



# **Patriarchs of Time: Dualism in Saturn-Cronus, Father Time, The Watchmaker God, and Father Christmas**

*Samuel Macey*

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Exploring the personifications of time by which Western civilization has ordered its attitudes toward both earthly existence and eternity, *Patriarchs of Time* traces the lineage of time's gods from the deities of ancient Mesopotamia and Persia through the pantheons of Greece and Rome, the Christian Father Time, and the brief reign of the Newtonian Watchmaker God to the consumerist Santa Claus who holds sway over the year's end celebrations of our own day. Each of these patriarchs, Samuel L. Macey shows, has embodied dualisms that reflect the dilemma in the Western mind between the joys and woes of our brief time on earth and the promise of eternal life or eternal punishment in the hereafter.

Santa Claus is today, effectively, the sole inheritor of Saturn's old midwinter festival, but Macey suggests that it remains to be seen whether he will fully manifest the dualism that has always characterized the West's patriarchs of time, and whether our present consumerist saturnalia will regain the spiritual message of hope and eternal life that has always been a part of time's dominion.

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