



Presence and History

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When Guénon speaks about modernity, he does it in the most accessible way for the western mentality. The spatial-temporal setting, thus the geographical-historical one, is used as a support meant to facilitate, for a materialistic mentality, the understanding of much higher orders of reality which are situated, by comparison with the corporeal applications just mentioned above, on the position of their principles. It is obvious that Guénon's considerations are not founded on a horizontal description, similar to the one used by historians or by philosophers of history, but they proceed from realities of a traditional, thus metaphysical and initiatory order, or in other words, his considerations have a profound vertical and transcendental origin and impetus.

And from this point of view – which is the only legitimate one when it comes to reading and understanding a traditional text or such an oral conveyance – the immediate application of this transcendence to the individual domain is the *psyche*, as the defining individual component *par excellence*. Thus, the consciousness of sequence – which necessarily translates the consciousness of becoming – is nothing else, in itself, but the actual expression of a possibility of manifestation. In other words, it is not the Spirit the one conditioned by history but history is the one conditioned by the Spirit. Nevertheless, this consideration is a truth found by applying the metaphysical doctrine of the multiple states of the being, a doctrine which is unequivocal in what concerns the degree of reality of each world. Each world is the manifestation of the possibilities contained within the Universal Consciousness (Chit), and all existence is the actualization of those possibilities.

Therefore, that which befalls is not from man but through man. And so, the *medium* role played by the human individual can be transformed into source by blocking the channel that is producing the illusory appearance of alterity, activating thus within the power of realizing the Identity.

The harmonization of the *outer* with the *inner* is the actualization of the alchemical *Rebis*, by the union of the feminine with the masculine. Such operation leads to the exit from history. All traditional cosmological sciences have as goal the psychic regeneration. The traditional psychology is the alchemy. Its precise goal is the restoration of the Androgynous being. So, the *materia prima* with which one should operate is not *soma*, and this must be underlined in order to avoid any confusion regarding the level on which the cosmological wedding operates.

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In connection with the above discourse, we believe it would be opportune to relate to *Diotima's Gnosis*. The devotional way is not really distinct from knowledge. Love, eventually, cannot be distinct from gnosis, but in its most external aspects that are exclusively limited to the instinctive animal domain. As a vehicle for the Knowledge of Unity, love is the Divine Woman, Mother of God and of men, *Shakti* and *Maya*. She is the one mediating between God and man.

To beget humanly, thus to conceive from psyche and flesh is a symbol of divine mercy. The infant symbolizes the fruit of Union (*Yoga*). For man, dressing his external part, which is the woman, and thus realizing the individual center, begets just like his Principle – from himself – a psycho-somatic compound pure and androgynous,¹ which is the direct reflection of Being within manifestation, at the central point of that particular state. In reality, every new-born child is an image of the *avatāra*. Consequently, the union between man and woman has as goal the restoration of the primordial unity, the reintegration in the centre, be it here the psychic heart or the metaphysical heart, for from the present humanity's point of view they appear to be indistinct.

The intellectual *eros*, which is rigorously the transcendental Intellect (*buddhi*), reflects within the individual domain in the form of the erotic sympathy, with all its various modes that, when sublimated, return to its original transcendental identity. Within the individual domain, we can speak of a horizontal *eros*, and of a vertical one. The former is binding together the masculine nature, which is a bond called brotherhood or fellowship. The latter is established between the masculine nature and the feminine one. In this last case, the sympathy shown by a man towards a woman bears the name of compassion or mercy, meanwhile that *eros* which is directed from woman towards man is called devotion or worship. Pushing these considerations forward, we find that the masculine nature² cannot be an *eros* devotee but only in regards with the transcendental, in rest he is not bound to anything but by his own will, which horizontally is called altruism, and on the inferior vertical, mercifulness. What we are witnessing in our times is not so much an emancipation of the feminine nature, for actually such a thing is properly impossible, but a progressive emasculation of man. Obviously, these considerations must be understood as targeting mainly the psychic domain and only subsequently, as a logical consequence, the socio-cultural and the somatic level.

The masculine and the feminine natures are double-conditioned: on the one hand there is the ancestral heredity which goes back in time up on the chain of the ancestors, and on the other hand there is the individual's own and unique qualitative nature. These two psychosomatic conditionings bear in the Hindu tradition the name of *gotrika*, respectively *nāmika*. Thus, the fact that a masculine nature may also be possessed by a woman, and a feminine nature by a man, is not only possible but it is as actual as it can be. And there is no anomaly in this, because what we speak here is something which a traditional society is very much aware of.

¹ It is a known fact that within the first months of pregnancy, the sex of the infant is uncertain. Moreover, the new born child really lies in the same place with the psychic-regenerated one – thus with the one that passed through the first initiatory death.

² A masculine nature could also be represented by a woman if she is regarded in relation with a man belonging to an inferior caste. If we take as example the case of a *brāhmaṇa* woman, then she possesses a masculine nature in relation with all the men from the lesser castes. The *brāhmaṇa* woman reveals her feminine nature only in front of the *brāhmaṇa* male, who is the only human being not subdued by the individual woman, being the paragon of the masculine nature par excellence. The *brāhmaṇa* male has a feminine nature only in relation with the transcendental. We should also note that the *brāhmaṇa* woman is the nearest reflection of *Shākta* on this plane, while the *śūdra* woman is in close proximity to *Prakṛiti*.

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From such a perspective, one would never compare, for instance, a *brāhmaṇa* woman with a *śūdra* man, the former having, in relation with the latter, a masculine nature. Even though on the somatic level things are as they appear, on a psychic level, a *śūdra* male is feminine in relation with the *brāhmaṇa* woman.

As an individual's degree of intelligence is higher, so the natural hierarchization of society appears with more clarity. For never a *brāhmaṇa*, whether male or female, shall find something worth of his or her interest or desire within the inferior castes. Such an individual could only offer them the sympathy of mercifulness, while his whole passion being directed towards that which exceeds him. However, on the other hand, it is obvious that a *śūdra* male could truly and completely be in love with a *brāhmaṇa* woman, but this, although constitutes for him the object of his complete devotion and worship, is only all that he can enfold with his power, and this only represents a very small part of the desired being. This is why a revolt shall never result in an ontological escalation but in the forced and violent captivity of the superior, and in the artificial emancipation of impotency.