

Undulations from the Sky

from Herstar Invocation One

As a privileged white teenager in the American 1970s, I heard feminists from many professions and cultures expose an immense and incontrovertible fact -- the history of power imbalance between males and females. It felt as though an earthquake was destroying my whole landscape. No matter where I peeked in Western civilization - and most other places as well - I was greeted with an astonishing profile of domination. Women were almost nowhere in written history. As far as economics goes, everything my mother did to raise six children wasn't defined as work. The religious root of Western civilization - monotheism - was almost entirely a metaphysical portrait of the Father and Son. Healthy psychology was defined as the pattern of male socialization. Medical research was almost entirely based on the male body. Legal codes skipped over violence against women and children, especially at home. American women didn't enjoy legal equality with men. The list of grievances seemed to be limitless. Moreover, the scathing analysis of this tiny and unheralded group of feminists reframed human history. They taught that the male-female imbalance had given monstrous birth to even more massive grids of imbalance. Entities conventionally perceived to be feminine had been systematically dominated for centuries, especially by Western socioeconomic and religious institutions. These "feminine" entities could be "effeminate" men, or entire races and cultures, or Earth itself. This stupendous legacy of oppression —whether of females, Goddess, or entities perceived to be feminine in essence, such as Earth — came to be interpreted as the essential debility of Western civilization. The core assumptions of our culture were to be challenged. Courageous and brilliant feminist assertions shook the foundations of our personal identities, households, social institutions, and fields of knowledge.

The 1970s earthquake rocking our cultural landscape was terribly disorienting and painful for me. Yet on a deeper level, I knew this earthquake was one drummed up by a great intelligence, an intelligence at once individual and collective. This truthful mind would force us to evolve. As a teenager, I could only conceive of this wild mind as

Kali. The shift was too huge for me to image in any other way. As She fearlessly rolled the living forms of our cultural landscape beneath our feet, as private, public, social, symbolic, secular and sacred icons toppled to the ground, we would make adjustments as a species. We would grow toward different lights.

Now, as a feminist astrologer, I ask how these lights have changed. I ask how the reception and transmission of lights — the lights of Sky and their rapport with Earth — now shine through a different prism. I see feminist astrology as the skyquake that corresponds to the feminist earthquake. Feminist astrology is the undulation of the jeweled belly of the Sky. Physical and metaphysical power in female terms has gathered in relentless generational waves — despite storms of cultural resistance — ever since the discovery of Uranus in the late 18th century. Many of us rode one such wave as it crested during the 1960's Uranus- Pluto conjunction and its aftermath. Now, with the sextile of this conjunction and the passage of Neptune into tropical Aquarius, this gathering of female power renews its momentum and bears the flavor of joy. We're swimming to the ocean floor. I am grateful to have a part, however small, in the empowerment of women and girls and its tremendous spiraling effects on our relationships, institutions, and fields of knowledge. Still, it may take hundreds of years to realize our dreams. Resistance to feminism is still formidable. As a healing balm, I say to myself that the tones of our efforts, be they sweet or bitter, are part of a much larger choir with its own stately rhythms of manifestation. I think of this choir, and say to myself that its songs are so vast in their implications that they can only be sacred songs. Western astrologers now honor female energy as Source, although our tradition has been filtered through patriarchal values for the past few thousand years. We now identify how perceptions of planets, signs, elements, houses, and fixed stars have been cast in terms of male experience in patriarchal social order. We "hear women into speech," allowing the core astrological vocabulary to flow from specifically female experience. We share suppressed legacies in astrology, art and religion, as well as our own meditations, pilgrimages and creative efforts.

So many people paved the way for the precious exchanges of the Invocation action. I would like to thank: the 50 authors, 49 women and 1 man, many of whom worked very hard without being paid; my parents for their solidarity and for helping with living expenses; Kathy Bing-You, Vashti and James Braha, Pat Con, Chris Ann Moore, Ann Roddy, Wendy Thacker, and Christine DeBellis Waddell for the sweetness of friendship; the 67 people who made donations; The Mountain Astrologer staff for their kindness; and the 28 people who have purchased copies of Invocation One to date.

As a final note, although a number of Invocation authors are experts in cross-cultural mythology, I think all would agree that this action speaks for feminist activism and awareness within Western astrology. The Western tradition originated in Mesopotamia, as far as we know. Over millennia, it saturated the civilizations of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, Arabia, Judaea, Megalithic and Celtic Europe, and really all territories touched by the Judeo-Christian tradition. However, so many other astrologies — Hindu, Chinese, Tibetan, Mayan, Native American, Polynesian, and so forth — shine in the glittering webs of memory stretched across the space between all our relations. I am truly sorry that despite 12 months of outreach, no astrologers based in non-Western traditions stepped forward. If you are one, and if the feminist tradition has been a creative force in your life, please do not feel excluded. So many are eager to learn from you. Let us work together to make a wider and more inclusive future. So much depends upon it.

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