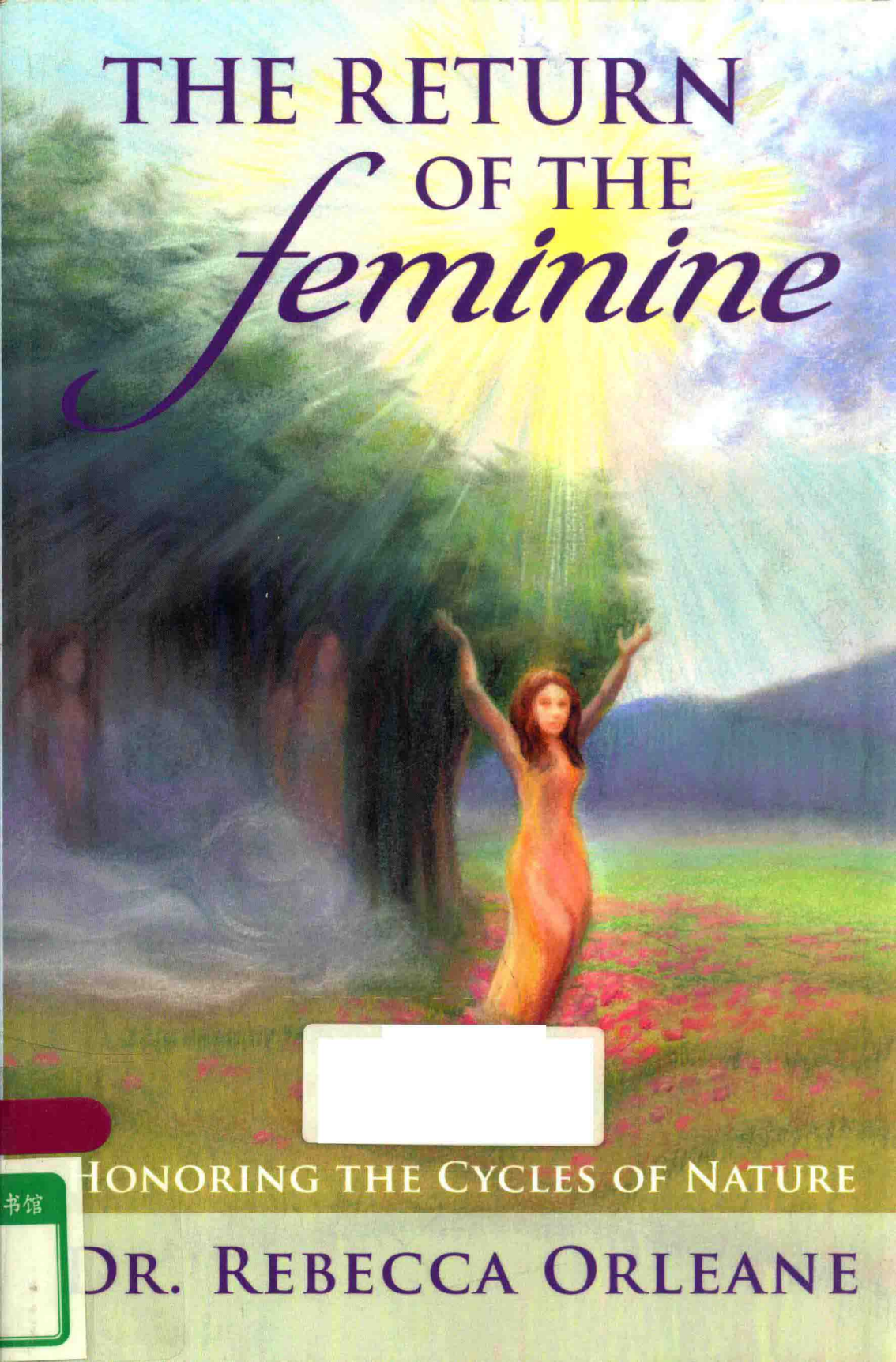


THE RETURN OF THE *feminine*

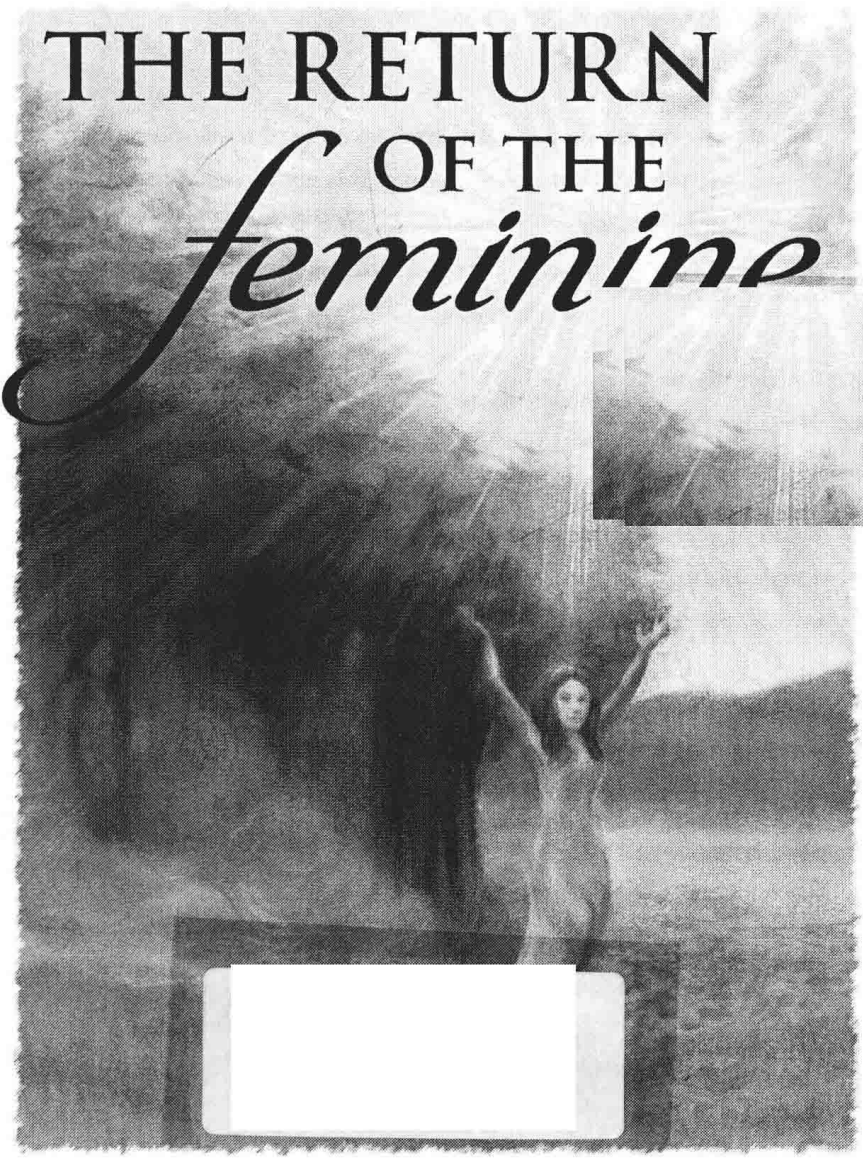
A woman with long brown hair, wearing a long, flowing orange dress, stands in a lush green field. She has her arms raised in a gesture of reaching or receiving. A bright, ethereal beam of light descends from a large, dark tree on the left, illuminating her and the surrounding area. The background features rolling hills under a soft, colorful sky. The overall style is painterly and spiritual.

HONORING THE CYCLES OF NATURE

DR. REBECCA ORLEANE

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THE RETURN OF THE *feminine*



HONORING THE CYCLES OF NATURE

One Water press

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AuthorHouse™
1663 Liberty Drive
Bloomington, IN 47403
www.authorhouse.com
1-800-839-8640

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Hard cover and soft cover first published by AuthorHouse in association with One Water Press™, 5/28/2010.

ISBN: 978-1-4520-1252-0 (e)
ISBN: 978-1-4520-1250-6 (sc)
ISBN: 978-1-4520-1251-3 (hc)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010907350

Printed

Bloomington, Indiana, United States of America

This book is printed on acid free paper

Cover:

Art by Ann DiSalvo

Graphic design by Rowan Design

OTHER WORKS BY
REBECCA SMITH ORLEANE



Conversations With Laarkmaa:
A Plieadian View of the New Reality
Co-Author, Cullen Baird Smith

Southern Piercings

DEDICATION



To all those who are remembering the principles
of the Divine Feminine
and are turning towards Nature
to bring balance, harmony, peace, and love to our world.

COVER ART

Ann DiSalvo

INTERIOR PLATES

INTRODUCTION: May Jo Wootten

CHAPTER 1: Donna Hertz

CHAPTER 2: Silvia Trujillo

CHAPTER 3: Paula Fong

CHAPTER 4: Donna Hertz

CHAPTER 5: Paula Fong

CHAPTER 6: Meredith Killmer Hanson

CHAPTER 7: May Jo Wootten

CHAPTER 8: Laura Hurst

CHAPTER 9: Ann DiSalvo

CHAPTER 10: Silvia Trujillo

CHAPTER 11: Paula Fong

CHAPTER 12: Donna Hertz

CHAPTER 13: Silvia Trujillo

EPILOGUE: May Jo Wootten

ART DESIGN AND TYPOGRAPHY

Rowan Design



INTRODUCTION

Like all of us, I came from the stars into the rhythms and cycles of Earth. We are Nature beings who are divinely connected to Mother Earth. When I was born I whispered to my mother that I must follow the rhythms of Nature. Listening intently, my mother silently took me to her breast and provided my first cycle of nourishment: her love.

Like so many who are reading this book, I grew up as a young girl in a patriarchal culture. Because of the prevailing attitudes and beliefs, I “lost” (forgot about) my connection to Nature’s cycles. I joined the belief system that dictated that “progress” and “linear thinking” were the only systems worthy of recognition. But ignoring my own inner rhythms because they were “inconvenient” or hiding my cycles because they were “embarrassing” and made me “different” from mainstream male culture didn’t work for me. I grew pale and sick, unable to be myself.

There is no coincidence that this book has thirteen chapters. Thirteen is a sacred number to women. The Moon makes thirteen cycles around the Earth per year. Most women have thirteen menstrual cycles per year. My intent is to present

We are 70-98% water. The same salt water that fills the sea fills my blood. The rivers within me are connected to the rivers of Earth. Sitting in the sun, I realized that the energy of the sun not only shines directly on us, but is also reflected from the moon, causing a tidal pull of the water on our planet. As the sea and I are one, my own waters also follow a rhythm of natural cycles. These natural rhythms must be followed to bring our relationships back into balance. This book explores the cycles that define our lives, offers ways to heal our relationships, and beckons us to return to Nature.

we are.

One day, sitting by the beach and watching the waves come and go, beckoning me to join my water to theirs, I thought to myself, "I am a sun worshiper," as I enjoyed the sun's warmth on my skin. And a voice somewhere in my memory, a voice from the night I arrived on this earth, whispered, "Remember, remember." In an instant, I remembered that I am connected to the sea and the tides. The rhythm of the lapping waves awakened in me the memory of the divinity of my own rhythms: the sea and I were one. I realized that I am connected to and part of Nature, and there can be nothing more holy than the divine cycles which connect us to who

the stories and information in these thirteen chapters in a melodious, winding, weaving, encircling, all encompassing way, the way a woman thinks, the way a woman feels, the way a woman IS. Some of the chapters in this book are short and some are long, but then, this is a book that advocates change, not constancy.

“Wo-man” and “fe-male” are words used by western cultures to define the feminine gender in relation to men. We have no word in English to communicate a different vision for being female, and this lack of language reflects the existing lack of understanding of feminine principles.

Observing the similarities of our dual nature to the waxing and waning of the moon provides the most obvious description of *how* and *who* we are as females. It is the continually changing nature of the moon’s reflection of the sun’s light that governs the gravitational pull of the tides on earth. The continually changing nature of women governs the pull between Life and Death. Every woman’s cycle contains both in perfect balance. Women are Lifegivers who intrinsically understand through the feminine principle the power and timing of Life and Death. There is no more poignant place to seek understanding of our place and our purpose on Earth. Women understand duality so well *because* we are dual. Cycles of Life and Death, guided by our own inner timing, run in our blood.

The scope of this book is to help better understand the gifts of having a dual nature and how to use those gifts to

heal our relationships through dreaming, spirituality and intuition, and our innate creativity. We will look at the moist, rich, darkness of the time of bleeding, and I will re-introduce the ancient idea that menstruation is a time of purification, listening to our intuition and our dreams, birthing new ideas, and moving deeper into understanding of our own spirituality, all of which greatly enhance our relationships.

This book explores the similarities of our feminine nature to all cycles of life. Like everything in life and like the sunlight's reflection through the moon that pulls our inner waters, women are continually changing. Each change brings a gift and a different view of the world. All things in Nature move in cycles, and these cycles define Life and Death on Earth. Simple observation of Nature shows cycles in the rotation of the earth, bringing day and night, or tree rings that indicate yearly growth patterns. Scientific knowledge of cycles in all life expanded in 1729 when it was discovered that the *Mimosa Pudica* plant had daily cycles, closing its leaves at night and opening them in the day. Yet even as science explored cycles of life, one of the most obvious and important life cycles, that of women's bleeding, was pushed underground by the politics of our time.

We will explore in this book reasons that women's cycles have been ignored, dismissed, or pathologized, and how those actions have affected our place in society, preventing us from truly being who we are. Our Western Patriarchal society

has promoted progress and constancy at the price of slower, gentler harmony with Nature. Learning to respect the wisdom of our natural cycles is a step towards healing and growth. As part of the natural universe, women have cycles that have always been with us and are the essence of life itself. It is time to awaken to the value and power inherent in another way of seeing the world, through the eyes of feminine vision.

Rather than appreciating the benefits of women's natural cycles, like ever changing dark and light of the moon, we have been encouraged to re-align our nature with a business calendar that artificially pressures us to join a linear progressive model for life, appointing nights, weekends, and holidays as the only calendar sanctioned times for rest, regeneration, and introspection. This artificial way of living has thrown our most important relationships out of balance and endangered future life through alignment with technology over Nature.

American television is full of commercials that proclaim "now you can be active every day of the month," failing to recognize the artificiality of expecting each day in a woman's monthly cycle to be the same. Not perceiving one's cyclical way of being isolates women from the processes that occur anyway; detachment from bodily changes ensures that they remain merely bodily ones, hiding unrecognized benefits.

This book will explore myths and beliefs of blood mysteries from the earliest times. The practices of indigenous peoples who are close to the land will be shared as a teaching tool;

indigenous peoples worldwide see menses as a sacred time, a time of power, where women, of their own accord, go into retreat to examine their life's purpose and to gather spiritual strength. People who live close to Nature observe that life consists of interconnected processes rather than a discrete causal relationship between things; through this understanding, indigenous peoples acknowledge and respect the natural changes of women better than their Western counterparts. In the West, the attempt to control Nature's cycles rather than recognizing that humans are part of Nature's cycles contributes to patriarchal attempts to control women through undervaluing who we are and what we have to offer.

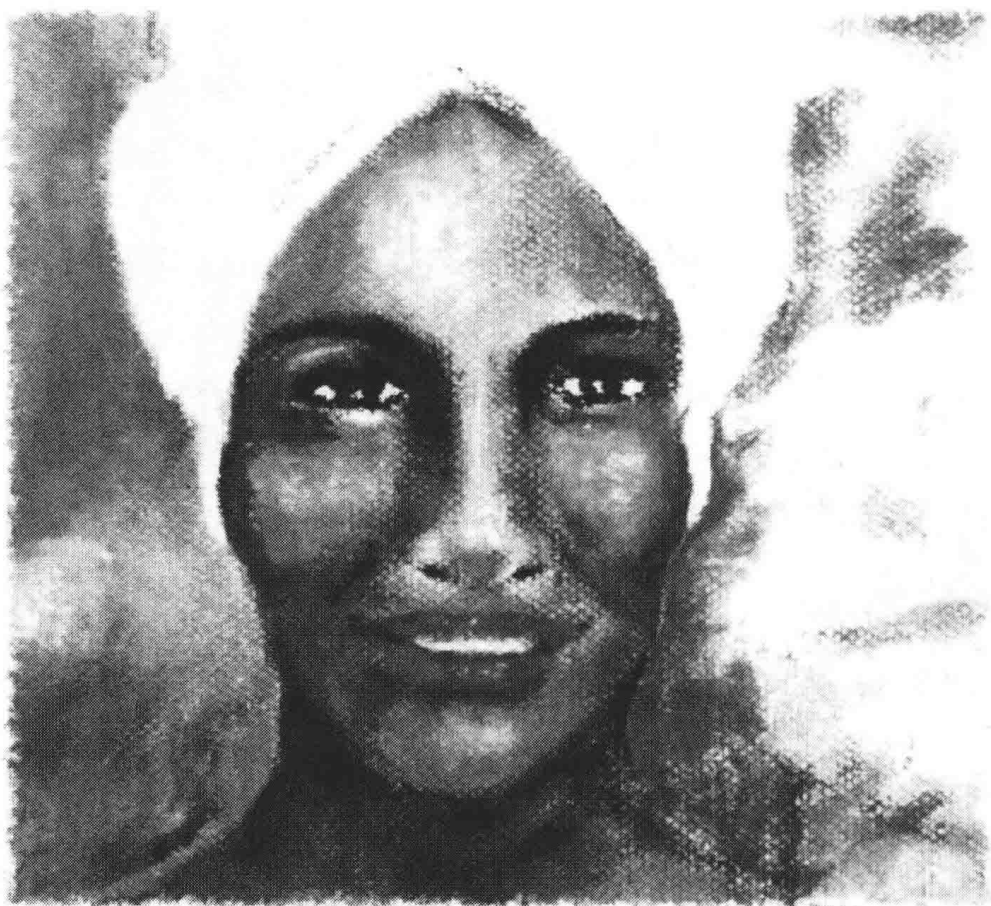
We will explore how creativity, dreaming, intuition, and our spiritual experiences can be enhanced through deeper listening to the rhythm of our bodies and honoring their call to retreat. We will look at the benefits in each of these areas in connection to our own body calendar. Unlike the Western calendar that dictates times of rest, calendar consciousness was first developed by and in women from their natural menstrual body calendar. Chinese women established a lunar calendar 3000 years ago; Mayan women saw a relationship between the great Mayan calendar and women's cycles; in Gaelic the words for "menstruation" and "calendar" are the same. Yet with all this ancient recognition of a woman's natural cycle, modern society has chosen to try to manipulate it or ignore it.

If we are not in tune with our own rhythm, then we experience sharp and inappropriate breaks or alterations in our life's flow, expressed by many women as PMS. I suggest in this book that Pre Menstrual Syndrome is a culturally induced condition resulting from the scientific dissection of physical and emotional events that occur during menstruation and a suppression of women's emotional vision. This book combines an understanding of hormonal changes and emotional guideposts for life changes. I also introduce the idea that the power of Menopause has been squelched through lifetimes of cultural assault on women's cycles. It is through failure to listen to the wisdom of our own cycles that we approach Menopause in such confusion.

Women are central to our homes and our communities, known as lovers of peace, and the natural creators of life. When women's cycles are ignored, controlled, or denied, there are long reaching unpleasant effects. I believe that ignoring or suppressing women's natural cycles contributes to the increase of stress and illness, the deepening of sadness and depression, and greater disparity in our relationships. While each woman must evaluate the worth of these assertions herself, the evidence is clear to me. Patriarchal misconceptions have imprinted themselves into women's consciousness as truth. The smell of patriarchy is concrete, rigid and stifling, blocking us in and paving our direction. Patriarchal culture demands: cut it down and pave over it. Pour your own image

into the mold and cement it into the place where Nature once cycled through the seasons.

Feminine consciousness knows to go down into dark earth and breathe in the moist stillness. Feminine smells reflect the cycles of life and death: grass, flowers, trees, ocean, stream, meadow, the fecund smell of fall leaves turning into earth; the fragrance of feminine consciousness calls us to merge with Nature. Each starting place stirs us towards the next level of birthing, the stretching forward in fullness until the core of us rips through the ground and waves our newly sprouted greenness towards the wideness of the blue, blue sky. Sweet, ripe, redness gathering into blossom, then fruit, feminine consciousness offers herself to the world to be eaten, and then drops back to earth for another cycle of being born again. We are not paved over. We do not cement our image over the ever-changing landscape, demanding to stand firm or build on the shifting sands of time. Change is our lifeblood. We need to better understand the wisdom of our own life cycles. It is time to return to the feminine and heal our relationships through living in harmony with Nature.



NAMING

—*Rebecca Smith Orleane*

I know

The shape of a word in my mouth,
Whether it sticks in my throat,
Or glides smoothly forward.

I know

The vibration produced as my thought turns to speech,
Whether words connect as they land,
Or repulse upon their arrival.

I know

The power of the words I speak,
And yes, *I* must direct
The power of Naming.

THE RETURN OF THE FEMININE: Honoring the Cycles of Nature

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