



TRADITIONAL MARTINIST ORDER

ORATORY SECTION

SECOND DEGREE



LESSON FOUR

"It is not the head which is necessary to advance in Truth; it is the heart."



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CONCURRENCE

As discussed in this monograph, Jacob Boehme, a great German mystic of the seventeenth century showed tremendous interest in the notion of androgyny and developed a theory that influenced the Western mysticism of the eighteenth century. In regards to our study of the day, here is a text that he wrote on the topic in a book entitled “*Mysterium Magnum*.”

“Adam was a man and also a woman, and yet neither one nor the other, but was a virgin filled with chastity, modesty, and purity as the image of God. The two principles of fire and light were there, and it is in their conjunction that God's love lived, the virginal principle, which was the beautiful rose garden in which God loved Itself. This is what we will be in the resurrection of the dead, just as Christ has taught us. 'At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven' (Mathew 22:30).”

A man, just as Adam was before Eve, must get up, take back, and keep eternally possession of Paradise; not as man or woman but as the Scripture says: “They are virgins and they follow God and the lamb; they are as the angels of God, not only of pure spirits as the angels, but clothed with the glorious bodies in which the spiritual and angelic body rests.”

Jacob Boehme (1575 -1624)



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THE ORIGINAL ANDROGYNY

Dear Supplicant,

I greet you before the Luminaries of the Traditional Martinist Order!

In the previous monograph, we evoked the concept of duality through the study of the two pillars of the Temple of Solomon. Today, we are going to finish this study by focusing on the theme of androgyny.

To begin, the word *androgyny* comes from a Greek word associating *andros* meaning “man” with *gyne* meaning “woman.” An androgyny is literally a man-woman, or in other words a being that is both male and female. This concept may evoke for some of us the strange pictures that are found in the treatises on alchemy. In fact, the alchemists often represented the Philosopher’s Stone as an androgynous being, a figure combining man and woman in a single being. This figure is found in numerous myths relating to the origins of Humanity and Creation. In fact, it constitutes an archetypal image, a symbol proceeding from an intuitive perception of natural and universal laws.

In esoteric literature, the word *androgyny* is often confused with the word *hermaphrodite*, so much so that one is frequently used for the other. Actually, these two words refer to two concepts that are somewhat different. Thus, in Book Four of *The Metamorphoses*, Ovid tells the story of Hermaphrodite, a mythical character whose name comes from his parents, the god Hermes, and the goddess Aphrodite. While Hermaphrodite was bathing in a spring guarded by the nymph Salmacis, the nymph immediately fell in love and wanted to unite with him. Since he refused her advances, she implored the help of the gods. Her request was granted, but Salmacis held the young man so tightly that they ended up becoming a single being. Hermaphroditism refers therefore to Hermaphrodite, a man who, by his union with a nymph, has become a double being, male and female. As for androgyny, it corresponds to a being who, at its origin, was endowed with masculine and feminine polarities.

The fundamental text relating to original androgyny is the discourse of Aristophanes in the *Symposium* of Plato. It is a dialog between characters that praise Eros, the god of Love. In this allegoric text, Aristophanes and Socrates explain that human love takes its source from a being, who possessed at the beginning, an extraordinary power. They report that in the beginning, Earth was inhabited by androgynes. Endowed with colossal power, they took on the assault of the sky by piling up mountains on top of each other. This ambition caused them to feel



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the wrath of Zeus and led to their fall. In order to put a stop to their project, the king of the gods was determined to weaken them for good by separating them into two beings. He attributed to the first the masculine nature and, to the other, the feminine nature.

Continuing his narrative, Plato indicates that humans come from these two beings that were divided and that the nostalgia for their lost unity gives rise to the desire for their union. However, Eros is the only god who allows human beings to realize this desire and to unite again with the other half of themselves, the one they have lost. This is what is said in the discourse of Aristophanes regarding this: *“So ancient is the love for one another which is implanted in us, the love reuniting our original nature, the love making one of two.”* In his conclusion, Plato makes it clear that impiety causes the refusal to return to the primordial state and to *Supreme Happiness*, this being the first cause of the exile of humanity and the separation into two beings.

The previous explanations do not suggest that the duality resulting from the loss of our androgyny concerns only the physical dimension of our being. A text from The Upanishads indicates that *“...it is not for the love of the woman that a woman is desired by a man but for the Atma,”* that is, the Spiritual Principle that animates all beings. On the same subject, the psychologist Carl Gustav Jung considered that the psyche of human beings possesses a masculine part, the *animus* and a feminine part, the *anima*. His work has shown that one of the important steps of the realization of being, which he calls the Process of Individuation, is to go through the Joining Together, or in other words, through the marriage of the two opposite natures in each of us.

Let us now see what the Judeo-Christian Tradition teaches regarding androgyny. This notion is evoked in Genesis. In fact, it is indicated in this narrative that on the fifth day of Creation, *“So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”* (Genesis 1:27). This sentence is not the only one regarding human beings. Verse 7 of Chapter 2 of *Genesis* tells us *“Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”* This verse seems to describe a second creation of man and this time, there is no mention of woman. Later in the same chapter (Genesis 2:18), we learn that God was searching in Creation for a being to accompany the man so that he would not remain alone. Not finding one, God decided to cause a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. While he was sleeping, God took one of his ribs with which God made a new being: a woman. These different texts are therefore contradictory. In fact, the first shows us the creation of a human being that is both male and female whereas the other talks about a man created from mud and from which a woman was later extracted.



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Philo of Alexandria, born in the year 13 BCE, saw in the allegory of the *Symposium* a key to understanding the text of *Genesis*. For him, the first Adam that the Bible speaks about is an androgynous being, who is later separated into two beings. The Fathers of the Church, among whom were Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor, were familiar with Greek culture and also had similar thoughts. Many texts of the Midrash, such as the *Bereshit Rabba* also present Adam as an androgyne. It is the same with numerous Gnostic writings such as the writings of Simon Magus or the Naasenes. In the ninth century, John Scotus Eriugena introduced the idea that originally humans possessed a spiritual body and that the division into male and female was a consequence of the Fall. According to him, this division was part of a process that started within God to give birth to Creation, and then it continued in Humanity. Moreover, he considered that Reintegration would begin with the reunification of the primordial Adam, continue in all the kingdoms of nature, until finally, all Creation would return into Divine Unity. In the fifteenth century, in his book *The Dialogues of Love*, the Spanish Kabbalist León Hebreo also showed a parallel between the text of Plato and that of *Genesis*. He saw, in the Fall of Humanity, the moment when Adam the androgyne was separated into two in order to give birth to man and woman.

What does the Martinist Tradition say about androgyny? First, we must note that this notion is not found directly in the writings of Martinès de Pasqually. That being said, the *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings* indicates nevertheless that when Adam was emanated, he was purely spiritual and was therefore neither man nor woman. According to this text, it is only after he fell into matter that he became a man and that woman appeared, in the physical sense of the words Man and Woman. The concept of androgyny is more present in the writings of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin. The reason for this is that he was made aware of this question through the books of his second master, Jacob Boehme. In fact, Boehme created a theory on this subject that greatly influenced western mysticism of the eighteenth century.

In his book *On the Election of Grace*, Jacob Boehme specifies that Adam “...was a very beautiful image, clear and crystalline, neither man nor woman, but both reunited, similar to a virile virgin” (Chapter 5, p.84). According to Jacob Boehme, it is when this androgyne Adam was placed in Eden that he became fascinated by the material world. To understand this world that was foreign to him, he projected his own thought into nature. This experience brought about profound trouble within him and it is then that God perceived the attraction that matter had over Adam. From that moment, God knew that an inevitable process had begun and that Adam would have the desire to taste the forbidden fruit. Not wanting Adam to run the risk of losing himself



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definitively in matter, God decided to protect Adam by modifying his nature. It was then that God put him in a deep sleep during which God separated the two polarities and divided Adam into two beings, a man and a woman.

The originality of Jacob Boehme's insight is in the idea of the separation of the androgynous Adam into two beings was intended to prevent his definitive loss. We can also note that he located this separation before the episode of the forbidden fruit, which is generally considered to mark the Adamic Fall. It is after discovering the work of Boehme that Saint-Martin elaborated on the theme of androgyny in his books and his correspondence with his disciples. That being said, he did not use the word *andogyne* to designate the original Human. He used the word *hermaphrodite* to which he gave the same meaning. It should also be noted that the Unknown Philosopher searched in modern men and women for intellectual, as well as physical, testimonies of the andogyne Adam. In his book, *The Spirit of Things*, he evoked the traces that this original state has left on each of us. Thus, he sees in the breast of a man what he "*has preserved of the feminine gender and that he no longer possesses.*"

According to Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the primary consequences of the loss of androgyny, for human beings, is that we would be incapable of creating beings, or of producing offspring alone. However, though, if we are no longer able to procreate alone, we have still retained the power of thought. The Unknown Philosopher saw in this a testimony of our original state. He thought that it is because of intelligence that men and women can still exercise their creative power, which explains why they take such pleasure in creating. Thus, the ability to think is a means for people to establish connections among themselves, to recover the unity that existed among all beings at the origin of Creation, and to recreate the spirit of the original Adam.

In conclusion, we can say that the myth of androgyny represents the loss of primordial Harmony, which reigned at the origin of all Creation. It also represents the separation between the spiritual and the material in the macrocosm as well as the microcosm. Applied to human beings, this myth symbolizes the rupture of our inner unity, the loss of harmony that once existed between our divine nature and our terrestrial nature. That is why Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin liked to say that our essential task consists in re-marrying, which implies devoting time to our inner life. This work is a necessity in order to rebuild within ourselves the Temple where the spiritual Marriage – to which each of us is called – must occur.

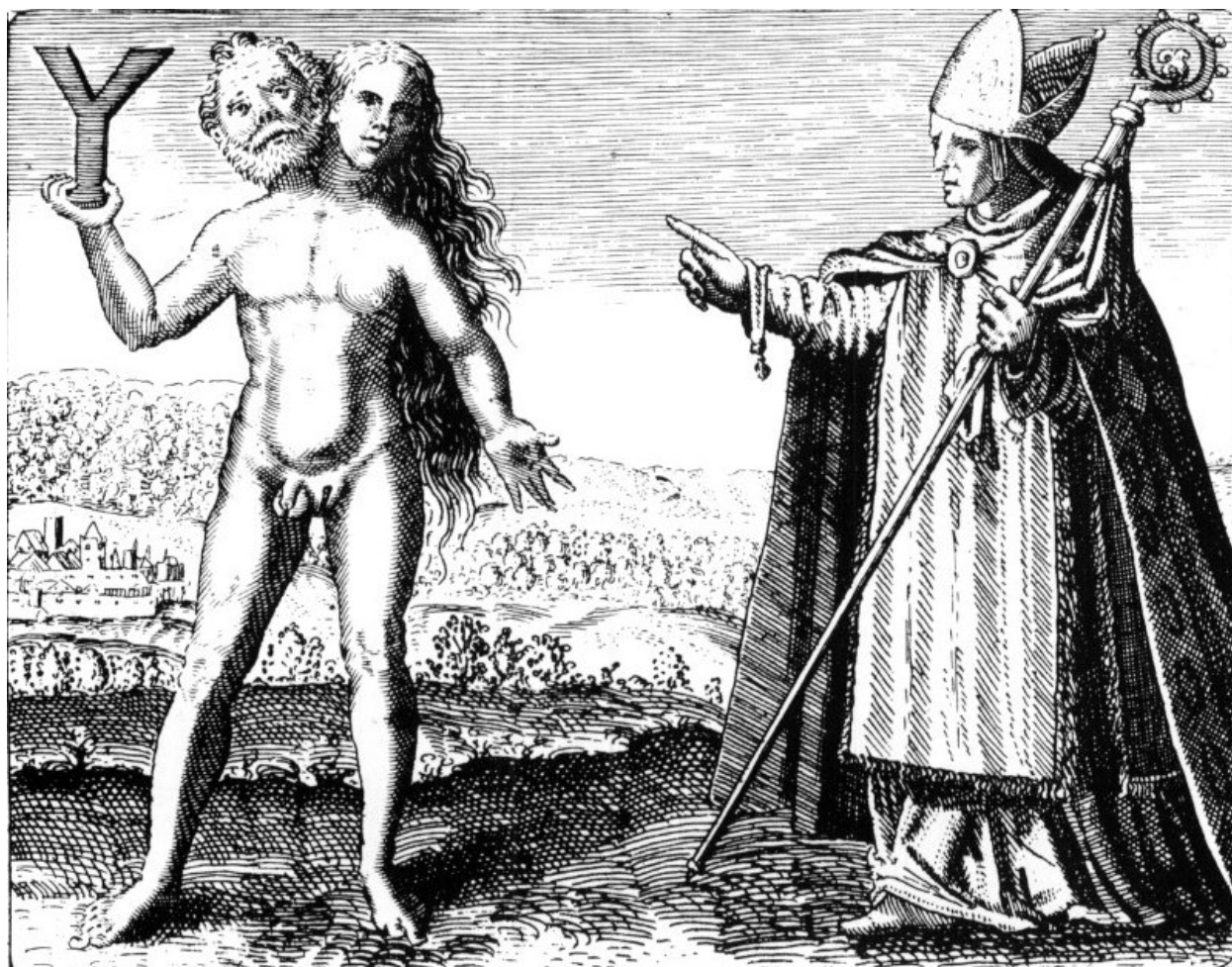
May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom!



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PRACTICAL APPLICATION



This is a representation of the androgyne, from the book *Symbola Aureae* by Michael Maier (1568-1622) who was a member of the Rosicrucian Fraternity.

SUMMARY

After carefully studying this monograph, read the following summary. It contains the major points that you may want to reflect and meditate on during the coming days. If you have trouble understanding one of the points, return to the explanations given in the monograph. Immerse yourself in learning the points covered in this summary before proceeding with the study of the next monograph.

- An androgyne is literally a man-woman, or in other words a being that is both male and female.
- According to Plato, in the beginning the Earth was inhabited by androgynes and humanity comes from their division into two beings.
- In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the notion of androgyny is evoked in *Genesis*, where it is said: “*So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*”
- Many Christian authors have presented Adam as an androgynous being and they saw in the Fall of Humanity the moment when Adam was separated into two, giving birth to man and woman.
- The concept of androgyny is more present in the writings of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin than in the writings of Martinès de Pasqually. The reason for this is that Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin was made aware of this concept through the books of his second master, Jacob Boehme.
- According to Jacob Boehme, the separation of the androgynous Adam into two beings was intended to prevent his definitive loss. He located this separation before the episode of the forbidden fruit, which is generally considered to mark the Adamic Fall.
- According to Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, the primary consequence of the loss of androgyny was that humans became incapable of creating beings or of producing offspring alone.
- The ability to think is the only means for people to establish connections among themselves, to recover the unity that existed among all beings at the origin of Creation, and to recreate the spirit of the original Adam.
- Applied to human beings, this myth symbolizes the rupture of our inner unity, that is, the loss of harmony that once existed between our divine nature and our terrestrial nature.

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