

CHAPTER VII

A TIME OF WHOLENESS

THE PRINCIPLE OF GENDER



Gender is in everything; everything has its Masculine and Feminine Principles; Gender manifests on all planes.

– *The Kybalion*

In Leopold Tyrmand's *Dziennik 1954*, a night at a ball becomes a study in mixed motives. Bogna's companionship eases the narrator's fatigue and pleases his vanity, yet he keeps examining her tenderness for signs of calculation. His account reveals his own expectations as much as it describes her behavior. What appears to him as a performance may also contain affection, vulnerability, or hopes he cannot fully know.

The scene brings us to a question about relationship: how do we meet another person without reducing them to the role we want them to play? Attraction can bring people close while leaving their intentions far apart. This particular encounter offers a point of departure for reflection, not a universal account of women and men.

– An introductory reflection on the supplied passage from Leopold Tyrmand's *Dziennik 1954*, not a direct quotation.¹

– ● –

The last of the seven principles brings us to generation, renewal, and the joining of what Hermetic language calls masculine and feminine aspects. Our final journey enters A Time of Wholeness. In the original English *Kybalion*, the principle is called Gender:

Gender is in everything; everything has its Masculine and Feminine Principles; Gender manifests on all planes.

The claim belongs to the book's metaphysical vocabulary. It should not be mistaken for a biological statement that every object has a sex, or for a complete account of contemporary gender identity.

At first the principle may seem redundant. Have we not already examined relationship, polarity, and rhythm? Why add gender? Does the final principle reduce creation to sexual reproduction, or does it attempt to crown the whole structure with an account of how something new emerges? Does it belong at the top of the ladder or at its base?

Or somewhere between?

One way to read it is as a closing bracket that returns us to the beginning. It asks about creation and renewal together: not only how a form arises, but how it persists, changes, and gives rise to another. Biological reproduction becomes one example within a much wider symbolic inquiry.

The principle offers a philosophical response to Leibniz's question about why there is something rather than nothing. It does not conclusively answer that question, but places Polarity, Rhythm, and Cause and Effect within a story of emergence.

Imagine walking through the dreams of a Universal Mind while watching the dream take form. That is the imaginative setting for this chapter. I hope what we find will be at least a little less entangled than the human relationship Tyrmand describes.

TWO POWERS

In Hermetic symbolism, masculine and feminine name archetypal powers rather than two kinds of person. Their interplay is imagined as productive: differentiation and combination, initiative and receptivity, the emergence of forms that cannot remain

unchanged forever. The attribution of these processes to two universal powers is a metaphysical proposal, not an observed physical classification.

The vocabulary connects generation with making and bringing forth. *The Kybalion* uses gender more broadly than sex, emphasizing an active and a receptive aspect in creation. The Latin family of words around *genus* and *generare* helps explain that historical usage. Modern English also uses gender in other ways, which makes it especially important not to slide between meanings unnoticed.

We have many words for contrasts: birth and death, light and darkness, positive and negative charge, waking and dreaming, perception and intuition, thought and feeling. They name different kinds of relationship. Their variety invites a symbolic comparison while resisting reduction to a single pair of forces.

The seventh principle invites a comparison among these contrasts. Its value depends on what the comparison reveals, not on declaring them literally identical.

THE RIDDLE OF CREATION

Generation provides our route through A Time of Wholeness.

The route unfolds in time because creation is a process. Within the Hermetic picture, a form appears through relations among contrasting tendencies. Physical examples have their own explanations: pressure and gravity shape a star's equilibrium; the strong nuclear interaction binds nuclei against electrical repulsion among protons; matter and dark energy play different roles in cosmological models. Reproduction likewise takes many forms, including

asexual ones. Calling these relationships masculine and feminine is an added symbolic reading, not their physical cause.

One historical scheme calls matter and receptivity feminine, and form, initiative, or ordering principle masculine. It associates earth and water with one side, fire and air with the other. These assignments vary across traditions and should not become prescriptions for women and men. Matter is not inert simply because a metaphor calls it passive; laws are not male. The human interest lies in a tension we recognize: reaching toward relationship while retaining a distinct existence.

The symbolic story can begin with a primal unity divided and seeking reunion. Between the separated aspects appears something else: desire, longing, a need for contact.

Relationships then become as important as the things related. The world takes shape through encounters, exchanges, and constraints rather than through isolated ingredients alone.

In this philosophical sense, I call the movement toward relationship love. The word reaches beyond sexual attraction to affection, friendship, care, and the willingness to sustain another life. This does not make love a newly discovered fundamental force of physics, or restrict it to heterosexual pairings. It gives our journey a human vocabulary for connection. We will begin with the history of life, look inward toward thought, and finally make a speculative leap toward the end—and perhaps another beginning—of the universe.