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THEORY AND CRITICISM OF LITERATURE AND ARTS

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Introduction

Can God be measured? And if so, how?

In Pythagorean mathematics, Unity possesses an internal duality : it is both even and odd. This concept represents a form of dualism where Unity reflects both order and complexity.

Unity is not considered a number; it is the fundamental principle, the archetype from which all numbers derive.

The number 1 represents the very principle of numbers and does not have a specific position, unlike the concept of a Point, which has a position in space. For Pythagoreans, the Point was described as a Unity with a specific position.

Pythagoreans regarded this Unity as both male and female, both even and odd because it represents the seed of all things and encompasses the rational principles artisan and artifact. In other words, it is perfect in itself, without beginning or end, and is the cause of balance and stability.

Pythagoreans affirmed that Unity is simultaneously even and odd, participating in both even and odd numbers. When added to any number, it transforms it, making even numbers odd and *vice versa*.

The irreducible One has a dual nature, manifesting passively and actively, and it is in this dualism that the mystery of numbers resides. To verify this postulate, let's consider how the Fibonacci sequence starts and how adding one to two yields an odd number.

It is essential to note that this nature is not androgynous, meaning the two natures exist only potentially and not yet explicitly.

In the view of the Neoplatonic philosopher Iamblichus of Chalcis, God is 1 because God is the source of all natural things, just as 1 is the source of all numbers, and within this Unity, all potentialities are inherently contained. Just as nothing can exist without 1, no act of knowledge can manifest without it.

Like God, according to the three monotheistic religions, even the number 1 generates itself, and is generated by itself.

The One, as the Irreducible Unique Cause, is recognized as Two due to this dual nature. In other words, a new unit is added to the original Unity, giving rise to the concept of Two.

Any other form of unity, according to this perspective, is considered only an apparent form, and its existence results from a distinction made within the Monad itself. The Monad, or the One, dwells in isolation and silence. Pythagoreans taught that Unity, being indivisible, cannot be considered a number in the traditional sense.

God's creation of humanity and God's sex

Genesis 1:26-27 is a significant passage in the Bible that describes God's creation of humanity. It is found in the Book of Genesis, which is the first book of the Old Testament in the Christian Bible and is also a part of the Torah in the Jewish Bible. This passage reads as follows:

<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדִמוֹתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בְדִגְתַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׁ עַל הָאָרֶץ. וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם.</p>	<p>Then God said, "Let us make man [adam] in our image, after our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male [zakhar]-female [nekeivah] He created them."</p>
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Given that the term "adam" אָדָם is introduced for the first time in the Bible in this passage, there is no prior context to insist that it exclusively signifies a male individual. In fact, the phrase "male and female He created them" can be understood as an explanation of the true nature of this "adam." In Hebrew, "adamah" (אֲדָמָה) is a feminine form, and is often translated as "ground" or "earth." This term's etymological connection with "adam" is significant and serves to strengthen the purposeful link between humanity and the earth, emphasizing their origin from the "dust of the ground," as narrated in the Genesis creation story.

In light of this, several rabbinic texts have preserved a potentially widespread interpretation of Genesis 1:26-27, suggesting that the initial human being might have encompassed both genders.

The passage explicitly affirms that God fashioned humanity in His own image, encompassing both males and females. This has been construed as an endorsement of gender equality within God's divine plan.

In Judaism, while the Tanakh employs masculine imagery and grammatical forms to refer to God, traditional Jewish philosophy avoids attributing a specific gender to God. However, in certain instances, Jewish aggadic literature and Jewish mysticism explore the idea of a gendered God.

It's worth noting that certain thinkers have advanced the notion that the four letters comprising God's name, YHWH, may be seen as a cryptogram.

In this interpretation, ancient Israelite priests might have reversed these letters to form *huhi* (he-she) which suggests a dual-gendered deity. This concept intriguingly parallels the mathematical notion we discussed earlier, where the One, as the Irreducible Unique Cause, is acknowledged as Two due to its inherent dual nature.

In the world of art and spirituality, symbolism often hides in plain sight, inviting us to delve deeper into the layers of meaning within a single image. One such captivating masterpiece is Bourgot Le Noir's famous illumination depicting the *Vagina Christi* (Fig. 1, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloisters Collection, fol. 331r, *Prayer Book of Bonne of Luxembourg*).

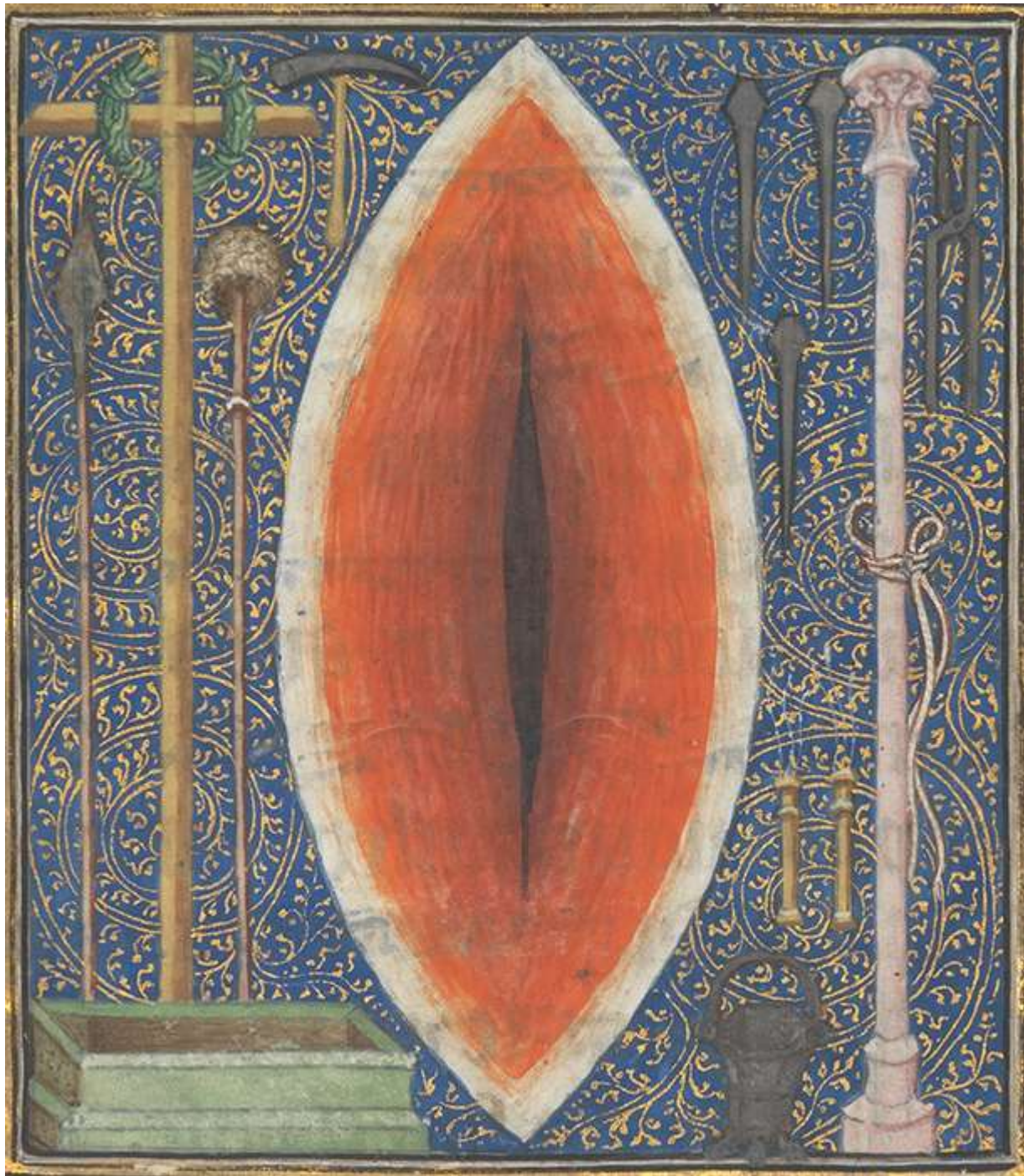


Fig. 1. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloisters Collection, fol. 331r, *Prayer Book of Bonne of Luxembourg*

The Vagina Christi: A Symbol of Divine Femininity

At its core, the Vagina Christi represents the divine feminine aspect of Christ(ianity). This symbol signifies the “womb of creation”, nurturing life and spiritual rebirth. In this

sacred image, we see the fusion of spirituality and femininity, underscoring the essential role of the feminine within the divine. Just as physical birth is associated with the maternal womb, spiritual birth is linked to the idea of being born into a new life through Christ's redemptive sacrifice.

During the conference on the topic of intersexuality in images during the Middle Ages, recently held in Lugano at the Receptio Center,¹ I had noticed how in the background of this famous image of the *Vagina Christi*, the illuminator Bourgot le Noir² had depicted six spirals that I immediately associated with the well-known Fibonacci sequence.

Clearly, the number six in this context is not coincidental, it is linked to the six days of creation in the Book of Genesis, where God created the world and all living creatures. It can symbolizes the act of creation itself.

As even the humanists are aware, the Fibonacci sequence, a mathematical phenomenon discovered by Leonardo of Pisa (Fibonacci),³ reveals a profound connection between mathematics and nature. It begins with 1, with each subsequent number being the sum of the two preceding ones (1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, and so on). This sequence forms the foundation of the Fibonacci spiral.

Beyond the meanings ascribed to the spiral by psychoanalysis (I am thinking in particular of Jung's idea of the reinvigoration of life as well as the process of individuation through which the Ego learns to revolve around the Self, I am not suggesting here that Bourgot le Noir was familiar with Fibonacci's work, but simply that she knew the symbolism, found in artworks and many illuminated manuscripts, of the spiral.

¹ This article was written before Peter Kidd, a freelance consultant for auction houses evidently involved in questionable dealings, launched a highly suspicious hate campaign against the center and its founder on Twitter. Prof. Rossi had exposed a lobby of biblioclasts making money by dismantling medieval manuscripts and selling their pages.

² To attribute this miniature solely to Bourgot is a convention. In reality, in this case too, we can speak of duality, as it is impossible to distinguish the hand of the illuminator from that of her father.

³ Leonardo of Pisa, commonly known as Fibonacci, was an Italian mathematician who lived during the Middle Ages. He was born around 1170 and is best known for introducing the Western world to the Hindu-Arabic numeral system, including the use of the digit zero. His most famous work is the *Liber Abaci*, published in 1202, which explained the decimal number system and demonstrated its practical applications in various mathematical and commercial contexts.

The spiral represents both masculine and feminine energies seeking integration and balance, as well as the passage of time allowing night to dissolve into day and day into night. It also symbolizes the alternation between existence on visible and invisible planes (creation and destruction, birth and death, etc.), which always resolves into rebirth.

Now, let's connect the dots. Within Bourgot Le Noir's illumination, we find the *Vagina Christi* surrounded by six spirals (to draw these shapes, the illuminator did not use a compass: the spirals are not exactly the same size), which represent continuous renewal, and the cyclical nature of faith.

In Christian culture, this can be linked to the concept of spiritual rebirth or being "born again" in Christ. Just as a spiral expands outward, the Christian journey is seen as an ongoing process of deepening one's faith, evolving spiritually, and moving closer to God. The concept of continuous renewal and spiritual growth represented by spirals can be expressed using a general logarithmic spiral formula:

$$R(\theta) = a * e^{(b\theta)}$$

$R(\theta)$ represents the distance from the origin to a point on the spiral at angle θ .

'a' determines the initial distance from the origin (the size of the starting spiral).

'b' controls the rate of growth or expansion of the spiral.

In this context, as θ increases, the spiral expands outward (a form of growth), symbolizing the ongoing deepening of faith and spiritual evolution. The spirals and their representation of growth and evolution, as well as the divine feminine's nurturing aspect, suggest a profound dual-gendered concept of divinity. This means that within the divine, there is a balance of both feminine and masculine energies that coexist and intertwine.

Just as the Fibonacci sequence emerges from the fusion of 1 and 2, the divine unity transcends gender and reflects the concept of God as both genders.

Now, let's integrate both the idea of divinity as the sum of various elements ($D = \sum (E_i)$), the balanced dual-gendered aspect of divinity ($D = (F + M) / 2$), and the concept of spirals for growth ($R(\theta)$):

$$D = \sum (E_i) = (F + M) / 2 * R(\theta)$$

In this combined equation:

'D' represents divinity as a sum of various elements, encompassing both feminine ('F') and masculine ('M') aspects.

'R(θ)' symbolizes the spiritual growth represented by the spiral, which is influenced by and connected to divinity.

The equation signifies that divinity, as the sum of its elements, plays a central role in guiding and influencing the ongoing spiritual growth and evolution represented by the spiral. The balance of feminine and masculine aspects within divinity contributes to this growth.

A unified equation which emphasizes that the spiritual growth and evolution (R(θ)) is intrinsically linked to and influenced by the multifaceted nature of divinity (D) as represented by the summation of its elements ($\sum (E_i)$) and the balanced interplay of feminine and masculine qualities within divinity:

$$D * R(\theta) = (\sum (E_i)) * R(\theta) = ((F + M) / 2) * R(\theta)$$