

Reflection on Man and Woman: Married by Complex Love and Mystical Spouses of Creation

*Reflexão sobre o homem e a mulher:
Casados por amor complexo e cônjuges místicos da criação*

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Abstract: The difficulty of a relationship arises from the paradox of not considering a bond to be continuous, because the interruption, the fracture up to the gateway of what instead unites, is a seemingly inalienable, unbreakable, and dutiful condition between a man and a woman when they marry. One wonders why the dimension that unites so as not to separate, in a “necklace of precious promises,” immediately goes *together with* the condition that suffers the loss of hope and joy, leaving only the emergence of “premises,” almost warnings that at a moment, indeterminate, demand their redemption. One often hears it asserted, in an *undue* reference of conceit and vanity, that “promise is debt”; rather a promise is anything but a debt, it is instead a mutual *credit* by which the power of joy and the light of the beginning is revived, a beginning that then continues in time not spoiling itself, but relocating itself in form and species, perforce, new, just like the light of the dawn that is feeble yet astonishing without being magniloquent, because it reduces the darkness of night to a distant memory, which even seems impossible to us.

Keywords: Man. Woman. Marriage. Love. Mystical. Creation.

Resumo: A dificuldade de um relacionamento surge do paradoxo de

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não considerar um vínculo como contínuo, porque a interrupção, a fratura até o entroncamento, é uma condição aparentemente inalienável, inquebrável e obediente entre um homem e uma mulher quando eles se casam. Perguntamo-nos por que a dimensão que une para não separar, em um “colar de promessas preciosas”, vai imediatamente junto com a condição que sofre a perda da esperança e da alegria, deixando apenas o surgimento de “premissas”, quase advertências que em um momento, indeterminado, exigem sua redenção. Um de dez ouve afirmar, em uma referência indevida de vaidade e vaidade, que “promessa é dívida”; antes uma promessa é tudo menos uma dívida, é antes um crédito mútuo pelo qual o poder da alegria e a luz do início são revividos, um começo que então continua no tempo não se estragando, mas se deslocando na forma e na espécie, forçosamente, nova, assim como a luz do amanhecer que é fraca mas surpreendente sem ser magniloquente, porque reduz a escuridão da noite a uma memória distante, o que até nos parece impossível.

Palavras-chave: Homem. Mulher. Casamento. Amor. Místico. Criação.

The final confrontation between the Lord and Satan's kingdom will be over the family and marriage

Sister Lucia dos Santos

Introduction

Question: There is a prophecy of Sister Lucia dos Santos, the Fatima seer whose beatification process began on February 13, which is about “the final clash between the Lord and Satan’s kingdom.” And the battleground is the family. Life and family. Not everyone knows that she was commissioned by John Paul II to conceive and found the Pontifical Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family which today bears her name.

Cardinal Carlo Caffarra: Yes. At the beginning of this work entrusted to me by the Servant of God John Paul II, I wrote to Sister Lucia of Fatima, through the bishop because directly it could not

be done. Inexplicably, although I did not expect a reply, because I was only asking for prayers, I received after a few days a very long handwritten letter - now in the Institute's archives - in which it is written: the final clash between the Lord and the kingdom of Satan will be over the family and marriage. Do not be afraid, he added, because anyone who works for the sanctity of marriage and the family will always be fought and opposed in all ways, because this is the decisive point. And then he concluded: but Our Lady has already crushed his head. One could sense, even when talking with John Paul II, that this was the knot, because you touch the backbone of creation, the truth of the relationship between man and woman and between generations. If you touch the pillar the whole edifice collapses, and we see this now, because we are at this point, and we know it¹.

I In front of the beginning

1. The difficulty of a relationship arises from the paradox of not considering a bond to be continuous, because the interruption, the fracture up to the gateway of what instead unites, is a seemingly inalienable, unbreakable, and dutiful condition between a man and a woman when they marry. One wonders why the dimension that unites so as not to separate, in a “necklace of precious promises,” immediately goes *together with* the condition that suffers the loss of hope and joy, leaving only the emergence of “premises,” almost warnings that at a moment, indeterminate, demand their redemption. One often hears it asserted, in an *undue* reference of conceit and vanity, that “promise is debt”; rather a promise is anything but a debt, it is instead a mutual *credit* by which the power of joy and the light of the beginning is revived, a beginning that then continues in time not spoiling itself, but relocating itself in form and species, perforce, new, just like the light of the dawn that is feeble yet astonishing without being magniloquent, because it reduces the darkness of night to a distant memory, which even seems impossible to us. And that light that ripens in the hours then revives at sunset to fade away at the moment when darkness comes to console and bring refreshment, leaving the eyes to rest in the same way as the grain

¹ June 18, 2015 interview with Cardinal Carlo Caffarra, now at <https://chiesaepostconcilio.blogspot.com/2015/06/il-cardinal-caffarra>

of wheat that falls to the ground gives up to a hundred times as much when it dies².

2. Therefore, it is the inevitability of the discarded condition that strengthens the bond, proving in its stability: “For with fire is gold tried, and men well accepted in the crucible of sorrow” (*Sir*, 2, 5). It can be argued that it is the darkness that leaves us longing for the light in its flow and expectation on our part, as if darkness is necessary for the body and spirit to regenerate and refresh itself at the radiance of the light, at the same time, in fact, the colors and the chiming of a new day, a new hope emerges; likewise, it can be said that it is the wind that shakes the flame of our life, letting it burn at the plexus of existence in the certainty that it will not be extinguished as much as we were promised at the beginning: “Life is a flame continually shaken by a rushing wind, and it will be extinguished when the wind has ceased to blow.”³

And when will the wind stop blowing?

When will the alternations of day and night cease?

3. This happens when one lets one’s promise depend on additions and afterthoughts that stand and premise vis-à-vis life, oneself, and others, no longer considering that light finds relief and refreshment in

2 *Jn.* 12:24; *1 Cor.* 15:37-49, where St. Paul says, “And God gives him a body as he has appointed, and to each seed his own body. Not all flesh is the same flesh; other is the flesh of men and other that of animals; other that of birds and other that of fish. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but other is the splendor of heavenly bodies, and other that of earthly bodies. Other is the splendor of the sun, other the splendor of the moon, and other the splendor of the stars: for each star differs from another in splendor. (...) If there is an animal body, there is also a spiritual body, for it is written that the first *man*, Adam, *became a living being*, but the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. There was not first the spiritual body, but the animal body, and then the spiritual. The first man drawn from the earth is of earth, the second man is from heaven. What man is made of earth, so are those of earth; but what the heavenly, so are the heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of earth, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. St. Josemaria Escriva in *Christ Is Passing By*, 3, 23, says: “For a Christian marriage is not just a social institution, much less a mere remedy for human weakness. It is a real supernatural calling. A great sacrament, in Christ and in the Church, says St Paul. At the same time, it is a permanent contract between a man and a woman. Whether we like it or not, the sacrament of matrimony, instituted by Christ, cannot be dissolved. It is a permanent contract that sanctifies in cooperation with Jesus Christ. He fills the souls of husband and wife and invites them to follow him. He transforms their whole married life into an occasion for God’s presence on earth. Husband and wife are called to sanctify their married life and to sanctify themselves in it. It would be a serious mistake if they were to exclude family life from their spiritual development. The marriage union, the care and education of children, the effort to provide for the needs of the family as well as for its security and development, the relationships with other persons who make up the community, all these are among the ordinary human situations that christian couples are called upon to sanctify”.

3 Thus a famous Buddhist proverb.

darkness, but darkness nothing can beyond those certain hours, like the pain that ascertains the presence of a stitched wound or is alarmed by it. The same pain, however, could do nothing beyond: one does *not die of pain*; one dies instead of neglect and vanity in regard to pain. A gateway from itself, when the wind no longer blows, when squandering and consumption bind and enthrall until it can no longer glean from the pleasantness of an event just being that an...event. The routinization of joys in fact content, and causes these to turn into repetitiveness and finally into affliction, offering no more that repetitiveness than a usual turn to the noria of lonely weariness, no more pervaded by the touch of surprise, not at all shared, that unexpected cut of brightness that makes life unusual in its lightness and beauty.

Then again, what would become of beauty if it were not a surprise?

II Dwelling on the beauty

4. Joseph Haydn in his famous *Symphony No. 94*, in G major, from 1791, celebrates the beauty of the composition with a twist: halfway through the second movement, an *Andante* in C major, something happens that was unusual for the time, suddenly, without anyone expecting it: a very loud kettledrum blast bursts in, giving new vigor to the whole and unexpected joy in the listener. It is a play, an awakening, a breath of that wind that revives time and the flame of life, it is Beauty that smells new. This happens between two spouses in the *unexpectedness* that joy always brings: for getting used to the fate of the orderly and the measured entails a debasement of the initial fragrance, only a sharp blow of the eardrum, rather, awakens to the joy of the whole and to that Beauty to which there is no boring habit, but always newness.

Therefore, bond and tie alternate in the semantics of *complex love that does not stipulate* affections, but closes the illusoriness of relational evanescence and opens to the reality of completion of parts, not at all theoretical, rather placed in the margin of a union that reinforces what is opposite and that precisely by virtue of this opposition finds legitimacy in time, a sigh in the space of different mutual action, integrating what in-itself and for-itself could only be separate. Beauty, however, *composes a* multiplicity of aspects and *is*

composed of a whole plurality of events that cannot be identified in the immediate, gathering the varied experience of life, always waiting for a different possibility to constantly continue to be specific and essential: precisely that encounter between a man and a woman as parts of a singular story that in the determined junction of diversity and differences becomes unique story, specific and unrepeatable event, exactly story analogous to beauty always unequal to those who perceive it from the outside, provoking different evocations in each one, so that it evolves different and in that surprising, incessantly without interruption, continue to amaze us and make us part of it.

5. In the marriage bond that in fact captivates in amazement, the altercation brought about by a natural difference in roles causes regeneration of mutual aspects and a rescaling of initial positions, the result of a casual, unsuspected acquaintance that is contemplated over the years as the immediacy of an exchange of emotional and characterful, rational and vital singularities.

Through such peculiarities, we come to recognize from reality the solution to the unexpected, to the uncertain, precisely as the development of a mutual rediscovery at once new, and renewed especially by the difficulty of the imponderable. Such a condition to which we are remitted and which involves the spouses, disrupting what is given for immutable behind which one hides one's own inadequacy, can be a sign of one's own burgeoning: it is as if one pretended that Haydnian symphony should not *surprise* however unexpected, but simply should reassure the listener to a perpetuated model without new evocations and creative stimuli.

It is in this that tradition dies when it no longer produces transformation: Beauty itself debases if expected; it disappoints if modeled, because like life it is not a copy, nor a mimeograph, nor a labored and artificial reproduction, boasted then vital and real. It may be, but it will not have been desired in the bond of belonging of two diversities, man and woman, contemplating their course of beauty and mutually completing a defense to the uncertain without extending the present moment not being the man in challenge with the past, in competition with the present or in competition with the future.

Rather, man perfects himself by coping with eventuality as opposed to the unchanging given, a characteristic that is self-constructed as an improper defense to his survival.

III From the outside of complex love and within the transient

6. Rather, it is existence, which reserves unhoped-for situations or dimensions of narrowness, that becomes a contemplation of an as-yet unperceived form of the same reality, thus suggesting the marriage and family bond to rise from the difference of roles and the rawness of moments, rediscovering a mysticism of punishment and ecstasy of daily scans in which the apparent repetition lets one reflect how nothing is a copy clouded by *quotidianism*, but a tradition that transforms and revives without satisfying itself in the obvious and satisfying itself to an indifferent uniformity.

In the beauty of *complex love*, that between spouses, no habit is contemplated, but creative dissimilarity is perceived, although days may appear to be deduced from custom. But it is actually the beauty of the apparent banality that brings us to life and the incisiveness of an uncaught detail, and now the new narrative of the everyday, that allows us to become in that same tradition, making the *complex love*, that of the bride and groom, ever recent.

After all, why does one often listen to the same piece of music? Why would one never finish admiring a work of art? Precisely to contemplate its unperceived relevance, but also to enjoy the same thing again and again: the *complex love* of the spouses always lives and revives the same apparent everydayness, and the people are always the same, sometimes they become more unpleasant, of the others carve of an unknown detail the time of day, and it would never be possible to say that it is the same person in that it is still she to him, and he to her.

7. The perception, therefore, of reality as a direct consequence of a mutually completing action that rises from every alter, or alternate, makes one aware that no beauty would make sense if it were not the same, but loved differently each time and repeatedly heard. In all of this, man and woman can establish a bond that from their concrete everyday being addresses the universal transcendent, a moment of unity between them: between the spouses, in fact, there is not only life bound to a time, rather there exists and acts the very life of Christ, that is, the creation of man and woman, the transformation of nature and the beauty of what is always different in its specific presence as a new being.

And Beauty can also come from the sharp blow of fate and the alternation of fate, from what we glimpse to be unexpectedly difficult and insurmountable, just like the night compared to the fading day. The bond, however, between man and woman, spouses in their time, in their bodies, is not extinguished until each of them sees in the other the completion of his or her action in the world, that *flow of life* that invades and perfects themselves as primary cognition, each aware that the attainment of serenity comes from the becoming unceasing sense of a *surprise*, that of Beauty unveiled and rediscovered as mutual, unexpectedly and inevitably, in her and in him.

New source from the same source.

8. Even the beauty of God, in the humanity of Christ, was different and will always be new to us, unexpected discoveries that knit together precisely the varied novelty of events in our existence. Already all this constitutes mysticism, that is, contemplation, of *complex love* and its constant transformation. In Ryūichi Sakamoto's piano piece, *A flower is not a flower* (2009), built on the Debussian model of the prelude, touching and poignant, one would say one hears repeatedly the same melody, alternating according to a different timbral and harmonic order and then varying considerably melodically. That seemingly same flower, that is, those same notes, however, *is not always* the same flower, rather each time something else while identified as a flower, but different in the eyes of the lover.

The spouse we know and re-know is identical to himself/herself, but continuously different because he/she is maturing with us, is changing in the other spouse, mutually in him/her, thus alternating a mutual beauty that becomes a mutual and passionate search for new moments and paths of life⁴. Therefore, what comes out of it, an effect, but not only a suggestion, just an evocation that only music can in its depths make understood, is of an incontrovertible beauty of *complex love*, endowed with few variations, always the same, and yet, despite that, without exception, *unexpectedly and mystically different*.

IV With respect to difference and alternation

9. Such incontrovertible reality makes life in man and woman a continuous encounter of that beginning, of that first meeting of theirs that reverberates through time and is redeemed in the days, in the years, without ever wearing out, lest that initial gesture end in a

4 We highly recommend listening to Sakamoto's piece, easily found on youtube, played by the composer himself on the piano.

lurching subjectivity that only a poignant touch, a consoling embrace and of incitement delimit deep egolatries on which the human soul is likely to feed.

Ugo Borghello says in this regard that in a singular situation of decadence in our time brought about by a stifling of human love by the omnipotence of communication drugged by arrogance and force, by means of which one is able to shout more than any other interlocutor, silencing any contradictory⁵, one easily lapses, in our opinion, into a trial-like unfolding of roles: there is a defense, there is a prosecution, rarely a judge, that is, only an *alternate altercation as an end* in itself.

10. The groom, on the other hand, should show devotion to his bride, and she support for him, relief and comfort in the *complex love* that recognizes the peculiarities of each without leaving them to the chaos of different objective truths but relocating them on a context of natural truth, common to the spouses in which life finds its *raison d'être* without it being squandered among intuitions, suggestions, and devious completions. On the other hand, self-completion is perfected in the other because of specific singularity thus being able to acquire the universality of common and mutual conjugation in *complex love*. Says Ugo Borghello, “Between individualistic subjectivity and an external and moralistic objectivity, there is a need to focus very much on the relational, on that social and love dimension, which substantiates the human person himself.”⁶

11. If, moreover, one wants to reflect on man and woman in the context of Creation, one cannot avoid considering how that love of theirs was torn apart by an ancient suspicion, which crept in with “catastrophic violence”⁷, dividing the fulcrum of Creation and disrupting its arrangement.

5 Ugo BORGHELLO, *The Dream of Love Forever*, Ares, Milan 2007, p. 138.

6 *Ibid.*

7 “The religious man of the Baroque clings so much to the world because he feels dragged along with it toward a cataract. There is no Baroque eschatology; and for that very reason there is a mechanism that collects and exalts everything born on earth, before consigning it to death. The beyond is emptied of everything in which the slightest breath of the world breathes, and to it the baroque draws a series of things that used to evade any formative intervention and, at its climax, exposes them to the light of the world in drastic form, to get rid of one last sky and to place it, as a void, in the state of being able one day to annihilate within itself, with catastrophic violence, the earth,” Walter BENJAMIN, *The German Baroque Drama* (1928), Einaudi, Turin 1980-1999, p. 49.

But Creation was effectively given by God to man and woman so that they themselves would become a mutual and reciprocal gift in God's love and through natural law. If, therefore, the summit and fulfillment of the *fiat was accomplished* in God, in spouses that specific bond is actualized, redeemed on Calvary by Jesus who reassembles the torn pieces of the human heart by restoring the creative act of the Father through his conscious offering of Himself and his life⁸, resurrecting as an actual reality for man and woman, a concrete possibility for them to complete their lives through their spouse in the love and work of Christ re-donated and recreated, a composition offered to us and allowing us constant reflection because of that sacrifice of love for the salvation of the initial *fiat lux*⁹: the sacrifice precisely of Jesus in his *consumatum est*, recomposing the work of God the Father and redeeming that vertigo of creation and fatherly love by consciously offering Jesus his life.

Cardinal Carlo Caffarra, Archbishop of Bologna, in a homily given in Valencia on September 18, 2015, did not fail to emphasize how the family is born within God's creative project and there precisely finds its *raison d'être*. On this aspect, Paul Valéry was right when he argued that "a man alone is always in bad company": the essential quality of man crushed between marginal utilities and relative scarcities, always economic and income, of the contemporary world, can be reborn in that Love that has already taken away with it all forms of loneliness, because it has defeated all forms of death thus raising life by making it an act of transcendence. This is why the love between spouses is born and multiplies life in the capacity and certainty of a Love that unites the lovers, aware that any union would be immediately separation, if the bond of the lovers were not the Beloved: as Msgr. Caffarra makes us understand, one is married in the love of Christ, and the family highlights how the man and woman united in marriage are called to participate in the arising of a human person, in the entry into the universe of being of a new human person. The mission of the family is to cooperate in God's creative action."¹⁰

12. Hence how for every child born, the Word returns each time to become flesh..., precisely because it confirms to us that life bursts

8 *Jn*, 19, 30. See also *Heb*, 1, 3.

9 *Gn*, 1, 3.

10 See www.caffarra.it, report dated September 18, 2015, 1.

forth from lovers in the bond they possess with the Beloved, that is, with Christ and in Him. The freedom is to be in the responsibility of earthly love, complex, but participating in the union between the spouses for Creation, conscious of their hearts with the Love that transcends every act of our lives: only in this case will it be possible to distinguish between a being truly free in the specificity of one's history from any narcissistic phenomenology of death that is dressed up, like a James Ensor mask, in a life that takes on the connotations of constant estrangement from transcendence and from any mystical experience of marriage because it is a family between man and woman and offspring in the context of the creative project. Such a mission, as Archbishop Caffarra adds, is powerfully rooted in God's Providence precisely because it takes on the features of generation-education of a new human person.

The problem was addressed as follows by an Italian physicist: "We Christians, who have come to know the name and face of the One who answers the unquenchable human need, Christ present, have in this education an exceptional responsibility and a fascinating task. Personally, the passion that sustains me in the work of research, and thus the main source of my commitment to it, is the experience – albeit initial – of glimpsing in the beauty and power of the universe, and in the delicacy of its changing, the sign of the hand of the Creator who in every moment makes all things new. And I am sustained by the hope that the work of myself, my collaborators and my students may be a special way given to us to pay homage to the Infinite Mystery, to the Lord of heaven and earth, to repeat with emotion and full consciousness the ancient exclamation of the psalmist: '*How great, O Lord, are your works! All things you have wisely done*' (Ps, 104:24)"¹¹.

V The self-giving of spouses as a transition from complex love. To love mystically conjugated in Creation

13. The Form of Life thus turns toward the hope of love that is formed and constituted in God's Providence, becoming a bond sacrificed in Christ's love, already at the wedding in Cana¹², where

11 Thus Marco BERSANELLI, *The Mystery of the Universe*, in AA. VV., *Young people and the university: bearing witness to Christ in the university environment*, Pontificium Consilium pro Laicis, Rome 2005, p. 149.

12 *Jn.* 2:1-11.

Jesus through the intercession of his Mother saves the wedding feast by turning water into wine. If in fact the child, as Archbishop Caffarra again says, is the fullness of conjugal love, life itself between spouses is not extinguished even in the absence of children, rather it is kindled by a different light of self-giving, participating in and renewing the sacrifice of Creation.

For the beloved Son is fullness of the mystery that binds him to the Mother, becoming herself a maternal gift for all, beloved immaculate and willed detonation of grace to seal the universe in one star, one star: Conception and Conception founding the creation of the family in the reception of the *fiat* in God's Love¹³, for the New Creation in Jesus, because Mary, Mother of Jesus, summit of human beauty and pinnacle of Truth, lived and gathered in her Son, becomes astonishing certainty for the salvation of the conjugal journey lived mystically as a bond created in God's creative plan toward the restoration of the soul to the salvation of reason from its own drowning.

On the other hand, it is meant here to remark, the beauty of this Love, the love of God and God in His being humanly Love, His unprecedented and enchanting preparation, does not descend from heaven like lightning, impressing in the power of any extraordinary event, however still natural; rather it is born of a mother, the Mother, like any human being of this world. And all this happened and ad-came according to the order (*order* understood here as design, not as command) of a divine will announcing the spiritual Incarnation and a historical necessity, without the intervention of a natural conception between man and woman, to be reflected in that event in the Mother

13 "The 'power' of the Spirit covered Mary with its shadow: the virginal conception is not a miracle! And on closer inspection this is observed in the birth of Jesus: for centuries the common faith of Christians and the Fathers held that Mary did not go into labor pains. Today there is much confusion. But without labor pains means that the Resurrection of Mary's Son is anticipated. Mary, as Mother, as Mediatrix of all graces, receives first all that God has reserved for us in the Redemption. In Mary we anticipate the Cross, in her immaculate conception; we anticipate Pentecost, in the virginal conception of her Son; we anticipate the resurrection of bodies, with the Assumption into heaven; and we anticipate the Resurrection, with the virginal birth, without labor: the risen Jesus who enters the cenacle behind closed doors anticipately made Himself present outside of Mary, behind closed doors (virginity not only before and after the birth, but also during the birth, as the dogmatic portent dictates). Ignace de la Potterie points out that Mary immediately wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes, but would not have done so had she been in labor. It is of the utmost importance, in order to understand the *new creation* (italics ours), to believe that Mary did not give birth in labor pains. But it is necessary to enter into a *new world*, worked in power by the Spirit, where one does not have to resort to miracles," see Ugo BORGHELLO, *Knowing about Love*, Ares, Milan 2013, p. 205.

of God, in the Mother of Jesus. Mary remains and is revealed by her Son, Mother of God in the grace of God the Holy Spirit as the apex of human giving and anabatic point of reference for reaching God and loving him because Christ of the Gospels, the fulcrum of all hope and the foundation, in the sense of *Grund*, of all hope of faith, the cusp of love and of all faith in this love

14. There is one moment, among many, told and meditated upon by art that is combined with music and literature to make a meditation of hope on the family, in the marriage between a man and a woman, who met to prolong creation and actualize it, guarding creation.

The outstretched arms, the bustle of merriment and revelation of his divinity and love for us, at the wedding of Cana, are chromatically sculpted by Tintoretto¹⁴ into ensembles of vines, arms that are high to the sky, eagerly outstretched to measure the elongation of vespers, the conjunction of parallax, in that eclipse to the diffuse Gregorian chorus, that still leaves us shelling rosaries, like wheat abandoned in the millstone to the cement of life. An anaphora emerges from the arrangement of the figures: horizontality is suppressed and the light of attention converges to a depth that repeats that initial sudden light, just as if creation perpetuates itself, drawing us too and sucked all the way down to the light of Jesus that cleanses and honors the creatures in a beginning that will have to repeat itself in order to thus be continuous.

In such a way that light comes from the complex love between the spouses is *consciously mutually* determined, because the love of the beginning and in principle given: for creation would have had no meaning if in creation there had not been a bond of earthly love, sworn sacred insofar as it reflected and repeated the *fiat lux* from which everything arose, confirming itself everyday in the repetition of the event of love. And the latter gathers its *raison d'être* in spouses only and by virtue of being spouses in the becoming of creation, married directly through Jesus to the creation of God the Father.

15. Therefore it is never wholly dark between the spouses, as it is not perpetually so between sea lapping the earth and the sky shaving those waves, echo of a cappella chorus, recombination of *lux aeterna* falling from the motion of revolution and succession of Creation,¹⁵ rational mechanics without illusions, as the same life, desired and

14 Cf. TINTORETTO, *Marriage at Cana*, 1561, Basilica of Santa Maria della Salute, Venice.

15 On this meditative passage we refer to György LIGETI's composition, *Lux aeterna* (1966), Dir. H. Franz, Chor des Norddeutschen Rundkunks Hamburg, Deutsche Grammophon 1968. See also Giuseppe FORNARI, *Beauty and Nothingness. The Christian anthropology of Leonardo da Vinci*, Marietti, Genoa-Milan 2005, pp. 316-322.

willed by God, created anew in Christ, who reached out to us to envelop us in the mother-of-pearl refrain of his love, stigmatized in those lines by Tintoretto. And become now the years as memories hand in hand, then, at the genuflecting of darkness, years narrating that beloved hope of ours lest we forget, the depth expressed in that fresco, which finally makes room of the horizontal parade representation, but induces the observer to rush toward the mystery of love, after the shivers of the night together on sandy shores and ravines made of ivory, observing sapphire stones up there, exclamations embedded among milky lunar hums and guitar triplet arpeggios, *ad libitum* for infinite spaces, one might even fill one's evocation with the spinning echo of celestial bodies that conjugate emptiness to silence and movement to duration, once embedded time in the eternity of the orbits of existence now become *one in two*¹⁶.

16. Disrupted, however, in man both order and reason, disordered also the nature of woman, it was possible in a belief in the Life of Christ and his Calvary, to find ourselves reunited and reconnected to Love, lost in an original and daily tractiousness, which had torn apart the Father's Creation, torn apart his Love for us. In this regard, St. Paul tells us, "For the creation waits eagerly for the manifestation of the sons of God; for the creation has been subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but on account of him who subjected it to it, in the hope that the creation itself will also be delivered from the bondage of corruption to enter into the glorious freedom of the sons of God. For we know that until now the whole creation groans and is in travail; not only it, but also we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we have been saved in hope. Now the hope of what is seen, is not hope; in fact, what one sees, why would one still hope for it? But if we hope what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."¹⁷

The Life of Christ reached us so that the bond between man and woman would become in the New Creation, for the salvation of life and for its renewed and recomposed freedom to love. Christ appears on the

16 Cf. PLUTARCUS, *The Face of the Moon*, Adelphi, Milan 1991, p. 55. Cf. ARISTOTELE, *Physics*, edited by Luigi Ruggiu, Mimesis Edizioni, Milan 2007, VIII, 251b, 10-15, p. 321: "Moreover, how is it possible for there to be 'before' and 'after,' without there being time? Or time, without there being movement? If, therefore, time is number of movement or a certain movement, and if time is eternal, necessarily movement will also be eternal."

17 *Rom*, 8:19-24.

glaucous sea light, on the everyday in which we continue to exclude the needy, as a present happening and of our present, continuous in our offspring, so that it may become an event of reality in human history¹⁸.

17. God flourishes from his being in man's becoming present, perpetual God from his *indeterminable-being-present*, without past opposition and without future rambling, so that memory loses its claw¹⁹ and man is reborn, nature redeemed in Christ, space occupied in time found again²⁰. That is why the mystery of divinity does not become secret, but is the revelation in the world of Creation of man and nature, elements of his Form in us, continuous and discrete uniting in a saffron dawning of the conjugation in Christ of man and woman in this world offered and given because *created* of God, that creation where, man creature and unique project every time loved, God himself could not have been and nothing *ontologically* would *still be* donation, without *then* having to have been *cosmological* deflagration of his Love for his creature.

In this sense, Archbishop Caffarra²¹ referring to St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians (*Eph.* 5:22-32), takes up that creative project in man and woman as a conjugality that reveals a mystery nature in the same way as the relationship that conjugates, precisely, Christ and his Church, that is, the bride of Christ. Says Archbishop Caffarra: "In the conjugal relationship is present the Mystery of Christ's unity with the Church. That is the real sign of this. Real means that it does not represent the Mystery, remaining outside of It, external to It. But

18 Cf. *Mt.*, 14:22.

19 Giuseppe Ungaretti in his 1932 *Canto sesto* says: "O beautiful prey,/Night voice./Your movements/Foment fever./Only you, demented memory,/Freedom you could capture."

20 St. Basil of Caesarea states, "You will find finally that the world was not devised at random and in vain, but for a useful end and to procure for all beings a great advantage, since it is really the school of rational souls and the place where one is educated in the knowledge of God, inasmuch as He offers the spirit, through visible and sensible things, a guide to penetrating knowledge of invisible realities, as the apostle says: "His invisible perfections since the Creation of the world, appear clear through His works" [cf. *Rom.* 1:20]. Or perhaps because Creation took place in a moment and outside of time, it is said, *In the beginning God created*, because the beginning is something indivisible and inextended. Just as the beginning of the way is not yet the way, and the beginning of the house is not yet the house, so also the beginning of time is not yet time, nor is it the least part of it. And if someone controversially argues that the beginning is time, he knows that he will have to divide it into the parts of time: and these are the beginning, the middle, and the end. But to imagine the beginning of the beginning is utterly ridiculous," thus St. Basil, *Homilies on the Exameron*, I, 6-7.

21 See also Msgr. Caffarra's website cited above; here in particular the homily of January 10, 2015 given in Raeggio Emilia.

it means that marriage stands in intrinsic relation to the Mystery of Christ's union with the Church, and therefore participates in its nature, and is as it were imbued with it." Participating therefore in the mystery nature in the union of Christ with His Church, spouses share in the creative project not only through their offspring, but also through their intrinsic union of love in creation itself.

This then results in a conjugality that is perfect charity of the husband toward the wife and of the wife toward the husband, precisely because consent is produced in Christ and it is this reality that then explains how this "mystery" turns out to be a gift of Christ in creation perpetuated as a gift of love and exchange of conjugality between man and woman that is perfected daily in Christ.

VI The recognition of the vocation to conjugality in the mission of love

18. From this it emerges, therefore, how it is in the such mystery of conjugality close to the mystery of Christ's love and his passion and resurrection, that God saw and recognized the love of man, his Creature, and that of woman, a unitary part of the perfect whole of Creation, not composed of mere, anonymous remains of bodies, he glimpsed it and inveighed it present instead in a jolt, in the continuous surprise of gazes that smile at complexity, and that precisely in such conscious experience, both spouses, become sharers in the destiny of meeting one mutual life, composed of two existences, together in the New and Renewed Creation. Moreover, only those existences conjugated in the common life of the spouses and conjoined to the Life of Christ break into the creative project, transforming-and-procreating-the-Creation to transit into the world by safeguarding and preserving it as Created and in virtue of having been *created* by God. Every image of courtship results in reunion with an awareness of transcendence, without blurry images about life, without that retaliation constituted by grievances and regrets for supposed certainties that later failed as a result of an ever-possible experience related to the pain of illness, the suffering of professional failure, or the conscious event of bereavement.

19. In this sense, the lived experience is not rendered a dull membrane of silence and demands that gentrify the spouses, gradually placing them in the indifference of their common sacramental

conjugality in the passion and resurrection of Christ, in which they directly take part; rather, that *lived experience* becomes a real event of a hope that is hinged in mutual love because faith has allowed each one to be and continue to be spouse to the other, everyday of his or her life. Of the mundane reason, of the daily living between spouses, expressive and relational *indicalities* can be given that compose a meaning connected to the various contexts, always different, that the couple lives in their being spouse hold in the sphere of creation.

It is intended, in essence, to emphasize the presence of a progressive constitution of that trust on the basis of which communication relationships develop and mutual expectations are articulated: this trust appears to be based on the internalization by the spouses of their belonging to a broader natural project, which if excluded by the spouses in favor of practical and immediate contexts (careerism, patrimonial success, consumerism to the point of squandering resources) results, as a consequence, in the same conjugality being mortified, escaping the *genome of the family* were to proclaim the gospel of marriage²².

On the other hand, a *natural attitude* guarantees stabilization in the face of the precariousness of daily living, not resulting in the activation of mechanisms, propulsive and obsessive, when difficulties are interpreted as disappointments of a context imagined without folds, experienced only in the naiveté of an initial party and reception, as if to perpetuate them in the later complex, conjugal love, composed of the beauty of a constant and mutual conjugation in creation itself, mutual (in the proper sense of a common human and conjugal affair) in that particular development of ages and unpredictable successions of life. To discharge then into the chimeras of a continually protracted celebration leaves prolonged suffering and disappointment, that is, an immaturity lived in oblivion and in the daze of diversified prodigal fogginess.

20. The creative aspect, then, inherent in conjugality, that is, the link to a real and concrete beginning of history, entails a reflection on precisely what can be called a composing of the love that happens in Christ, the place of time and redemption and the person through whom the union of love unfolds perpetually in a conjugal bond that

22 Cf. Pierpaolo DONATI, *The Family. The genome that makes society live*, Rubettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2013, pp. 250 ff.

participates in Creation, an intimate fragment of the complexity of creation itself. It arches from Creation a joy that *combines* passion with movement and duration, to penetrate into reason and glimpse therein through reality the conjugal conception, in which the spouses themselves rise from worldly sorceries in the constant return they make, mutually, toward the mystery of created *love*, determined by creation.

A jubilation, therefore, and a contemplation of daily moments take place in the living and experience of an inexhaustible Love, which bestowed the understanding of how perfect it still is, and can be in the marital vocation and mission, which happens because it is part of creation and perpetuated in the created present. And if only we had wanted, we would have already desired and loved in the completeness and absoluteness of God's present, inescapable in the certainty of his soul and will, from his intelligence and memory, because act arose in the joy of observing how *everything had been good*²³, springing forth in fact to be eternal in his Hope for man, rising every principle from his Love, faithfully given entirely one, All and only for us, for you and me, for the married, for the unmarried: while leaving us at liberty to preserve that Whole or destroy the fragility of nature, loved by God in Creation, offered in the name of Jesus' torment on Calvary, God Himself gives that bread still to us unceasingly, so that our hearts may be filled with the lost tenderness, recusing indifference and envy, forsaking sloth and avarice, fighting gluttony and lust, conscious of our initial pride and unbearable wrath, for this saved only through Christ's sacrifice and once again loved by Himself, in His Resurrection.

21. The Gift, then, finds man and redeems him; it redeems that man created by God together with the nature of the world in space and time, in the motion and discrete of the universe, in the uniform and continuous of the movement of bodies in time and space. It is, peculiarly, the *analessis* (repetition) with respect to the ontological condition of God's love for man, that is, that constant repetition by means of which the Son offers anew with His sacrificed Love that of the Father by *fiat*, until the fulfillment of the Son Himself who retraces in its entirety the history of love between God and man, His Creature, in that very special instant in which love constantly lives by the return, repeated (*analessis*), of feeling loved and joyfully loved

23 *Gn*, 1, 4.

back by man. Thus man's own search for God inevitably carries with it an emptiness (the *κενόν*), a need to chase after what is supposedly lost forever or what one has never been able to possess, but which God wishes to give again: the daily hope and undoubted certainty of His being the perennial landing place for a man already in his existence, so that man's own life is completed and even fulfilled (i.e., *happens*) precisely in that search for God and in that human longing to be reborn in God during that same life.

22. The gaze toward our interiority is a recognition of the transience of the material body and its silence. Beauty and mystery intertwine, and the enchantment envelops the eyes of consciousness, of a dissolved, shipwrecked self, but which just in this shipwreck leaves a visible trace of itself that absolves it of its guilt because it will always be able to return to the Father thanks to the accomplished fulfillment of Christ's sacrifice and the happening of his Resurrection. It is therefore in the metamorphosis of time that one observes the space of one's individuality dilate and become characterized; nothing seems to disappear swallowed up by the imageless mirror in which the word of men is reflected, dead.

The visibility of the simple disappears behind the multifaceted variety of a metamorphosis, behind all that leads that same structure always beyond its original form. The invisible is concealed within the unexpressed origin of the structure, the mechanism reveals in that way its unity in which the singularity of its elements and functions disappears into the whole, into the heart of that metamorphosis that empties space, centering time, sipping the surrounding emptiness and finally enclosing the possible experience of the universe.

VII **Mysticism and created man: salvation given and redemption obtained**

23. Everything seemingly motionless rises to manifest its presence so that we have a perfect description of what reality, *ars poetica*, and life have been: thus we can tell a dying person what his life has been, and we can be sure that he listens to our words hoping to find in them the solution to the enigma of the whole existence, an enigma that dissolves of all artificial construction in the Love of God and His Creation. Thus to listen is more than to be silent; we hear the

lands and winds of love, the murmurs and silences of the soul in the presence of God.

And hearing then becomes listening with the soul of one's memory.

24. Nature suffers no veil of illusion from which men often suffer, because nature is perfect by offering what it was created for the benefit of man, never being able to contradict itself with itself: an apple tree will give only apples and not oranges. But man can ruin the nature of the apple tree and slowly and stubbornly destroy nature in-itself and for-itself, or even use it by perverting its purpose, the purpose proper to Creation. In the face of nature, one can never expect an unforeseen event in causes and effects: the sea may suddenly arise and become threatening to man, but only because a wind, a storm may suddenly reach the sailors. However, one knows the causes and especially what would be the effects, foreseeing their extent precisely because every natural event is preceded by inescapable signs in the severity of possible consequences. A man, on the other hand, is as unpredictable as his own fate; as uncertain as his life; as indeterminable in his reactions whether in the face of a happy event or in the face of mourning. He remains, as *Psalms 63* sings, a mystery, and sinks endlessly into the abyss that is his heart. Man is shrouded in a veil of illusions, better: real infatuations, which perpetuate themselves in his life, until they cloud his senses, spheres of action, room for maneuver and goals.

25. The temporal event translates, therefore, into a continuous unit of measurement of what can be discrete: for just as entropy reveals a state of crisis within a thermodynamic system (but not only), in the same way, the event, in itself always entropic, highlights discrete elements of the world and nature, that is, the very temporalities that nevertheless allow for the continuous transformations of the form of the world.

The temporal meaning of the word indicates, therefore, the recognition of time (*Zeiterkennung*), the substance of the concept itself: one identifies the concept and from its interpretation one obtains the meaning of a definite temporality, a segment of the *continuous form of cosmological time*, the first step toward the revelation of the world as a secret enclosed in time. Moreover, the ultimate Aristotelian boundary, the αἰών, is ultimate insofar as it nonetheless encompasses every possible boundary of heaven, that is, precisely the whole of mystical

time in its fullness of unfolding in an indefinable space, by virtue of encompassing everything, a question posed already by Anaxagoras, returns to a higher level of reflection and yet new, since this boundary is “incorporeal” and introduces us to the Empyrean. For this reason, attention has been especially then turned to a general meditation on the face of the *eternal that is* configured in Christ: for it is precisely this meaning of continuous time that marks the manifold future of the world and its variable becoming, denoting the development of form, perennial in the continuity of the phenomenon that enfolds all light, then allowing it to happen. And this occurs exclusively in God.

Therefore, it was intended to interpret the world’s path between time and transformation, in a dimension not circumscribed solely by its being, but also according to a *discrete element of its tangible and constant becoming*.

There is, however, a light that pervades every observation of the sphere of space that enlarges alternately, however, on what has no limit, but which permeates, nevertheless, a finite dimension: man, capable of understanding and evaluating the universe as a present reality, in the same way as the world grasped and resolved (in *erfassen*’s semantics) in its limitlessness, although differentiable in the multiplicities of meaning and the variabilities of time and its interpretations. Every metamorphosis has its own time that never changes and that hangs on that line that can be glimpsed clear and clean on the horizon, light that springs from the will of love at the apex of this earth in the very moment when the sky seems to join it. That same light, however, still perceives *something else* almost ignored, which had sung his attention and yet canonized his minute observation, something greater that does not oppose the *limitlessness to the indeterminate*, that does not affect the plurality of observations of space and time, that is, an isometry that does not possess the latter principles, but nevertheless consumes and regenerates them in a form of the world *continually* eternal because indeterminably beside man, beside us always present: the Word of God and his Creation.

26. In the nature of the world they glimpsed synolus and conjunction of matter created by God himself because it was willed, beloved form of the plurality of every element, multiplicity in God already present without past beginning, already future without end, immobile purity that endowed Creation with accomplished

indivisibility, intersecting it with the *creatum* as a work that became the form of his Love, phenomenon present and temporalized in the world, happening of Jesus among us, even for you, to reach you still, and love us together entirely. Jesus was born son and is Son of the Father, without time ever beginning, nevertheless taking form his life between birth and death, death loved and conquered in his Resurrection, Jesus being, in his fullness, eternally present in the Father and the Father *ab intra* in him²⁴ .

It, therefore, happens *indefinable* to man to distinguish time, except in his advent as man and in his death as man, which reconciles, however, in the Resurrection of Jesus the world because overcome, for it is Jesus who reunites man himself with God, thanks to his sacrifice that perpetually gave us the New Creation.

Likewise, Christ *is eternal* in the Father because the Father ceaselessly in Him permanent²⁵ , ontic principle moved in the certainty of raising and saving His creature to place the world in His Creation of initial love, jubilation of pure *act* into which flowed the form of man as the *power of God's Love*, that first man so ardently desired and loved, never superimposable and analogous to one of His kind, in every plurality of birth and in every multiplicity of death²⁶ . Nonetheless, independence and development of antitheses ran swiftly to repeat themselves relationally: the Creation raised the void to the perpetuum of matter. In that moment, part of an imperceptible instant, Life transposed itself and became the origin of the phenomenon of an

24 On the divine nature of Jesus in *John's Gospel*, chapter 8:12-29, it is written, "Again Jesus spoke to them and said, 'I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' (...) They then said to him, "Where is your father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you would also know my Father." Jesus spoke these words in the place of treasure, while teaching in the temple. And no one arrested him, for his hour had not yet come. Again he said to them, "I go, and you will seek me, but you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come." (...). They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father. Jesus then said, "When you have raised up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM and that I do nothing of myself, but speak as the Father has taught me. He who sent me is with me: he has not left me alone, because I always do the things that are pleasing to him."

25 "Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and that is enough for us." Jesus answered him, "Have I been with you so long and you have not known me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you, I do not speak them from me; but it is the Father who is in me does his works. Believe me: I am in the Father, and the Father is in me; if nothing else, believe it by the works themselves,"" so *Jn. 14:8-11*.

26 Cf. Derek WALCOTT, *First Light*, edited by Andrea Molesini, Adelphi, Milan 2001, p. 113.

unchanged form, transcendent first substance of being that happened in us, sustaining God personally to each of us: “that man might be, that you might happen, that I myself might love you.”

The completion of the void was from the beginning that gift of absolute love for the completed created work, an act that reunited reality with time, the moved with temporality, Creation with the world of man: *ut operaretur*²⁷.

27. Creation began from God to unfold its own metamorphosis in time, on the line that is glimpsed sharply on the horizon, and which marks the separation of the world, a space without parts, flowing into a point disrupted by the darkness of the unknown ocean, while the light does not surrender to rise constantly in spite of the world's cacies, without noise, gushing with well beyond the very moment when heaven seems to unite with earth.

That same light, however, perceives something else almost ignored at first, yet formed as a result of that blinding flash of truth, deflagrated in your heart and mine, no longer sung as imposture, in splendor so intense as to divide the void and let it explode into myriads of endless existing spaces and nascent times, thunderbolt of its Love at first, at the hour of the sea dew on the golds woven in the sky like silk, at the first gleam on the still unknown sea, that Love, composing given to us, slandered in the occurrence of *limitlessness* and *indeterminacy*, so that the plurality of spaces themselves might be formed in absolute time, without any imperfection of continuity, uniform instead, the perennial cause of the ontic *present* in the world: the Word. Only in these ruthless moments, we understand the salvation offered by Jesus at the dear price of his Life, life in truth of us all, because in his Heart our existence and our life still rise and pulsates.

The Creation fulfilled by the Father at the untimeliness of the *fiat lux* is rejoined to the Creation of Christ on Calvary, to the historicity and the present of his *consumatum est* who loves man anew, saving him forever by restoring to him a life that had been lost in the lies, lusts and vanities of all times for every history, even that of our time, bitterly mean, intriguing, and for this very realization, fiercely luciferous.

28. Life begins to beat again at the doorstep of man and woman, persuaded of their error, and the pregnancy of Love has begotten,

²⁷ *Gn*, 2, 15.

giving the Light of the world the Spirit of the New Creation²⁸, that is, the Word of Life for man saved in the Life of Christ. The Mother can continue to smile and cherish to herself the tenderness of that return, in the renewed *magnificat* that restores Love, an event of perpetual Life, a center for the world where lost everydayness can be found, to the salvation of man and woman²⁹.

In the same way the center of your fullness rests in the hour when you empty every moment of Time, suspended on your body, and the wise Form induces us to the element of an uncertainty dispelled by the shipwreck of a Phenomenon. The body of Creation rises from the tear of your soul, redemption of man possible only in the woman he loves, bride of his present, *together* spouses beyond worldly temporalities. Behold, when Life quenches all earthly fleetingness to rise to the joy of Heaven, a smile still cleanses the spirit in the duration of hours, you know it, you remind me of it, you afflict it, you sigh it, in the suspensions of summer vermilion from the Fire of your love, our cave of refuge, when the fullness of heartbreak arches from passion to take refuge in reason and only then glimpse the rhythm of these waves. We shall see them traverse the created lands and waters, the suffused skies, time unrolled like that early linen over the cities of the world now deserted, desecrated by wars, assailed by the lava stones of the underworld³⁰: “Do not turn away from me, however, you, my bride, for on the Book of Great Stone, we shall find written engraved of travertine the names of salvation, carved of alabaster the generations who believed, who loved and were exterminated by the hatred of those who never had name, nor identity, confused among the spectres, excluded from the City, and who did not recognize Life recreated and *fiat* restored. Let us not part then from the last *silence*, rather let us pause *together*, as the light digs into the earth the things and the seasons, as it reflects the shadows of the clouds and watches over the

28 “Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him were created all things in the heavens and on earth, those visible and those invisible: Thrones, Dominations, Principalities and Powers. All things were created through him and in view of him. He is before all things and all things subsist in him. (...) For it pleased God that all fullness should dwell in him, and that through him and in view of him all things should be reconciled, having pacified by the blood of his cross both the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven,” so *Col*, 1, 15-20.

29 “And She of whom I think of all the women of my lineage, from the depths of her old age turns to her God a countenance of sweetness. And it is pure lineage that holds her grace in me,” SAINT-JOHN PERSE, *Exile* (1942), in *Works*, Utet, Turin, 1969, p. 120.

30 Cf. *Mt*, 24:3-15.

soliloquy of the sirocco, in the evening, when we watch astonished all the lights thinning phlegmatically in the ultramarine blue, in that ancient perpetual ink impregnating the sky, perviously permeating the shadows, adagio, on the orchid sea, jagged by the waves.”³¹ .

29. The Shape of Life thus turns toward the hope of misty love, grasped in a lapse of sacred persistence, so that you may understand how the arms of his heart are already crucified between the shores of the world he loved and which denied him, grasping the Son of Man the rocks scarlet from the sunset, in which gushes the reverberation of a sacrifice of flesh, languid glitter among the crystal salt, among the footprints on the golden sand, left to shimmer in the rustle of the wind, violet litany, marmoreal ebb, the petrified groan of the Word forsaken by man. After all, in *The Grand Inquisitor*³² Dostoevsky expresses how the fundamental problem of the human heart is to make itself free in selfless love: but freedom is extinguished, says the Grand Inquisitor, “in order to make men happy,” so human bondage before passion expresses the perpetual transience of happiness that can never ultimately be such except in self-satisfaction: contemporary narcissism unveils, in the altruistic egoist, the historical semantic shift from atheism to the dissolution of human quality, and in this, we discern a transformation of the concept. Thus Christ who came to liberate man from himself in the will of love returns to be condemned, in the words of the great inquisitor, because man’s own history is still unable to detach itself from the relationship of opposing roles for the attainment of worldly sovereignty.

Therefore, we understand the arrangement of a “new creation” through the *consumatum est* of Jesus, when we perceive that

31 “For the rabbi, drawing the cosmos was indeed a subject to be treated with caution, to be passed on only to scholars in possession of a solid curriculum. Veiled in poetic language, but fundamental to understanding the history of Jewish speculation on divine graphism, is the *Sefer yesirah*. This little book of a few pages comes perhaps from an environment on the fringes of rabbinic orthodoxy, in which Greek doctrines were combined with a refined sensitivity to the symbolic values of the Hebrew language. For the author of the *Sefer yesirah*, too, as for Philo, the traces scratched by God at the beginning of time are at the origin of the real. They are carvings that constitute the real writing of the great book of the world. It is precisely to this writing carved into the cosmos that the earliest meaning of the word *sefirah*, a key term in the conceptual lexicon of the *Sefer yesirah* and the entire Jewish mysticism of the following centuries, refers. The ten *sefirot-scriptures* are evidence of a *logos* designer who shapes his design with slight strokes of air, water and fire, before translating it into physical reality. The doctrine of a primordial carving exerted a decisive influence on the mystics of later ages,” thus Giulio BUSI, *Visual Qabbalah*, Einaudi, Turin, 2005, p. 3.

32 F. DOSTOEVSKYJ, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Garzanti, Milan 1964, p. 264.

composition to be an inexhaustible and total gift in its inextinguishable present being, although every human will have perverted and corrupted man's natural end: that is, that of *loving oneself* in order to be able also therefore to love the other. On the other hand, if man is unable to love himself³³, which does not presuppose selfishness nor does it mean being-egotistical to the point of egolatry as is often the case, rather self-preservation as a creature and awareness of being the composing of a gift offered by God to the world, neither will man be able to love the other in the first and irreplaceable Christian will, that of loving one another as Christ himself has loved us.

By not happening this indispensable passage, a fact that history has often placed before us, or more everyday life at work and in interpersonal relationships, man will not be able to love even his fellow man and Creation.

VIII God and mystical time: the Aristotelian physical *πρότερον* and the metaphysical *ὑστέρον*.

30. God, then, sees universal history, and what happens in it; he sees everything in one splendid, dizzying instant that is *eternity*³⁴, being able therefore to imprint a motion on time in the world, not having to undergo it while remaining God, motion which, in its perennial immobility, *perpetuates* everything and *moves*, revealing itself to be the fundamental and noncontextualizable expression of time, because it is devoid of the Aristotelian "before" and absent in the succession of time: that is, indeterminable present, God's form. And God is delineated in perfect completeness of motion, whose body does not undergo corruptibility due to motion itself, but happens, that body, as the motion of an absolute event, *indeterminable* but also *indeterminate* in time and space. Christ is, therefore, the revelation of time in the world and the breaking of the bond between simple and

33 This means coming out of the love of concupiscence to find the love of benevolence: "The love of concupiscence knows how to fill itself with sacrifices for others, while the love of benevolence must start from a healthy love of self. But the love of concupiscence sacrifices itself in order to have a return of image, of power, when it lacks the source of love which is *complacency*," thus Ugo BORGHELLO, *Knowing about Love*, cit. , p. 399.

34 Cf. Jorge Luis BORGES, *Seven Nights*, Feltrinelli, Milan 1983, p. 33.

complex, as well as the bond between abstractness and transience of matter characterizing the universe.

In such a perspective, the Life of Christ, his birth, his advent, his being that conforms to his becoming, his Death that transmits Life again in the Resurrection as a gift of love, to reveal himself as the announced God of the salvation of the world, focuses all this the concept of *infinity* placed towards the “after revelation”, a moment in which time itself is comprehensible because it scans what has had a beginning without ever having to end: the love of God in the martyrdom and resurrection of Jesus revealed God. It is intended to emphasize how the concept of the *infinite becomes* historicized, temporalizing itself a posterior to the eternal, that is, God, which singularly prescinds from the “before” and the “after” since it is universally configured in Christ as God’s never-ending proclamation, because Christ himself God in the world, time of the world.

And then in the context of such irresolvable undecidability, we come to the concreteness of the hermeneutical Aristotelian spirit that marks time pervaded by the *before* and the *after*, a later acquisition in St. Augustine, who nevertheless finds that the perception of God can no longer be set aside and separable from man’s life and his “existence.” Therefore, objectively sensing life as a journey, as *destiny*, which, in spite of itself, must reach a paradoxical goal in its opposite, life itself grasped and interpreted into existence, he reveals the antinomy of time to be an explication of the theological and immediately *mystical* dilemma: *do I believe?*

31. In essence, faith acquires certainty the moment one is equally certain that one can never decide, in the same way as when one decides in everyday, rationally existential choices, precisely because God is an *irrationally existential choice*, and specifically in that perspective also a *mystical choice*; just as much as life is paradoxically inseparably linked to its opposite, death. Yet it is in this paradoxicality of life that one grasps its recognition as an incontrovertible reality that exists only, and only if, *undead*.

The most irrational happening in life, the occurrence of its opposite, existentially necessitates the mystery of God, ontologically legitimizes man’s very life, and allows a glimpse of time, as if death were the “identity card” of life. This is why the mystery of salvation in Christ definitively liberates love toward Him, love that is forced to

struggle against the prison of existence in order to bear witness to its life, and that is loosed from its chains only when the paradox returns to its final recomposition. In this regard, Edith Stein identifies man's passion as the suffering and caging of the soul in the mortal body, a body that obtains its own Aristotelian physics of being motion in the measure of the movement of time, confessing the prodigality of sin, which returns to become a membrane of life for the love given by the one who imparts motion to man's life in the universe.

32. In the *Science of the Cross*, Edith Stein, crucified philosopher and martyr, speaks of God as a mystery that envelops our very being, *for it is in the soul of each one of us that God reserves the right to become in the presence of Christ, in that inconsumable yearning for Him that binds us to Immortality*. This mystery is unfolded by Stein as the resurrection of the flesh that rises from the Word to rise to the sanctified work of human life. The mystery of being enveloped each person's soul as a God-given envelope that we can open toward the Other, to grasp in earthly conjunction the poetic verse that enables becoming in an eternal, bodiless beyond.

In parallel, man's body binds his every earthly attachment to the hope of elevating it to the dignity of a supernatural mystery, which would join his soul to the sense of the Word which in turn envelops every single human activity. Thus every feature of the world's form is a movement and measure of the time that envelops Creation, so that man may be a participant in it as a dimension of the one-created, as water flowing from the source of Christ, absolute life, the first and sidereal motion of life itself in which the mystery of man contemplates its purpose and *raison d'être*.

33. The soul itself, therefore, finds awareness of the heavenly return only by knowing and loving God: Stein clearly tells us that the soul gains possession and intensity of its *created* dimension when it unites and is in correspondence with God. This condition, which is not always common among men, is, however, *always* true for man, placing the latter at the center of his meditation the tendency to precipitate himself into a center, as Edith Stein again argues, actually capable of bringing man into contact with his Creator. Christ himself in the hour of Gethsemane finds depth to his meditation in being reached by his

father's will, to which he acknowledges everything, even the suffering that would soon torment his body and soul, anticipating the Cross³⁵.

Thus, one understands St. John of the Cross-one of the greatest mystics of Christianity-when he argues in *Flame of Living Love*, 11:4: "Little does it matter to me whether a bird is tied to a thin thread instead of a thick one, for however thin it is, it will remain tied as to the thick one, until it breaks it in order to fly. The truth is that the thin one is easier to break; however, however easy it may be, if it does not break it, it will not fly."

Complex love, indeed, will succeed if it is aware of its freedom in the happiness it finds only and uniquely in its willingness to immolate and give itself. The turnover of bonds built in the shell of dependence has removed from man every boundary of freedom, deceiving him with liberation from world-historical sovereignty. Rather, the humanity of death resurfaces in a yearning for the divine, in a primal source that leads the being back to still being able to will, in the instinct of the soul toward the Creator, and thus desire the dimension of a purpose expressed by the reunion of every earthly element that rises to heavenly consistency. In a similar vein, Edith Stein, taking up precisely St. John of the Cross, leads us directly back toward the mysticism of Eternity, mysticism and asceticism that are made possible in the soul of man the moment he glimpses the step toward the Cross, as divine Love that touches his eyes and soul by opening them and capturing them toward God.

34. Each part, therefore, also enucleates here, in self, purely philosophical concepts, or a particular natural element on which we dwell until we admire it in its intrinsic Beauty. It is that Beauty coming directly from the Creator, that Beauty which in Dostoevsky's words will save us and save the world. This was already announced by Plato, who linked beauty to truth; as well as by Dionysius the Areopagite, who invited us to see how God made us partakers of his beauty, precisely through the Creation that is transfused into that *creatum that we all possess and of which we are custodians, beginning with ourselves.*

35 "Jesus' suffering in Gethsemane was of such magnitude and exceptionality that it provoked this rare phenomenon: sweat of blood. Jesus' blood surfacing on his face and falling to the ground; blood that is another - or the identical - manifestation of Jesus' renewed 'yes' to the Father's plan of redemption and that is already shed in remission of our sins, anticipating the Cross," thus Javier ECHEVARRIA, *Getsemani*, Ares, Milan 2011, p. 247.

Finally, for reasons of *explored silence*, I have deemed it here exclusively to meditate on Creation as an event for man and woman together as spouses, postponing to completion much other material on the Creator, God the Father, and Jesus, God the Son: that very Creator who restores man on Calvary³⁶, in an *indeterminably present* sacrifice, because still here in-me and I, living, graced-that-sacrifice-lives, thus salvation of me and of us all, restoring anew and constantly infusing Life to the paternal *incipit in his consumatum est*, the foundation of Christ's earthly and human story, to which I have already devoted a specific study. Nevertheless, themes of comparative significance are outlined at the conclusion of these meditations, in order to complete what was intended as a moment of observation and meditation with respect to a description of religious experience and theological-historical tradition. Therefore, Creation, an event that we live through to this day, which allows us to discover the interminable joys of *creation*, then prompted me to meditate on a specific peculiarity allowing it to mature from the puerile pantheistic environmentalist and ecological attitude, that is, the aspect concerning man and woman, they spouses, characterizing life and *creation* as their heritage. It is grasped, therefore, precisely from the oneness of love between man and woman, that *quid* of which we are constantly partakers both as a gift of us to the world, and because the *created world came into being* insofar as it was given to us by God, precisely because it is a composing of his Love.

And on the love between man and woman, Jean Guitton says: "It is true that woman's nature is to give herself; man, who by instinct would be polygamous, needs effort, will and perseverance to be authentically faithful; and he must thoroughly engage reason to attach himself to one love. *Woman provides the model of love, man imitates that model* (italics ours)." And on this love become family one can fully agree with the words of Bishop Joseph Mani, echoing those of Guitton: "It is God who created your family and foresaw it 'before the creation of the world, that it might be holy and perfect in love.'"³⁷.

36 Regarding the renewal of God the Father's Creation through the sacrifice of Jesus, God the Son: "By renouncing earthly, religious righteousness, Jesus obtains for us an unsuspected gift: *the new righteousness is the supernatural world*, which is grafted into us ontologically by baptism, which makes us children of God, in intimate communion with Father, Son and Holy Spirit, inhabiting his Dwelling Place and becoming us, in a wondrous way, *dwelling place of the Trinity*, house of God, paradise. St. Paul speaks of a *new creation* (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). It is the world of faith. It is the new kingdom. Justice in this sense becomes synonymous with theological life worked by mercy, by God's gratuitous love for those who do not deserve it."- Ugo BORGHELLO, *Knowing Love*, cit. p. 287.

37 Cf. Jean GUITTON, *The Century to Come*, Bompiani, Milan 1997, p. 14, note 1; Bishop Giuseppe MANI, *Pastoral Letter on the Family*, Cagliari 2001, p. 49.

IX In the mysticism of suffering: the contemplation of reconstruction

35. The problem of mysticism is resolved in balancing two opposing demands: on the one hand, the inescapable realization of a gap existing between the immanent and the transcendent and, on the other hand, the difficulty in accepting, because of our reality tied to phenomenal experience, the presence of the *spiritual* and of a real “intangible consistency” which we perceive, not on the basis of our senses precisely, but solely by deepening it through meditation and the experience of recollection, and which in this comes to us complete in its evidence. Meditation and recollection, then, are the inextricable moments in which, that all which is perceived solely by means of our senses, becomes the ascertainment of a *profound* related to ourselves, and which nevertheless returns to us difficult to take in, since it is not endowed with that sensible experience, but intuited and perceived only inwardly.

The bride and groom can say to each other, “The dream you have, it is a reality that exists in you and that you just have to remember, without it escaping in the morning, evanescent as a dream, precisely because it walks by your side: it is a thought, that wish, the desired day that comes.”

36. In Japan, a pottery, precious or significant that breaks, goes through the technique of *kintsugi* (literally “recomposing with gold”) a very special repair technique, handed down from *Zen* tradition, that does not aim to hide the object’s fracture lines with perfect and invisible bonding, rather the same lines are emphasized with detailed repair: gold or cast silver emphasizes the fractures, and one would say *enhances* them by emphasizing the jagged pattern of the injury, transforming the object therefore into a new work, which does not distort the previous form, only gives the object a luminous scar. These are metaphorically the same scars that we humans carry within us, and cherish as the fruit of our material and spiritual experience together. The principle of *kintsugi*, in fact, appears blatantly opposite to that which animates all of us when we substantiate the experience with the reality of affliction: spiritual fracture, moral pain, physical pain, guilt, shame, professional failure, human ruin, anguish, mourning.

By filling that loss the *kintsugi* seems to be telling us: life is wholeness and tearing together. That pottery now in shards has a history and becomes more beautiful. Grief teaches that you are alive, the rut left by failure allows the enhancement of sensitive experience through the knowledge of a deeper connection, which gathers discernment of your reality from the inner one that is unseen but pulses alive in each of us. Therefore, the tear is reassembled through a *quality*, the shard joins the others through gold and silver, and the pottery is now even more precious and ready to continue to be useful.

37. The quality of pain and sorrow is enhanced in meditation, and that goal precisely leads to what is intended as mysticism, that is, the experience of recollection that combines immanent and transcendent, making the latter experienced and not something arcane, rather known and recognized as credible, not esoteric and priestly, but human and revealed, *essoteric*, common to all because possible knowledge valid and effective for anyone. Such acquisition is plausible because it is the result of an experience, not only sensible but also spiritual and of recollection of one's pain so that whatever is acquired as transcendent fortifies sensible and immanent reality. In *kintsugi*, also an in-itself and for-itself *experience*, it is stated that when something has suffered a wound, it unveils a history, reason why it becomes more valuable, until it is as rare and unique as any human being, bearing its own mystical history, because it is the result of many scattered shards that have been brought together in the crucible of pain, forged finally as gold, many cracks brought together by the gold and silver proper to pain. References to this are manifold and already known: "For he knoweth my conduct, if he try me at the crucible, as pure gold I come forth" (*Gb*, 23, 10); "The crucible is for silver, and the furnace for gold, but he that tryeth the hearts is the Lord," (*Prv*, 17, 3); and even in Sirach we read, "For by fire is gold tried, and men well accepted in the crucible of sorrow" (*Sir*, 2, 5).

It is this kind of lived experience therefore that allows the immanent to transit to the transcendent, to prove its consistency. One comes to this at the moment when one's knowledge of pain breaks the transient link with reality, thus interpenetrating us into a cognition: it is this rift that makes people different and increasingly valuable³⁸.

38 Cf. Salvatore NATOLI, *The Experience of Pain*, Feltrinelli, Milan 2008.

38. In Islamic mysticism, the perception of pain is mystical remission: the content of the Sufist *mujahade* is expressed in this: if we consider man as part of the shattering creation, man sees himself in his life overtaken by the uncertainty and instability of his fate, finding in the experience of recollection a point of beginning for what he could not explain or de-emphasize: we refer precisely to producing an understanding out of nothingness, that nothingness (*sifr*, in Arabic is zero) with which time is clothed, not immediately perceived and which could in its varied range of assumptions and then subsequently experienced (*Erlebniss*), leave us reconstructed again and more precious, for we would have made life firm again. After all, pain is the mystical moment, because it traces an unmistakable and inescapable mark, absolutely unrepeatable in that given and specific condition.

We can struggle to make peace with our cracks, and we hide them, we do not value them. Better: we act to remove them (Freudian mechanism of *Verdrängung*), because we are ashamed of our scars. After all, we are not *atheists*, but *atheists*; we are no longer free, but *liberists* (precisely in the economic sense), libertarians, placing in everything something agonistic, and so also with our wounds, doggedly hiding them, showing ourselves intact, appearing stubbornly, but foolishly, lacking in experience; we are integrist, not integers, that is, we are dull and reaped by a culture of death and indifference so that our wounds do not appear. Sometimes the notion of being ashamed of one's flaws or falls has been passed to us a bit everywhere, even in the family: not saying anything to anyone would make one forced into a defense that does not mean *working on one's self* at all, as the *mujahade* in Sufism describes and that means going to the bottom of our pain and awareness with life.

Much of the globalized world can afford to lead a wasteful existence. But in doing so we forget that our conditions are subject to changing fluctuations and that we may not be able to anticipate the moment when everything will change: the examples of wars that then enact negative stock market fluctuations, the speculation that takes place at such moments in history in which huge flows of money benefit the few, are not just recent, or current, things, but characterize human history: we have become too accustomed to a wasteful lifestyle, so that the only ways out maybe, yes a drastic reduction in our standard

of living, but above all, a generalized barbarism may result, up to the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel³⁹.

Yet, the whole of our culture starts with a crack, a pain, it starts with the wound in Christ's side from which water and blood gushed out, renewing our creation at that very moment⁴⁰. And so when something has suffered a crack when a man suffers pain and a wound, he does not break down, he shows instead that he has a story by revealing his life, by claiming to have lived, to have been present among us, bearing a terrible burden to make it there and therefore acquiring ... *lived experience*: this is because then a man, a woman, overrides the immanent always by the power of that suffering which is love for their own life.

39. This happened to the Mother, Mary, Mother of Jesus; it happened to the Son, Jesus, and her son: that excruciating grief of a mother for her own son led to the scaffold and executed there, innocent, saves our lives, redeems the Father's Creation and offers in pain, in scarring, the New Creation⁴¹: the *Stabat Mater* is not mourning, it is redeeming sacrifice; it is the story of an event, not a fantastic narrative, and no matter how many wounds and cracks that life, our life, may have, they are always held together by a thread of gold, strengthened in the crucible by the gold of Christ, that is, his blood.

It is not glue, but God's gold, his own blood given to us to recompose our wounds, our cracks, our failures. And these are seen yes, but they make the story of that man and woman. Those who show nothing are the prototypes of the dictators, the false bourgeois, the hypocrites themselves, the double-breasted European bureaucrats who are shocked at the arrival of people persecuted by the savagery and barbarity of war and who reject the pain of the other because it is inconvenient and troublesome.

And Jesus himself, that is, the revelation of God in the time of the world, suffers the mystery of the necessity of the world's salvation through that which opposes political power, through that which opposes political power, through that which opposes the "simple"

39 "He will make a strong covenant with many/for a week, and in the space of half a week,/ he will cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease;/on the wing of the temple he will place the abomination of desolation/and this will be to the end,/until the end marked on the destroyer," *Dan*, 9, 27; but also *ibid.*, 11, 31; 12, 11; then *Mt*, 24, 15.

40 *Jn*. 19:34.

41 Cf. *Qur'an*, Sura XXIX, vv. 20-23.

domination of the tyrant who plunders and humiliates, finally through that which opposes death, that is, love, that love already narrated *as strong as death*⁴², but which nevertheless *necessitates* death in order to be and to reveal itself and to *live*, for it is in that instant when life suffers such a need for the mystery of its own being that life itself, at last, rises as the fulcrum of the fullness of salvation and becomes, life, an *event* in the world, an absolute contemporaneity in the universe, without beginning and without end. This is the *event*, caught in a single imperceptible instant, in which God suffered the mystery of *his need* to transcend the seemingly inaccessible anguish, in order to overcome it in spite of the danger of the weakness of having been able to reveal himself politically, as a leader for the dominion of history and over the world. Rather, it is in the salvation of pain that Jesus manifests and unveils all his beauty of being the Son of God, a beauty only seemingly and momentarily defeated by death, a beauty, however, that rises again as the love of that Life that still *happens* in time, because memory of the world⁴³.

40. The world, by means of such hermeneutics, does not possess in-itself principle and does not provide for in-itself end, so that it becomes again totality and unity of a conjunction: that between the singular cosmological foundation and the revealed universal, that between world and time, precisely between man and God; thus meditation on cosmology precisely as the specificity of inquiry and research of the Pauline *all in all*⁴⁴, where the revelation of God is fulfilled by Jesus as the human face of God, the Man who redeems humanity and who in accomplishing this, is at once the Man in pain, Christ of redemption in the scandal of his Love, finally God of salvation⁴⁵. Freedom mystically redeemed from sin, for man to live

42 *Ct*, 8, 6-7.

43 Says Javier Echevarría: “We will never be able to take full charge of the evil that we humans have committed throughout history. Jesus, who perceives in all clarity that mass of filth hurled against God, sinks down in amazement because his perfection of intelligence and love leads him to penetrate all the degradation to which we creatures have condescended. But to so much wickedness, which strikes him in soul and body with indescribable suffering, he responds with that fullness of love, so immense that it erases that progression of miseries: *Man, your sins are forgiven you (Lk. 5:20)*,” so Javier ECHEVARRIA, *Gethsemane*, cit., pp. 219-220.

44 *Cor*, 15, 28.

45 We refer to the pages Giuseppe Fornari devotes to the theme of scandal, between beauty and the infinity of love, in Giuseppe FORNARI, *La bellezza e il nulla. The Christian anthropology of Leonardo da Vinci*, cit., pp. 357 ff.

continuous time in world history, completes his being in the *possibility of love* and the *choice of forgiveness*, passing through the “narrow gate” of natural law.

Therefore, without Christian grace opposing human vengeance, often labeled as “justice,” freedom would immediately turn into existentialist *liberation* and relativization of morality, a kind of entitlement whereby all value, devoid of charity, would not coincide with virtue, and value would result in the opposite of human quality.

41. This implies that the relationship between man and the form of the world, in the time characterizing the world, in the face of a tragic event, would be totally dominated by drive and instincts, governed by the dulling of the sense of reason, transformed into ideology and therefore into terror⁴⁶. This is why the rejection of grace in Christ pervades man with its omnipotence, which crumbles inescapably when, to the rejected freedom, recourse to postponement as a desperate means of reassurance creeps in: “sooner or later my prison will be filled and I will be able to fulfill my task.” However, this is not necessarily to be hoped for, for the very moment this would occur, however, reality would already have unraveled only the anguish of a world with no more exit, in the forced imagination of regulating the fate of a fake world, which would become real and the sole overseer and guardian of the self-proclaimed guardian himself, in the emptiness of his own world wanted by himself as a prison.

On this worldly idolatry says Hugh Borghello: “*We live solely to the extent that we die with Christ*; to the extent that the old man, with his lusts, is overcome by the presence of crucified love. There I see myself and feel loved beyond all fear. Stunning is the excerpt from chapter eight of the letter to the Romans: ‘There is therefore no longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ has set you free from the law of sin and death’ (*Rom. 8:1*)”.⁴⁷

46 Says Amitav Ghosh, “For Khieu Samphan and Pol Pot, the deaths of Hou Youn and Hu Nim and thousands of others who were killed in torture chambers or at execution sites did not represent a contradiction, rather a confirmation of their idealism and ideological purity. For them, terror was the essential component in the exercise of power. It was an integral part not only of that coercive system, but of the moral order on which the regime was based; a part whose best description remains to this day in that line that Büchner, the most prescient of theater authors, puts into the mouth of Robespierre (Pol Pot’s favorite hero): ‘Virtue is terror, terror virtue,’ words that are well suited as an epitaph for the twentieth century,” thus Amitav GHOSH, *Dancing in Cambodia*, Linea d’ombra edizioni, Milan 1994, pp. 60-61.

47 Ugo BORGHELLO, *Liberating Love*, Ares, Milan 1998, p. 345.

Nevertheless, if life *were not limited* by the goal of its own end, there would be no salvation. It is mystical time that reveals God in each of us, precisely in its special dimension of having to enclose life and in its incontrovertible condition of having to comprehend death, the object of that desire which in the world could never be fulfilled, because it lacks the necessary duration to do so, a measure for a man that is always incomplete, unquantifiable. Such a scope, on the other hand, suggests how, peculiarly in this limitation, the human condition of life is revealed to be inextricably linked to its opposite, and therefore, through such contradiction, equally inextricably bound to its mystical divine dimension. Only an act of meditative recollection that transcends the apparent around us, in pain as taught by the mystics, makes concrete the transition to the transcendent as experience.

42. Dilation, then, toward the past and toward the future, converges in the present, concrete eternity in Christ, in Him present indeterminable, livable because from Christ extended form of the infinite that emanates from and derives from God because in God, as inscrutable event: both the infinite and the entire completeness subsist, continuing to happen. Actually what is invisible in us, that is, our consciousness, is perpetuated in *abstract time* as the substance of that visible *now*, in the remembrance of the transformation of one's *concrete* time, of its mystically historical evolution and which leads the concrete back to the abstract experience (here in the sense of *Erfahrung*), the imperceptible yet perceptible experience of time external to our world, time by Aristotle⁴⁸ already identified and placed in the infinite, in turn opening up to analogously infinite greatness: God's, experienced anthropologically in Christ revealed in the love of *the Cross* and in the *limen* between his life and death toward his resurrecting Life, bodily witness for man to the victory of love *on the Cross*.

The power of holiness increases man's hope for his salvation, when time seems to dull the focus of grace, of that Christian grace which transcends (*überschreiten*) human righteousness: in this emerges an awareness of a mystical means of perspective of reality. Yet it is exactly at that precise instant that the light of Christian grace, outlines in a totally unexpected and unexpected way, but in full, what

48 ARISTOTELE, *Physics*, edited by Luigi Ruggiu, Mimesis Edizioni, Milan 2007, pp. 243-249. On this we refer to listening to Arvo PART's work, *Da pacem, Domine* (2004), in *Da pacem*, Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, Paul Hillier, 2006.

will really be the future, what will happen in the future, that future of life, awaited by each one of us, which returns to the One who gave this life to each one. Therefore, his mystery, in the same way as *it happens* in the life of man, God reveals it exactly at the margin of his own “Life,” becoming this last death of man-Christ, in that mystical, that is, mystery and sacred aporia, already pointed out above, which indicates life to be the inescapable link of its opposite, precisely because it is from such paradoxicality that then emerges that long-awaited Love, able to let Jesus rise to Life, Himself coming to be God so that Jesus also happens in existence as the supreme sacrifice of our life, the immeasurable legacy of time as eternal duration (αἰών)⁴⁹.

Holiness on the other hand could never be separated from a martyrdom, sometimes visibly carnal, often absolutely interior, and in any case only apparently invisible, a martyrdom that, however, lets from that grace, who knows not entirely *in-expected* and unexpected, flow the reunion of man to God, mystical and mysterious, so often invoked, at other times instead un hoped for against all hope and rationalistic evidence and worldly materiality.

43. The meaning of life, nevertheless, is not commensurable with the mundanization of time, that is, with making it dependent on the collective imperatives of the world. Rather, life is independent of it and acquires its value by having meaning. But what then? In what “sense” must life have of it?

Man’s life, however, always possesses meaning, to the extent that each one of us, could already recognize and literally discovered and ascertained that his dignity was never tied to how “precious” his time in the world was, rather human dignity was *riveted to the* fact that the life of each one of us, was precious in and of itself, like a broken cup and repaired by letting the crack shine through. For life is itself a talent delivered to us as a gift from the One who had already offered His life so that the very existence of each of us and for each of us was made safe forever⁵⁰. The Gift, then, stands inescapably beyond the meaning that the world may have attributed or subtracted, as in a kind of zero-sum economic game, from the human dignity of our lives. Christ’s sacrifice intersects the *indeterminable present* in the common

49 Cf. Giuseppe FORNARI, *Beauty and Nothingness. The Christian anthropology of Leonardo da Vinci*, cit. pp. 316-322.

50 *Ex*, 37:24; *Mt*, 25:18-28.

path to God: it is then the sacrifice, that is, the *limes* and *limen* of martyrdom through time, that reflect holiness as the only possible mystical meaning of life and this life.

X Invariability and multiplicity of the instant: From indeterminable mystical time to indeterminable mystical marital experience

44. In such a hermeneutical framework of the *mystic*, we can affirm how the concept of the universal translates into the experience of God's revelation in Christ. This experience, however, would be impossible if it had not been revealed exclusively, and unrepeatably, by Jesus himself, because "true God and true man"⁵¹, is the human and visible face of God's invisibility. Precisely in this sense, God is an experience of time, time that reveals itself, in turn, as "indeterminable present," because Life-in-itself without beginning, and for-itself without end. Yet that indispensable consistency and persistence that profiles human experience as an indissoluble bond with God because Christ, therefore God in Christ since it is an inherent bond between God and man⁵².

It cannot be left out, however, how the whole of post-scholastic philosophy, which takes its start particularly immediately after the Protestant Reformation, has, rather, struggled tenaciously against God revealed by Christ, because Son, by refuting the *instant* of the singular in the universal, the revelation of the ontic foundation in man, that is, Christ: Christ is the *mystical body* of God in the world and in man's

51 "For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by man's hands, a figure of the true one, but into heaven itself, to appear now before God on our behalf, and not to offer himself again and again, like the high priest who enters the sanctuary every year with other people's blood. For in that case he would have had to suffer several times since the foundation of the world. Now instead, once only, at the fullness of time, he appeared to cancel sin by the sacrifice of himself," *Heb.* 9:24-26. Inescapable, I think, here is the listening to *The Shroud* (2006), especially what happens mind-bogglingly from minute 13 until 15:40, by the Estonian composer, already mentioned, Arvo Pärt, who with rare timbral and sonic forces *unveils* the power of the light of resurrection, announced in that veil that fills human history with salvation.

52 "He who believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me; he who sees me, sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me will not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not condemn him; for I did not come to condemn the world, but to save the world. He who rejects me and does not accept my words, he has those who condemn him: the word I have spoken will condemn him on the last day. For I have not spoken from myself, but the Father, who sent me, has commanded me what to speak and what I should say. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. The things therefore that I say, I say as the Father has said them to me," *Jn.* 12:44-50. See also *Jn.*, 8, 12-20.

time so that the latter had been saved by an ontological and worldly event, and Jesus *happened* historically to continue to *indeterminable present* future, thus revealed hope of man in his time. The mystical encounter with the certainty of the *indeterminable present* revealed in Christ, because He is the Son of God the Father, comes through a recognition, exactly what in the Shivaitic tradition could be identified as *pratyabhijñā*, a recognition, that is, that made hope saved because of a gift of God's love in the instant of Creation.

Ancient Hinduism on the other hand had made proper in man the characteristic of his *mystical impulse* (*udyāma*) be in search of the missing part of himself in the world, attainable only through the overcoming of temporalities, once the worldly limits of temporalities have been crossed. Being in this observes a single intrinsic light to which it rejoins and by which it is traversed, intersecting in a universal heart, in which there is time that is, by the mere fact of occurrence, *present* but *indeterminably enduring*, that is, *interminable*: precisely God, the certainty that the Beloved need never again risk the lover's abandonment.

45. One deduces from that acquisition that indefectible bond of God's perpetual love for man, realistically possible only in Christ, because anthropologically perfect, mystically alive, humanly real in the experience of time in the world by being born and dying and rising again in that material body that marked the very time of the world. It is specifically at that apex of time that culminates the convergence to a continuous, first, fundamental motionless present (*unbewegte Ur- und Grundbewegende*), perpetually present time that reveals its motion without having to be "before" and without looming over an "after," however determinable. Rather, it is a complete time that encompasses accordingly *contingency*, *epoch*, or *eternity* in the permanent stillness of the present-in-Christ (*Gegenwart-an-Christus*).

From this present-in-Christ resurrects, as the fulcrum of grace, man's salvation in its timeless dimension, but from which *happens* for man the glow of love made safe in Christ and determinable at every instant of man's existence, just as if this very existence was no longer merely detectable in past time or future expectation, but also uniquely determinable in the *present of faith* in Christ, from which everything is origin and motion, duration and foundation and measure indefinable insofar as it is inscrutable, that is, definitive precisely because direct

ascertainment of a living witness on the part of man to renounce and refuse a return to the day of despair.

Hence *hope* becomes an inescapable event of *faith* at the moment, however, when *Love* has happened (*geschehen*) and occurs to become Present now indeterminable for man, the impeccable reality for the man himself to know and experience Christ.

46. And so the fact that God was the creator of the world without tools is easy to presuppose even if one does not want to resort to his Omnipotence: a craftsman, for example, builds those same useful tools later in the creation of the desired object: it is precisely in the *non-simultaneity-of-events* of Creation that is the philosophical locus where God expresses that intelligence, will and memory which will give the object to what is ripe in its causal premises, precisely because the causal conditions of things are not all produced simultaneously and in the same way: it is on the indifference to the presence or absence of causal concomitances that God rests his own creative activity.

God, then, is a substance that has intelligence for its quality, yet is not to be united with other (human) souls in something absolutely inescapable: time without the world, a time devoid of temporality and temporalization, that is, a continuous form that does not need a discrete element that can intersect it to contextualize it within the world, as a function of the time of this world.

47. *To love one's spouse, mystically caught in the ongoing process of God's creation, however, means to love him or her in the vision of a vertical love, coming from and directed to God, that is, a divine love that in meditation we can discover totally and infinitely.* Says Edith Stein, "God can grant the soul an obscure and loving knowledge of Himself, even without that preparatory training which is meditation. He can bring it by weight, suddenly, into the state of contemplation and love, that is, *infuse it with contemplation*"⁵³.

The circumstances of a life highlight metamorphoses of tradition, and cohesion in the transformations of the elements of nature in the world, so that power, as understood by Schelling, unfolds determinacy in the world and time provoked and kindled by Creation.

53 Cf. Edith STEIN, *Scientia Crucis*, Ed. OCD, Rome 1998, p. 205. Cf. by Fernando INCIARTE, *Unsterblichkeit der Seele und Auferstehung des Leibes*, in *Leben zur Gänze. Das Leib-Seele-Problem*, vol. 7, *Religion, Wissenschaft, Kultur*, Schriftenreihe der Wiener katholischen Akademie, ed. G. Pöltner, H. Vetter, Präsidium der Wiener Katholischen Akademie, Wien/München, Herold, 1986, p. 82-95.

With Schelling⁵⁴, in the *Naturphilosophie*, the element of the world is phenomenized to its form: the *discrete* is differentiated from the *continuous* because it is the synthesis of form and phenomenon between nature and the world, between the time of movement and the measure of space in the world, the revelation of the intelligibility of Creation by God.

According to Schelling, who goes back to Christian philosophers earlier than him such as Eckhart or even Bruno, what differentiates the philosophy of nature from the previous theory of natural phenomena lies precisely in the overcoming of definitions: the phenomena that in nature appear, pose in-self necessary principles and not merely possible. Creation itself, therefore, arises as the cohesion of God's love to his own will to extrinsic *ex-sibi* the Gift of love that, nevertheless, becomes part of self and therefore man: Adam, and subsequently God himself in Christ who becomes incarnate to redeem that Adam and love him back, offering again a Gift of love, paradoxically precisely with his own Life. Therefore, in the Passion and Death of Jesus, in his human vicissitude that is jointly and inseparably also divine, we witness the renewed Genesis, the new giving of the Creation of man and the world, that *fiat* springing from human history and time, resulting in the transformation of crucified Love into a Gift: from the *fiat* of the Father in which man was created and arose, that human story and that man-event pass to the *consumatum est* of the Son, in which man finds his salvation for his new Creation.

48. Again: that Gift is precisely Jesus, Son of God, who contemplates his Passion and Death as corroborated and reaffirmed Creation that at the moment of his ascent to Calvary, Christ reforms and recreates that world and man willed with a breath by the Father and to which the Father in and through his Word had given life: finally discrete element and continuous form, man and world, creation and Creation, at Jesus' Resurrection all deflagrate together in that light that *carves through* the imperceptibility of an instant and allows in that elusive moment the inseparable return of the Whole (*Weltall*) once again, the Augustinian "soul of the world," the Schellingian *Weltseele*, to occur as that special explosion of the *discrete* in the order of nature

54 Friedrich W. J. SCHELLING, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur als Einleitung in das Studium dieser Wissenschaft*, Krüll, Ladshut 1803, pp. 35-48, (cf. transl. it. edited by Giulio Preti, in Friedrich W. J. SCHELLING, *L'empirismo filosofico e altri scritti*, La Nuova Italia, Florence 1967; but another specific Italian translation of the Schellingian text edited by Carlo Tatasciore, Friedrich W. J. SCHELLING *Filosofia della natura e dell'identità. Writings of 1802*, Guerini e Associati, Milan 2002, in particular pp. 56 ff.).

and the world, order conjoined with the *continuous* in the definition of time within the world and man within the universe.

In the Schellingian concept of *Weltseele*, the German philosopher wanted to impart identity to nature in a created world that would still generate the *adynaton* of a cosmological dimension of Creation absent from a Creator, instead possible solely through God, man being unified in Him.

Consubstantiating Himself into a perfect form of life resurrecting in the love of God the Father, - an event impossible for man because man's life is subordinated to the singularity of a cycle in the world of nature irreversible, that is, concretizing the return from death to life -, precisely such a perfect form is given at the moment of Jesus' Resurrection: Jesus unhinges the order of nature, a condition possible only to God because He is the Creator of Life, to become Himself in the order of Creation and to happen in the vicissitude of man as that Gift of love specified for man Himself, thus reincarnating Jesus, in exactly that moment and in that dimension of the event, precisely the very genesis of Creation in the certainty of renewed Love.

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