, and systems provide the vital containment of psychic life. The *hieros gamos* of our time is this marriage of masculine and feminine, of body and soul, spirit and matter, and the dualities and binaries that make existence discernable and speakable.

Integration of any two principles is never at the expense of either but, on the contrary, is a deep honoring of the two into a new, emergent third that could only be born out of the very essences of what has come before in their essential difference.<sup>29</sup>

When taken to heart, this re-visioned Saturn allows us to embrace our suffering as an agent of growth rather than a negation of meaning or a punishment. Rather than fearing Saturn, we begin to work with, to trust, and to love the fate with which we participate. Instead of operating from a place of fear and control that leads to oppression and tyranny, we can learn about the cycles of life and the qualities associated with each moment in time. Awful things happen in this world, but they can drive us into the divine darkness where new life can gestate and spring forth. Patience, devotion, refinement, maturation, wisdom, incarnation, embodiment—these are the precious teachings and invaluable gifts of Saturn. Structure and routine through practice, repetition, commitment, and experience give us hard-earned abilities to manifest and create, to be the co-authors of our lives. Through sustained focus and hard work we can evolve our tradition into a moral structure and ethical system that feels life enhancing and vital, composting the old faces of the gods into regenerative new forms honoring the ever evolving diversity and complexity of life being born again and again in each and every moment.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, “Richard Wilhelm: In Memoriam,” in *The Spirit in Man, Art and Literature*, vol. 15, *The Collected Works of Carl Gustav Jung*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, ed. H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, and W. McGuire, Bollingen Series XX (London: Routledge, 1971), § 82, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Stevens Sullivan, *Psychotherapy Grounded in the Feminine Principle* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publications, 1990), 3.

<sup>3</sup> For a more in-depth and nuanced reading of these archetypal principles, including the positive and negative attributes of each archetypal pattern, see Gareth Hill, *Masculine and Feminine: The Natural Flow of Opposites in the Psyche* (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 1992), 3-22.

<sup>4</sup> Patricia Reis, *Daughters of Saturn: From Father's Daughter to Creative Woman* (New Orleans, LA: Spring Journal Books, 2006), 11.



<sup>5</sup> James Hillman, “On Senex Consciousness,” *Saturn and the Theoretical Foundations of an Emerging Discipline. Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology* 5 (2016): 14.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Tarnas, “Notes on Archetypal Dynamics and Complex Causality in Astrology, Part I,” *Death, Rebirth, Revolution: Archetypal Dynamics and Personal Experience. Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology* 4 (2012): 39-60.

<sup>7</sup> Hillman, “On Senex Consciousness,” 14: “Senex dominance: *the usurpation of one god over many*, of one archetypal form over others, of one kind of consciousness pressing others into unconsciousness.”

<sup>8</sup> See “On Senex Consciousness” and Thomas Moore, *Care of the Soul: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1992). Moore was one of Hillman’s mentees and successors in archetypal psychology.

<sup>9</sup> Hyper-separating archetypes that are in fact multivalent is an expression of a static masculine mode of consciousness. The archetypes are not pure forms in themselves but always known in and through relationships with one another. The Moon or Mother archetype is seen in the Saturn archetype; Saturn carries aspects of the Mother. Every archetype can be seen to some degree in every other archetype. It is not just we who are connected in interdependent webs of being and ecology, but the archetypes themselves.

<sup>10</sup> See for example, Stanislav Grof, *Psychology of the Future: Lessons From Modern Consciousness Research* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 32.

<sup>11</sup> Reis, *Daughters of Saturn*, Part 1.

<sup>12</sup> For a healthy and revised view of Saturn with his daughters, see Reis, *Daughters of Saturn*, 292: “The transformed Saturn does not swallow his daughter to appropriate her creative energy. Instead, he teaches his daughter the lessons of agriculture, the patience of planting, the work of cultivating, the joy of the harvest that comes after a great deal of concentration, focus, analysis, and renunciation. The transformed Saturn is also known as Sal Sapientiae or Sal Saturn—the bitter salt of wisdom.”

<sup>13</sup> Stevens Sullivan, *Psychotherapy Grounded in the Feminine Principle*, 26.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Tarnas, “Introduction to Archetypal Astrology,” 1987, accessed October 21, 2015, 8,  
<https://cosmosandpsyche.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/introductiontoastrology1.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Hillman, “On Senex Consciousness,” 17.

<sup>16</sup> Reis, *Daughters of Saturn*, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Stevens Sullivan, *Psychotherapy Grounded in the Feminine Principle*, 26.

<sup>18</sup> See for example, Reis, *Daughters of Saturn*; Stevens Sullivan, *Psychotherapy Grounded in the Feminine Principle*; and Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: Authors Choice Press, 1981).

<sup>19</sup> Sylvia Brinton Perera, *Descent to the Goddess: A Way of Initiation for Women* (Toronto, Canada: Inner City Books, 1981), 19.

<sup>20</sup> Catherine Keller, *From a Broken Web: Separation, Sexism, and Self* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986), 38.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Tarnas, *Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (New York: Random House, Harmony 1991, Ballantine, 1993), 444.

<sup>22</sup> Brinton Perera, *Descent to the Goddess*, 21.

<sup>23</sup> Stevens Sullivan, *Psychotherapy Grounded in the Feminine Principle*, 26.

<sup>24</sup> Tarnas, "Introduction to Archetypal Astrology," 9.

<sup>25</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Contributions to Analytical Psychology*, trans. H. G. Baynes and Cary F. Baynes (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1928), 193.

<sup>26</sup> Christopher M. Bache, "Death and Rebirth in LSD Therapy: An Autobiographical Study," *Journal of Transpersonal Research*, 7(1) (2015): 16.

<sup>27</sup> See for example, Rupert Sheldrake, "Preface," in *New Science of Life: The Hypothesis of Formative Causation* (London: Icon Books, 2009), 12-13.

<sup>28</sup> A term from the visionary activist and Buddhist ecologist Joanna Macy. See Macy, *World as Lover, World as Self: Courage for Global Justice and Ecological Renewal* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1991).

<sup>29</sup> Tarnas, *Passion of the Western Mind*, 445: "Each perspective, masculine and feminine, is here both affirmed and transcended, recognized as part of a larger whole; for each polarity requires the other for fulfillment. And their synthesis leads to something beyond itself: It brings an unexpected opening to a larger reality that cannot be grasped before it arrives, because this new reality is itself a creative act."

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Motherboards: Note that the changes are all evolutionary unless noted. If one revision, for example, integrates two ICs into one, all following ones have that too unless noted. Board types used in Model 1: VA0 to 3. Board types used in Model 2: VA2 to 15. VA0: Launch units, very first revision. CD Block is on a daughterboard, power supply mounted on top ("Type A"). Power led, access led, on/off and reset buttons, and the CD Tray open/close sensor are all separate. Retrograde Saturn re-enters the sign of Capricorn Saturn is in Capricorn from July 1, 2020, to December 17, 2020. Read about the Saturn in Capricorn transit and how it affects us. Details. Retrograde Saturn re-enters the sign of Capricorn. Saturn is in Capricorn from July 1, 2020, to December 17, 2020. Read about the Saturn in Capricorn transit and how it affects us in general as well as each sign of the zodiac.