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Sailor Saturn and Sailor Pluto: There Was No “Switch”

Some fans claim that Naoko Takeuchi, the creator of *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon*, made a major mistake when she created Sailor Saturn and Sailor Pluto. This article will attempt to show why there was no “switch” between these two characters. This is the main argument against Takeuchi’s choices:

"In mythology, Pluto was the God of Death and Saturn was the God of Time. Sailor Pluto is the Senshi of Time and Sailor Saturn is the Senshi of Death. Therefore, Takeuchi either switched Sailor Saturn and Sailor Pluto for some reason or she got her mythology mixed up."

This is an example of a logical fallacy known as begging the question. The conclusion of the argument is entailed in its premises. The premise *assumes* that Sailor Saturn "should have been" associated with time and that Sailor Pluto "should have been" associated with death (and all of that is exactly what the people are trying to prove). In this argument, the arguer should not be granted the assumption that Sailor Saturn "should have been" associated with time and that Sailor Pluto "should have been" associated with death, but should be made to provide support for that claim.

Additionally, this is an example of the Straw Man fallacy that presents a false dilemma. Those who make the above assertion take facts from Sailor Moon and classical mythology, and proceed to invent several close imitations of those facts (Straw Man fallacy). They then present those distorted facts in an illegitimate "it can be only either this or that" manner by declaring they are mutually exclusive (false dilemma fallacy). Finally, they attack these fallacies instead of the real facts and thereby create the illusion that it's true that the powers of Sailor Saturn and Sailor Pluto were switched around. The conclusion is fallacious for several reasons:

1. It assumes that classical Greco-Roman mythology was the only source Takeuchi used for reference. This hypothesis can easily be shown to be false. (One should point out that Mercury wasn't exactly a god of water and Mars wasn't exactly a god of fire in Roman mythology. Sailor Mars and Sailor Mercury possess their respective powers because in Japanese Mercury is often called *Suisei* 水星, the "Water Star," and Mars is often called *Kasei* 火星, the "Fire Star.") Even if Saturn was always the God of Time, which wasn't always the case, and Pluto was always the God of Death, which also wasn't always the case, what rule is there that states that Takeuchi only based her characters' powers on these deities from classical Greco-Roman mythology?

2. It assumes that, in Roman mythology, Pluto was always associated with death and was the God of Death while Saturn was always associated with time and was the God of Time. It's a little more complicated than that. In reality, there

were several gods associated with death and time. Mars, for example, was a god of death at some point in his history of worship. The Moirae, the Fates, controlled destiny and therefore were goddesses associated with time. Pluto, a name that was originally used by the Greeks and later used by the Romans, was the ruler of the underworld. As an agent of death, he was always subject to time and the Moirae. Furthermore, it was Thanatos (Θάνατος), not Pluto, who was the Greek personification of death. Cronus (Κρόνος), the leader of the Titans, was associated with (or mistaken for) *chronos* (χρόνος), which means "time" in Greek, by the Stoic philosophers in the Hellenistic period. Even today, people very often had mistaken the Titan Cronus for the Greek word *chronos*. Saturn, an ancient Italian deity of agriculture, blight, and sowing, had no special time god roles before he was equated with Cronus. Later Roman writers did associate Saturn with time, but this happened after they said Cronus was the same as *chronos*.

3. It ignores the fact that both the planets Saturn and Pluto, in Western astrology, have been associated with various themes such as death, rebirth, and time. The British composer Gustav Holst, the author of the famous suite *The Planets*, wrote, "Saturn brings not only physical decay but also a vision of fulfillment." The Saturn article at Symbols.com tells us that "The position of Saturn in an individual's natal chart or horoscope reveals the way in which the protective shell will break, the price that has to be paid for the freedom necessary for further development, and the pain that has to be endured during the process of really becoming a grown-up, a kind of rebirth. If the implications of Saturn are ignored, the planet becomes precisely the symbol of deprivations, inhibitions, and hardship just mentioned." The famous astrologer Sydney Omarr, in his book *The New Millennium Guide*, tells us what Saturn traditionally represented in astrology: "Its traditional meaning equates it with the most dire of events and circumstances. Hell on Earth. Satan. Destruction. All of this smacks of predetermination, destiny instead of free will." In the section dedicated to Pluto, Omarr writes, "Astrologers have various ways of reading past-life themes in a natal chart. Some use the sign, placement, and aspects of Saturn or the moon's nodes. Other focus on the rising sign and aspects made to the ascendant's ruling planet. And other astrologers focus on Pluto." We're also told that, "The door to past lives might be one that Pluto will hurl open." These statements indicate that Saturn and Pluto, astrologically, have several things in common.

4. Worst of all, it completely ignores (or thoroughly distorts) Takeuchi's own say in the matter. Sailor Pluto, when we first meet her in the anime and manga, is called the *meikai no bannin* 冥界の番人, "guardian of the underworld." That's a reference to mythology, yet almost everybody seems to ignore this title of hers. In the anime, the mist that wraps around her Garnet Rod when she performs her "Dead Scream" maneuver is called the *meikai no kaze* 冥界の風, the "wind of the underworld." Sailor Pluto's most common epithet *henkaku no senshi* 変革の戦士, or "soldier of change," is a reference to Western astrology. Astrologers in the West often say that Pluto represents ideas such as change and transformation. Sailor Pluto is associated with time, called the "soldier of space-time" (*jikū no senshi* 時空の戦士), watches over the Space-Time Door (*jikū no tobira* 時空の扉), and called the "guardian of time" (*jikan no bannin*

時間の番人) because her father is Chronos クロノス. This is another mythological reference. In later times Cronus was identified with the Greek word for time, *chronos* χρόνος, while Hades eventually became known as Πλούτων *Plouton*, or Pluto, which in Greek means "enricher." Hades was (the eldest) son of Cronus just like Sailor Pluto is the daughter of Chronos.

Sailor Saturn's two common anime and manga epithets, *horobi no senshi* 滅びの戦士, "soldier of ruin," and *chinmoku no senshi* 沈黙の戦士, "soldier of silence" are also Western astrology references. When the characters mention Sailor Saturn and her powers, the words *hametsu* 破滅 and *horobi* 滅び, which mean "destruction" and "destroying," are used more often than the Japanese word *shi* 死 which means "death." Sailor Saturn's Silence Glaive, which has often been referred to as a scythe (*chinmoku no kama* 沈黙の鎌, the "scythe of silence") in the Japanese script, is reminiscent of the scythe that Cronus and Saturn wielded in classical Greco-Roman mythology.

Incidentally, in the Japanese anime and manga, Sailor Saturn has never been called the *shi no senshi* 死の戦士, "soldier of death," and Sailor Pluto has never been called the *toki no senshi* 時の戦士, the "soldier of time." (The latter can be found in the instruction booklet for the Sailor Moon Super fighting game for the Super Famicom, but it isn't used in the anime and manga.) Even the phrase *jikan no senshi* 時間の戦士, which can also be translated as "soldier of time," isn't ever used in the anime or manga. Furthermore, Sailor Saturn has never been called the *saisei no senshi* 再生の戦士, or "soldier of rebirth." The phrase *hametsu to tanjō no senshi* 破滅と誕生の戦士 has been erroneously translated as "soldier of death and rebirth." It really means "soldier of ruin and birth." The Japanese word *tanjō* means "birth" but not "rebirth." Although Sailor Moon brings about Hotaru's reincarnation, Sailor Saturn herself doesn't wield those powers. Hotaru's healing ability doesn't count as a "power of rebirth."

To put it simply:

Sailor Pluto's sphere of influence includes the underworld (*meikai* 冥界), change (*henkaku* 変革), the dead (*deddo* デッド), and space-time (*jikū* 時空) because she is the one who inherited those powers from her father, Chronos.

Sailor Saturn's sphere of influence includes silence (*chinmoku* 沈黙), ruin or destruction (*hametsu* 破滅), death (*shi* 死), fate (*unmei* 運命), and birth (*tanjō* 誕生) after she's been reincarnated after the Death Busters series in the manga.

When it comes to classical mythology, Sailor Pluto's identity is reminiscent of Greek mythology. *Plouton* (Πλούτων) and *chronos* (χρόνος) are real Greek terms). Sailor Saturn's identity is reminiscent of Roman and ancient Italian mythology ("Saturn," or *Sāturnus*, is a word that's probably of Etruscan origin). The mythology of the Greeks was very similar to the mythology of the Romans (and the Romans borrowed most of the mythological stories from the Greeks), but the Roman counterparts always had their own idiosyncrasies.