

MYSTICAL ASCESIS

By Pietro Ubaldi

PIETRO UBALDI COLLECTION:

Great Messages
The Great Synthesis
The Noures
Mystical Ascesis
A Man's History
Fragments of Thought and Passion
The New Civilization of The Third Millennium
Future Problems
Human Ascensions
God and Universe
The Future of the World
Commentaries
Current Problems
The System
The Great Battle
Evolution and Gospel
The Law of God
The Functional Technique of God's Law
Fall and Redemption
Principles of a New Ethics
The Descent of Ideals
A Destiny Following Christ
Thoughts
Christ

For suggestions, inquiries, or the wish to share your thoughts please contact at:

pietroubaldibooks@gmail.com

Instagram: @UbalDIUK

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FIRST PART

THE PHENOMENON

1

POSITIONING OF THE PROBLEM

In this volume, I will analyze the phenomenon of mystical ascesis. I dispense with the need to again place it in the cultural field and in the modern psychological moment, since I present it in its dual aspect of a scientific phenomenon and a spiritual phenomenon, as a logical and lived sequence of the inspirational phenomenon, already extensively analyzed in the preceding volume¹. Those who have read it will have found therein the dual pretext for this continuation, be it in the scientific field, or be it in the spiritual field. And to respond objectively, or rather, almost photographically, to the reality of the phenomenon, as it was lived by me, here I will analyze and delve into it, under two aspects resulting from two different psychologies, which, although today considered opposite, are for me equivalent: science and faith.

This will serve to demonstrate its substantial identity in all fields and, especially, in the face of this much debated and controversial mystical phenomenon; it will also serve to show that certain antagonisms, lately so acute and transformed into seeds of painful schisms of the unity of thought and faith, should now be considered overcome. And, when I have brought together to the same conclusions the extreme and opposite attitudes of human thought, my interpretative conception, based on the reality I have intensely felt, will have the solidity of universal truth and can

¹ “The Noures”, a work by the same Author already published in English

be considered a new foundation that, in my constant longing to do good, I will have managed to lay for the construction of the edifice of knowledge. I dare to hope this, not only as the fruit of the immense inner work in which I have matured, by the fatality of the law of evolution, superior to my merits and my own will, but also because this very study constitutes, for me, such a high culmination of my preceding syntheses, that I can summarize and raise them all to what I might call my highest conceptual synthesis, of passion and life. The mystical phenomenon is, in fact, animated by a dynamism so potent and profound, made of inner maturation and surpassings so substantial and yearning for impulses so exalted, that it must necessarily be considered at the apex of the aspirations of intelligence and heart.

The previous study, to which I have already referred, although apparently exhaustive and definitive, is nothing more than the preparation for this one, just as the phenomenon of inspirational mediumship, described therein, was for me nothing more than a phase of life. In this new phase, it seems as if all the powers of the human soul rise up in a whirlwind, and I, through my exposition, will guide the reader, who has followed me thus far, even beyond the vivid sensation of the overwhelming vertigo that has struck me in my supernormal states of vision and ecstasy. I have stated that this is a **continuation** of previous phases of the phenomenon, which is why in this writing I must necessarily refer to the volume in which these are described. I declared that these are phenomena I have lived through, which compels me to speak of myself again. If this is inelegant, it is nevertheless a guarantee of objectivity, because my analysis touches, also here as in the phases already examined, a reality that, although interior, is perfectly accessible to me. Although personal and objective, I was able to abstract myself from it clearly, subjecting it to methodical, analytical, and scientific study.

Only in a second part is the mystical phenomenon presented in its spiritual, religious, and ideal aspect, as it was, almost always exclusively². It thus distinguishes itself from that common, vague, and imprecise nomenclature, and is defined in its fundamental lines as a phenomenon of biological evolution, extended to the realm of the highest psychism. Viewed in this way, as a lived case, the phenomenon, although it may seem confined to the subjectivism of my individual consciousness, undoubtedly presents itself not only in the solidity of an experimental reality but also within the bounds of a universal truth, because I conceive and regard it, in accordance with my consistently followed philosophical and scientific orientation, as a phase of the human and normal biological evolution, although here it is continued and projected into the higher levels of spiritual ascension. Therefore, these are universal truths that we will deal with, fundamental lines of the phenomenal development, which is the law of things, an objective reality situated beyond the relative, in the absolute, a deeply human reality, woven of struggles, pains, and conquests.

This is a great advantage of being able to operate upon a psychological reality, which for me is experimental, and upon a truth that is universal: these are the two bases of our study, very solid, which compensate for what could be seen as a flaw, that is, the continuous need to speak of myself, as well as of my previous literary production. To this, however, I must indispensably refer, as from it result the first phases of the maturation of the spiritual phenomenon I have lived through. It is essential, to understand it in the specific case in which I analyze and present it, to resort, as preparation and explanation, to my past, which contains it in germ, and from which it developed. I would not know how to establish the terms of this study differently, because only those who have experi-

² Second part of the present volume - "The Experience". (Translator's Note).

enced certain sensations and emotions have the sufficiently vibrant word to express the ineffable.

Forgive me for such ostentation, as it is necessary to recognize how inevitable it is. Forgive me if it seems to reach even a merciless confession of my entire being, to the most hidden intimacy, a confession that will provide the reader with the same sensation I experience, made of sacrifice and holocaust, rather than vain exhibitionism. A donation of myself, for the understanding and resolution of the most arduous problems of science and faith, implicit in the spirit, problems of the world, not only in an evolutionary sense but also historical, because mystics have always existed, at all times and in all countries. The resonance that my soul finds in so many mystics and the one they find in mine, the communion of faith, of experiences and of spiritual goals, the historical universality of facts and phenomena lived expand my poor case beyond the limits of a subjectivism that, evidently, is no longer confined to me, but overflows beyond the borders of my personality.

I hope to have thus justified the position in which I place the mystical problem, which here is compensated with two solid points of support and, yet, two points of relative weakness.

2

EVOLUTION OF MEDIUMSHIP

I thus place the mystical phenomenon in the evolutionary sequence of the inspirational phenomenon. Let us specify, therefore, with greater accuracy.

In my previous book, I classified in various phases the mediumship that I have considered a phenomenon in evolution, a moment and exponent of the greatest biological-human evolution, which, having overcome organic forms, ventures today, progressively dematerializing, into psychic forms. Here I do not demonstrate, but merely recall this biological-psychic evolution, elsewhere already exhaustively treated by me³.

In its first lower level, the mediumistic phenomenon manifests in a physical form, with material effects. On a higher plane, there appears a superior mediumship, more evolved, with mental effects. These are forms too well-known for me to insist upon. If, in its first level, intellectual mediumship is simply passive and unconscious mediumship, where the will and consciousness of the medium move away from the phenomenon, as strange and useless elements, by evolving to a higher level, it transforms into an active and conscious sense, in which, as I have demonstrated, the medium's consciousness is awake and an integral part of it. Indeed, I have extensively dealt with this inspirational mediumship, that is, active and conscious intellectual mediumship, clearly operating in the living personality of the subject. I outlined the law of resonance of the phenom-

³ In *The Great Synthesis* (passim) and *The Noures*. (Translator's Note).

enon, through which, between the center of emanation, transmitter, individualizable as **noures** or thought currents, and the awakened consciousness of the medium, a communication can be established, through the attuning of vibrations, which is the basis of the inspirational reception.

And, at this point, I had stopped, because yesterday this constituted the last term of my realization; but, it is no longer so today. Those affirmations contained, however, the reasons for this continuation.

The inspirational⁴ mediumship is already immensely superior to the common passive and unconscious mediumship, because it becomes active and tends to fix itself in the medium's personality, as their normal emanation. However, the phenomenon cannot stop its development here. Certainly, it will take us to dizzying altitudes, especially for science that is not accustomed to dealing with phenomena whose evolutionary progression leads them to a normal dematerialisation, which withdraws them from common sensory and psychic perception; a progression that leads them to seemingly vanish into a world that, being imponderable, is contested by science. But, this is not reason enough for me to stop, especially when I find in myself the guide of a lived experience. Let us continue, therefore, still, as the phenomenon continued in me for a year; relegate to the past that known and overcome phase and venture into the superior zone of evolutionary development of the inspirational mediumistic phenomenon.

We have seen that the two terms of the inspirational phenomenon, akin to a radio transmission-reception, represent the emanating centre and the consciousness of the medium, which is receptive and recording.

⁴ Those who are accustomed to naming these phenomena with another nomenclature, unless they replace the word with the concept and the form with the substance, will equally, I am certain, comprehend, even though the expressions adopted by me may be unusual for them. (Note of the Author.)

The two terms are distinct, though communicating, that is, linked by a phenomenon of resonance. The *Nouric* capture is based on this principle, namely, on the state of attuning or vibratory harmonization, which is achieved through two reciprocal approaches: first, the entry into the phase of superconsciousness by the medium's self which puts itself into tension; in other words, an ascensional shift of their centre, along the evolutionary scale of dimensions, to the highest psychic phase and superconsciousness; second, a descent along the same evolutionary scale, that is, an involution of conceptual dimension by the emanating centre and its irradiation, so that, through mutual propensity of one towards the other, it is possible for the encounter and embrace of the two terms.

These faculties tend, through continuous exercises, to stabilize themselves, moving from the unstable zone of fatigue and conquest, to the zone of assimilation, completed in the medium's personality, that is, to the zone of instinct and normal quality (automatism).

A habit of consciousness is formed through the subtle breathing in the rarefied zones of this stratosphere of thought. The approximation of the two terms thus tends to become ever closer, more constant, more normal. Over time, the vibratory attuning stabilizes, through constant repetition, that state of affinity between transmitter and receiver, which is sympathy and attraction, a state recognisably basic, upon which I insisted so much in the study of the phenomenon of *nouric* reception.

Evident is the result of this process. It contains a field of forces converging towards the same point which will necessarily be touched, sooner or later. The abnormal communication of thought will become in the consciousness of the **metaphanic** a kind of education and, consequently, a habit to live in a superior spiritual zone, where the balance of their new **specific psychic weight** tends to normalize itself, in an increasingly stable form. And the communion will not only stabilize their paths but will also expand their frontiers; if before it invaded only the zones of intelli-

gence and was only resplendent light, yet cold, now it will flood the zones of the heart and will also be heat that inflames with passion.

Extremely fervent of maturations is, therefore, the phenomenon, and intensely active is the Above in the transfusion of forces for the *transhumanisation* of the being. It tends, therefore, towards a gradual, progressive, and total elevation, from itself to itself of the receiving consciousness, of the entire human self of the sensitive, with all its resources and potentialities. From this results a kind of fire that reduces the old man to ashes and makes him re-emerge in a completely new form, in which the conception, the psychological orientation, and the vision of the phenomenon and its laws are entirely renewed.

We thus see the phenomenon of inspirational mediumship mature and naturally transform, by logical development, into what can be called, in its first phase, mystical ***metaphany***, in the sense of an increasingly total reception, that is, of emanations, not exclusively conceptual, but also affective, etc. However, as this phenomenon approaches its maturation, it transcends the simple inspirational phenomenon in a rapture of the entire being, to such an extent that it ends up facing this being, as the solar light faces the lunar light.

Such is the mystical phenomenon that we now address.

3

MEDIUMSHIP - METAPHANY – MYSTICISM

We shall enter, later on, into the details of this development. For now, it suffices for us to outline the guiding principles. The succession of these phases I did not learn from books, which I do not read, or texts, which I do not consult, but from my direct experience. I wished to preserve here my virginity of thought, remaining in direct and exclusive contact with the phenomenon, so that afterwards the eventual coincidence with the results of other studies and experiences would become, for me and others, more surprising and confirmatory.

The scope of the phenomenon of mystical ascesis, the subject of this study, is thus defined and can be expressed in these terms and understood within these limits: by mystical ascesis, I refer to the development of the psychic phenomenon, from the stage of lucid *metaphany* or conscious inspiration, to its phase of mysticism that culminates in the complete unification between the receiver and the transmitter. This study, as well as my experience which guides it, moves within these confines.

The essence of the phenomenon always lies in the universal and inextinguishable evolution of the spirit. However, it is certain that at these levels, the simple mediumistic phenomenon spreads over such a sea of conquests and grand affirmations, that the thread of supranormal revelation and the first glimpse of transcendental transparencies, which is the

simple *metaphany*, gets lost in the vertigo of light, which is the mystical state, in such a way that, far from diminishing the personality in unconsciousness, it captivates it consciously to the superconceivable. I hear the inner voice expressing itself in a chant of universal harmonies: — "Behold," says the voice to me, — "the spiritual substance of the forms of being. The whole is a whirl of spheres. This movement represents the sweetest music, the most marvellous harmony of lights, the most gigantic construction, in the broadest accuracy of relations, and it is also a chant of concepts and feelings. Observe and, in the harmony of this infinitely multiple love, forget the dissonance of your pain that is closed in time. Let your spirit explode, beyond all measures, in the immeasurable, beyond all limits, in the infinite, beyond all lesser rhythms, in the divine rhythm of the whole. You will see and hear. Every soul is made to see and hear."

"Observe. Beings divide and come together according to hierarchies. Each one, by virtue of their specific weight, finds their natural level, invariably. They see, speak and listen to each other. Voices and lights, from plane to plane, descend and ascend: for the Above has a thirst to give, just as the inferior plane has a thirst for help. This is the Law, reigning everywhere and at every level. Thus, everything is distinguished by unmistakable individuations and everything comes back together and unites in the same light and the same chant. To the call of the weak, a kind echo responds; thanks to the goodness of the Above, there is always a gift to be given. To assist each other, that is the law."

"The light radiates from the Centre and shines through sphere to sphere, through the beings that comprise it. The *metaphanic* is a soul awakened to listening and hears that which for others is silence. Concept, harmony, and potency embody that light; it is a symphony of thoughts and actions, it is also a current of love and strength grafting on-

to the spirit, which is the sole cause of life. And it reinforces motivations and fertilizes your works."

The *nouric* perception is a contact with the divine irradiation, which is the vital lymph of the universe.

"Therefore, I say unto you: Listen and purify yourselves, so that all may be ascension. Do not auscultate vainly, out of mere curiosity, for sacred is the voice from Above. Do not dissipate the substantial potency of life. Let all this serve you to ascend. Never heed the sad voices of the inferior planes, except to aid in suffering and ascending."

"The law of moral ascension, led through kindness and love, is the law of the centre, which by it sustains the universe."

I recall here the words of Goethe to Eckermann: "No production of a superior order, no invention ever proceeded from man, but emanated from an ultraterrestrial source. Therefore, man should consider it an unexpected gift from Above and accept it with gratitude and veneration. In these circumstances, man is only the instrument of a superior Power, akin to a vessel deemed worthy of receiving a divine content."

* * *

We shall then feel, more closely, the blaze of those sublimations of the spirit, through which one transitions from the phase of conscious inspiration to that of mystical unification. However, it is necessary, first, to understand and explain the phenomenon rationally and scientifically. Before surrendering to the impetuous lyricism of the vision, it is essential to

follow the phenomenon in each of its manifestations, to grasp it in its bare reality with the analyst's tongs. It is incumbent, above all, to provide complete satisfaction to reason.

In the evolution of the mediumistic phenomenon, from the physical plane to the unconscious psychic plane, then conscious, up to the mystical unification with the source, a fundamental note is the progression of consciousness, of the intervention of the will and, at the same time, of dematerialization. And in it, there is a progressive conquest of the moral factor, an ascending realization of spiritual refinement, a transformation into specific weight, increasingly free and lighter. The entire vast phenomenon of the evolution of mediumship thus combines, in its zones of development, through constant characteristics. While the mediumship of physical effects moves predominantly by *barontic*⁵ causes and ectoplasmic technique, and unconscious intellectual mediumship can open through all doors and become a reception organ for all thought, from the noblest to the vilest, here we witness a process of progressive purification of the phenomenon and the medium. In conscious inspirational reception, the moral factor, as I have often insisted, occupies the foreground, and in mysticism, it is not only a prevalent condition but absolute and irrevocable, so much so that it represents the apex of moral and religious perfectibility. The phenomenon overflows, therefore, in its highest maturations, beyond the limits of the possibilities and competence of science, into the realm of faith and religion. For me, however, there is no antagonism, except in the relativity of perspectives and the one-sidedness of viewpoints. We must, however, elevate science to the level of faith and undertake, without straying, penetration into the realms of the supersen-

⁵ Neologism formed from Greek elements: "baros (Gr. báros, ous) - heavy, dense, and "ontos" (Gr. ón, óntos) - being, entity. Barontic: originating from Spirits of dense constitution (inferior Entities). This problem of barontic currents is extensively explained in the book "The Noures," by the same Author and has already been republished by this Publisher. (N. of T.)

sory. The time has come for these antagonisms between science and faith, today devoid of meaning, as they are the offspring of one-sided visions and outdated historical moments, to fall forever, relegated to the past, just as all surpassed things do.

The mystical phenomenon thus leaves behind, in the path of human ascensions, the mediumistic phenomena and, although it originates from these, it is to be seen that it completely frees itself from them. We thus enter a supermediumistic field, resulting, though, from the mediumistic. We reach the superior phases, to which the phenomenon ascends and in which it intensifies and frees itself, and we enter this zone, which is of supreme purification.

I have not yet been able to raise to higher levels, at least today, my capacity for penetration. It seems to me to have touched the vertex of my possibilities and of my dream of human achievements.

4

THE MYSTICAL CATHARSIS AND THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE

The mystical phenomenon can also be conceived, in the broadest sense, as a moment of human spiritual ascensions. It includes, therefore, the problem of knowledge and can be considered, as I consider it, a true technique of thought and a particular method of inquiry, of superlative yield. Elsewhere, I have already insisted on these concepts, during the study of the inspirational phenomenon. Continuing the analysis of the same phenomenon, in its superior phases, it is natural that those concepts also find here their further development.

It is the evolution of the spirit that traces and surpasses the limits of knowledge, which diversely situates it in its progression, up to the point where unification with the source of emanation, which we find at the apex of the mystical phenomenon, also becomes unification of the divergent aspects under which the relative is contemplated, in a single humanly absolute truth. Thus, to the different phases of spiritual evolution correspond various degrees of knowledge and different approaches to the revelation of truth.

At the dawn of his spiritual life, man cannot rise beyond the immediate consequences of his sensory impressions. His judgment, therefore, stops at the surface of phenomena, limiting itself to an empirical and dis-

jointed interpretation, a mere projection in the cosmos of the reactions of his small inner world.

In a more advanced moment, consciousness, further matured, as has happened to date in the bosom of civilization, desires to understand the value of its own reactions, seeks and demands a truth less apparent and more substantial, and approaches phenomena, not solely with the fantasy of the primitive, but with the objective gaze of an observer. Thus, it has learned to catalogue facts, coordinate them according to hypothetical schemes, and attempts to comprehend the logic and establish the law of progression of phenomena, in order to gradually establish the principles, increasingly abstract and general, that govern the organic functioning of the universe. Such is the current scientific phase. The modern man rightly feels his superiority over the superstitious man, who is impressed before learning to observe, and takes pride in not being overwhelmed by vain fears in the face of phenomena whose cause can be discerned with his analytical power. And this is already a great deal. Man has achieved rationality, this architectural power, which allows for ideological constructions; he is a force of choice and coordination, a vision of relationships and unification; he is induction, deduction, systematization, that guides towards the reconstruction of the original thought of creation.

Science has gathered all the little stones of the great mosaic, has endeavoured to reconstruct the grand panel, yet has managed to achieve nothing more than to outline some figures. But, alas! — the path is long, the method exceedingly verbose, so much so that it can be considered inadequate for achieving the ultimate synthesis. Thus, the incompetence of science becomes apparent, consequently a fundamental question of method; this, as conceived, can be nothing more than an eternal journey, incapable of synthesis.

From the evolutionary maturation of human consciousness, however, ensues a fundamental mutation. I feel, through personal experience, through observation of historical types in the movement of biological laws, the truth of this statement. The phenomenon of mystical catharsis represents such a complete elevation of consciousness that the pathways of knowledge open wide to it. This is an important aspect of the mystical phenomenon, which we are studying here. Before confronting its greater psychological, ethical, and religious aspects, let us examine its scientific and gnoseological aspects.

The three degrees of knowledge, that is, the sensory phase, the rational-analytical phase, and the intuitive-synthetic phase, correspond to the three types of man and consciousness that I described in another work⁶, namely: the vegetative, physical, sensory man, of concrete ideation, driven by the primal instincts of life; the rational man, subjected to education, psychic, nervous, utilitarian; finally, the superman, master of himself, the forces of life, of knowledge. The phenomenon of mystical asceticism represents the biological maturation of this new type of man.

It is happening now, at this moment in human evolution, such a renewal of consciousness that its effects are incalculable in the psychological field and thus deserve particular examination. It is about a new and authentic technique of thought, a complete reconstruction of the methods of research and scientific orientation. Therefore, I must return to these concepts, already previously outlined⁷, to take them further here, in the logical continuation of their development. I must return to them because, if in those writings the method of intuition begins to reveal itself in the phase of conscious inspirational mediumship, here it fully mani-

⁶ In "The Great Synthesis," chapter 78 (The Paths of Human Evolution). See also chapter 37 (Consciousness and Superconsciousness. Succession of Three-Dimensional Systems) (Translator's Note).

⁷ See The Noures, by the same Author, particularly chapters 5 (Technique of the Noures) and 6 (Conclusions). (Note of the Translator.)

ifests itself, in the mystical phase which constitutes its continuation. At this level of evolution, complete is the maturation of that method, whose yield presents itself to us with full efficiency.

5

OBJECTIVISM AND SUBJECTIVISM

When tackling the gnoseological problem, we depart from principles decisively new in modern thought. The knowledge, I believe, is not attained through the so-called objective methods of external projection, mechanical, uniform for all and accessible to all, but through subjective methods, of introspection, peculiar only to certain types of superconsciousness. I believe the limits of knowledge are given and measured predominantly according to the degree reached by human consciousness on the scale of psychic evolution, which means that the breadth of the dominated phenomenal field is conditioned by the extent achieved by the **self**, in its evolution, which is its potentiation and expansion. This is why the mystical phenomenon, which is the superior phase of the spirit's evolution, presents itself in connection with the problem of knowledge and coincides with its solution.

Thus, I position myself as the antithesis of the modern mental form adopted by science, while at the same time, placing myself above objective psychology, I elevate subjectivism to the forefront.

At the beginning, I indicated the subjective character of this writing, which is also that of my entire psychological orientation. Some may argue against me for subjectivism, as if that were a flaw. The objection, which can be global and rise against my personality and the value I assign to the method of intuition, seems serious, but it is not.

How can rational science oppose me, as a flaw, the arbitrariness of subjectivism and its intuitive bases, when it itself is founded on axiomatic bases, equally intuitive and arbitrary, because still capable of demonstration? The foundations of that conceptual organism, from which this accusation may arise, although considered absolutely secure, are gratuitous axioms, of transitory value and extremely relative. This may give some autonomous spirits the sensation that human thought, in all its overwhelming congeries of ideological, philosophical, and scientific constructions, stirs on conventional bases. **Science ignores what the phenomena upon which it operates substantially are.** It ascertains and combines the effects, because it has experienced that things occur in this and that way. But, why and in what manner this happens, it does not know. In the abstract field, if we penetrate to the unadorned backstage of ideological construction and lay bare the play with which the chain of human syllogization is woven and developed, we will see, ascending from concatenation to concatenation and from relation to relation, that one must necessarily arrive at the fixed starting point, the cornerstone of the entire edifice. Now, this fixed point, which is precisely what governs the construction and for the lack of which it all crumbles, is simply an axiom of which nothing else can be said except that it is so because it is so, an axiom whose demonstration is deemed superfluous, for the simple reason that it is declared evident; and while for the acceptance of a detail a thousand proofs are demanded, for the acceptance of the base-principle nothing is required, solely because it already exists as an undiscussed acceptance in the great majority of humanity. And then the guarantee of this fundamental truth is entrusted solely and exclusively to a background of collective intuition that instinctively supports a minimum of truth. **Instinctively**, that is, beyond all rational control. Leaving aside utilitarian science, true science, abstract, philosophical, mathematical, of conceptual content, turns and revolves, recurs and relies entirely on rudiments of intuition. Minimal intuitions, but secure, solely because guar-

anted by extending to a large number of people. Or greater intuitions, of geniuses, isolated seers, later developed, analytically and rationally, by the chain of reasoning.

There is, then, in the roots of modern thought, an area of that arbitrariness and that intuition which would exactly taint my subjectivism. The method of intuition consists merely in an extension of the same system to all ideological unfoldment; it means extending the same intuitive contact to all development and constantly maintaining oneself in the axiomatic system, without seeking rational support. If **“the axiom is the intuitive contact with the absolute,”** I extend this contact and make it continuous and universal. I do not, therefore, condemn science; I consider it, rather, a spark of thought, as far as it is not demonstrated and where its rational activity does not reach. I amplify, rather, its fundamentals in a method that, although accessible only to those who, through evolution, have arrived there, is the only one that can truly attain knowledge.

The method of intuition is not accepted by modern positive science, as it is anti-objective. It is not accepted because, while the phenomenal world, as per the method of observation and experimentation, is approximately the same for everyone and is susceptible to being understood and constructed, the intuitive method, being extremely personal and subjective, does not possess the strength to ascend and rise to a height greater than that of a personal interpretation.

There exists a preconceived idea, and this consists in the number, that is, in admitting that the numerical extension of judgment is a guarantee of truth. This gives me the idea of blind people holding hands to guide each other. Now, the result of external observation is, if not totally, at least partially the same for all, only because it is external, or in other words, it is conjugated to the simplest form of sensory perception, the most rudimentary and also the most diffuse and fundamental in the bio-

logical world. The value of objectivity, therefore, rests solely on the extension of a judgment identity, which is, in turn, the offspring of an identity of physiological, nervous, and psychic construction. Objectivity, then, reveals itself as all the more evident, the more it depends on the more primitive sensory structuring, which is firstly touch (we know how illusory this unquestionable sensory reality is in the face of the kinetic constitution of matter), and then sight, hearing, etc. I would be saying that it is a direct function of the inferiority of the evolutionary level, because the more the being evolves, the more it necessarily penetrates, thanks to the law of differentiation, into subjectivism.

Now, the objective method, whilst presenting the advantage of reaching more universal conclusions and interpretations, appears constructed, by its nature, precisely to remain adherent, without the ability to transcend them, to the most exterior appearances, to the most rudimentary and superficial structures and phenomenal interpretations. This unity of judgement is an apparent advantage, because it leaves us on the surface, tends to always reconduct us towards the relative, the particular, and does not constitute, absolutely, unity of orientations and conclusions, universality of conceptions that reach the substance of things. The objectivism was born fatally without wings. Indeed, modern science is incapable of constructing a system that contains the explanation of all phenomena and demonstrates, through them, the functioning of the universal law.

The objective method is, in sum, the negation of the method of penetration into the depth and substance of things; it seems to me almost like a ballast that stays low and automatically intercepts the paths of knowledge, capable of utilitarian results, but impotent in the face of deeper outcomes. The value of objectivity lies entirely in this human consensus that certainly does not contain the key to the absolute, nor can it be taken as a measure of things. True consensus can consist only in the

voice of the phenomena, which only intuitive subjectivism knows how to listen to and make heard, bringing it out of the silence of the mystery. It cannot but arise, in the spirit of those who have heard this voice, a trust in other proofs, which are not those of the senses and instruments, nor those provided by the acceptance of normal human psychology.

But, it is not everything. The objective method is based entirely on a fundamental error of situation, which prevents it from conceptually penetrating phenomena. This error lies in the distinction between the self and the non-self, between the subject and the object, between consciousness and the external world. Upon this individualism, offspring of selfishness, is the foundation of all modern scientific psychology. Now, it must be admitted that the harsh necessities of the psychology of struggle, which life imposes, cannot be definitively overcome. While in the intuitive method, consciousness, becoming humble yet sensitive, manages to transport itself, through inner pathways, from its innermost to the intimate essence of phenomena, with the objective method, consciousness, remaining autonomous and volitional, suppresses its sensitivity and stifles the voice of phenomena, colliding with them, without penetrating them, stopping at their surface, in such a way that it touches only appearances and illusions. The thought of GOD, which resides in the depths of things, withdraws when faced with a psychology of doubt and violence, while it reveals itself spontaneously to those who approach with love and faith. Such is the law of life.

Objectivism is, therefore, the offspring of a prejudice: a fundamental human instinct. What value will it have when transported to the rarefied atmosphere of conception? It is from there that originates this psychological orientation of destruction. The distinction between subject and object is not merely separatism that distances and digs an insurmountable abyss of misunderstanding between observer and phenomenon, but, in strictness, it is also antagonism because observation precisely starts

from negation and doubt and, as a guarantee of truth, precisely takes distrust, opposing trust and faith, that is, it assumes a mental attitude that a **priori** closes all paths of communication. With this psychology of aggression and negation, only conceptual destruction can be obtained, and in the face of mystery, darkness and silence.

Opposite is the method of subjectivism and intuition. While objectivism distances, this one approaches; while objectivism diverges and separates, subjectivism converges and unifies. This is truly the method of conceptual unification in the absolute demolition of the dualism of the objective method.

6

THE METHOD OF UNIFICATION

How, then, shall we resolve the problem of knowledge?

It is at this point that it again converges and merges with the issue of mystical ascesis, because the method of unification can only manifest when the evolution of consciousness reaches the mystical phase. In this plane, the great phenomenon of unification occurs, which we will further delve into. This could not fail to have reflections and repercussions also in the field of gnoseology. Evolution changes the methods and expands consciousness. And, as it had nullified rational psychology in the psychology of intuition, moving from the logical-scientific phase to the phase that we might call inspirational, so intuition continues and completes itself in conceptual unification, in the same way as the inspirational reception continues and completes itself, as we will see, in the unitary fusion of the two terms of that reception.

Once this level is reached, the dualism of the objective method disappears from consciousness. The two terms — subject and phenomenon — come closer, the distance is reabsorbed until it fades away, the division is healed, the conflict between the two antagonisms is resolved, and understanding is opened. Here we do not deal with this phenomenon of unification, except for what it reflects on the problem of knowledge. When consciousness, in the mystical catharsis, not only communicates, almost radio-phonically, with the *nouric* source, as in inspirational mediumship, but tends, through a process that we will examine, to superimpose and

identify itself with the very source, then the contact is so intimate and integral, that knowledge is spontaneously acquired, through a new sense of vision, and truth overflows all categories of reason, reducing rational schemes to prisons insufficient to contain the concepts. Consciousness transcends the confines of logic and, with a sense of immense dilatation, human thought is shaken from its foundations, in a revolution and renewal so complete, that they remain incomprehensible and inadmissible to those who have not experienced them. The comprehension exists, effectively, in function of the amplitude and depth of the field of consciousness and its degree of sensitization.

To solve the problem of knowledge, it is necessary to reach the universality of the self. It is essential to fling open, through an act of faith and love, through a sense of complete submission, the doors of the soul, to project oneself out of oneself and so that the infinite may penetrate it. Certainly, this is a new behaviour in today's psychology; however, it is necessary for the achievement of new results. Only the identification of the self with the phenomenon can allow the expansion of the former to the limits of the latter; and, when the phenomenon becomes the universe, its expansion will have no limits, as the DIVINITY does not have. The embrace of souls will encompass the infinite. The old crutches of observation are then thrown away, and one flies. It is only through the evolution of the subject, through renewals of consciousness, that such substantial surpassing can be achieved. Then the problem of knowledge is resolved. In the new way of being, knowledge is implicit; truth reveals itself automatically, through vision, and a spontaneous, simple, complete synthesis is reached. Sensory observation, the presumed objective security, is left behind as a crawling method, inadequate, incapable of true synthesis; the tortuous paths of reason are abandoned for the new sensation of the true, direct, immediate, exhaustive. True and throbbing is the vision; it is no longer the tiring conclusion arising from cerebral distilla-

tion, but a living conclusion; in it, the universe vibrates and exults in thought and action.

As the dissolving of the separatism of the egoistic phase occurs in the unification of the altruistic phase, the barriers of the dualism of the objective method fall away. The true, unique, and radical solution to the problem of knowledge can only be obtained through the transfer of consciousness to a superior plane of evolution. The philosophical problem cannot be isolated, nor solved independently of biological and psychic reality. It resides in the human personality and progresses with it; its progress can be nothing but a moment in the progress of the latter. It is necessary to break the circle of instinctive impulses, as well as the ties of rational psychology and habitual conceptions. Just as the mystery of unification, in mystical ascesis, is a natural phenomenon that develops according to its own technique of development, so too is the conquest of knowledge.

Then, a psychological dualism appears between the two forms of thought — the rational and the intuitive — as the vision emerges. The two visions are different: the greater comprehends the lesser, but the lesser does not comprehend the greater. Those who are outside this higher reality will surely take it for an illusion, until they conquer it through evolution. What is outside one's own experience is considered unreal. The two perspectives reach different depths and, consequently, see different aspects in the same truth. The two points of view will necessarily be discriminated against, under the pretext of incomprehension, because the two consciousnesses are diverse and the extent of their reciprocal sensitivities is the only measure of their respective cognizable. However, if the superior psychology can penetrate the inferior, and not vice versa, the latter, even if it denies it, cannot help but revolve around the other, due to a vague premonition of the truth, due to a desire that, incessant, cries in the soul to discover the mystery. Since darkness does not satisfy the

sight nor silence the ear, nor ignorance the intellect, and no one can be satisfied with their negation, nor feel content with the reality they possess, without ever desiring broader realizations, also the incomprehension of the unknown constitutes a vague torment that stimulates to emerge from it.

The method of unification contains within itself the elements apt to compensate for what might seem a weak point, that is, subjectivism. How can we compensate for the plurality of conceptions and the dissonance of contradictions that derive from that subjectivism? Philosophy, precisely there where thought, rising and abstracting from the simple objective verification, becomes necessarily subjective, is a sea of irreconcilable divergences that disorient the spirit, giving the sensation that the search for truth is absurd. And yet, the truth is one. Will, then, divergent subjectivism be incapable of reaching it?

It was precisely, as a reaction to all of this, that science mutilated itself in the objectivity of comprehension, with the aim of achieving a truth equal for all. However, it is evident that knowledge gains in depth and potentiality, as we move from the external world to the internal one. It is not by lowering oneself to the former, but by elevating oneself to the latter, that one gains in truth. It is precisely there, when we have barely separated ourselves from the sensory surface and progressively approach the intimate substance, that subjectivism begins, that is, the variety and divergence of individual expressions: the paths of knowledge are in subjectivity, and the paths of subjectivity constitute the paths of intellectual separatism that seems to distance itself from the unity of knowledge. The conquest of truth must, therefore, pass through this contradiction and know how to reconcile it. A truth equal for all can only be a truth of surface. The search for a deeper reality leads to divergence. Well then. It is important, therefore, to know how to understand first, and then coordinate and reorganize that divergence.

It is natural that assessments change, as we ascend, because so much more than awakens and mobilizes the personal self, that is, the multiple individualism in which the unity of the absolute is reflected. This remains simple and monistic and loses nothing of its unitary character, expressing itself in the infinite variety of the relative. We must remember that the self that conceives is a relative and is in evolution.

We need, then, to overcome this divergence and reconstruct the unity of the substance. It is necessary that we not be intimidated by this apparent irreconcilability, this dissonance of interpretations; we should strive, through the coordination of the expressions of the relative, to reconstruct the unitary fabric of the absolute. The division lies in human manifestation, not in the substance. Let us reorganize the particular reflections, and we will reconstruct the aspects of the single light. From the fusion of unilateral visions, a mosaic will emerge that will provide us with the outlines of the divine model. And the varied intuitions of subjectivism will be ranked by breadth and depth; the relative truths will coordinate themselves, the lesser ones behind the greater ones, up to the most comprehensive and purest — those that have been able to come closest to the substance and have managed to make it more transparent. They will be considered as so many jets of light, each representing the sign of an eternal and infinite language, the word of a divine sermon. They will be considered successive approximations of the human soul, which ascends among darkness and struggles along the same path of truth, from the relative to the absolute, from analysis to synthesis, climbing, by its own effort, the paths of unification. And, as units of measure and index of truth, will be taken, not the objectivity or the judgment of the number, but the degree of purification of the being who, in its evolution, approaches God.

Also let the garden of intuition blossom in a thousand forms. Each diverse flower will be equally beautiful and express a revelation. Then, it

will be seen that, in essence, each flower, in its variety, translates the same eternal beauty and sings the same infinite wisdom. The most perfect and purest flower will speak to us sweetly, with more evident transparency; the most rough and primitive will barely be able to stammer. Yet, the word is one, because the plan of creation and the thought of God are one. And then, through the beautiful multiplicity, rich because of subjectivism, spontaneously one returns to unity, in which separatism is once again unified and the self merges into the Whole, without destruction, as a collaborator who gave himself for the reconstruction of the great edifice of knowledge. At that height, the split personal intuitions will be seen to coincide in depth, in the same chant, which is the voice of God.

Then, the multiplicity and diversity of judgments are nothing more than the marker index of the distance between intuition and the single central source. The more the being is perfected, the more sensitive and powerful the instrument of consciousness becomes, and the more evident becomes the conceptual unity of the true. The dissonance of contradictions is, therefore, due solely to the blurring of the reflecting mirror and is determined by the degree of impurity of the receptive medium; the divisions in conclusions indicate the degree of corruption of thought and the distance it carves between itself and God. The harmony, which is perfect in the Centre, becomes corrupted as it moves away in the imperfection of resonance of the periphery. And human ignorance, which radiates disorder, is the *involution* that generates chaos.

There is, therefore, a solution to the problem: it suffices for us to progress, to surpass the zone of the first disordered approximations of intuition. We will then spontaneously and automatically find the unity of the true. Evolution and only evolution can give us, and will necessarily give us, unification. Only through evolution can one move from ignorance to knowledge, from separateness to unity. *Involution* is darkness that di-

vides, evolution is light that unifies. In *involution*, truth is silenced, suffocated in the dense medium, which does not allow for transparency. Evolution coordinates, reorganizes, harmonizes, and thus reabsorbs the divergences and makes the reality of the true more evident.

One should not, therefore, condemn and abandon intuitive subjectivism, but make it evolve, purify it, guide it ever higher, until unity is rediscovered within it. Thus, it will always remain the main path of knowledge. Coordinate, therefore, the current intuitions to reconstruct the truth, but, above all, ascend, evolving consciousness, to approach the truth. It is necessary to ascend, also out of humility of heart, purity of intentions, sublimation of passion. It is necessary, in order to make consciousness evolve, to go through the mystical catharsis, which is at the centre of this study. In a corrupted heart, nothing can be born other than the proud language of vain wisdom, beyond strife, confusion, misunderstanding. These are the sterile logomachies of some philosophers.

One and simple is the truth. However, to see it all, in its unity and simplicity, it matters to know how to reach its height; it cannot be pretended to bring it down, to our human level, without contaminating and falsifying it. The truth, the solution to mysteries, the vision of God's thought is not achieved through powerful arguments, by laborious research, or through the prepotency of logic and reason, but by following the paths of the spirit's ascensions, which are those of mystical catharsis.

STRUCTURE OF THE MYSTICAL PHENOMENON

I spoke of mediumship, of *metaphany*. I speak, now, of mysticism, considering, in its forms, the indices and the most ostentatious exponents of this spiritual evolution, which is the central problem of all my study, as it is of my life. In the face of these consequences taken to the field of methods for the conquest of knowledge, the importance of such questions can be evidenced and verified, since such gigantic repercussions are projected even in the practical field of problems of conceptual orientation, so serious, tormenting, and still today unsolved.

Having overcome these corollaries of a philosophical nature, on which I have dwelt, not only because of their intrinsic importance, but above all to better frame the mystical phenomenon within modern knowledge and justify its thought technique in the face of rational psychology, let us now resume more particularly the analysis of its development and conclusive goals, within the scope outlined in the definition of mystical ascesis, given at the beginning of Chapter 3.

The solution to the problem of knowledge is nothing more than an aspect of the transhumanization that occurs in mystical ascesis, which embodies such a profound transformation of being that it comes to change and solve all human problems. When the spirit reaches this level,

the simple phenomenon of unification disappears, which here is not merely a technique of thought, a method to achieve knowledge, but constitutes a transhumanization of personality, reabsorption of the distinct into the whole, of consciousness in Divinity. Then, the simple *nouric* reception becomes vision and ecstasy, that is, it will no longer be just a communication of thought, but a total expansion of the being in all its capacities. For many psychologies, this field will be located in the zone of the superconceivable.

To understand the mystical phenomenon, it is necessary to reconstruct it from the beginning, orienting it, first of all, within the context of universal phenomenology. And it is a psychological phenomenon, a phenomenon of biological evolution that, starting from the surpassed organic phases, continues in the superior phases of spiritual evolution. It is, therefore, a universal phenomenon, logically situated in the development of the law of evolution, natural, necessary, inextinguishable. It is supernatural only in a relative sense, that is, in relation to the current evolutionary position of human consciousness. It is, as are all culminations, uncommon, little visible, and difficult to conceive for those who are on the low planes of current mediocre normality. We see it, indeed, emerge in all times and places, from one end of History and the world to the other. Each intellectual type impresses upon it, according to its specific differentiation, the particular note of its personality and moulds it, transforms it, and adapts it to itself, to its race, to its time. But, the phenomenon persists, as an integral moment of the laws of life. It seems inevitable that, at the threshold of this, human evolution, having reached its highest maturity, should present itself, as in a great curve of its trajectory. Therefore, nothing of miraculous, exceptional, gratuitously and arbitrarily granted by heaven. In all phenomena, and especially in those that rise towards God, we feel more and more the presence of an order, a justice, a divine harmony. This does not mean a lack of faith and religion, but simply seriousness, positivism, conformity with justice.

In *The Great Synthesis* I scientifically explained in the theory of the evolution of dimensions⁸, how the human spirit, through evolution, ascends from the current phase of consciousness to the phase of superconsciousness, which is the first dimension of the successive triphasic universe, in which the current one evolves, triune in its development plans: matter, energy, spirit. Certainly, the entry of the human psyche into this new dimension of being, here already absolutely supermaterial or supersensory, is for it such a new and grandiose fact, that the mere presentation on the threshold of the new dimension and the very new way of being is enough to give it a profound sensation of vertigo, as happens to those who lean over the abyss of mystery. This seems made of darkness, but is nothing more than an unexplored sea of new sensations.

Further ahead, I will expose the phenomenon in terms of sensation, as so many mystics have lived it, in accordance with the fundamental lines, as I myself have lived it and as I will objectively describe it. As I have said, I conduct the analysis of realities that are experimental for me, deduced not only from others, but above all from my observation.

Before, however, I give myself up to the impetus of the mystical moment, I must express myself here in terms of science and reason, to present the logical possibility of the phenomenon, so that it becomes rationally admissible, even to those who do not feel it, nor have touched it through evolution and, therefore, are not apt to understand it, except in terms of their rational psychology. Thus, we can analyse and understand with the modern mental form of science a phenomenon that seems relegated to the highest and most inaccessible zones of spiritualism and religions. It will appear, thus, in its bare reality, not as a privilege or concession from Above, nor as a private monopoly, but, more precisely, as a path open to all men of good will. It will appear, as it is, that is, as an exact, objective phenomenon, whose law is possible to trace, as we shall do,

⁸ The Great Synthesis, chap. 34 to 37. (Translator's note)

and whose verification can be made spontaneously, whenever its determining conditions are present. It does not occur by intervention of capricious extracosmic wills, but represents the normal functional development of the universe, in its highest planes. Let us reconstruct, then, through observation, the law of the phenomenon.

To proceed in this way, let's reduce it to its simplest expression, to its skeletal vibratory structure. Vibration means, in the hyperphysical world that we now enter, the true mode of being, a fundamental quality, capable of individuating the form into specifically defined types. We see it, for example, in Hertzian waves. Beings situated in the physical plane, that is, in the organic form of a material body, are distinguished from each other by the qualities of this envelope, by the limits of the spatial dimension in which it is located, by its impenetrability, by its sensory characteristics. But, undoubtedly, there are forms of hyperphysical existence, of supersensory consciousness, free from the organic envelope. When we move from the physical organism, governed by a dynamic principle, to the organism of an exclusively dynamic structure, when the body is no longer made of matter, but only of energy, then the specific personal individuation, the one that distinguishes, cannot be given by the body and its physical characteristics. Then, what individuates is the type of vibration that constitutes the manifestation of life of the being, it is the peculiar form of energy, according to which it agitates, they are the characteristics of the wave, by which this vibration is defined.

In such forms of life is situated, both the disembodied spirit (and all the more so as, through evolution, it is freed from its denser envelopes), and that part of man which is pure consciousness or spirit, and this equally so the more it manages to overcome the *barontic* zone of the lowest passions and reach the highest planes of evolution, even if it is in special *metaphanic* states. Then, the self only exists in the form of this dynamism that has surpassed the dimensions of space and time.

We have already explained, in “The Noures Technique”⁹, how communication can occur between pure psychic centres (in that case: thought current and medium's consciousness). This happens thanks to the phenomenon of resonance, which is a universal law of repercussions even in the acoustic field. We have already seen that this phenomenon is the basis of *nouric* transmission and reception, and for it to occur, the two terms — transmitter and receiver — must come into tune, that is, harmonize according to the same vibratory rhythm. We have seen that a communion of vibration is necessary. If this is similar, it can coincide and overlap; if it is dissimilar, no resonance will occur and, therefore, neither attuning nor communication will be possible. Indeed, we have taken affinity as a necessary condition for the transmission and *nouric* capture.

Consciousnesses or spirits are, therefore, similar or dissimilar, due to their vibratory characteristics. On the physical level, two or more beings that vibrate perfectly, in unison, and feel as one, through instincts, feelings, thoughts, remain nevertheless inexorably distinct in their human appearance, without the possibility of overlapping and coinciding. If we remove their envelope, they will appear and become what they really are as consciousness, that is, a unique being, without the possibility of distinction. If we place them in their position as spirits, they will merge into the same type of vibration, just as two identical notes, emanated from two different sources, form the same sound. This is why, often, the so-called spiritistic identification becomes difficult, precisely because the concept of personality, in a human sense, no longer has significance in higher planes. In those zones of spiritual evolution, beings are connected by resonance, in the form of collective existence, that is, they exist in the form of thought currents. Therefore, as soon as we immerse ourselves in this conceptual atmosphere of evolution, we encounter *noures* and not

⁹ In the volume 'The Noures', by the same Author, chap. 5. (Translator's Note.)

separate individualities, as the analogy with the human world would lead us to suppose.

In the description of the technique of *nouric* reception, the seeds of this development were already contained. And, as the inspirational phenomenon evolves and completes itself in the mystical phenomenon, so the simple *nouric* communication here complete itself in the identification of consciousness, which is the unification of personality. In the acoustic field, the phenomenon of resonance, which we had taken as the starting point of that technique, is precisely a dynamic affinity, an identification of a mode of being, a superposition of individuations. Attunement is always the basis of the same phenomenon in continuation, for harmonizing is its law, to first reach communication, which is the centre of the *nouric* phenomenon, and then to unification, which is the centre of the mystical phenomenon. Thus, the two consciousnesses, vibrating in unison, that is, existing in the same form, lose all distinctive note, acquire it as identification, and merge into the same unity.

Every mystical phenomenon is realized, therefore, through a process of attraction tending to shorten the distances given by diversity, that is, to eliminate differences and contains a method for the conquest of affinity, to reach unification. This is a process of love, the great spring of mystical ascesis, as it is the central pillar of the building of evolution. In the spiritual world, beings that intone the same note and emit the same light become the same music and the same splendour; beings that move according to the same dynamic type merge their movement, unify, that is, are the same consciousness.

8

COROLLARIES – FAITH AND REASON

These simple affirmations offer us the key to the phenomenon of mystical ascesis and its respective spiritual corollaries. **Vibration, resonance, attunement, affinity, unification** are its logical and evident phases. Higher in the above, as I have already said in "The Technique of Noures," we have superior equivalents of vibration, although the principle is the same. When one considers that, in mystical ascesis, the second term is truly the Divinity, one can already imagine the vertigo of the exaltation of consciousness that such ascesis can represent for the human personality undertaking it. It immediately follows from this that ascesis is on the paths of spiritual perfection, in the highest manner, and that the vortexes of moral conquests are its natural and necessary goal.

The mystics always speak of God and of love, of union, of spiritual nuptials of the soul with God. It behoves us to arrive, rationally, at the explanation of this terminology and psychology that they do not explain. There we see functioning the entire vibratory mechanism of thought, of feelings, of passions.

Through the positive and negative signs, we see the formation of sympathies and antipathies, harmonies and dissonances, attractions and

repulsions. There lie the great forces of love and hatred, which are found at the foundations of life.

But, ascesis is a phenomenon of evolution and, therefore, of harmonization and unification; it is above all love. In mystical ascesis, this current of attraction is established between the high and the low and between the low and the high, and with this, the greatest mystery is revealed, in terms of reason, which is the descent, to man, of the love of God. We will see what a wonderful play of spiritual lights was born from these phenomena. The principle of attunement and affinity imposes the process of purification, the need to create a vacuum below, in the world of matter, which is relegated to the past, so that at a higher level there is space to yield to life. Then arises the inner struggle of renunciation, the fatigue of virtue, the pain that tears apart the bonds of the spirit, the overcoming of passions, the destruction of the human **self** and the resurrection in God of the super-human **self**.

The vibratory principle upon which the phenomenon is based leads us to understand the paths of liberation, to understand why passions must be guided and not destroyed, why it is necessary to master them and not become sterile in their mere destruction. It is necessary to reconstruct the vibration that is halted, to reconstruct it into a more intense movement, so that it may be life and not death. It is necessary to transform, rebuild, be reborn continuously, to affirm vigorously and, I will say more, to enjoy, to live, to love on high and not just to suffer and die below. My mysticism is joyful, constructive, dynamic. Certain conventual mysticism is absurd, made only of arid renunciation, which denies, kills, destroys, and leaves nothing but emptiness. Certain contemplation, sometimes found in the East, is absurd, isolating man in his selfishness of spirit and segregating him from the world, without making him active, an agent of good in the life of all.

We understand, thus, the mechanism of renunciation and conquest. Each one becomes a slave to what they love and, when it comes to material things, the heart binds itself to the ephemeral and the illusory, condemning itself to new tearings, until it understands, in order to direct itself to safer goals. It is the vibratory principle, by which a current of attractions is established between the two terms, the self and the object of its love, that explains the genesis of the bond. They are subtle yet real powers that later must be demolished. Real is also the pain. The man is bound, dragged from all sides, tormentingly, by these imponderable ties created by himself. Here too we encounter the same terms of the phenomenon, that is: vibration, attunement, affinity, unification. And our heart will experience the fate of the object of its unification. The communion of vibrations makes us similar to what we love: the object is placed on High and the soul serves it. Herein lies the mechanical reason why it is necessary to detach oneself from the earth, which makes us understand how feelings, passions, attractions generate fusions that can, according to the nature of the object, become bonds of joy and pain.

We thus understand the phenomenon and the meaning of faith. I conceive the consciousness as a radiant unity, the evolved **self** as a *noure* that perpetually tends towards diffusion, towards the expansion of itself, which is the centre of continuous emanations. How, then, does one break the closed circle of reason and penetrate the heaven of intuition and vision? How does one conquer, with the limited means of a lower conceptual dimension, the domain of the higher dimension? With faith. The vibratory technique gives us the key to the mystery.

Reason is objective. It wants, before believing, to assure itself and, only under its control, to trust. But, the method of prudence and security is not the method of flight. And here re-emerges the incessant antagonism between my form of thought and that of scientific rationalism, in continuous, strident, and irreconcilable contrast. And yet, the former is

the system of the mystics, of the geniuses of the Gospel, of the great creations of spirit, it is the method that is based on the refinement of the central organ of conception, consciousness, a fundamental fact, from which science distances itself. If we do not break, by evolution, the circle in which reason has enclosed itself, it will never leave it and within it, unable to escape, always returns upon itself. And it is impossible to break it through evolution, except by introducing into consciousness new factors capable of expanding its potentiality. Faith is what the psychological act is called with which these new factors are introduced.

What is the use of remaining in the field of positivity and security, if this is so limited and does not offer the possibility of expansion? The universal truth is already completely ready and present, blatantly before our eyes. Creating it is not our task, but rather to develop the sight to see it. Thus, the whole problem is taken up again, through a transformation of consciousness. This will only reach that zone where it will be able to exist. There it encounters a peaceful, but inviolable barrier, which holds back the immature, the unworthy. The law places a veil before their eyes and their violence remains impotent; the truth remains outside the field of their consciousness.

“It behoves me to know how to ascend qualitatively,” each one should say it, because knowledge is a vibratory state of attuning that is achieved by harmonizing through the paths of kindness, of spiritual ascension. Now, one who, instead of following these paths and putting oneself in a positive state of trust that establishes resonance, places oneself in the negative vibratory state of doubt and mistrust, which moves away in dissonance, will automatically close the doors of knowledge to oneself.

Let us always apply the same concepts: **vibration, resonance, attunement, affinity, unification.** Through these paths, the spirit can peacefully merge into truth. Now, it can be understood that the problem of knowledge in its essence and integrity consists of a problem of unifica-

tion between the human self and the Divinity, represents a problem of mystical ascesis, of revelation, because in our consciousness that Divinity is limited only by our capacity to conceive and surrenders to our soul in relation to its power of harmonization. But, when attunement is achieved and unification completed, truth then becomes a divine chant, a supreme harmony, a blaze of love in which the soul no longer feels itself as a distinct thing.

This vibratory conception mechanically reveals to us that in the love of Christ lies the great path of human ascensions. The Gospel is the method of universal harmonization; in it, as in no other part, the Divinity shines through in the sublime poetry of His Love. It is precisely about transparency, and this is achieved in mystical ascesis.

If we position ourselves in a state of resistance, in a closed vibratory state, as if refusing to ascend, then we ourselves will halt and deprive ourselves of the amplifying reception that descends from the invigorating currents diffused throughout. Reason is a circle of closed forces, it is a conceptual selfishness that cannot transcend itself, does not sympathize, and is unaware of the vibratory paths of attraction that lead to fusion with the non-self and, therefore, to its expansion to it. It becomes necessary to subjugate this equilibrium and reconstruct it in a higher and more complete form, though it may be more unstable and, nevertheless, more dynamic. And faith is the first leap forward.

In the dubious torment, I have interrogated the deepest part of myself, telling myself: "how can I entrust myself to an imponderable that does not yet exist within me and which I must create myself?" And the deep has answered me: believe, because only your faith, the basis of ascending impulses, will make those higher realities that escape you today objective and tangible.

It is not about crazy faith, the **credo quia absurdum**¹⁰, a desperate capitulation of reason which, unimpeded, intends to always be the only one to speak, even outside of its field. May this be extinguished forever, bow in its caricature expressions and remain closed in its scope, as queen, but without claiming other kingdoms. Faith is not a renunciation of the faculties of thinking, as it may seem to those who are incapable of reaching this level; it is rather a state of grace that sees and knows through other paths and retains in itself its infinite joy; it is a donation in which nothing is lost, because to that love and that trust the Universe responds, reciprocating with new donations; it is not blindness except for the blind, because in that blindness vision opens, the heavens are revealed, and the thought of God appears resplendent.

Faith is, therefore, the creative act par excellence that accompanies reality in formation, which can and knows how to voluntarily anticipate future states of evolution. Within us, in our depths, already resides the germ of the infinite developments of the divine. It is necessary to nurture it in our innermost being, and ours must be the initial impulse. There is in the self the power to raise these dynamic axes, to expand them like whirlwinds of forces, attracting and assimilating infinite universal currents. With faith, we can believe before feeling, affirm before knowing, want before being. Absurd, they will say. So it is, however, that we feel, know, and exist; with anticipation, we fly where others walk. Hence emerges a creation, impossible otherwise. Thus, the vibratory state is formed in anticipation, and its resonance is excited, which, amplifying in continuous vibration, will transport us to that mode and that plane of life, where we want to ascend, and therein transform us.

¹⁰ "I believe because it is absurd." Phrase of unknown origin, says Paulo Rónai. Possibly an adaptation of words by Tertullian. Improperly attributed to Saint Augustine, this expression defines faith, in opposition to reason, according to the widespread concept in the Middle Ages. (Note of the Translator)

Just as the Sun is a torrent of light and force, radiating everywhere, but only utilized and valued when it falls upon a receptive germ, so too God is a torrent of thought and energies that bear fruit only when gathered by the resonance of a prepared soul. The source is a whole, and from it flow not only knowledge, but also goodness, action, power. However, it is the **self** that, through an act of faith, must open its arms, open wide the paths of conceptual and dynamic absorption in all its modulations, perform the work of projecting oneself to learn, embrace, and assimilate. Thus fertilized by the divine resonance, nourished by these responses, the vibratory state will stabilize and form the aptitude, the quality, the spiritual way of being, which will then become fixed with repetition, become habit, instinct, necessity. Thus, the divine influx represents an eternally active power in the work of creation.

9

DIAGRAM OF SPIRITUAL ASCENSION

To delve deeper into the problem of mystical ascesis, let us revisit the concepts already presented, fixing them as much as possible in a diagram. In this way, we will graphically highlight the phenomenon, in its most expressive lines, and obtain its definition in a more synthetic and intuitive form — a graphic structure that will give us its functional technique. We have placed the phenomenon of mystical ascesis at the heart of the evolution phenomenon, as its integral and central part.

Thus, mystical ascesis projects itself upon the grandiose background of the greatest phenomenon of the universe. We have seen how the vibratory principle, individualizing the spirit, allows, by resonance, the attunement and how, by the stability of this in a state of affinity, guides the being to the ultimate term of the ascension — unification with God. Therefore, within the bosom of evolution, having reached its superior spiritual phase, mystical ascesis is the phenomenon in progressive march towards unification. I thus seek to gradually guide the reader to the rational comprehension, then to the sensation of this supreme vortex of ascensions to which my soul is bound. In this conception, I reach knowledge through attunement with *nouric* currents, operating with the method of intuition.

Let's observe the attached diagram and explain its meaning and development, imagining constructing it as it effectively emerged in my mind (Fig. 1)

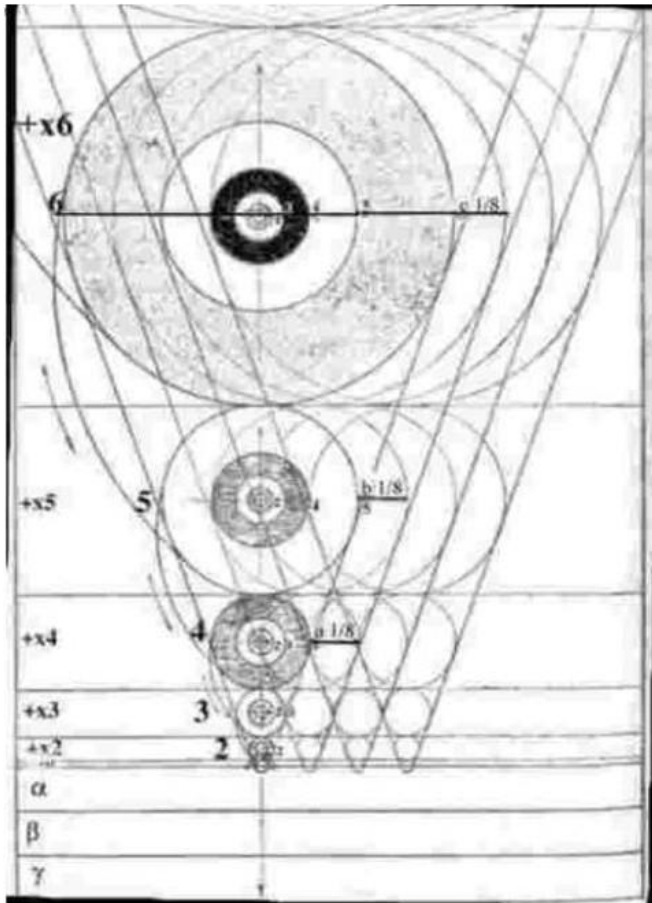


Figure 1

The diagram expresses, through orthogonal coordinates, the law of variation of evolution as a function of time. More precisely, we have gradations of evolution on the vertical axis of ordinates and gradations of time on the horizontal axis of abscissas. By time, I mean, not the temporal dimension, which in the superior zones of evolution is surpassed, but the rhythm of phenomenal transformation, which is a universal fact and persists everywhere, as a marking step on the path of the eternal becoming. We will specify later what the degrees of evolution are.

From this arises a **V** of progressive opening, whose branches are tangential to the overlaid circles. Assuming the vertical coordinate, indicative of evolution, repeated further to the right and raised, on the contrary, along the centres of the circles, we will have a symmetrical diagram, that is, a diagram whose right half is repeated in the left half, on the sides of the said line, appearing in the much more expressive form of a V that opens upwards.

The series of circles and tangents that are laterally repeated expresses the repetition of the phenomenon in its progression in identical and contemporary individuations, that is, expressed within the same scope of development. This repetition of the diagram in collateral cases is necessary to establish the relationships between the various individuations of the phenomenon.

The ascending progression of the circles is nothing more than a diagram inserted into the preceding one, following the same axes of development and whose same coordinates could be repeated, starting from the centre of each of the successive circumferences. Thus, we obtain the expression of the internal development of the phenomenon, as it is understood in the conical opening of the two divergent tangents, and the expression of the determining cause of this opening, as one ascends to the higher zones of evolution. This internal diagram will be understood by

observing that it expresses nothing more than the progressive opening of a spiral, whose centre, for convenience of observation and clarity of expression, progressively shifts upwards along the same axis, and recalling that this diagram is nothing more than the development of the typical trajectory of phenomenal movements (fig. 2)¹¹ applied and repeated in this particular case, with the aforementioned displacement of centres. It is evident, indeed, that this particular phenomenon of the evolution of consciousness or spiritual ascesis, which we are studying here, must be expressed in the same spiritual line that is the typical trajectory taken as the abstract and universal course of every phenomenon. Thus, the diagram of figure 1 indicates the same progressive covering of zones (dashed), as in the diagram of figure 2 (in this case, it is, on the contrary, concentric), covering that indicates, in both designs, the successive zones of expansion of the phenomenon.

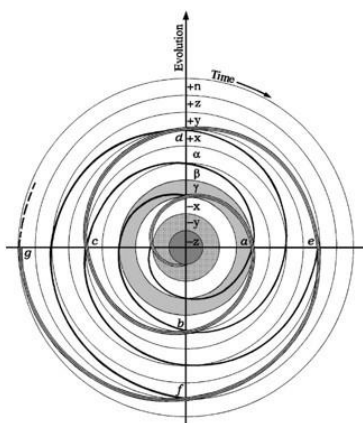


Figure 2

¹¹ Compare 'The Great Synthesis,' chapter 26 ('Study of the Typical Trajectory of Phenomenal Motions') and figure 1 from 'The Noures' (Author's Note). See also chapter 2 of 'The Noures' ('The Phenomenon'). (Translator's Note.)

This is the analytical explanation which, however, in its original intuitive phase, was instantaneous in me. Let us now see the meaning of these signs. We have, therefore, three diagrams merged together: the first is given by the two diverging lines in the form of a V that opens upwards; the second is given by the opening of the spiral with coverage of successive zones, which expresses the expansion of the phenomenon (its dynamic aspect) while allowing at the same time to close it and isolate its various phases (static aspect); the third is given by the lateral repetition of the two preceding diagrams, which allows establishing the relationships between the various cases and transforms the simple individual phenomenon into a collective phenomenon. Triple, then, is the meaning of the diagram: firstly, it expresses the being's ascent along the various planes of evolution; then, it translates the corresponding dilation (spiritual) of consciousness (dashed zones); finally, it signifies the progressive superposition of individuations and fusion of consciousness in the form of collective existence. Thus, the music of ascensions progressively dilates its resonances, extending them in the complex symphony of collective harmonizations. The graphic harmony of the diagram is nothing but the optical expression of a musical rhythm of concept in which a divine logical development of forces is contained.

FIRST ASPECT - PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Let us now develop the innermost meaning of the diagram, starting with its first aspect. We can explain here what we understand by gradations of evolution, which are marked along the vertical axis of the ordinates. We have elsewhere¹² established the triphasic constitution of the universe encompassed by human cognition, that is, consisting of three planes of existence: Matter (**γ**), Energy (**β**), and Spirit (**α**) (fig. 2), situated in the relative dimensions of space, time, and consciousness. And we have demonstrated that this unified trinity, three-dimensional and triphasic, which is the typical form of the infinite phenomenal universes that transform into one another, is also the internal axis of evolution of our own. In the bosom of the phenomenon of evolution, the being is thus continuously on the march, from the matter phase to the energy phase and from this to the spirit phase. To what I have already explained, I dispense myself from returning.

Only that demonstration stops at the vertex of the spirit phase and the consciousness dimension, precisely because, by surpassing this point, we leave our universe and the human phase, as it is correctly conceived. However, we cannot stop there. Precisely where that demonstra-

¹² Cfr. The Great Synthesis, chapters 7, 8, and 9. (Translator's Note.)

tion ends, this study begins. Through the mystical states that I have traversed and lived, I feel I have been able to emerge from the human level, normally conceivable, advancing marvellously as a new form of consciousness, into the first zones of the first phase **x** of the evolutionarily superior triphasic universe (**+x, +y, +z**) (fig. 2). In this study, which could also be defined as an incursion into the inconceivable, I descend again from the superconceptual dimension of ecstasy and vision, to the current rational dimension, to analytically expose the law and content of the phenomenon. I hope in doing so to make myself understood. We will thus complete the analysis of the mystical phenomenon, which thus remains perfectly framed and oriented in universal phenomenology, as a form of superconsciousness evolutionarily situated in the first zones of the superconceivable. Only now could we give this definition more precisely, which was not possible in principle (chap. 3).

Let us, so to speak, leave in the subsoil of evolution the **y, β , α** phases, already traversed and surpassed, and begin the diagram (fig. 1)¹³ with a horizontal line that we will graphically take as the starting point of our detailed examination of the first zone of the superconceivable. Here the organic evolution of the species is surpassed and only man survives as psychism. The emerging individual unit and at the same time remnant of the entire previous evolutionary process is consciousness. From this point upwards, we can only operate on immaterial units. The undeniable presence of the psychic phenomenon and its derivation from the organic zones show evidently that evolution tends towards dematerialization, which is why we can only advance in the imponderable.

Further on, we will isolate, in the second aspect of the diagram, the study of the development of a simple consciousness. Let us now observe, conversely, in the continuation of the physical-dynamo-psychic evolution,

¹³ The diagram figure 1 is nothing more than a detailed study of the +x zone of diagram figure 2. (Author's Note.)

these first zones of the superconsciousness dimension. In these zones, thus, distinct and isolated on its own plane, the phenomenon will erupt, within the bosom of evolution and its phases. Taking as a starting point the neutral phase of transition $+x^1$ that covers the base horizontal, let us enter the first zone or plane of consciousness, $+x^2$. Thus, we will have a succession of planes, $+x^2$, $+x^3$, $+x^4$, $+x^5$, etc., along which consciousness ascends. More precisely, we will have the following progression:

$+x^2$ = sensory consciousness plane.

$+x^3$ = rational-analytical consciousness plane.

$+x^4$ = intuitive-synthetic consciousness plane.

$+x^5$ = mystical-unitary consciousness plane.

$+x^6$ = unexplored plane, etc...

The sensory consciousness plane marks the physical plane of consciousness that begins to emerge, as a purely sensory synthesis. It's a phase of mechanical consciousness, which is ignorant of any positive interpretation of the universe. A surface psyche, oblivious to all attempts at inquiry, an organism of mechanical reactions. (See chap. 4). It is the first human level of the brute, just emerged from the beast, still animal and vegetative.

The rational-analytical plane of consciousness represents a first attempt at ascension, at dematerialization, at formation, and at detachment of a spiritual psyche; as psyche, a pure means of organic functioning. It is the phase of science, of observation, of the relative, of hypothesis, of reason, and of analysis, but not yet of synthesis. One begins to seriously face the external world, but always with superficial means. In the consciousness, which remains sensory as a method of inquiry, an inner

flame is kindled that yearns and asks, but which still does not know. It is the period of research and, yet, of ignorance still.

The intuitive-synthetic plane of consciousness is an evolutionary zone already supranormal and exceptional for the current average human, who rests in the phase +x³. Here, the genesis of an independent spiritual psyche is complete, and the realized dematerialization allows it, in certain states and moments, to perceive through resonance the emanations from zones of consciousness or psychical planes that are evolutionarily higher. It is the *metaphanic* phase, conscious and inspirational, no longer of ignorance, but of knowledge, not anymore of analysis, but of synthesis. This plane is reached through the method of intuition. Phenomena are contemplated through inner paths, research is conducted, and truth is attained through introspection, in the innermost part, where it truly lies. There, the being no longer touches just the relative, nor is immersed in illusion, but touches the absolute, possesses the truth. It does not operate with the instrument of logic, induction, hypothesis, but through vibratory attuning with zones of consciousness where the truth is already recorded. The consciousness is no longer sensory. The inner flame burns, which not only asks but knows. I have traversed, through experience, this zone¹⁴ and from it I extracted **The Great Synthesis**, "which is the verification of the ultra-sensory reality of phenomenal truth, through attunement and inner vision".

The mystical-unitary plane of consciousness is the one in which I currently live my new experience, of which, moreover, I had already had a premonition. I have defined these planes in relation to knowledge, because this is the prevailing index, as it is the most evident and significant. If, until now, we have dealt with a cold intellectual ascension, which has no other goal and satiety beyond comprehension, let's see that in this new plane of mystical consciousness the ascension is integral. The

¹⁴ Described in the aforementioned volume: The Noures. (Author's Note.)

attunement with the superior zones of evolution is not only conceptual, but, on the contrary, invests all the qualities of the personality. Heart, feelings, and passions awaken and the being no longer ascends only by intellect, but by love. Then communication becomes communion, the simple resonance turns into fusion and unification through the identification of vibratory structure, which in that plane of existence is the distinctive form of being. As in the preceding plane, there had been awakened, through conceptual vision, a resonance in consciousness, which in this resonance had expanded (as graphically expressed in the diagram), so, on this plane, mystical ecstasy awakens in which a new voice sings, in which vibrates love, which is an expansion of consciousness, so vast, that, as I will describe, one feels humanly lost, but divinely resurrected. These are not hypotheses or fantastic speculations; they are staggering realities in which my soul was caught, as in a whirlwind, and which, nevertheless, here I demonstrate to predominate analytically, in the mental form now normal. And I complete the work of such rational reduction, so that these high phenomena may be admitted and understood, because I know that very few could thus explain them by experience and because I know that in them lie the future and the progress of the human spirit.

The $+x^5$ plane expresses and comprehends, within its scope, the phenomenon of mystical ascesis. I am unaware of what happens in the $+x^6$ plane, which lies beyond my current experience; if no new evolutionary phenomena occur, it too will be lost to me, in the inconceivable. Perhaps this is beyond human possibilities. And naturally, the school of ascension is infinite in the subsequent and then in the successive triphasic universes.

11

SECOND ASPECT — EXPANSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Let us now analyse the second aspect of the diagram, given, not anymore by the opening of the diagonals upwards, a fact that expresses the ascent of the being through the various planes of evolution, but by the opening of the spiral with the covering of increasingly extensive circles, which express zones of consciousness dilatation corresponding to the various planes now described.

We have already made the connection of this second aspect of the phenomenon with the first, because they are linked by correspondence, which is why, within the scope of each evolution zone, the amplitude of a given phase of consciousness is extended. From the diagram results, thus, graphically, with all evidence, this dilatation expressed by the dashed fields, increasingly extensive. In the diagram, the spaces, the lines, and their movements and relationships represent differences, movements, and relationships of concepts, high and low have an evolutionary sense, the extension of consciousness is figuratively spatial, the rhythmic repetition of lines signifies affinity of individuating vibratory characteristics. Thus, each circle contains all the preceding zones conquered at the lower levels of evolution. Thus, in the diagram, we see not

only that the $+x^2$ zone corresponds to the consciousness amplitude of circle 2, the $+x^3$ zone corresponds to that of circle 3, the $+x^4$ zone to that of circle 4, the $+x^5$ zone to that of circle 5, and so forth, but also that each circle encompasses within itself all the smaller circles. Thus, for example, the 5 contains the 4, the 3, the 2, the 1. This means that each conquered dimension, upon touching the corresponding plane of evolution, contains all the preceding dimensions, each level comprehends the lower ones upon which it raises and lowers; it also means that each form of consciousness dominates the scope of each assimilated and surpassed consciousness. In its larger circles, the diagram gives the intuitive impression of this spatial increase of consciousness around its nucleus, through successive and superimposed stratifications, which corresponds to reality, because the increase is truly due to a descent of experience.

While all this constitutes the expression of the static aspect of the phenomenon, immobilized, for convenience of study, in its various phases of development, the line of the phenomenon's dynamism, that is, the progression of its course, is given by the unfolding of the spiral which, on its path, successively encompasses fields of consciousness ever more extensive. Here we reencounter the same spiral of universal phenomenal development (fig. 2), although it is, due to its displacement from the centre, apparently different, as I have already noted.

By dilatation of consciousness, we must understand the potentiation of all its qualities. In this way, in each plane, a new quality is added to the preceding ones. Thus, each phase completes its own creation, according to this order:

$+x^2$ = sensory consciousness = sensitivity.

$+x^3$ = rational-analytical consciousness = reason.

$+x^4$ = intuitive-synthetic consciousness = synthesis (truth).

$+x^5$ = mystical-unitary consciousness = love (union with God).

As for what happens higher up, I know nothing: but, at each step corresponds a leap forward, a new conquest that adds up to the preceding ones. Such is evolution, the essence of life. Love, a feeling that I will allow myself to be inflamed later on, is thus my present conquest and the content and essence of the phenomenon of mystical ascesis that we are studying here. **Love is unification with God.**

In the scope of circle 5, which precisely expresses the mystical phase, we find, therefore, all the smaller concentric circles, that is, the sensitivity that develops reason, the reason that generates intuition, leading to synthesis, the intuition that, through attunement, transforms into love, leading to unification with the Whole. And each quality encompasses within itself the preceding one, upon which it was built.

THIRD ASPECT — COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESSES

As for what happens higher up, I know nothing; but, at each step corresponds a leap forward, a new conquest that adds up to the preceding ones. Such is evolution, the essence of life. Love, a feeling that I will allow myself to be inflamed later on, is thus my present conquest and the content and essence of the phenomenon of mystical ascesis that we are studying here. **Love is unification with God.**

Let us now observe the third aspect of the diagram. The development of the spiritual phenomenon has already been exhaustively analysed in all its aspects, as an isolated case. In this last moment, it is repeated (in the graph, laterally) in other individualizations of it, with the purpose of establishing the relationships between various cases, studying their mutual repercussions, and finally their dilatation with the collective phenomenon. We will follow it here, in its new complexity, to deduce important and unexpected corollaries, since ascesis consists of these collective resonances that multiply and transform the phenomenon. The graph will reveal to us the genesis of superpositions and fusions of consciousnesses, from which new forms of collective existence will be born.

The dilatation of consciousness derived from spiritual ascesis is not only a conquest of knowledge, but also an increasingly integral expansion

of the being in all its qualities, successively awakened and potentiated, out of the germ (universal form of phenomenal expansion, or creation, or manifestation of the divine), which potentially awaited in the nucleus of the preceding phase. Thus, the being changes consciousness, conceptual dimension, mode of perceiving and feeling, alters its very nature and, shifting along various planes of existence, the laws of life change as well. The continuous overcoming of evolution transforms and purifies it, leaving behind the dross. It can thus happen, as we have observed elsewhere, that in the phase of transition, which is the current human phase, in the period of new formations, two laws of different altitudes compete for the field: the biological law of the struggle for life and the evangelical love.

Today, that the average man is located in the phase $+x^2$ of sensory consciousness, and in the phase $+x^3$ of rational consciousness, and finds himself exactly absorbed in the labour of the first creations of thought, sees the importance of these magnified before his very eyes, and is led to consider them as the principal and perhaps the only creation of the spirit. He still does not know how to conceive the manifestations that will appear in the intuitive plane and in the mystical plane. But, the spirit is an army of qualities in march. The creations of goodness and love are equivalent to those of sensitivity, reason, and intuition, and are already being prepared below, in the first nucleus of consciousness.

In this sense, our diagram can be read similarly. On the horizontal base, many equidistant points are plotted, representing centres of consciousness. The closed circle, drawn around each point, besides indicating the scope of the consciousness, corresponding to the plane on which it is located, can express a field of forces or a cycle of vibrations, closed in itself, that is, that returns, without exit ways, perpetually on its own trajectory. This is the phase of necessary selfishness, in its plane, for the protection of the first formation of the **self**. If this field of forces is so determined by protective needs, in principle, and represents a solid crust of

defence against all agents of destruction, it does not allow the opening of the circuit, nor contains possibilities for expansion. It does not permit contacts and communications, like all closed circuits, and the equidistant centres on the horizontal base are unaware of each other. This recalls the corresponding phase of atomic kinetics of a closed cycle, the stable but immobile equilibrium of matter (inorganic chemistry).

The emergence and detachment of the spiral, alongside the circle, directed towards tracing the upper circumference, represent the dawn of a new balance of unstable forces, yet broader, altruism. The trajectory, driven by inner maturations (manifestation, exteriorization of divinity), at a given moment breaks away from the closed circuit and no longer returns upon itself; the balance is disrupted, the cycle of forces opens into a new balance of altruistic consciousness. Thus, one ascends to a new phase that recalls the corresponding unstable yet mobile balance of energy, the corresponding atomic kinetics of open-cycle life (organic chemistry). Thus, the rhythm of the lower planes is repeated higher up, yet more transparent of divinity.

Ruptured is the protective covering, and the being seems to madly abandon its defences, appears to be at the mercy of all, because every force, with the barriers demolished, can penetrate into the open field. The Gospel emerges, which seems utopian. But also, the circuit, which before was closed, is now open, and the possibility of all expansions arises, and every assault is a contact; every contact, an absorption and a dilatation of consciousness, which thus begins its path of expansion towards God.

The diagram is the expression of expansion, whose consequences, of a collective nature, it indicates. For also graphically, the small circles, distanced at the base in their selfish isolation, come closer in their expansion, rising until they touch and begin a progression of superpositions that becomes increasingly intense. Before studying its significance, let us observe how this process of superposition manifests in the graphic

development. The diagram demonstrates, with spatial units, that the zone of superposition of the circles expressing the fields of consciousness on the various planes is in progressive increase and that the zone of non-coincidence of the aforementioned fields is inversely progressive, and this through relations that express a law of constant infinitesimal approximation. Let us observe this law of progressive coincidence and its consequences.

While, on plane **2**, the two circumferences are still distant, on plane **3** they are tangent, on plane **4** they superpose by $\frac{1}{2}$ of the diameter (taking the diameter as the unit of coincidence). We still have $\frac{1}{2}$ diameter of non-coincidence (see line **a** = $\frac{1}{2}$). On plane **5**, the zone of non-coincidence is reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ diameter (see line **b** = $\frac{1}{4}$), and the zone of superposition is proportionally increased. On plane **6**, the zone of non-coincidence is reduced to $\frac{1}{8}$ diameter (see line **c** = $\frac{1}{8}$); and so on successively. This is enough to trace the progression $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$ of non-coincidence that expresses the corresponding relationships of superposition.

The mechanics of the graph allow us, therefore, to calculate **the law of attenuation of separatism or distancing between units of consciousness and the corresponding law of fusion of individuations**. And it shows us, with the tangible expression of its progressive spatial superpositions, that the tendency of the law is unification, that is, identification by coincidence, a tendency expressed by a constant relationship of approximation. Changing the base distances between centres will change the relationships, but the law and the tendency remain. To a necessarily two-dimensional diagram, we cannot demand more as a representation of a multidimensional and abstract reality.

What does this mean? The expansion thus leads to an interpenetration of force fields, the development of spiritual asceticism here assumes a broader collective aspect of consciousness harmonization. Evolution, therefore, leads to a closer fusion but never to identity, because the zone

of non-coincidence is such (**1/2, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32, 1/64**, etc.), that it never nullifies. Although it remains spatially identical, because they are parallel to infinity, the diagonals of ascension, that zone thins with constant approximation (allowing the inverse phenomenon of progressive superposition), because on every plane the relation with the diameters changes, which continuously redouble. Thus, while the zone of identity always increases, the zone of distancing is in continuous diminishment, precisely because the progressive increase in the relation between the diameters of extension of consciousnesses tends towards the nullification of distance, although it never absolutely reaches it. Whatever extension is attributed to the distances of displacement at the base of the diagram, as I have already said, this law remains constant.

Each plane tends, thus, the higher it is, to be less a series of distinct consciousnesses and more a unified zone of consciousnesses harmonized and merged into the same nature. Likewise, in the diagram, the proximity between centres is indeed progressive in relation to the diameters. The superposition of force fields always diminishes the distinction and operates the assimilation among the various types of consciousness that tend to become a single mode of being. Thus, the inner communication always widens, the paths of resonance are flung open: on the spirit level, as we have said, individuation no longer has the spatial corporeal strength of the physical plane, and is defined by the type of vibration, by a specific timbre of emanation. Then the zone attunes itself according to a single note and is, like each constituent consciousness, the same single note. The communication becomes communion; communion becomes unity.

I see then the successive circumferences of the diagram animate themselves and reveal their true essence as fraternal spirits, harmonized in the same note of love. And each plane of evolution is a celestial sphere that modulates a diverse and ever more intense and pure note of love. I

see a fantastic whirlwind of lights around a blinding splendour, centre of wisdom and love, which is God.

This unification through vibratory states, this ever more intimate interpenetration of consciousnesses, this rhythm of collateral approximation, resulting from the entire movement of the diagram, tells us that, as we ascend the spiritual planes of evolution, we cannot find, and here we explain how indeed we do not find, personal individuations of consciousness in the human sense, types of separate **selves**, similar to us, in the zones of consciousnesses connected on the same frequency. This rationally explains the difficulty of spiritual identification in the case of high Entities, who never define themselves in a human sense, and the fact that I have verified, ascending evolutionarily, I have not encountered individual centres of thought, but *noures*, that is, currents of thought. And it is logical, moreover, that evolution, being such a substantial renewal, leads almost to the vaporization of that distinction, which is the necessary and fundamental note of this dense nucleus that at our level is still the human personality. It is logical that the expansion of this nucleus into immaterial forms leads to interpenetration and, therefore, to the communion of personalities. Concepts, for us, apocalyptic, I know, but this is the reality. Up there, in the High, consciousness no longer appears with the unitary and distinctive characteristics of our plane, but becomes a collective fact. One cannot deny that this disorients all our conceptions; yet, it does not become any less true. Nothing can change in the face of the obstinacy with which, in our incomprehension, we deny. We will find *noures*, always *noures*, currents not only of thought, but of attraction, of sympathy, of love, through which Spirits are linked in the form of collective existence. The beginning of this phenomenon can also be observed in our plane, in the case of collective consciousness, where we have precisely a principle of psychic existence through currents. This could also be expressed in our diagram, while there is also in such a phenomenon a di-

latation and interpenetration of individual consciousness in the ever less selfish understanding of the good of all.

13

EGO SUM QUI SUM¹⁵

Our diagram has already provided us, in its greater and lesser aspects and in its corollaries, material for many teachings and concepts. Let us now distance ourselves from the minutiae and observe it as a whole, like a unique symphony. Let us distance ourselves from the graphic representation and ascend in abstraction, thus approaching reality.

How far does this unlimited evolutionary path go?

Under our eyes occurs the phenomenon of the transformation of consciousness which, intensifying, seems to vanish in our perception. And yet, the same phenomenon of Darwinian organic evolution repeats itself on immaterial planes, governed by the same principle. There is in the whole process a grandiose and relentless rhythm, by which the universe advances to zones in which it dematerializes and seems to lose itself in the inconceivable. Our vision, although sharp, cannot today transcend a certain order of planes. And then? Then there is only one direction, and this direction is God.

From the great path, we see no more than a small stretch that starts from matter; nor do we know its evolutionary antecedents. It ends in

¹⁵ "I am who I am" — Words of the Lord to Moses, in the Latin translation of the Bible (Exodus, 3:14).

In Hebrew, it means "I Am That I Am," in the sense of divine transcendence — The Supreme Being. (Translator's Note.)

these higher spiritual phases that I am describing, beyond which rages such a fire, that our self cannot resist. This fire is God.

It was already much to have discovered biological evolution; it is already much to have continued it here in its higher psychic phases. But then, beyond, still further beyond, the mystery remains. And yet, man evolves. The same law that, higher up, obstructs our vision, to that height draws us, progressively pursuing the mystery. Consciousness expands in all its qualities and the divine light can descend in its ever-greater transparency of spirit.

We saw that evolution consists of a process of vibratory harmonization and that, the higher one ascends, the more it manifests in the form of musical resonances; The evolution from one plane of consciousness to another can thus reveal to us the most unimaginable realities. On each level, beings respond more and more, with clarity and strength, to the divine note that, like a light, rains from above and penetrates the various zones, more or less, according to their density. Everything is, therefore, a projection, more or less dense with shadows, of the thought of God. The paths of spiritual ascension, which we are studying and of which the mystical phenomenon is, for us, such a significant moment, are the paths that converge towards the centre, guiding towards God, the ultimate term of all resonances.

God, then, is the goal toward which universal evolution marches. This is an organic ascension of all beings. As they ascend, they coordinate themselves, progressively harmonize their dissonances, eliminate their antagonisms, and bridge their divisions. The Ascension is an ever-tightening embrace that consolidates the conquests and unifies the expansion. From bottom to top, evolution is a process of progressive unification and the final term of this unification is God. God is the point toward which all beings tend. Toward Him everything converges and in Him everything unifies.

"Ego sum qui sum". God cannot be defined. To define is to limit, and here we speak of the limitless. Every definition will be a reduction, a mutilation. It cannot be defined because one cannot project the infinite into the finite, the absolute into the relative, nor can one represent the reality of substance in the illusory form without hiding it. The concepts of God and person cannot be conjugated, since the latter is a circumscription of individuality and the infinite cannot be circumscribed. One cannot reach God through argumentation, for He is above all reasoning. God cannot be demonstrated: He is felt. One cannot reach God by merely multiplying human attributes. To surpass the concept of direction to which we must limit ourselves, a leap into the inconceivable is necessary. Indeed, those who truly draw closer to God experience a sense of immense fading. Only then does one truly look to the Height. Ascending from plane to plane, the fusion of spirits becomes increasingly intimate and complete. Along this harmonization lies the path that leads to God. He is a global unity that, within itself, harmonizes and merges all consciousnesses and creatures.

The superior zones of evolution are levels of spirit and are within us. God, the supreme term, is not outside, but within us, in the depths of an abyss over which, trembling, we only dare to lean. And the **self** of all the phenomena that He eternally creates in His manifestation. We can only pray by immersing ourselves in this inner centre, where height and depth merge and our measures no longer make sense. The mystical asceticism is a stretch of the path that leads us to God. Spiritual evolution is the deepening of our consciousness in our own innermost being; its dilatation is a strange super-spatial inward dilatation, which can also communicate to us the sensation of an expansion beyond ourselves. But, there are no communicative sensations that allow for comparison with the new dimensions. The flashes of consciousness, which are in inspiration, in revelation, in ecstasy, are indeed flashes of Divinity. We will hear its immense echo, listening to the voice of the spirit; we will see its flashes seeing into

the depths of ourselves, because God is at the bottom of the human heart, as a premonition of all ascensions, unquenchable like the fundamental instinct of life.

The spiritual ascension is a process of penetration of the conscious self into its ever more intimate and profound strata, which are ever higher planes of consciousness. This march in depth is a liberation from the dense envelope of matter and its sensory illusion, it is a stripping off of heavy dross, it is a progression towards reality, truth, good, the Absolute. It is an ascension to the interior. **The future is within us.** The manifestation towards the external reality of the senses and matter is an involutory descent, it is, forgive me the term, a decentralization of Divinity. Evolution proceeds in the opposite direction, because it is the centripetal movement of the soul's return to God. The centre of consciousness, to evolve, does not project itself outward, but shifts towards the inner reality, hyperphysical and supersensory. This is a reabsorption of the spirit in God, who after having projected, outside of Himself, the creative process, in its first involutory phase, reverses it and reconcentrates it in Himself, in its evolutionary phase. Concentric process of synthesis, of attraction and of love, opposed to the preceding one, of dispersion.

The great force that impels evolution is love. It is the radiation that descends from Above and attracts to Itself. It rebuilds, gathers, reharmonizes, leads back to unity. The struggle between good and evil is the struggle between these reconstructive impulses, which affirm, and the negative impulses, destructive and dispersive of involution. Strive, but conquer. The selfish one who believes to win life, making himself the centre of everything and mastering everything, in order to accumulate for himself, on the contrary, closes the doors of that to himself, because he isolates himself from the great movement of unification, segregates himself from the sources of life, and sterilizes himself. He inverts the paths of the expansion of the self, chains himself to perishable things, and closes

himself off to expansion in the heart of the neighbour and of the creatures. To nourish only himself at the expense of others, he subtracts all nourishment. Thus, he is defeated and not victorious. This has been warned to us by the supreme wisdom of the Gospel. The selfish lives at the expense of the whole. Whoever loves lives in continuous communication with the whole, an inexhaustible source of riches. He who gives seems to lose, but with this act identifies his own good with that of his fellow and, multiplying himself in the fellow, revives in him. Thus, altruism expands consciousness and, if it loses utilitarianly, loses only according to the most limited rational psychology; but, in compensation, gains much spiritually. The act of selfishness, on the contrary, constitutes a contraction and leads to suffocation; the sensation of expansion and increase that comes from the act of altruism explains the joy of giving, otherwise absurd. Thus it is explained, and only in this way, how for the spirit to give oneself in sacrifice is not, as it is for the body, a painful mutilation of life, but a joyful form of expansion.

By love, I understand the love of the spirit, which unifies, not the carnal, selfish love, that always leaves deep residues of separatism; I understand by love the vibration of an open circuit, not the vibration of a closed circuit, which returns upon itself. I understand the expansive vibration of true evangelical altruism, the vibration of mystical expansion that represents an order of shorter, faster, and more dynamic waves, and, therefore, more penetrating, whose more intense and swift rhythm allows them to rise beyond the Earth's atmosphere and cross the superior planes of evolution, to come much closer to the source, feel its attraction and, with it, achieve a more perfect attunement. Love is the main road to reach God. Thus, below, all creatures are enemies, above, all creatures are brethren. This is how the Gospel transforms the enemy into a friend, and, having reached a certain level, the entire universal phenomenology appears as a vast music of all creation and the voice of things changes and becomes a chant. And it is the asceticism that operates

this miracle, revealing to the soul the secret of harmonization, which in love operates the reabsorption of evil, darkness, struggle, pain, into balance, order, happiness.

FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN

The phenomenon of spiritual ascension remains situated within the heart of universal phenomenology as a phase of evolution, as an inextirpable and necessary fact. It is grafted into the technique of the organic functioning of the whole. If here we have reached experimental verification, in a scientific form, our entire world could not fail to confront such a fundamental fact. And it repeats itself in all times and in all places, and, from Brahmanism to Buddhism, from Islam to Christianity, it is found in all religions.

The process of mystical ascesis, the object of this study, could be repeated as a method of Yoga, with an equivalent nomenclature, inasmuch as the yogi equally aims at liberation and unification. However, I distance myself from all that smacks of negativism, because isolation from the world and one's peers always constitutes somewhat of an isolation from God. I shy away from this method, because it is a suppression of external reality, rather than an expansion of inner realities; I flee from all that does not come through harmonization, that sweet chant that turns life and pain into joy, like Brother Francis's chant in the Canticle of the Creatures. I, being Latin, can only feel the ascension of the spirit in the ardent, passionate form of the Latins, in the form of a vibrant and active mysticism, I cannot abstract myself in the socially passive isolation of pure concentration; but I need, as soon as I have reached a new element in concentration, to descend again among my peers to give myself; I need

to speak and to fulfil, not to concentrate in myself, but to expand, through a harmonization of souls, the fruit of my ascension. My conception as a Westerner, more outwardly dynamic, imposes upon me the duty to narrate all this, so that everything may come to light and resonate in the hearts of others.

The world does not appear to me as merely a vain dance of shadows, like a great Mâyâ, but as a battlefield, where the soul of my brother bleeds, whom I am bound to help. Through this unification with him, my unification with the high is consolidated. From this base of human love, I begin the process of my harmonization in divine love. I understand mystical ascesis in the Latin sense, that is, Christianly, not as a sterile meditative concentration that robs society of a soul and an activity, but as a fertilization performed by the divine in the human, so that in the human it expands and multiplies for its ascension; I understand it not as a force that is absent from the earth, but as a force that returns to it and is active and present upon it, acting powerfully each day. I understand mystical ascesis as aid to life, not as aggression to life; as expansion, not as compression. I am, therefore, immensely far from a certain sterile conventual ascesis, which oppresses without having within it a passion for resurrection. Let us not kill love, I refer to the love of the spirit, otherwise, we will kill ourselves; let us not kill it, but graft it onto pain. The pain will pass and love will survive; fertilized by pain, it will grow and take us higher.

My conception, based on solid scientific and experimental foundations, must remain very distinct and distant from all the shoals, among all the forgeries of a healthy and positive view of life. I only transiently accept darkness, torment, the mutilation of renunciation, and as briefly as possible and only to revive more intensely and higher. To live, live, live always more. My ascesis is a vortex of passion, not a slumber into nothingness, nor a school of ascetic persecution and, much less, an accom-

modation of conveniences: it is a logical, natural, and unstoppable maturation, which appears when the soul has behind it such an accumulation of forces, that the balances precipitate towards higher forms of life. In asceticism, I see the sound mystical methodology, that is, the natural process of consciousness development. And just as the rational phase gave us the analytical method, and the inspirational phase gave us the method of intuition and led me to the construction of a universal synthesis, so also the mystical phase gives us the method of integral expansion and leads to the construction of a unitary consciousness. The unification of knowledge is completed and elevated to the unification in feeling.

The expansion of the cycles expressed in the diagram is an enlargement of consciousness that covers ever vaster fields of sensation, encompasses in the most intense vibratory capacity an ever-widening range of notes, and can respond more and more to the voices in the great canticle of the universe. The superposition of planes in the diagram truly entails a descent of light, strength, and love from Above and establishes incessant communion among the various planes, which is a wonderful concert of souls. And the more I ascend, the more I identify myself in this song; and the more I receive and merge, the more I nourish myself from it, the more I must give back what has been given to me, the more I must lower myself and spread out among the lesser sister creatures. There is indeed in the universe, from plane to plane, this wonderful circulation of vital lymph, pouring forth abundantly, limited only by the receptive capacity of the being, by its resonance potency. God is a centre of vital, affective, and intellectual energies, before which any being would be reduced to ashes if the pathways of penetration were not automatically limited in proportion to sensitivity.

I have rationally addressed the matter, whose scientific foundations I have already established. However, now, the slow pace of reason irresistibly accelerates and becomes more refined in sublime expressions; for the

argument urges and my spirit is eager to spread its wings and show itself in flight, just as it truly is, no longer constrained within those fetters. It is time to strip off the envelopes of rational representation and to approach the vision. Gradually, in this writing, I will approach it, until penetrating it, until immersing myself and losing myself in ecstasy and burning in divine love.

I declared, at the beginning, that I would deal with the subject of mystical ascesis, not only as reason, but also as sensation and faith, not only in its scientific and objective aspect, but also in its mystical and spiritual aspect. This diverse projection will not split the reality of the phenomenon but will reinforce it, confirming it; nothing will detract from its fundamental rational solidity, to which it is always possible to descend, since it can no longer be lost sight of, even if one wishes, except when one knows how to translate the terms of faith into terms of science. The scientific aspect that I put forward at the beginning, to firmly establish the bases of the phenomenon on earth, does not deny itself, precisely now that we observe the continuation of this phenomenon in the heavens.

In my previous works, I mercilessly narrated, after overcoming the shame of the intimate things of the soul, my suffering, my weakness, my fatigue. It is time to report the fruit of all this — the conquest — to enter the phase of achievements. At the end of the preceding volume¹⁶, I made serious statements. The moment has arrived to consolidate them with even more serious statements. I cannot deny the past, I must continue it with new ascensions. In this new testimony, which I give with my soul bare before God, I still strive and will go to the depths. The first ties tighten, the commitments strengthen; by certain paths, it is no longer possible to stop. This testimony will say it is ***The Great Synthesis***, will reveal today a new zone of its meaning, even deeper, will confirm and will ex-

¹⁶ The Noures (Author's Note)

pand my already so serious statements about it. I will speak of Christ, because Christ has come closer and I feel that He comes closer each day more, in a resplendent light. Since He is the centre from which are born and in which all my work and my whole personality merge.

Thus, I will better make understood, in this world of the blind, what are the true goals of life. Many comprehend too late, already at the end of the path, that nothing substantial was built, nothing that withstands death and survives destruction and cannot be subtracted from one's own personality. They then understand that wealth, honours, sexual love represent vain illusion. What boredom in the soul! Afterwards, it will be necessary to start over from the beginning, to repeat the course of trials. Light is only made at the end, on the edge of the grave. First, always an unceasing aggression, to become great already where nothing resists and time destroys everything. Always so; otherwise, what would one do? It seems that men know no other way to act. It seems that if this rivalry, this ferocity of struggle ended, they would be astonished, looking at each other, yawning, as someone who has nothing else to do, or no longer knows what to do. Or else they would gorge themselves on goods and pleasures, until bursting, until death. This tremendous passion that I stir seems, then, properly beyond the normal conceivable. Each one descends the slope and drags along the others, and all drag together; it is a competition for the one who most rapidly precipitates, a compression that no more anyone resists and in which the human soul, spark of God, is trampled underfoot.

I will make understood the deepest realities of life, which escape the covetous and hasty glance of modern man. He believes himself to be nothing more than the body, and with it to be consummated. He does not want to age, nor die with it. What a tremendous mutilation of the infinite consciousness to identify oneself so exclusively with one's own limitation, to enclose oneself in darkness, without hope of light, to imprison the free

spirit in the envelope of matter and to suffer the unstable vicissitudes of this, its laborious transformism, only to, in the end, putrefy with it! Christ came to announce to us: "**I am the Resurrection and the Life:**", and we have not understood Him. The man of today, in the alleged modern civilization, laboriously pursuing an ideal of material well-being, has closed himself off from the paths of spiritual expansion, from the paths of consciousness development; he has enclosed himself in a crust of selfishness, and his soul suffocates and suffers. The soul would wish to explode in its free element, but, feels, on the contrary, to die in matter.

Enclosed thus, the spirit feels the rush of the narrow walls it tries to raise and does not understand that they are not, nor can they be, its habitation. The presumed dynamism of our time is nothing more than the disorderly agitation of this anguish that seeks escape. Mastery of speed, time, and space seems like a flight, a liberation, an overcoming, and yet, it is nothing more than the shorter, more laboured breath of one who runs more swiftly in the same circle of vain things. One cannot imagine how all human life rests upon these subtle psychological games, upon these profound laws of the evolution of the spirit.

The utilitarian science aimed to pave a way through the iron circles of material needs, and the human masses were thrown into these waves of hope, falling, however, into such abysses that the world remained more dissatisfied than before. Quite different is the expansion that the inner pressure needs. The spirit cannot be satisfied with these increments in matter, new external stratifications that thicken the envelope and chain the spirit to the earthly ballast, which is made of pain.

For those who see and understand, this spectacle is astounding. It would be ridiculous, if it were not mortifying. It's a harrowing race towards the futile. Such is the world to which I speak, I know it. I speak of elevations of spirit to the most rarefied atmospheres of intelligence and love. I intend to captivate the reader even further, into divine raptures. I

will lead them, fully, to the sensation of mystical ecstasy, because this is the substance of the phenomenon. Will I be understood? I am well aware that it often concerns souls of different ages, of diverse and less profound inner maturation, for whose insensitivity certain brutal shocks are necessary. But, their pain is real and it tears me apart. I feel them calling from far away. Although they do not understand it, nor admit it, it implies for me the tremendous duty to give myself for their good. I see them suffocate, submerged up to the throat, in darkness and torment; I see the imminent dangers of now, which they ignore. Why, then, should I live, if not to help? Do I not have the duty to restore, where it is most needed, that light which from above pours in torrents, freely, upon me?

The unitary and compact organization of the universe imposes a solidarity between the high and the low, in the labour of ascending. Whoever has more, must give more. And it is for this reason of balance and love that the utmost greatness of Christ married the extreme opposite of His bloody passion. Through my spirit move forces that, in harmonizing these planes, belong to all. I cannot isolate myself. The universe is now to me a concert; it is necessary to live, harmonizing oneself. I feel enraptured on the path of return and with me rises to God the chant of all creatures. The human dissonances of selfishness, greed, violence will not manage to silence this immense song that is the soul of creation. I have abandoned everything along the path of pain. I have risen, naked, from the lacerations stemming from separation. But, now, in the expansion of my spirit, the universe comes to meet me, without more limits. To give of myself, that is my labour; to immerse myself in the rhythm of the whole, that is my nourishment.

Such donations, usually considered absurd and far less necessary, are an absolute duty for the soul that, naked, has crossed the threshold. If one ascends in pursuit of knowledge and love, it is to undertake a more arduous work, it is to fulfil more arduous duties. For a new civilization

must be born, and sacrifice is necessary to prepare it; it will be a new historical cycle that will form a new race in which fraternity will no longer be an empty word, but a new evolutionary phase of more perfect spiritual harmonization.

MYSTICAL METHODOLOGY

To live and love, such is the substance of my mysticism, which will appear in this expression of a lived phenomenon. As the veils fall and the source approaches and becomes transparent, one ascends and the fire blazes. Within it, one will hear the music of the divine, the love of creatures, the love of God. Before us, we will see the figure of Christ reemerge, who precedes us and advances through the centuries. We will see gradually appear, in a succession of frames, this vision and in it the transformation of a soul. But, let us still delay the march, before venturing into the great flight. Let us advance through a gradual increase in tension. We have sufficiently dealt with the technical aspect of the question. Let us leave behind this surpassed effort. We are still in the vestibule, before the portal. Our psychology must advance through progressive dematerialization, and the preceding theoretical affirmations should convert into a tangible form of life. To make understanding possible, we must gradually separate from current psychology and gradually strip ourselves of the rational analytical envelope, free ourselves, and elevate from the mental form of our time. The preceding technical study made us rationally understand mystical ascesis; now, we must understand it spiritually. That first orientation is at the base and thus helps and will help us, but now it is necessary to reach the super-elevation of the edifice. It is necessary to rise in the new form of thought and move within it; we must tear the veil and face the light.

Here, mystical ascesis has surpassed, in our examination, the theoretical phase of understanding and enters the practical field of its realization. It emerges from the rational exposition with a palpitation of life, no longer an explanatory illustration, but a norm of action. Those who still doubt will see that the ascesis becomes a method and that there is a methodology to reach God and achieve unification. This equally forms part of my experience. This exposition will lead us to the understanding of the last part and the psychological frameworks that complete it. We will thus see born here, as a logical consequence of our promises, a mystical methodology. It is the same as that of the great mystics, of which, however, they did not give the necessary rational and scientific explanation for today's understanding. Essentially, it is the methodology of evolution in the spirit phase, it follows from every word of mine in my past writings, it is contained within them, in their general lines, and continues here in its highest development.

The experimental field of my observations thus extends to the experiences of mystics who have lived the phenomenon and given their testimony, confirming it. There is a mystical science, whose authors join hands. Embryonic in the early days of Christianity, it develops afterwards, often reaching unprecedented heights. St. Dionysius the Areopagite enunciates the general laws of mystical theology, laying its foundations; John Ruysbroeck (born in Belgium, in 1293) assimilated his thought and above all lived it. In **The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage**, he truly burns like a fire and flies like an eagle; his spirit lets out a tremendous cry and plunges into the vertigo of the highest mystical states. And who does not know Eckhart, Tauler, and also Blessed Angela of Foligno, St. Bonaventure, St. Teresa, an unmatched vibrant soul, and the saint of the mystic Assisi, St. Francis, shadow of Christ? The maximum doctor in mystical theology, of the greatness of St. Thomas in dogmatics, is St. John of the Cross (born in Spain, in 1542). His works: **Ascent of Mount Carmel**, **Dark Night of the Soul**, **Spiritual Canticle**, and

The Living Flame of Love describe the paths of spiritual ascesis until the unification of the soul with God.

There is, therefore, a method to reach God, with characteristics that are repeated, demonstrating that behind personal achievements there is a general phenomenon. In this, theoretical mystics and experimental mystics are in agreement, in a dominant note. What do all these men do, what do they want? They are souls tormented by a strange necessity: they are in a hurry to reach God, driven by a dizzying desire, the desire for unification. They all burn with an inner effervescence of love. They live with their arms open to God and to the creatures, suffering before arriving and, afterwards, singing and loving. They ignite in the fire of ecstasy, in unimaginable sources, to then pour out torrents of light and passion. We hear cries that are not understood in our world, and therefore are not admitted. What then occurs?

The phenomenon of the absorption of the lower self into the higher self occurs, through the dark night of the senses. The centre of gravity of life shifts to a hyperbiological world, located beyond our capacity to conceive. If, theoretically and technically, this is conceivable, as we shall see, quite different is to live the phenomenon and to experience the sensation of its maturation. Those who are still evolutionarily distant observe and do not understand; but, those who have arrived and live the phenomenon undergo a revolution in thought and sensations. The smile of those who deny cannot destroy this reality; nor can their pseudo-pathological explanations halt the development of the laws of life. Then comes the phenomenon of transhumanization into God, and the soul, although covered in ridicule, finds itself in the face of such stupendous achievements, that it cannot silence its rapture.

The phenomenon immediately reveals itself as decisively super-rational, precisely because it is a transformation of consciousness; at its first step, it surpasses and nullifies reason. As the initial occurrence,

therefore, the point of contact with lower psychology is thus missing. It is logical, however, that one who flies leaves the ground. Reason can classify the phenomenon, but cannot feel it. Let us cross the portal; reason does not enter. It is natural that it remains outside and, finding no echo in the expanse of its own consciousness, denies. Then, accusations of hysteria and neurosis arise, because from each mouth can only emerge the voice of its own understanding.

Let us enter the supersensory and super-rational, which is a dimension entirely different from the normal human dimension. This gauge is not suited to measure such dimensions. The mystics themselves find no words in the language of all. The profound essence of the phenomenon remains inadmissible to reason, and reason, finding itself denied, denies in turn. Thus, they exclude each other reciprocally. Not being the phenomenon felt as a reality among realities and considering that every **self** is invariably the measure of things, it is then defined by incomprehension as a nothingness which, however, for those who feel, contains the infinite, a nothingness vibrant with passion and fruitful in splendid activity, super-humanly altruistic and beneficial. This is what Boëhme's **rest without beginning or end** contains, the **eternal silence** of Eckart, the **tranquillity and silence of the night** of St. John of the Cross. And so it seems absurd to create a doctrine on a system of systematic negation of the means of the senses and the mind and that one can conquer a vision by force of darkness. In truth, there is a first phase of negation and darkness, but it is only a beginning; then comes the resurrection. To fly, however, it is necessary to leave the legs, for as long as we want to walk, we will never fly. It is no longer a matter of running with large strides of reason, but of flying in intuition and vision. Now, this is quite different. And the two worlds will confront each other, accusing each other of illusion. If a passage is not opened, they will never understand each other. But, one might ask me, if man is enclosed in reason, as he is in his skin, how will he one day get out? How can one exit from one's own conscious-

ness? Evidently, it is by force of evolution. Is not this a continual emergence from under the envelopes of one's own seed? There is this immense inner impulse that contains all developments and is an impulse of God towards His manifestation.

The mystic excludes reason. He does not kill it, he surpasses it; he does not lose it, he transmutes it. The soul heads towards God; for what more can the reasonings of the intellect serve? How can certain spiritual heights be evaluated with means made for the small psychological distances of the earth? Rational demonstrations, philosophical arguments may constitute a very imperfect approximation of the idea of God, but in its essence, it does not bear image, thus also does not bear demonstration. To attempt to demonstrate His existence is equivalent to denying the direct sensation of Him and closing the great paths of communication with Him, which are the paths of faith. Satisfied, the intellect then blinds itself, because it feels much better with the other means. The knowledge of God is something else: it is more about letting oneself be carried than a laborious search; it is the soul's emergence above the plane of reason, in a bare vision, that no longer bears image, no longer chains, nor reduces the divine in representation. Consciousness must resurge in a luminosity so clear, vast, and immediate, that these dense and opaque inferior vibrations, such as the senses, reason, observation, distinction, logic, cannot insinuate themselves into it. The vision becomes pure, simple, unitary.

THE NIGHT OF THE SENSES

Mystics insist much on this sensorial overcoming, which they achieve through a process of progressive purification. The beginning is quite arduous. It is not, therefore, only a negation of reason, darkness of intellect, and renunciation of logical understanding, but also a negation of senses, the closing of the soul's doors, eager to project outward but repelled inward, the shutting of the doors to satisfying passions, thus compressed to sublimate themselves. Here begin the mystic's agonies, whose soul is torn apart, fibre by fibre. To reach dilatation, it is necessary to traverse this zone of comprehension. The development of the phenomenon is given by all this mutation of equilibriums, through which the centre of gravity of consciousness shifts. The phenomenon is essentially dynamic, and in its movement, there are two moments: atrophy of the lower self and its reconstitution on a higher plane of consciousness. The first phase is, therefore, death. This, however, becomes necessary. Only under the condition of a reversal of the vital process of expansion, in the human zone, can a much more potent process of expansion begin in the super-human zone. That suffering of renunciation, which seems absurd, is nothing but a potentiation of impetus for a new life, much more intense and vaster. The resurrection in the divine must, therefore, be parallel, close to death in the human. Only this mysticism is healthy, active, creative, because it is directed towards life. Woe to those who stop only at the first phase and demolish consciousness, without reconstructing it. This

is suicide, not mysticism. Mysticism must advance through the broad paths of evolution, leading to light and joy, never, however, to retreat upon the narrow paths of involution, which close in blindness and pain.

This first phase of work and darkness was expressed by mystics as being the **night of the senses**. At this point, I want to reproduce a page from a well-known scientist, Carrel, who in his volume — **Man, The Unknown**, leads science to confessions never dared before, which seemed eternally outside its competence. Although Carrel was unable to understand some problems, because science and reason are not sufficient to solve them, as it would require other means and sources of guidance, it is very interesting, however, to see how certain high mystical phenomena can be sufficiently understood and classified by science, when it is conscious, winged, and genius. Carrel writes¹⁷:

“The initiation into asceticism is arduous, and few have the courage to embark on this path. He who wishes to undertake this painful journey must renounce himself and the things of the world. Then, he remains in the darkness of the dark night, experiences the sufferings of purgatorial life, and, lamenting his weakness and unworthiness, begs for the grace of God. Gradually, he detaches from himself. His prayer becomes contemplation. He enters the illuminative life. He can no longer describe what he sees (...) His spirit transcends space and time, comes into contact with something ineffable, and reaches the unitive life, contemplates God, and acts with Him. (...) We must accept his experience, just as it is given to us. Only those who have lived in prayer can judge it. The quest for God is indeed a very personal undertaking. By virtue of a certain activity of his consciousness, the mystic tends towards an invisible reality, which resides in the material world and extends beyond it. He embarks on the

¹⁷ The quotations that follow are translated directly from the original French: **L'Homme Cet Inconnu**, Chaps. IV and VIII, Librairie Plon, Paris, 1936 (Note from the Translator).

most daring adventure that can be attempted, which is why he can be considered a hero or a madman”.

Further on, the same author continues, from another perspective: "The happiest and most useful men form a harmonious ensemble of intellectual and moral activities. (...) Moreover, there exists a class of men who, although as maladjusted as criminals and madmen, are indispensable to modern society: they are the geniuses, characterized by the monstrous hypertrophy of some of their psychological activities. The great artists, the great scientists or philosophers are generally ordinary men, whose function has hypertrophied. They can also be compared to a tumour that develops in a normal organism. These unbalanced creatures are generally unhappy, and yet, they produce great works that benefit the entire society. Their maladjustment engenders the progress of civilization. Humanity has never been propelled by the effort of the multitude, but by the passion of a few individuals, by the flame of their intelligence, by their ideal of science, charity, or beauty."

Such is Carrel. He has the merit of guiding science towards the acceptance of two great truths: the value of the moral factor, in the face of the problem of knowledge, and the possibility of transcending the rational-analytical plane into conceptual dimensions and higher planes of consciousness. Science advances and will arrive through a long path. But, we are in a hurry, the work is vast, we cannot afford to waste time on the hesitations of hypotheses, nor on the slow control of analysis. Barely touching a phenomenon, it is necessary to conclude immediately, to go deep, to give it an exhaustive explanation.

Carrel still continues: "For many years, we have witnessed the progress of eugenicists, geneticists, biometricians, statisticians, behaviourists, physiologists, anatomists, organic chemists, biochemists, psychologists, medical doctors, endocrinologists, hygienists, psychiatrists, criminologists, educators, clergy, economists, sociologists, etc., and we know

how insignificant the practical results of their research are. This immense conglomeration of knowledge is scattered and spread out in technical journals, in treatises, in the brains of scientists, so that each one possesses a fragment of it. Now it is urgent to gather these pieces into a whole and to make it live in the spirit of a few individuals. Only then will the science of man become fruitful. This undertaking is difficult. How to build a synthesis?"

We cannot be satisfied with a question mark. Our souls are eager to know and have the need and the right to know, immediately. Why does science not understand this synthesis? Why can it not create in this sense? Why does it stall, stranded in its objective security? Why does no one dare and risk, without worrying about the sacrifice of reputation and position, throwing everything away for everything, to achieve through a passionate fervour an immense dream?

But, let us return to our phenomenon, to penetrate it fully, to its core. That first phase of the mystical phenomenon, made of purification and darkness, qualified by mystics as **the night of the senses**, is not an illogical mutilation of life, but concentrated labour of evolution. Those anguishes have the widest rational and experimental justification. It seems absurd to possess eyes and refuse to see, to possess ears and refuse to hear, to possess senses and refuse to feel, love and refuse to love, life and refuse to live. The human consciousness, astonished, questions itself about the reason for those vicissitudes. But, it refuses to see, hear, feel, love, live, only to see, hear, feel, love, and live more and better, always more and better. Herein lies the purpose of the **dark night of the senses**: one stops reasoning, to intuit, stops loving the creature, to love the Creator. Certainly, this first phase of compression is pain, but the immediate one, of expansion, is incomparable joy. It is just, moreover, that every evolutionary progress be conquered through effort and work:

this is what the balance of the Law imposes¹⁸. And this first movement is of pain because it represses and reverses the soul's impulse which is expansion (evolution). But, upon closer examination, this inversion is equally, or rather, more powerfully on the paths of expansion and evolution. Pausing before the scene of pure and human life, reason easily falls into error. What are, indeed, pain and pleasure but the indisputable voice of the instinct aware of what is necessary to it? The necessity of life, a fundamental and universal necessity at all levels, is expansion; its satisfaction is joy, and its limitation, suffering. Scarcely does a resistance yield and allow the expansion of the **self**, it is invaded by unspeakable satisfaction. And the self, internally, is exerting continuous pressure because it is, by its nature, unlimited and, as such, does not admit confines. This is the universal law, and, on any plane, constant, even although it may be under different forms. Pleasure is increase; pain, decrease. Then, the consciousness does not know, at first, the cause of this process of decrease which is so repugnant to it and why it should replace it with that of increase which so attracts it. But, just overcome the first moment and taste the new achievements, and it will launch into mystical asceticism with the uncontrollable impulse that would have given to human passions. Because it is always about increase, which is pleasure.

If, however, it is necessary to die, mysticism is entirely based on the reconstructive phase and does not accept the initial negation of life except as transitory darkness, a condition of permanent light. The phenomenon is balanced according to perfect logic. It is about reshaping consciousness according to a more potent nature. Human passions represent an order of heavy vibrations which, falling back to earth, are incapable of rising into the stratosphere of the spirit and engulfing themselves in higher planes to penetrate and settle in them. Detachment is an

¹⁸ See fig. 2: "Development of the typical trajectory of phenomenal motions". Every phenomenon, before beginning the launch of its greatest development, folds upon itself in a phase of contraction. (Author's Note)

incapacity of consciousness to respond to certain vibrations established in vast periods of biological evolution and a training to respond to subtler and higher vibrations. I have asserted that vibrations represent an order of shorter, faster, and more dynamic waves, more penetrating and, by their more intense and swift rhythm, capable of elevating itself. Here, it is about moving from an order of dense and heavy vibrations to an order of agile and subtle vibrations. Scientifically, ascesis can be defined as the science of thought-waves and likewise the method of their transformation into ever more immaterial, elevated, penetrating, swift, and potent types; it is the organism of norms modelling this resonance. The states of the soul, the behaviour of the spirit, contain the method of operating the transmission and of capturing such waves, a method by which one achieves to put the spirit in a state and **permanent** attunement with centres of consciousness and emanation located on higher planes.

In ascesis, one advances gradually. A first vibration connects the spirit, by resonance, with a higher plane. Repetition consolidates the connection, so that it becomes possible to gradually adapt the being, until it manages to stabilize in a new equilibrium and definitively transfer to a new way of being. For this reason, precisely, I insisted much on the affinity with the transmitter in the technique of the *noures*, because there began this process of attuning that here is completed. In mystical ascesis, one tends towards unification; the attunement, therefore, must be integral, of the whole soul and with the entire universe and not merely partial, localized in a given conceptual resonance.

So, evolution, after having reversed, for a moment, its direction, corrects it and resumes it to ascend vertiginously. The being overcomes the phase of negation and becomes to affirm with a hundredfold power. Once the centre is changed, life then changes in meaning and value; it contains achievements different from the human ones, towards which it tends. The physical body is no longer a means of expression and expan-

sion, but a prison, a means of compression. Death becomes life and life turns into a process of negation in the human and of affirmation in the divine. It is a stripping of the soul, for at certain levels it cannot arrive and enter except as a bare soul. After the first vicissitudes, the spirit resumes the direction and the marvellous phenomenon of the inversion of pain occurs, that is, its annulment. Liberation is then achieved. Once the dissonance is overcome, the spirit harmonizes in the great concert of the universe, human pain separates more and more from it and remains below, as a dead thing, among the dead dregs of life. Pain is reabsorbed into love, the dissonant vibration is submerged in the ocean of harmonies of the Divinity. Then occurs what happens in death: the suffering, which should increase, is progressively reabsorbed into insensibility. In the struggle between pain and love, love wins; pain dies, love triumphs. Amidst the torments, the soul sings.

Thus, the spirit emerges into a new world. However, this happens gradually. The suffering resulting from the mutilation of consciousness on the human plane is compensated by the joy of expansion on the superhuman plane. As occurs, on the inferior level, the suffocation of life, the field covered by the new consciousness unfolds; as detachment becomes imminent, distances shorten, and the soul approaches the goal and exults in its triumph. The life of the mystics is the course of this path.

Ascetics exist, harsh and insensitive, who know nothing else but to speak of renunciation, in which everything is still immersed in the night of human separation; and there are ascetics who, having reached a higher level, sing of love. There are those who sow and those who reap, those who martyr themselves and those who triumph, but all traverse the various phases of the same cycle. In the beginning, the path is fraught with difficulties and resistances. The lower **self** does not easily lay down its weapons and, when it does so voluntarily, organizes an unconscious de-

fence in which the millennial, untamed impulses of the biological past re-surface. Then, in the depths of flesh and passion, menacing whispers resonate and the beast reveals itself, eyes bloody, fierce, to tear apart. The two tremendous enemies — spirit and matter — are precisely united, one to the other and the fight is atrocious, internal, without truce. Not infrequently, the beast wins.

THE UNIFICATION

The division has already begun, the antagonism has been outlined, the breach becomes wider and wider. Through the cracks of the envelope, something has penetrated, and escape has now become possible. A new experience has been lived, and the spirit, which once again assaults the walls for its liberation, cannot forget it. Exciting moments of trembling anticipation in which the soul tenaciously struggles and, from its prison, passionately cries out, increasingly compressing and intensifying its effort for liberation, because it heard through the thick walls the first resonance, tasted the first inebriation of flight, feels in the darkness the crumbling of the last barriers one by one, beyond which light will burst forth. Gradually, the veils are torn, and the first contacts occur. Divine sounds descend to the spirit. The passage is now open, and through it pours the divine source. The soul will be beyond all its longing, flooded.

Then comes the spirit of God, like the eruption of a fire that sweeps over everything, to completely incinerate the residues of human passions. At this point, the process of unification begins. But this, too, does not come without struggle. The soul is now bare and is struck to its depth. The subversion of balances causes unheard-of storms of sensations; in the field of forces of consciousness, the supervening of the most potent radiations provokes flashes and fires. The soul must burn and blaze to emerge renewed from the ashes of its past. The supreme divine force has drawn and encircled in its orbit that soul which, once trapped, begins to

gravitate around it, more and more vertiginously: and, the more the orbits tighten, the more violent is the attraction, the more active the absorption, the closer the unification. In this unification, the consciousness feels itself to be lost as a distinct individuation, no longer knows who it is, and struggles against its sweetest annihilation, made of love. But, at the same time, it cannot help but expand, because that attraction is also its attraction, and the two terms, unifying, cannot but inevitably impact one another. The soul experiences vacillations: it feels to expand limitlessly, and this is supreme joy, yet, it no longer identifies itself, no longer recognizes itself as a distinct self, and this saddens it. It seems to it that it is no longer possible to exist without representing such a **self**; in this immense expansion, it seems to consume itself and retreat in terror. The abyss of the infinite opens at its feet, and its small consciousness of before does not know how to measure it. It experiences the vertigo of great altitudes and turns again to cling to that divine force of attraction that takes it ever further and ends up consuming it as a human thing, to make it re-emerge, wholly and only, as a divine thing.

Struggle, always struggle, but now a most sweet struggle. The combat, in the early stages of mystical ascesis, will be undertaken between the beast and the angel who still remains exhausted and torn by wounds received, but now the struggle unfolds between the divine and the human. Ruysbroeck says, in his work, *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage*, in the chapter — "The Combat": "The assaults of love place, face to face, two spirits: the Spirit of God and ours. Then, the struggle begins. Our spirit leans towards God and wants to possess Him. The impulse of love has as its accomplice the secret act of God, ardently sought. The duel occurs in the depth. The wounds received by the combatants are of astonishing intimacy; they throw at each other rays that burn their fervent strength, and the ardour of the combat increases the anxiety of love between them. Thus, they merge. The spirit of God graces us, and ours reciprocates and, from this double impulse, the strength of love is born.

These ebbs and flows cause the source of love to multiply. Thus, the contact with God and the fury of our desire combine in the most ineffable simplicity. Overwhelmed and possessed by love, the spirit, through incredible forgetfulness, comes to remember nothing but its possessor. It feels ablaze and, as it plunges into the abyss of the one it now touches, seeing the reality it lives surpass its own desire and eagerness, it watches, astonished, its own fainting. But, gathering, in a supreme effort, all its forces, it finds in the depth of its activity the energy necessary to transform itself into love. Then, the inner sanctuary of its created essence, where its earthly activity begins and ends, is in its hands. And it dominates, with its virtues and powers, the multiplicity of the world”.

It is through these sensations, confirmed by mystics, that the progressive process we have seen acts: vibration, resonance, attunement, detachment, purification, affinity, attraction, love, unification. At the pinnacle of the phenomenon's development is unification. It is a procedure of love, the basis of life. It seems that the most perfect and complete state of being, which is unity in God, had once, as if precipitated by *involution*, split into the dualism of sexual love, in which the being, painfully unfolded into two, must anxiously traverse, every day, the labour of reconstructing unity through the imperfect, unstable, and insidious pathways of human love. Mysticism goes back to the paths of evolution that lead to liberation from such limitations, from all the divisions and separatism that are characteristic of the inferior planes, where unity fragments and pulverizes into the multiple and the relative. It is a great effort of rehabilitation of the regressed being, of reconstruction of the integrity and immensity of the **self**, today lost as if it were a punishment. It is about reconquering, in God, true love, universal for all beings¹⁹. Below, it manifests humanly similar to a rain of donations, which the spirit

¹⁹ These problems are extensively developed and elucidated in three other works by the same Author, subsequently written: *God and Universe*, *The System*, and *Fall and Redemption*. (Translator's Note)

spreads entirely around itself, that is, similar to a form of sacrifice and love for all men and all creatures, in which its universal character is clearly expressed. These beings represent on earth, channels of divine expansion.

If the rational aspect of the phenomenon, as already exposed, is intellectually comprehensible, its sensitive aspect is absolutely unimaginable and incommunicable to those who do not feel it, and therefore, cannot prove it. There are lacking words and expressions in language, there is above all lacking in the human heart the capacity to vibrate and to respond to such emotions. How can one explain the loss of distinct individuation of consciousness, the identification through reabsorption into the universe's principle, the transhumanization of pain through harmonization, if such states do not exist in the plane of normal consciousness? Here is where one arrives who has managed to break through the envelope: a truly continuous, internal, and profound contact, which is unity. Human loves have the same tendency, but encased in the physical envelope, they can never achieve this complete identification and always leave a distance that divides, a residue of selfishness. But, this is not among the loves, many among so many forms, but it is Love. St. Paul told us that love is the main road, or rather, the only way of mysticism, the grace more necessary than any other. And it is he who cries: **“Vivo autem iam non ego; vivit vero in me Christus”**: **it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me**²⁰. "Reason and intelligence," Ruysbroeck adds, "stop at the door. But love, which is love, the love that received an order wants, although blind like the others, to bravely advance. It retained, in its own blindness, the instinct of joy. Thus, when, before the door, intelligence prostrates and succumbs, love says: I will enter". And love enters, and death is conquered in this triumph.

²⁰ Epistle to the Galatians, 2:20. (Translator's Note.)

It is said that the greatest punishment for guilty souls consists in the deprivation of beholding God, which is the encampment outside the great currents of life. The greatest joy of the chosen souls lies precisely in this contact with God, in this supreme inebriation of harmonization, in this complete fusion. But, it is useless to accumulate words. Here I torment myself with expressing the ineffable. This contact of love, which in itself makes God's presence perceptible, is a sensation so subtle that it can only be reached through refinement and sharpening of one's own sensitivity. It is a note so high and of such vibratory frequency that the common ear does not perceive it; if it did, it would burst, so intense is its potential. To reach it, it is necessary, even for the mature and trained consciousness, to gradually attune in and raise the tension. This is achieved little by little and can be aided by that process of *nouric* attunement, a condition for inspirational reception, which I described in my previous volume²¹. Contemplation guides us into the house of God. The auscultation of the harmonies of creation is an important musical path of elevation, because it makes us consciously attend to the thought of God.

Arriving at this state, consciousness is, not only metaphorically but also truly, outside itself, because it is on a new plane of existence and outside its conceptual dimension. It is then said to be enraptured in ecstasy. Ecstasy is a tremendously active state and supremely conscious, it is the state of perception of unification. This may be unconsciousness, only for those unconscious in this plane. Ecstasy is the final phase of the mystical phenomenon, the crowning of asceticism, the apex reached, not rationally, as we did at the beginning, but sensitively. Here it is not about understanding the phenomenon, but, much more than that, it is about living it. Such is the difference between observing and being. Ecstasy is the conscious revelation of union, it is the perception of the perfect realization of vibratory identification. The "grace," so debated, is a real phe-

²¹ The Noures (Translator's Note)

nomenon, scientifically admissible, that is, a descent of current that elevates towards attunement and tends towards unification; and the emanation from the High, in which the Divinity reveals itself active and moves its attractions. The state of grace is the state of harmonization achieved.

Here is the glorious epilogue of the long and painful path that the mystic has walked. The poet sets out on the journey, but only the mystic arrives. The poet attempts and invokes, the mystic accomplishes and loves. Thus, the mystic is the complete, integral poet, who has attained the entire reality of their dream. Ecstasy is the supreme synthesis of all art, because it is of all conception and all beauty. Thus, mystics are immense, vertiginous, wonderful poets. They do not withdraw from life but are more intensely present in it. The mystic returns to things, but with divine vision, returns to creatures and loves them anew, because in them is God and in them, God is rediscovered. All things possess no more than one meaning and one power: to elevate their spirit to God. Their selfishness is transformed into the love of a **self** so vast that it encompasses all creation and can contain nothing but God. Their poor human arms are no longer sufficient to embrace the infinite. The mystic, then, divides the rhythm of their dynamism into two phases: contemplation and action. And the two cycles intertwine, complete each other, nourish each other reciprocally. First, they plunge into the divine abyss to attain its light and energy. Then, they descend again among human miseries to do good and alleviate pain. From their height, they bend down, with arms wide open. The tangible furrow left behind by the mystic's asceticism is made of deeds of kindness. **"The love of God cannot be idle"**. These practical consequences, a reason for division on the human level, must be understood by society. I quote, in this regard, other simple and sublime words from Ruysbroeck: "Interior consolation is of a less elevated order than active love which spiritually or bodily, serves the poor. Therefore, I tell you: even if you are raptured in ecstasy as high as St. Peter or St. Paul, or any others you wish, if you hear of a sick person in need of a hot soup or any

other similar aid, I advise you to awaken for a moment from your ecstasy and heat the soup. Abandon God for God; seek Him and serve Him in his members: you will lose nothing in the exchange. What you abandon for charity, God will restore to you with many other perfections."

MODERN INCOMPREHENSION

Faced with this psychology, the modern mentality does not understand. It is content to take advantage of its utilitarian consequences, entirely immersed in the eternal game of ambition. It scorns those who retreat into solitude, labelling them as idle and misanthropic; it only recognizes work when it is noisy, because it only understands what assaults its ears. That solitude, however, appears empty and encompasses a tremendous inner activity. The mystic maintains other vital relations, and if he momentarily flees human contact, it is to nourish himself in divine contact. The centre of his attractions is placed beyond the earth's atmosphere, his soul does not love life except as it represents a mission of good and a trial to lead him to God. Wherever his gaze turns, he seeks and loves nothing but God. He feels Him identified in his own essence, present and active in the innermost part of himself. All images have fallen. Only God remains, a thundering inner voice, in the external silence of things. The soul of the world is empty and projects outward, to cover its horrendous vacuum; the mystic's soul is full and loves solitude, which allows him to project inward and feel his own fullness. He does not need to stun his senses to avoid his own desolation; he does not fear, as the world does, the silences in which the soul manifests itself. The reality of life is in that seclusion where the word ceases. Only when we reach the

depth of those silences does reality raise its head and face us. The great clarity is found at the bottom, beyond the densest darkness.

The life plan of the mystic is placed far above the earth. He also suffers and enjoys, fears and hopes, laments and sings, and loves, but all this happens on another level of consciousness, through different forms, reactions, and repercussions. The conceptual and sensory orientation, the way of seeing his relations with phenomena, are completely diverse. He captures, as a whole, a new order of resonances. He has conquered a new sense, the mystic sense, which is the sense of harmonization with the universe. His paths are different. The current man advances through the paths of work, of dominion over the world, and wants to destroy pain from the outside. It is the long path of evolution, which overcomes obstacles, tames resistances, but binds the spirit. The mystic follows the short path, advances through the paths of concentration, of self-domination, and destroys pain internally, not by annihilating its causes, but by overcoming them, with a different sensitivity. He does not touch and does not shape the exterior, but frees the spirit, overcomes everything, because he rises above the earth.

These two psychologies are contrary, and there is no possibility of communication between them. For this very reason, objections will be raised against the non-applicability of all this, justifying indifference towards certain problems that "**serve no purpose.**" And then, there will be attempts to relegate to the pathological and cast into the forgotten corners of History certain phenomena. Nonetheless, the psychological problem is always the most distressing, and the mystery of the human personality is the most tormenting enigma. This is, therefore, the most modern, deepest, most original study that can be undertaken. Faith speaks to us with powerful, but vague, words, and science merely stammers; when honest, it confesses its ignorance. Yet, within consciousness lie the deepest realities and the broadest possibilities of life. Nothing is yet known.

And yet, consciousness is already the germ of all developments. If anything is born in the external world, in any of its fields, it always springs from that inner mystery. If the divine descends upon the earth, it is through that conduit.

The problem is, therefore, compelling, current, and also practical. It is not possible to forget or abstract away that which is not seen and not touched, because precisely there lie the cause and the origin of things. And each one of us carries within this unity called **self**, this synthesis called consciousness. This is what we have most alive in us, and so vast is it that we do not know its limits. We see it plunging into deep layers, which we do not know and do not dare to probe. It evolves and transforms continuously within us, but is always present. We do not see it, and yet our most intimate sensations and emotions, joy and pain, are in it and not on the outside; our most vital and important part is found in this imponderable. This centre establishes contacts with everything around it, and despite this remains always distinct, gigantic, and indestructible.

The modern man, who has understood the mechanical laws of so many phenomena, thus mocking so many terrors, believes by this to have destroyed mystery and solved the enigma of life. And in a primary simplism, does not see that the mystery is infinite and has done nothing more than to expand its boundaries. Does not see that in the subtle world of the spirit, grand laws and tremendous reactions are found. For this reason, he who has touched and seen, revolts when unconsciousness denies and smiles. For this reason, I strive tirelessly to make it seen and known. In these elevated and distant matters, "which serve no purpose," the problem of future civilizations is stirred. In these struggles, certainly not written for rhetorical exercise, a much more intense life is agitated, titanic forces are moved, the seed of new orientations falls, which tomorrow will conquer immense values.

The human spirit must, by an irresistible and fatal impulse of evolution, project itself beyond the barriers that today limit it, beyond the dimensions of its current conceivable. There is a duty to extricate it from its order of vibrations turned towards the earth, and to project it, with all its potentiality, into this other order of vibrations, which want to rise, overcome, and break through the spaces, for fusion with the cosmic rhythm.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS

Although the multitude of blind reasoners rise in protest, man cannot deny the indestructible premonition of his future consciousness developments. There is a sensation that, beneath the minuscule normal self of the surface, extends an unlimited self in depth. And man asks himself: what, then, am I? Science perceives that the phenomenal world, already vast on its surface, is of a complexity, perfection, and wisdom, which progress as it is observed at greater depths. Science is something that perpetually and unlimitedly evolves towards this depth. It itself is constrained, by laws of evolution, to progress and to launch into these new fields. And it has already perceived that the human personality extends into zones that are beyond the normal limits of rational and practical consciousness; it must have verified the existence of an underground field of consciousness, loaded with motives, full of germs, from which all of this develops and blossoms into the normal surface consciousness. It named this field the subconscious or subliminal consciousness, or something similar.

"In these last years," writes Paolucci in his pamphlet—The Problems of the Spirit—"the relatively new science of psychology has begun to cast a vivid light on the mystery of human personality. Numerous research and experimental studies on the normal and abnormal functioning of the human spirit have led psychologists to discover that a considerable portion of our mental activity occurs without our awareness. **This uncon-**

scious cerebration, as they call it, appears to be confirmed by our psychological knowledge. Hence arise the discussions about the **subconscious**. According to those psychologists, the subconscious seems to be the seat of inspiration and intuition. Poets, preachers, musicians can testify to this. The thoughts of greatest value are those that come to us uninvoked and constitute the flashes of genius. The best scientific discoveries are often made thanks to what psychologists call the subconscious. The researcher first feels an intuition and then devotes himself to work and asks experience to justify it. Reason, which is nothing more than the name ordinarily given by us to the conscious exercise of our mental faculties, laboriously drags itself on all fours; intuition propels itself with a flap of wings". Thus, intuition, which lies in the depths, is a closer contact with reality than reason, which is on the surface. "The discursive and deductive method," says Jastrow in *The Subconscious*, "is the laborious path of logic, mounted on stilts, while intuition is the powerful flight of the Unconscious, which in an instant transports from earth to heaven". Many, however, like Geley, an idealist but a positivist, in his *De l'Inconscient au Conscient*, have not reached the bottom and have not understood. Schopenhauer himself sees an insurmountable abyss that separates the Unconscious from the Conscious, and, instead of building bridges, cuts them. Others approach, investigate, yet without explaining. Thus does Ribot: "L'inspiration révèle une puissance supérieure à l'individu conscient, étrangère à lui quoique agissant par lui: état que tant d'inventeurs ont exprimé en ces termes: Je n'y suis pour rien"²².

I cannot refrain from mentioning, at this point, a page from the well-known volume—**Man, The Unknown**—by Alexis Carrel. This book, which came into my hands by chance, while I was correcting typographical proofs a year after I had completed this work of mine, surprised me with

²² "The Inspiration reveals a power superior to the conscious individual, foreign to him although acting through him; a state that so many inventors have expressed in these terms: I have nothing to do with it"

the identity of thought of its author with my experimentation. A strange coincidence between individuals so diverse and from environments so distant, which cannot fail to impress us, for it demonstrates that certain ideas, lived by me (expressed in ***The Noures***) and considered by others absurd and inadmissible, are instead, in the air, from one end of the world to the other, and the spirit of the less evolved is already prepared and in agreement to grasp them.

Dr. Carrel, one of the most eminent experimental surgeons at the **Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research**, writes:

"It is certain that great scientific discoveries are not the sole work of intelligence. Scientists of genius possess, in addition to the power of observation and understanding, other qualities, intuition, creative imagination. With intuition, they grasp what remains hidden to others, perceive relations between phenomena that appear isolated, guess the existence of the unknown treasure. (...) They know, without reasoning, without analysis, what it is important for them to know. It is the phenomenon formerly known by the name of inspiration.

"Among men of science, there are two types of mind: the logical and the intuitive. Science owes its progress as much to one as to the other of these intellectual types. (...) Only the great men, or the pure of heart²³, can be transported by intuition to the summits of mental and spiritual life.

"It is a strange faculty: grasping reality, without the aid of reasoning, seems inexplicable to us. (...) Thus, knowledge of the external world often comes to us by ways different from those of the sensory organs"²⁴.

²³ How much I have insisted in *The Noures* and also here on the value of the moral factor! (Author's Note)

²⁴ We translate directly from the original French - *L'Homme Cet Inconnu*, Chapter IV - the cited passages. (Translator's Note)

Thus it is regarded, as a necessary consequence of investigations of phenomena, the subconscious; but its nature, extent, and content have not been understood. Each author has created his own diverse subconscious, and none has framed it in the universal phenomenology, in the deeper theory of the genesis and development of the spirit, and the goals of human personality²⁵.

For James and for Myers, the subconscious is the primitive, the fundamental; the secondary, the derivative, is consciousness, which is a product of environmental adaptation. Jastrow adds that "above consciousness, there exists a psychic organization prior to it, which is undoubtedly the source from which it originated." One has come to vaguely sense the existence of this profound intellect, more vast than the surface intellect that we call reason, understanding that this synthesis of life cannot sustain itself by its own strength and that, like an island emerging from the ocean, must rely, to emerge, on much vaster bases, the deeper one goes into depth. To understand and solve the problem, it is not enough to have observed all this and remain in the rational dimension; but it is necessary to leave, once and for all, from this dimension and plunge into that depth with open eyes, that is, remaining conscious in other dimensions. It is necessary to have within oneself the phenomenon and to probe it through introspection. It is necessary to have the courage, which science lacks, to conclude for a unique conception of phenomena. It is necessary to have placed before all this a complete, intellectual, and moral orientation of the own self, within the organic functioning of the universe.

²⁵ Compare **The Great Synthesis**, "Evolution of Dimensions and the Law of Dimensional Limits," chap. 35; "The Origins of Psychism," chap. 62; "Technique of the Evolution of Psychism and the Genesis of Spirit," chap. 64; "Instinct and Consciousness, Technique of Automatism," chap. 65, etc. (Author's Note)

THE SUPERCONSCIOUS

I cannot repeat here upon which foundations the problem was established, something already done elsewhere²⁶. In that work, theories were developed that assign exact value to the concept of the subconscious. Let us summarize. The human psyche is an organism in continuous growth (expansion) through descent into depth, via stratifications, of life's experience syntheses, which gravitate towards the interior. This continuous assimilation, operated in a zone of free will, becomes fixed in the determinism of balances stabilized in the trajectory of destiny. The subconscious is precisely the zone of formed instincts, of innate ideas, of automatisms created by the habitual repetition of life. The law of the least effort²⁷ limits the conscious effort only in the active field of new construction. The rest, what has been lived and constitutes a complete synthesis, goes to rest (unconsciousness) in the strata of the subconscious, from which so many of our qualities and instincts emerge as complete products, whose determining terms escape us. The surface consciousness is, therefore, an active, conscious tentacle, because it is in a phase of work; the subconscious is an immense repository of reserves, of stable products fixed after the period of conscious formation.

²⁶ See note 25 at the end of the previous chapter. (Author's Note.)

²⁷ Regarding this law or principle of the least effort, see The Great Synthesis, chapter 40 - "Minor Aspects of the Law". (Translator's Note.)

Now, here begins the terrible confusion of psychologists, when they judge this subconscious as the source of inspiration, the seat of intuition, the germ of the intellectual creation of the genius. However, there is a third zone that I call the superconscious, which, by being equally outside of normal consciousness, was confused with the subconscious. And between the two, there is the difference of night and day. If the subconscious belongs to the past, the superconscious belongs to the future; the former delves into the *involutionary* strata of biological antecedents, the latter emerges in the evolutionary planes of spiritual overcomings. We are at the antipodes. In this volume, speaking of higher levels of consciousness, which ascend from reason to intuition and to the vision of mystical ecstasy, we have moved and advanced always and exclusively in the field of superconsciousness, ascending precisely along the phases of its increasingly intense realization.

Throughout this path, consciousness is therefore a small zone of light that, starting from the first emergence of psychism originating from dynamic forms, proceeds through the biological phase and now ventures into the psychic phase and its surpassing in the hyperpsychic phase, in which consciousness is directed to become aware in dimensions today that are super-rational for the average norm immersed in the darkness of the inconceivable. The rational consciousness is a small firefly, a lit streak, because of work and creation, that moves along this extraordinary journey, whose beginning is left below and whose end is lost above, beyond all our measure. Thus, the subconscious, although invisible, because it does not emerge into the light of consciousness, contains the bases of the edifice and represents the foundations that sustain it. Although it does not appear in detail, it still survives completely as synthesis and as such is susceptible to being investigated. If the subconscious is surpassed and forgotten, as conscious constructive labour, yet we possess it intact as a result: it is that instinct so rich in mysterious wisdom,

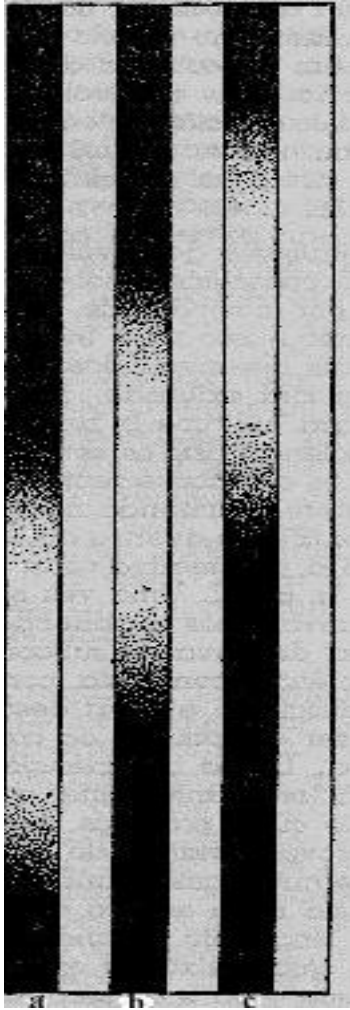
which governs so many of our actions and is all the more solid the more deeply it is rooted in the strata of biological evolution.

On the other side, like a premonition, the superconscious flashes in jets. Now, genius draws inspiration from this premonition and not from the subconscious, which contains only the foundations of the edifice, and not its elevation; genius creates solely as an anticipation of evolution, like a tentacle thrown into the future and not through reminiscence of an inferior past. In it, the zone of consciousness has shifted beyond the normal, to the higher planes of evolution. In the depths of the subconscious, one will fish for the undeveloped past, never the super-evolved future that arrives. Thus, the **self** moves from the subconscious to the superconscious, through the present phase, called conscious. This is the lucid zone of rational consciousness. The rest escapes us in forms of veiled, intermittent, unimaginable consciousnesses. But, the rest is our greater **self** of eternity, which lies beyond birth and death and with which the being identifies, rediscovering itself completely, and then, knows no end.

Now, if this non-conscious zone is the one that puts us in communication with reality, in intuition, and with Divinity, in mystical states, it is horrifying when one hears that the grace of God manifests in man through the subconscious or that man, to reach it, transfers himself to the subconscious. But, grace is an evolutionary phenomenon, not *involuntary*, it is of superconsciousness and not of subconsciousness. Grace is an elevation to the superconscious; it is through this that it directs itself to man, and to this plane it invites him to transfer himself. From this, it can be seen how those who cannot overcome the rational dimension will remain powerless in the face of such conceptions and will constantly grope in the dark. Only such complete blindness can confuse, in the same form of non-consciousness, two opposite extremes: the subconscious and the superconscious. The nebulous conception of modern psychologists has only glimpsed this zone of mystery and, without probing it,

has relegated to it all that is indecipherable of the psychological phenomenon. Instead of attempting, at least, an explanation for the phenomenon, it has contented itself with baptizing it with a word: neurosis. Marvelous way to explain! A word of Greek origin is coined, and with that, everything is considered explained. And yet, neurosis continues to be, for science itself, in the domain of pathological anatomy, an enigma; beyond these domains, higher up, science is, by method and premises, incompetent. Certain more vast realities will be eternally denied because they are incomprehensible if one does not exit the field circumscribed by such method and such premises.

I summarize, therefore, the framework of the structure of human consciousness. It is divided into two parts: the conscious and the unconscious. The first is the known, normal, rational, practical consciousness, which everyone distinguishes. The second consists of two zones: the subconscious, which belongs to the past, and the superconscious, which belongs to the future. Their extremes are lost in the infinite gradation of evolutionary ascension; but they come together at a point that continually shifts from the subconscious to the superconscious, but which is always the conscious centre where the sea of the unconscious surfaces to the sensation plane, as in constructive action. The subconscious contains and summarizes all the past and carries it to the threshold of consciousness; the superconscious contains, in an embryonic state, all the future that is in expectation of development. According to the own degree of evolution and maturity, the various consciousnesses are differently situated along this line, over which we can draw them as a zone in march. Observe figure 3.



Wishing to depict the development of the phenomenon of the evolution of consciousness on a strip, let us isolate in the figure, for convenience of observation, a section of the path for three types of differently developed consciousnesses: a, b, c. The zone of light expresses, in extension, the zone of consciousness; the black zone expresses the zone of non-consciousness, or the unconscious. This extends on two sides: to the left, we have the subconscious, to the right, the superconscious. Always

blending into these two zones of darkness, the conscious zone advances from the subconscious to the superconscious, according to the progressive degree of evolution of the consciousnesses a, b, c, etc. Once overcome, instincts are gradually abandoned outside of consciousness, in the zone of darkness of the subconscious, as consciousness conquers with its labour (life) the superconscious and causes it to blossom in its light. This can be compared to the path of the woodworm in wood. It (the consciousness) advances (evolution) by incessantly boring, through the wood, a channel of whose products (effort of life, assimilation of trials, creation of new instincts) it appropriates and nourishes itself, assimilating them, while conquering new space which it makes its own (the superconscious), as it abandons the old (subconscious), in which it leaves the excrements (overcome instincts) of its life and its labour.

If we wished to be more precise, attempting to reduce to terms of space that which is not spatial, we should say that of the two non-consciousnesses, considered in relation to the lucid surface consciousness, the superconscious extends in depth, into the inner zones, advances towards God and tends towards unification with the whole, which is reached, then, by introspection. The subconscious, on the contrary, extends in the opposite direction, not below, but outward from the surface, is the offspring of the experiences of the external world and is abandoned in it. The **self** advances between two equally non-lucid zones, but its progression is inward, its evolution distances it from the subconscious and leads it towards the superconscious. Opposite values: the first is a residue, the second, an achievement; the first is an inferior zone, from which we distance ourselves, and a dross that we abandon; the second is a superior zone, towards which we approach, does not contain the remnants of life, although at the moment they are necessary, but contain the future of life. The passage from the subconscious to the superconscious is an expansion inward, if we may so express ourselves, an expansion in depth, in which the being, delving towards the centre, rises to the higher

planes that are its approach. On this path, the **self** is like a nucleus that enriches itself, expanding through stratifications its potentialities, through the experiences of life, which are precisely the revealing agent of that intimate mystery in whose depth is God (manifestation). Thus, this mystery is continually externalized in that plane of lucid consciousness which, as is seen, is a consciousness of work and of transition, on the march from the subconscious to the superconscious, whose position is therefore relative, quite different from individual to individual, according to their history and their evolutionary maturity.

Only within such a framework of concepts is it possible to understand the superconscious, to set its boundaries, its content, its function. Only thus can one orient and define the mystical phenomenon, as naturally situated in the superior zones of the superconscious. The problem is not solved by mutilating or denying it, since it is a majestic historical fact, responds to a universal and fundamental religious sentiment, to an eternal function of the human spirit, and, as an experience for those who achieve it, is an undeniable objective fact. If the modern mental form is the most inadequate there can be for reaching such phenomena, this can take nothing away from their reality and importance. It is logically absurd, even for the rational, that such a vast consensus and a type of experience as unanimous as mysticism, which resonates from one end of the earth to the other and through the ages, should rest upon error and imposture. The mystical phenomenon is, on the contrary, the most imposing phenomenon of human life, because it marks a reapproach to that Divinity who, as the spiritual centre of the universe, is the goal of all existence, the convergence of all forces, of all movements, the supreme tendency of evolution.

SECOND PART

THE EXPERIENCE

1

ON THE MARCH

Let us leave behind the blind negativists; it is time for me to continue, even if alone, in my experience of the phenomenon. I have presented the foundations, and now we can advance. Initially, I framed the mystical phenomenon within the realm of modern concepts; then I exposed, in the study of the diagram of spiritual ascension, its theoretical and scientific aspect, the functional technique, and provided a logical demonstration of the phenomenon, in its various moments and nuances, so that reason would be satisfied; subsequently, I explored its practical aspect, as a spiritual realisation in mystical methodology, and I offered a general description of it as a sensation, referring specifically to the experiences of mystics. Here concludes my duty as a scholar, as a rational observer distinct from the phenomenon.

All this, however, is not enough. I enter the phenomenon, live it, and describe my experience. What the phenomenon loses, limiting itself as an extension of observed cases, it gains in depth of sensation, in liveliness of expression, in solidity of experience. This second part is for those who have matured. For those who feel and can, therefore, understand. These will discover a world; the others will not be able to enter. We have reached a field of mysticism that will live in these pages; an experimental mysticism. To stick to the targeted case, I must take a personal form and say I many times: inelegant, but necessary, although it displeases me. They will forgive, when they see that these I's are for others.

Thus, we have a progression of reality, of interpretative precision, of depth of sensation: to restrict and concentrate oneself to go deep and emerge. I will relive, in these pages, the torment and the conquest. It will be seen in a continuous series of frames, the entire unleashing of the inner storm; it will be seen that such statements are not groundless. You will see me in the terrible hour of defeat and dejection in which the idea plunges us and in the hour when the soul, having crossed the limit, manages to hear the divine music and sings the glory of God. I will start from my weakness and human misery, which will make me more understandable. The painful human negation will appear before the dazzling divine affirmation appears, the weary shadow of the cross of the way that projects onto the earth before its victorious appearance in the sky. We will see, lived, the reality of the rational assertions so far exposed. Because these phenomena, which many deny, or falsify, or condemn, are made of unsuspected harshness, of disillusioned human life, only later reabsorbed into mystical ecstasy. These phenomena require constant fatigue of the mind and heart; they are never achieved easily; they only develop in the struggle of each moment, with the soul naked in the middle of the road where life is fought over. They feed on one's own and others' pain, which becomes common. It is necessary to commune in suffering with the humble to obtain the communion of feelings, to attune in with the High and get an answer. It is necessary to impoverish oneself and descend to start the march. Only through this unused, misunderstood, and unadmitted means is ecstasy in the great love achieved, which is the supreme harmonization of the spirit in the cosmic pulsations.

The awareness of the lineaments and the orientation of the phenomenon is, finally, achieved here. It is the result of both the scientific and technical part, as well as the spiritual and descriptive part. My poetry will, at last, be able to move peacefully over these twin rails solidly laid.

Through the various soundings I have carried out to establish the relations between the mystical phenomenon and normal psychology; to place it within and make it understandable and not merely admissible—you will see with what caution I am advancing in this supernormal psychology. It was necessary to clearly show that the same person who here may seem almost insane, knows, however, to reason coolly and dominates the entire phenomenon as one dominates the normal psychology of which one makes a judge. I fully understand the enormous difficulty of the problems addressed, the risk of such new assertions, and my moral responsibility before science and faith. However, in one sense and in another, I have already spoken clearly and will speak even more clearly. Certain forceful statements have been and will be made in full reason and lucidity, with the consciousness of responsibility and the consequences. My soul is widely open to all gazes, in these my works, which have much higher purposes than cultural and personal ones; and if it screams, it is because it has serious things to say.

It is indispensable to exercise extreme caution when we venture into such unexplored fields, especially when this is done in such a personal manner. Here, I do not assert and defend myself, but I assert and defend a principle. And from this idea, many others of serious repercussion may arise in human thought. At certain moments, these musings of mine assume universal importance, encompassing religions, philosophy, ethics, in addition to science. At certain moments, their development exceeds the limits of editorial demand, which can never be a sufficient element for judgment. Sometimes the situation assumes the proportions of such a violent fire that the features escape from the frame imposed by practical necessity and reveal themselves in their true universality. In these moments, the path that human endeavours sought to impose on my thought appears destroyed, and my concept has nothing more in common with the particular fields in which it seemed to be framed. And then, I am supermediumistic, supermetapsychic, superbiosophic, etc. I am alone, I ad-

vance unaccompanied, because alone I have lived my phenomenon and alone I assume all the risks and all the responsibilities.

Extreme caution is necessary because there are many shoals. Everyone is attentive, harshly waiting for those who wish to create. Human thought, out of a need for defence and survival, has enclosed itself in castles armed against each other; it does not flow freely, like true lymph, but is circumscribed within enclosures. Ideas that do not present themselves as limited, imprisoned within one of these enclosures, are not admitted. I fly high, above the castles, I see them all. I would wish for them to identify with each other in peace and mutual understanding. I cannot descend, because descending would mean to enter an enclosure and become a prisoner. I would have the defence and the stability of solid ground, but with imprisonment, I would lose the freedom of flight. Yet, I must descend, enter the castles, but not agree to be confined in the comfortable security of the accepted truth and I must still walk; and, often, see, know, and be silent. Take into account, in these my works, above all, the many things I keep silent.

However, such caution would be cowardice if at the decisive moment I kept silent, or did not reveal my entire thought, at any cost. Here, my soul is gasping from fatigue and passion, at the feet of an idea for which I will give everything. Not even human concerns matter.

But caution is necessary, above all because I am probing into the mystery that may contain, for me, for my conscience, both as reason and as faith, great dangers. It is not the risks of human incomprehension that frighten me; it is the risks on the divine terrain that I explore and that sometimes crush me. Numerous and severe self-examinations are required before we venture into certain fields, and before we dare certain conclusions. From the calm, objective, and cold analysis with which, in

the preceding volume²⁸ I faced the study of my case, trying, myself, as far as it was possible for me, to scrutinize the phenomenon judged, initially, exclusively mediumistic, removing it from that atmosphere of the fantastic and miraculous that satisfies so many (another stumbling block in my path), it is apparent how much caution I had to exercise on my harsh road. I imposed on that work, I, the intuitive, disillusioned with human reason, a psychology of distrust, rational and scientific. My works develop in the depth of the knowable and the unconscious and are born in a strange lucidity from the contact of the soul with abyssal zones of mystery. My normal rational consciousness has to exercise severe control over these for me stupefying immersions. If what distinguishes me and in what perhaps consists my so-called mediumship is being conscious in the superconscious, I equally feel emerging in me, low zones of the subconscious that I have to recognize and master. This is why I do not advise the abandonment of the conscious to the unconscious for people who do not have the superconscious widely developed, and are not widely and clearly sure of this. Otherwise, the inspiration will be nothing but the emergence of the low regions of the soul.

²⁸ The Noures (Author's Note)

2

IN THE DEPTHS

Let us now revive, in personal form, the theory expounded in the last chapters. My conscious **self** hears voices emerged from the various planes of the unconscious: from those zones that are normally darkness, I see flares of light explode that fill me with astonishment because they reveal to me that in everything there exists an immense personality. As I go back through the various phases of the evolution accomplished within myself, I consciously project myself into zones of superconsciousness; on one plane, I hear a voice and another voice on another plane; each of them has a timbre, a purity, and a strength diverse, according to its level and my position and life force in relation to that level. I hear distant echoes approaching of living psychic forms and buried in the deepest folds of the **self**; I see the amorphous and primordial past rise from the sleep of the centuries and return to me (that is, from the subconscious to the conscious), from the dark depths of the race and the blood, from the fundamental stratifications of instinct, through the incessant recomposition of flesh and spirit that life is made of. How the past is slow to die! And suddenly reappears the brute and violent beast, the baseness that is condemned in others — types of consciousness that existed and that refuse to die. In the subconscious is all the animality of the man-beast, as in the superconscious is the super-humanity of the genius and the saint. The evolution of consciousness from the sub to the superconscious is

precisely the spiritual ascension from the beast to the saint — an immense and universal phenomenon.

There indeed exist, for those who can feel them, tremendous realities within us. At times, the unity of the **self** oscillates between various planes, the conscious synthesis of personality is unable to find ways to merge into a clear and singular form. Then, interior dissonances are heard, conflicts of inner dissident wills are unleashed that do not know and cannot merge in the soul, which, being in a phase of rapid evolutionary transformation, contains within itself all the extremes of baseness and sublimity. It is precisely at the doors of this overcoming that all the past, feeling suddenly denied, clings violently to the desire not to die. Then, in an immense storm, the forces unleashed by the disturbance of balances that slept in peace rise from the depths. And they scream with terrifying voices of thunder, to live again and always. And in the depths, there is a fearsome interior whirlwind, a battle of negatives and affirmations that wish to be absolute, an explosion of unexpected, illogical, inexplicable rebellions that give of themselves no other reason than the intimate instinctive sensation of an indestructible truth.

My *nouric* perception is immense, especially within me; my psychic sensitivity allows me contact with a wide range of planes of consciousness, both high and low. I can gaze not only upon the luminous peaks of the superconscious but also the dark depths of the subconscious. And I must say: the past is also terrifyingly deep! What is there down below? There lie the roots of evil and pain that the weariness of life brings with it every day and that must be overcome. There is an entire world in those abysses of the soul, all the mystery of being and destiny, the very mystery of the universe. From that deep ocean where so many pains and victories, faults, and virtues have plunged—now emerge, unexpected and unsuspected, these creations of the shadow, to help us or to punish us, according to what we have done. From the scenes that will follow, it will

be seen what infernal, demonic past is capable of emerging from those depths. This, although one wishes to project outward in a physical state, is always and only within us, in a state of consciousness—whether it be hell in the regressive stages of the subconscious, with its demons (individualizations of forces thoughts-wills) or paradise in the evolved stages of the superconscious.

From that depth speaks the voice of our fate, and the gifts of happiness, which seem casual and gratuitous, are granted; finally, come the punishments believed to be undeserved. And life flows like a torrent, carrying along all the scum from the traversed path, and, always in march, deposits it and purifies itself. And just as the torrent has its own unstoppable will to flow, malleable and subject to the paths that the terrain offers, adapting or reacting — so fate has a broad trajectory, propelled by its past, active and resolute, and yet, docile to the circumstances, which it accepts or to which it reacts. Try, however, to oppose a dam to this sweet flow of wave; the torrent and fate will accumulate impulses and compact masses, until they become threatening and can sweep away everything in their impetus — expression of the absolute dominion of the law, by which we learn that it is better to go willingly since it is impossible to stop.

At the opposite extreme, my consciousness faces the superconscious. Although I have always spoken and speak in this work of the positive side of the phenomenon, describing the evolutionary emergences of my consciousness, I did not want, in these last pages, to forget the negative side, of shadow, describing my *involutionary* immersions. A necessary contrast, these oppositions of the subhuman and human aspects and of the divine aspect of the phenomenon; necessary the exposition of this side of weakness and failure, of falls and resurgences — because it corresponds to the truth; because it makes my case more accessible to understanding, humanizing it in some points; because it brings me clos-

er, unites me, under the same cross, to my humble and unknown fellow human who struggles and suffers without the joy of spiritual compensations.

Great happiness, indeed because it is hard-earned, this emergence into the superconscious. This superconceptual confinement is for me a fact of daily experience. It would seem that my normal consciousness, due to the continuous pressure it exerts on the unknown, undergoes unexpected dilations. It would seem that at times the envelope that surrounds and delimits the scope, yields to sudden lacerations, through which flashes of blinding light penetrate. Thus, I constantly see appearing in my normal rational consciousness, sudden conceptions, coming I know not from which unknown depths. I feel each day, with astonishment, the presence of this broader intuitive and mystical consciousness becoming more vivid, where the rational is lost. It is about a new consciousness, whose unit of measurement and points of reference are different; it seems endless to me, because I never finish traversing and fully knowing it. Perhaps someone wants to deny it: for me, it is a tangible, evident reality. Reason may find it absurd, because it can be lost and denied; however, for me, it is full of inexhaustible conceptual reserves, because from it flow continuously ideas that I previously ignored. Usually, in my work as a writer, I reach the source. I start to write, barely knowing the subject, and as I write, ideas spring from those depths, and I perceive their tangible presence in my consciousness. Then, I seize them, I see them, they are mine. I do not know where and how one could otherwise seek and much less find, ideas that were not in books, that were not the repetition of old things already said.

But, where are these, before they appear to me? And then, the doubt: am I, or am I not? It's easy to make a mistake, but, certainly, the **self** is not everything on the conscious basis. Here its limits are others, a more vast world, which reveals itself gradually, through synthesis; so

powerful that my reason struggles greatly to represent it with words; a world where the conception is so vivid, luminous, and spontaneous and also so rebellious to all the norms of the reasonable, that it is very laborious for me to dominate it and keep it docile to the objective form of common thought. This world is not outside, but inside of me. This grandiose expansion is interior and directs towards dematerialization, to the superconscious, to God. It is surprising to find an unknown **super-self** so vast within us; but one cannot deny that it exists and that I feel it within me.

Is, then, my **self** such an extraordinarily immense unity that it contains within itself, in its depth, the conceptual universe where the paths that lead to God are found? If the means of communication is within me, I am not the means of communication, nor the cosmic *noures* with which I identify myself. But to everything I arrive and with all this I unify, delving deeper into my own being. I speak of **myself**, but the phenomenon is universal and accessible to all who have matured. The superconscious thus seems to contain such a vast world because it is the phase of evolution in which the being re-establishes contact and communion with this vast world. It is a greater extension that the spirit makes its own and where it expands. It is a dematerialization of substance that allows the identification of consciousness with an immense field, previously exclusive, of the **self**. And then this new immensity conquered is an immersion so intimate, that it becomes reality.

Just here, as I write, this superconsciousness is present and functioning. I feel it pressing, turgid with conceptions, and I must restrain myself to not precipitate the concatenation of ideas and leap to conclusions. Undoubtedly, in me, control is continuous. But sometimes the conception is so pressing that it attempts to follow its own course and does not admit deviations. Myself, when I start to write, I begin with a simple idea, already matured, without worrying about its development, which I ignore, and let it walk spontaneously. Thus, as soon as I identify

with a concept, it becomes mine, because it is etched precise and with fire into my consciousness. I let it walk and talk, because I feel it as a living, volitional, and autonomous force, until it reveals all its intimacies to me. I live from this tremendous agitated work that surpasses my consciousness, which seems active everywhere, even in the depths of mystery, where it extends its tentacles and holds and brings to itself everything it finds in its probing.

This sensation of oceanic depths within myself; the freedom to reach the inexhaustible, the awareness of possessing such a reserve of conceptual resources is for me a joy, an immense sensation of power. It seems to me to have reached the very roots of life, the principle of things, the essence of the absolute. Writing then becomes meditation, prayer that brings me closer to God. And from these deep moors, and not from the normal consciousness, do the purest and most beautiful thoughts emerge, all the more pure and beautiful, the deeper their source. And they seem to dim when they come to the surface of consciousness, crystallized in lights that flicker and die, trapped in words. They are so splendid, fluid, and lively that it is painful to paralyze them in immovable forms. The written word is a coffin into which they do not wish to descend. And when I believe to have thus trapped them, they are already dead, and I present only corpses. And they rise again, more alive, more splendid, more truthful, and begin to shine, to sparkle in the cloudy sky of my superconscious, inexhaustible palpitations of an immense wisdom that comes from God. If one knows and wishes to mature, this can appear in everyone's consciousness.

If in my intuitive phase the emergence was only conceptual, of guidance and judgment (***The Great Synthesis***), in the current mystical phase the emergence is also of feelings; the dilation is not verified only in the strength of thought, but also in the intensity of sensations and in the fervour of passion. It is still an emergence of forces that grab me and en-

gulf me in unification. The phenomenon becomes complicated with the appearance of this force of attraction, by which not only do I throw myself at the source to possess it, but the source projects itself against me, to submerge me. This straying of the being into the infinite is such a dilation of life that my spirit there returns tirelessly, now that it is getting to know it, flying around it, like the moth that throws itself at the blinding light and does not rest until it falls upon it and burns.

My **self** is a staircase that extends into infinity. The more I advance, the more I see marvellous things on the sides of the road. Each plane of consciousness gives me a stronger and more luminous synthesis of the universe. My being intoxicates with this progressive advance, with this navigation through the unexplored, which always reveals new horizons. My self, moving from one consciousness to another, in the superconscious dematerializes, becomes rarified, feels itself dissolving. It's as if I were evaporating. However, it is this evaporation, in which I no longer recognize my old concrete **self**, that takes me far. It is a decomposition, but at the bottom of it, God replaces my small **self**, because He absorbs everything into Himself. I then feel the tremendous words of Blessed Angela of Foligno being born within me: "**You are I and I am you**"; and those of Saint Paul: "**It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.**"

And this can also happen in the heart of everyone.

3

PAIN

In this way my self descends and goes from one consciousness to another, from the abyss of animality to the peaks of the spirit; from the various planes I contemplate myself, while from synthesis to synthesis I advance along the path of evolution. Having thus exposed my panorama, I observe myself and penetrate the mystery of my soul. With the superconscious I nourish the conscious. With this, I analyse that. Thus, I retrace the outlines of my psychic figure in eternity.

My exposition becomes ever more personal and vivid. The phenomenon, through the slow shifting of panoramas, each time positions itself with greater precision, and, stripped in its vibrant reality, increasingly approaches the reader's heart. A book says everything without intending to, especially what one does not want to say, due to the concern of silencing it. The mirage that vibrates in the writer's eyes transfers to their pages. Whoever dreamed of glories, will write of glories; whoever of selfishness, selfishness; whoever of greed, greed; whoever of sensuality, sensuality. But also, the one who fought and suffered for the elevation of the spirit—no matter what they say, will only speak of the elevation of the spirit. It is like a background music, a predominant colour, a dominating psychology that one does not want, does not improvise, does not invent. One cannot lie through volumes and volumes, in the face of arguments so dreadfully large. Only those who have to give a testimony, which is

stronger than life and death, can, at every step, pronounce the name of God.

I have already surpassed the theoretical exposition. I must now convey, of the phenomenon, an ever more vivid impression, through my sensation. I must control and restrain myself to advance gradually, so as not to disorient the reader suddenly with the vision of the last planes and so that they see how much the supreme madness that is about to happen was contained, controlled, and guided by me. And I, against my own impulse of passion, advance fearfully, because I expect affirmations increasingly higher, duties ever more serious, revelations always more solemn.

My soul traversed the rugged path narrated in Chapter XXV of **I Fioretti di S. Francesco**, to which I have already referred²⁹. Let us gather the phenomena of spiritual asceticism at its most intense and central point, at the most notable moment of its transformation, when all impulses converge, all elements coexist, all forces join and merge, and the final synthesis emerges in which the phenomenon precipitates into new equilibriums and transmutes into new orientations. We are at the centre of the drama.

Life is a journey, and I am a pilgrim: I shall always be found walking. My last volume lived and was surpassed; my soul was not satisfied. I said: yet, yet, I want to climb still higher. And I walked another year, through a new furrow, different from the old furrow traced. Thus, the volumes line up, following the stages of my weariness. I walk, I walk along the infinite road of life. How great is the pain, how astonishing is the knowledge and infinite the universe; it seems we will never manage to arrive! And at the end is the embrace of sister death. One goes exhausted of strength, laden with the dust of the journey, heavy with mud, tears, and blood. What labour it is to cross life! At no point does one know how

²⁹ The Noures, Chapter 4 - "The Great Inspired Ones". (Author's Note.)

the soul was able to drag itself there. Awaiting the embrace of sister death, the pain calls and hammers. The reader does not know how much human suffering conditions certain triumphs of the spirit. I am often very tired. I feel guilty and dejected... This poor sister flesh weeps muffled, already without the courage to protest. Poor thing! She knows, however, that her sacrifice was necessary for these affirmations of a higher life. She offered herself and today retreats, humanly ill, without a lament. Poor sister, thank you for your little heroism. She understood it. Day by day, I taught her that she could not be an end, but merely a means. And she said to my spirit: "Live you, then, who are worth more". Long ago, I asked my body to offer itself in holocaust, and it answered me: Take me. And now, it is so distinguished and removed from me, that I consider it as another creature that I love, because to its immolation I owe the true life. It is just that the lesser sacrifice itself to the greater. My pity lets it die peacefully.

Pain strikes, hammers, consumes, and rebuilds. It is a rhythmic hammering, lacerating, that wounds and awakens the depths. This hammering wrenches from my soul cries that are its voice, a voice that tells, with logic and calm, a tragic and strange story, profound and sublime — the story of a soul that conquers the infinite. It is to cast these cries, which are my works, that I face and commit my life; it is to live, live and narrate this supreme phenomenon that I endure, without help or pity, my immense inner pain, before which I stand alone and can only be alone. With the agony of the human, the triumph in the divine is re-deemed.

I told my pain to the stones. I told it to the humble waves, to the friendly trees, to the sky, and to the wind. My burning tears fell upon the stones, and they did not break. Man looked at me laughing, and the sister creatures withdrew thoughtfully, in silence. The humble and chaste wave still goes, murmuring, to carry my tears from crest to crest, without

understanding. One must have shouted to the world, without response, a great misunderstood passion; one must have dragged oneself, bleeding, over thorns; one must have crossed the desert of all solitudes and all abandonments; one must have pierced with one's head the hard doors of heaven to open them and, with the last breath, have thrown inside the shrunken soul, so that the infinite surrenders and the vision of God appears in its dazzling splendour. He who embarks on certain paths must lose the support of human understanding. At a certain point in his journey, he must find himself alone, because no one else is on his plane — and alone and without help, he must advance through unknown and rough roads. On earth: indifference, when not sceptical smiles and censures. If one thirsts for souls and no one feels such a spiritual fever — no one will understand of what passion one dies.

Then come, from the heaven to which the spirit clings as its ultimate salvation, the greater trials. It seems that the forces of life perceive the possibility of an escape and grasp us to prevent it. It seems to unleash, in cosmic dynamism, a rebellion against the emerging exception, which violates the general rule, and the assault begins. Only those who have experienced it can imagine what this insurrection of forces that demand leveling to mediocrity is like.

Tragic and cyclopean fate, of conquest and affliction, of visions and darkness, in which I struggle, creating in thought, while I ask for a rest that exists only in death. Only in thought resides my most intense sensation of living. In these super-human contacts lies, for me, the reason for everything, the refuge, the rest, the nourishment, and the fatigue. I feel my organism crack under such tension. And I am already overloaded with the normal work of all, necessary for the fulfilment of duties and to earn a living. But the spirit is calm, observes satisfied and keeps watch for the symptoms of the end, intoxicated with its creation, triumphant

and content with this slow martyrdom, dreaming in it its liberation and redemption.

I offer, physically, the spectacle of a man prostrated by the slow work of exhaustion. I have the sensation of a very long agony in which physical forces dissolve. It is not illness, nor injury, or organic alteration. It is the extinguishing, the giving of a form of life, while the essential is placed higher. The two terms, matter and spirit, are antithetical. Only in such a state of physical prostration do the transparencies of heaven draw near. Spiritual ascension is also made from this external dematerialization; such sublimation of the soul also implies these intimate transformations of matter. The body extinguishes and vaporizes in an immense dilation. Only in this state can one speak of things that are no longer of the earth. Only with the soul bare before God and the body bare before death does one assume the duty of absolute sincerity and of certain supreme testimonies; only under the persistent hammering of pain, looking towards death and presenting oneself beyond it, does one have the right to raise one's voice and to speak in the name of God.

And I will speak, by the right given to me by having suffered so much, having offered myself in my fatigue that went until exhaustion, and for having Christ in my heart; by the right conferred upon me by the baptism of pain, the spasm of passion, duty, love. An immense voice rises from my laborious silences; pain will wrench from me new cries, the vision will fill me with new enthusiasms; I felt something unforgettable in time, far away, in the infinite spaces of my spirit and I cannot forget, I cannot be silent. And I will say, obeying an order that is superior to me, that only I know, and that stands above all human orders. I have to tell all my truth before dying and, in death, bear witness to my assertions. I must lay the seed, so that one day it may germinate. I received the torch of truth and must pass it on to those who follow me. I must, until my last breath, with word and example, give the certainty of the idea I possess.

What matters is the idea and not this useless rag of my person. In an exaltation of my entire being, I scream with all the strength of my voice the truth of eternal life and resurrection in the spirit. And I say: see and touch, you who do not believe — I have lived it.

In this volume, I reach the final steps of my life. This is the book of pain and love, the book of unification. I have already accomplished the laborious work of condensation (***The Great Synthesis***) and conceptual alignment — the work that makes one think. Here, I fulfil a different evolutionary moment, not in terms of science, but with the voice of passion, the jubilant work of expansion, which makes one cry and hope, the book of the triumph of feeling and faith. With it, I arrive at the last point where Christ, who is already nearing, awaits me; and beyond a new great pain, which makes me worthy, the inner seal of devotion and love will open. Falling and rising, I walked through life. My books are a long path of effort and faith. I have overcome many stages; my thought has developed into many concepts; my passion matured thanks to much suffering. At the end of so much work of mind and heart, after so much exposition, only a single word will remain: Christ. On this word, which is the supreme synthesis of knowledge and love, I will lean over, satisfied and happy, to die. Satiated as one who, beyond all human illusions, has rediscovered the absolute truth; happy as one who, beyond all human pains, has rediscovered his supreme joy.

4

RESURRECTION

It is indeed tragic to feel within oneself this physical undoing, to see before oneself still an immense work and to live anxiously, in fear that one may lack the strength. And to have to consume oneself in the humble and heavy labour that life imposes, and to have to squander oneself generously, in the foolish struggle to which the philosophy of others constrains one. Human nature is slow and lazy; it drags itself with difficulty and follows reluctantly. It has the stubbornness of the donkey, it has all the vices, the inertia, and the weakness of animality. Matter is gloomy, it does not understand. The enemy is within me. My body is a younger brother whom I drag behind me with courage and effort. And yet, I have to give him what he needs, so that he yields his output. Sometimes I tell him: "Let's come to an agreement, brother! Do not give me useless troubles! Come on! Overcome the weight of your matter, and let's walk together." But he stops, stumbles, cannot endure. He sleeps easily, and dreams only of short and easy descents. Every vibration of enthusiasm, every shiver of high passion, all the fire of my spirit quickly dissolves in this dense and inert medium. What a struggle between the active spirit and the enemy, sleepy flesh, that condemn these intolerant relations between both! Animality intends to impose its law on the whole being, and the spirit torments itself to impose its dynamism. Where one is ardent, the other is glacial. Poor brutish companion! My spirit calmly awaits your annihilation, to realize its dream of escape. Poor body! You are not made

for flights. You run and truly become exhausted! You consume yourself in this absurd march that is not meant for you. I know it well! The organic edifice cannot withstand such intense and rapid dynamic developments, such storms of conception, such flashes of passions. Sometimes I see it collapse, dominated by painful exhaustion, but the spirit is insatiable, without mercy. It forgets them until it reaches intolerable extremes, and then the soul, also suffering, observes its pain, caresses it, and it calms down; picks it up in its march, positions itself at its flank, and carries it along, like a brother. And the opaque matter lights up with sacrifice, shines in the reflections of the spirit, and offers itself in long agony in holocaust to the triumph of the elder brother, because it knows that he is the only and legitimate heir of its life synthesis and that the future belongs to him; it knows that this is the law: through the annihilation of physical life, spiritual life is born and grows.

The body cannot live at the high temperatures that the spirit reaches in contact with the divine; at that utmost tension, human fibres break; in that spiritual fire, the body burns and consumes rapidly; it shines suddenly in a violent flame and annihilates itself. Yet, it is beautiful, whether it is overcome or triumphs; whether it dies or revives; whether it suffers or is happy. As physical forces wane, the song rises from the depths of the soul, ever sweeter, more subtle, more beautiful. It is refined by pain, harmonizes with the harmony of the universe, acquiring new resonances in attunement with the infinite. It is intuitive that certain spiritual elevations, certain supreme achievements can only be reached at the cost of repercussions in the lower stratum of the being itself. It is logical that the whole unity of the person is dragged into the whirlwind of asceticism. Only death, with its proximity, can give the spirit a certain luminosity. Only a body daily lashed can facilitate certain transparencies of the ultimate purification. Those who read cannot know from which furrows of torment this new flower of life springs; from which human destruction the conceptual and passionate amplitude that feeds certain literary works is

born; from what mass of life the word must be endowed to be warm and active. One cannot understand what bases of anguish sustain the festive and exuberant impetus of creation.

I know this torment and accept it. Each volume seems to me the last, but I know there will be another tomorrow, although today I am unaware of it. And I will resume the book of my confessions: before me, a ream of blank sheets, within me, my passion. To live, to evolve, to write. Walk, walk! And this fatal walk will not cease except by extreme exhaustion. The future is infinite; before the eternal tomorrow, all the past is always a prelude. I know the torment of creation, but I give myself again, I abandon myself again to that fever which gives me life and death, which elevates me and sustains me in the sublime exultation of intense achievements and which, however, destroys me and escapes from my body. This work tears me apart, but I open a new window to the world in the sky, yet the spirit prevails. It is its hour.

I am speaking of death and ought to speak of life; I keep looking at the earth while the sky calls to me. This state is not an end, but a beginning; not a sunset, but a dawn; not a defeat, but a triumph. This is the marvelous reality I live, and I shall proclaim it ever louder. Hear me, reader. My soul is already beyond life. I write in the presence of God and death, naked before all that was created and sees me. It cannot be a lie. I embody, at this moment, the apocalyptic phenomenon of my great biological revolution and present it at the decisive moment of its maturation, laden with the richest aspects, alive in me in the strongest contrast of antagonistic forces. We are at the center of the drama. The beast and the angel living within me engage in their final struggles. The forces of life tighten the fatal siege, and an entire process closes; a long journey of millennia, slowly, painfully followed, rushes into an instant that remakes, contains, and justifies everything. Here within me is the supreme human drama of a life that extinguishes; here within me is the supreme divine

drama of a life that resurges. The human sacrifice was immense, but the final result of my work exceeded all my expectations. Not only the light of mystery comes to me; the love of God comes to me.

I sense that profound upheavals occur within me, as if entire planes of my consciousness were collapsing. And in the depths of the ruins, I find astonishing resurrections. Those prostrations are the condition for profound reactions that have the virtue of bringing to light the mystery of the soul, of making my conscious **self** penetrate into the deep layers. I proceed by diving into the abyss and resurfacing, like the waves of the sea, and from these great oscillations an ever greater power of the spirit is born. I live slowly, savouring and controlling it, minute by minute — the phenomenon of organic death and spiritual resurrection. In the annihilation of the body, the opaque crust that imprisons my spirit becomes ever more diaphanous; in physical exhaustion, then comes to me, and I hear, ever more clear, more distinct — the chant that rises beyond limitations. Insatiable, I listen again and hear, to work and to sacrifice myself still, until the last breath of my passion. I hear a taciturn and incessant hammering on the anvil of my pain. But, each blow awakens in the depths a new resonance, like the divine echo. With each blow, my soul is a bit torn, and from the wounds flashes light. I hear a procession ever more frequent of blows and responses, with a fatal acceleration of rhythm — I love and embrace my pain that opens the doors for me. Every instant, more intoxicated I become at feeling that, beyond the sensible and conceivable, a new and wonderful pulsation beats and responds. Every drop of time tears a veil and destroys an obstacle. I advance, but I am afraid and this progressive diminishing of distance distresses me. But, I am on the march and cannot stop myself. A phenomenon unleashed cannot be interrupted. Everything converges towards unification. Fall, one by one, the last diaphragms. I feel the sensory part that still detains me thinning. What will still exist? The last bonds dissolve. I will take a leap and fall into the flames.

The source of the *nouric* emanations, from which I once captured my inspirational records, was a bright and distant star that gazed at me from the sky. However, the transmitter approached the receiver that, along that ray, made its way to the sky. Now, the star, ever closer, became immense to the point of invading and hiding my entire horizon. That thread of cold conception warmed up and turned into a blaze. The trembling light of a distant star is now a flaming meteor's blaze that draws me to its field of action and envelops me in a storm of forces. I feel it coming, kidnapping me, and absorbing me, like an immense flame from which I cannot escape. I would want to, but it's too late. I wish to escape this ultimate annihilation, and I do not know how. I feel caught in its orbit; my mass is thrown, and the trajectory narrows. I will lose myself in that light and will not even recognize myself. An immense embrace tightens around my soul, I hear the pulsations of my heart echoing through the universe, and at every corner of the infinite, a fraternal palpitation answers. It is a new love, inextinguishable, without borders, that bends over all sister souls. It is a life so vast that it revives in the life of all beings.

A phenomenon of astronomical force. I understand it is a tremendous thing to speak of myself in these terms. But in this phenomenon, I nullify myself. I know it. Down here, there's always a fear that our fellow man may be greater than us. But I do not speak of my greatness—I speak of the greatness of all. Everyone can ascend and will inevitably do so. Of my concepts, very little do I attribute to myself—nothing more than the effort to go and gather them. If I speak of myself in this way, it is because my self is merely a spark of life in the bosom of God, a force that cannot be separated from the universal organism. I speak, therefore, of myself and of everyone, because on this plane, distinctions are not made. In summary, my new love compels me to speak, to guide those who suffer towards liberation. My experience is disturbing to me. And it is human to shout one's supreme joy, the victory of the spirit for which one fought and spent a life. It is human, for those who have overcome the terror of

the abysses and the bitterness of all illusions, to say to the still inexperienced brother: "Look! This is the life! I speak to you in this way, because this is how I lived. It may be that my truth suits you". And how can I refuse myself the joy of sparing others a danger, of saving others from pain? I, too, am bound to this law of universal cohesion that holds together worlds as well as souls; one who evolves feels the need, in order to enjoy their evolution, to look back and communicate it to their own brothers. Isolated joy is never joy: love is the great law of life.

5

THE EXPANSION

I set out, in these chapters, to convey my sensation of the phenomenon, and here I am, already quite busy with the rational exposition of its comprehension. It is this sensation that I must bring here, bringing it closer to the reader's eyes. My first duty is spontaneity, so that everything is laid out here, outside of myself, just as it was experienced within me. No restraint now impedes the impetus of my enthusiasm and my passion. Concerns of misunderstanding would mutilate my thought; I can no longer hold back. The normal psyche is accustomed to the closed scope of its limits and does not find itself in this confinement of values. There is a need to feel the solidity of its prison, to identify in the envelope, to feel, to live. It is that reaction of the return of forces, rotating in a closed field, that gives the sensation of the **self**. But when all resistances yield and the walls collapse, there are not enough possibilities to embrace the new horizons. This is, here, an explosion of the soul, which in its expansion vaporizes and does not know how to find itself, suddenly, in the whole; it then lacks the pressure of confinement in the mind (**ignorance**) and in the heart (**selfishness**), which made the identity concretely sensible. It is very different to feel the **self** in the identification of one's own mind, in universal knowledge, and of one's own heart, in the love of God.

Ascending to the superior planes of evolution, the **self** becomes a completely distinct unit. We have already seen, in the inspirational reception, that at certain conceptual altitudes, there are no personal entities in

the human sense, but only *noures*, or currents of thought, and that, to immerse oneself in these currents, it is necessary to transform evolutionarily, up to those planes and dimensions. Now, when human consciousness moves from the intuitive phase of simple communications to the mystical phase of identification, it permanently loses, and not just occasionally, as in the receptive period, its characteristics of human personality, changing through evolution, until it transforms into that type of consciousness that the inspired one encountered in their ascensions, that is, into a *noure* or currents of thoughts. In other terms, it transforms into a radiant personality. The human soul is already, initially, a vibratory state, a current of thought and this is exactly what comes about in the dematerialization of the evolutionary process. This type of consciousness is equally identifiable, maintaining a characteristic individuality, but not personal, in the human sense. The **self**, evolving, has undergone a process of expansion and is no longer a field of forces confined within itself, like matter, but a radiant kinetic system, like energy. Identification is no longer made, then, in the human sense of circumscription and distinction, but in another sense, that of the individual type of vibrations which, in a radiant, expanded consciousness, can now only be the sole form of identification. This is how it is, and only this occurs with the one who witnesses their appearance, alone, on the *nouric* plane, that is, in the superposition of consciousness, in identification, and in fusion by groups, within their type of vibrations. And only thus can the phenomenon of unification be explained and understood, which on the human plane will always be a mystery.

These profound transformations in the mode of existence explain the crushing of the spirit that arrives at this stage of evolution. The **self** no longer sees itself in its garb of distinct human personality and does not recognize itself in this new radiant form, in an open kinetic system, as unlimited *noure*, free. The expansion gives it a sense of dispersion. Yet, this is, for everyone, the future of biological evolution on its superior psy-

chic plane. This is the transformation of dimensions, the entry into a new universe, that is, in brief explanation, what awaits us beyond the portals. By surpassing, through evolution, the threshold, consciousness naturally changes its characteristics. The phenomenon of the atom's explosion, which develops inexhaustible reserves of radiant energy, returns to the highest level. The closed kinetic system, with trajectories in a self-returning circuit (**atom, selfishness**), in which existence is precisely this continuous egocentric whirling and the sensation of the **self**, by the inexorable pulsation of all its inner forces against the limited trajectory of the system, not overcome, transforms into an open kinetic system, with impetuous, radiant trajectories (**energy, wave, radiant personality**), where existence identifies with movement and the sensation of the **self**: an expansion that extends to identification with the whole. A phenomenon of liberation, multiplication, overcoming. Movement follows stagnation, flight follows step. Existence is no longer about remaining, but about proceeding. The current human type of the **static self** is succeeded by the, today hardly conceivable, type of the **dynamic self**.

The sensation of life is an unlimited effusion that at first stuns; it is a dilation of impulses, it is that dematerialization in which evolution is precisely translated. This sensation may lack consistency; but, in return, how much space is conquered! We no longer feel ourselves concretely as before: we feel ourselves in everything! This is the phenomenal technique from which my sensations are born and how they are justified. Thus, the circumscribed human individuality is lost, to acquire a new and immense one, in the bosom of God. This is how one can understand how I can, as I claim, reach and possess the sense of unification; it is understood the origin of many of my strange expressions, and the great logic of the apparent madness; it is understood how the ascension of the soul towards God, which is the substance of evolution and the reason for life — is a process of harmonization, that is, of progressive attunement in the supreme harmony.

Ascending, everything unites and converges towards the common source: the singular truth, the singular love. Here below, everything is divided: the truths are diverse, selfishnesses differ, love is limited and disunited in each creature. In this transformation of consciousness, the effort of evolution is amply compensated. The great aspiration and the greatest joy of life, which is expansion, reaches there its most complete satisfaction. The small human doors swing wide open. The **self** no longer needs to be obstinate and restrict itself, because it unifies with the whole and the whole is its own. And each one feels in their instinct how much the soul suffers here below, where at every step its march stumbles into a world of obstacles. Everyone feels how much the earth opposes this yearning for freedom. Is not the greatest and most fervent desire of everyone this: to escape to space, to time, to overcome the forms of thought, to conquer, to multiply in new forces? Is this spatial-temporal overcoming not the basis and the essence of our mechanical progress? For this reason alone, this is evolution, because it is an escape from limits and an overcoming of dimensions. Everyone desires wealth, strength, freedom, love. But this other is the true wealth, the true strength, the true freedom, the true love: because everything expands in the very power of perception, in an unlimited sensation, in an omnipresent consciousness.

Unification with God is reached after having understood, in a conceptual synthesis, the organic functioning of the universe, merging and identifying with the universal soul. This is the direction towards being, the realization of the greatest happiness because, at the same time, it is the most extensive expansion. Otherwise, everything will be futile labour. The insatiable instinct of the soul is manifest, but the gateway is in heaven and not on earth. Here below, in the enclosed environment, expansion is reduced to mutual violence, due to the anguish for space. Here below, this is only achieved by stealing it from others, by oppressing and crushing — but it is not so in heaven! What extreme opposites we are on earth, where the assertion of the **self** is the struggle of all against all, is imposi-

tion, extortion, and coercion of the stronger over the weaker. What dissonances, what frictions, what dispersion of energies, what hell. Yet, the universe is order, is music, is love and will appear as such, with overwhelming evidence, as soon as the soul bends to the deepest realities. This is the wonder that awaits us, once the threshold is crossed. The true expansion is in the superior dimensions of the spirit. Only in this way can it, the insatiable, be satisfied!

Thus arises, between the mystic and the world, an irreducible antagonism, an abyss of incomprehension. Everything, logically, depends on the very diverse positions of the problem, due to the very diverse situation of the centre of life. The great passing is not death. One can die and be reborn in life, according to the level of spirituality achieved. When we ascend, human distinctions disappear. Matter divides, spirit unifies. How many dissonant screeches below — how many paradisiacal harmonies above! The harmonization of creatures becomes so profound when they ascend to the Centre that harmony acquires an inviolable intensity. It becomes so powerful that there are no longer any dissonances that can disturb it. So strong, that there are no malicious voices that can dominate it. So sweet that no pain can ever pollute it! And inevitably, gradually, pain and evil are reabsorbed and nullified in this supreme harmony.

6

THE HARMONIZATION

The law is fulfilled, and I observe its inevitable progress. Maturation is such a logical process, a concatenation of forces so well-balanced, that it seems natural to me. In evolution, high and low are relative, and I see no exceptional superiority in myself. I pursue my joy, as do all. Only, I pursue a truer joy; by more uncommon means—and I attain it. The universe is harmony that guides to supreme love, which is God. I, simply, harmonize. This is so spontaneous, that any sensation of fatigue disappears. I do not believe I can claim merit for this. One arrives at this naturally, beyond the measure of human greatness. To offer oneself in sacrifice is the natural law of cohesion, on this plane. And if one loves the enemy pain, it is not out of madness, but because it has already been experienced that this is the means of conquest. Thus, one blesses God's law that wounds, because one feels that behind the trial is His love. I speak of active and sensitive forces, of real conquests. Let it not be believed that mystical states are an absurd exception to the universal utilitarian law of the least effort³⁰ and greatest yield, which must always be in terms of happiness. The sensation of the sublime amply **pays** for each effort, and to the practical ones, I could say: "**the business is worthwhile**".

This progressive harmonization, which through all beings rises to the love of God, is such a grand vibration, leads to such grand ecstasy —

³⁰ See footnote - Chap. 20, from the 1st part. (Translator's Note.)

that supreme happiness is attained. What more can I desire? No human insatiability can ever be so satisfied. For me, the veils of the mysteries have fallen, and my mind is content. In harmonization, now, the barriers of love fall, and my heart is content. After the feast of understanding, the feast of expansion. After the joy of seeing with intelligence — the joy of apprehending with my sensations. The mind has merged into the divine light, achieving unity in the knowledge of truth. Now, the heart awakens and rises to that same altitude, to achieve unity in love. The process of unification in knowledge and in love — the supreme goal of life — is unique, for intelligence and for the heart. Only then will it be complete.

Where now is my poor inspirative perception, that open spiral to the sky—if the doors are wide open and rain down, with the light, torrents of sensations? Intuition has become vision, a rapture, an ecstasy. It arrived like an explosion of my whole personality, a total upliftment of my being, cast like a wave towards the sky. All the powers of my **self** projected towards the High in a burst of passion. Astonished, I witness my dissolution and my resurrection.

The degree of ascension of the being in the spiritual planes is measured by the degree of harmonization achieved by the consciousness in the universal organism, by the degree of identification with the whole, of unification with God. And the external index of harmonization, the feeling through which this is sensitively revealed, is love. It is the degree to which the struggle is appeased, altruism is expanded; the degree to which one can listen to the music of creation and become brotherly with all creatures; the degree to which one can suffer for love, for the good of our fellows. Love is the manner in which the radiant personality achieves vibratory identification with the divine currents: love is the sign of unification. One reaches God, even amid pain, with a content soul, singing and praising; climbing from harmony to harmony, from love to love. The degree of ascesis is measured by the degree to which the soul overcame

pain with joy, absorbed evil into good, harmonized the dissonances into order.

This love is a secret and internal palpitation, powerful and submissive, violent and yet sweet; through intimate paths, it propagates in silence, from being to being, and reaches far. So far that the heart embraces everything that was created. Deep and broad love, that penetrates everything and everywhere finds beings to love. Satisfaction superior to desire. This wonder is great, in a world where desire is always greater than its satisfaction. It is a boundless intoxication this immense vibration, omnipresent, indestructible; this opening of souls to pour into one another. The joy of the timid escape of a ray of human love, from one egoism to another egoism, was already so great! What paradise will then be this, to be able to hear, wherever it may be, wherever the mind directs, beyond all barriers of space and time—to hear a palpitation of return that says: "I love you!" And then, the soul cries out; "I have discovered love! Come to me, humans who seek it! It is not yours, the love. I have discovered love! This is not madness, it is joy. Smile, whoever wants to. I sing, I live, I enjoy, I affirm! Those who deny will remain in their darkness.

The tremendous human and animal struggle completely disarms itself in the face of the luminous force of love. I loved so much that even you, enemy pain, became a friend. Sweet sister death, I loved so much, that you too appear to me enveloped in love. Then, one can only say: "My body is tired and I sing; my body suffers, and I sing, my body dies... and I sing." This is paradise, fruit, not of death, but of intimate maturation, which one can always reach.

So, within the soul itself resonate all the echoes of the universe, in solemn and profound music where the voice of God sings. This music cradles and lulls my pain to sleep. Identifying with that vibration, I lighten myself and can escape the weight of matter. This love has made my friends the rocks, the brambles, and the storms: my brothers the man

and the beast. It has also made you my friend, sister death, who will mark the last impulse of my earthly fatigue. Love overcomes pain and death. What a transmutation of values, what a marvellous liberation! The ferocity of each punishment is tamed by elevation: the brother wolf caresses me. And then, the resonances of life change at the touch of this force. All rebellions calm down, exhaustion sleeps. From each act of kindness emanates music so sweet that it reabsorbs all the harshness of the sacrifice that the act imposes. Kindness, here, opens the door to a superior law, whose harmonies are so strong that they neutralize suffering and the weariness of renunciation. It is about a superior aesthetic of the spirit, whose beauty surpasses all beauties. The sacrifice expands through this resurrection into a greater and conquered life; it transforms into a clarity of vision, an embrace of love. The loss is in the restricted human visual angle, not in the divine, where there is affirmation, joy, beauty. I have heard this divine music; it sings in the sacrifice, and I am thirsty to hear it again. The weariness goes away, and the music stays. Then, the soul does not only cry out: "I have discovered love!", but also cries out: "I have conquered pain!"

And everything acquires a new flavour; a joy radiates that spreads over all things. The soul becomes a channel through which divine love descends and spreads. With joy, the burden of life is taken up again each morning. And the common work of all; but a divine sense that breathes within makes it holy and splendid. They will say: "Oh, old things!" We respond: "they are spoken, but not done, not felt." Within that fatigue which is the same on the outside, burns such a luminosity of good, such a beatitude of spirit, such a vivid blessing of God, so much faith and so much love, that everything transforms, as if by magic touch. Then, and only then, is life truly beautiful. Then the man, bent before the path, rises each morning with joy in his heart because he knows that the renewed fatigue that leads him back to God is holy; and at night, in the tired flesh, the spirit exults, giving thanks for the duty fulfilled, for the new

stretch of the path covered. He knows that pain writes, beyond time, that which no longer erases. The body is subdued and the soul opens and within it sing the harmonies of the universe. That joy is the joy of all creation, and it overflows, and returns, and there is no force that can muzzle it.

Then, a new courage to live comes to me, a desire to give my strengths a greater yield of good, a fear of human dispersion because everything is concentrated in the divine. And I return to all beings, in a wide multiplication of love, I look at all the faces of the universe, because they speak to me of God. And then, everything is love around me, inside and outside of me. Love, the soul of phenomena, the spark of life, divine greatness. But, I want this deep and complete union, this penetration and identification that human love does not give; I want the endless, immense embrace, with the whole universe; I want love without selfishness, perfect, indivisible, eternal. I want the true love, stronger than death.

If I possess everything, what does it matter if the heavy cross of life makes me bleed along the way if I advance closely united, heart to heart, with all sister creatures? If the little flower I pick gives me its fragrance and dies, saying: "I love you, brother"? If the animals, the rocks, the wind, the spaces, tell me: "I love you"? If the stars and the imponderable forces revolve around me, in a wonderful balance and symphony of movement, to tell me: "I love you, brother"?

Then, my spirit explodes in supreme madness and I am enveloped in the luminous wake of Christ, and in it, I dissolve. I forgot my **self**. It does not exist, is no longer recognized. It is dead. Resurrected. It is no longer **I**, yet, I am alive and present, in a new world, changed, renewed, immense. I am all that is my love. My love is in all creatures; mine is their self; my song is their song; my joy is their joy. And what death can close this universal life without limits of time and space?

THE UNIFICATION

Through love, the mystery of unification is accomplished. Common thought flies over, does not touch life, the mere understanding of truth does not descend to the depths of the soul to convulse it with its sensations. In the mystical plane the thought is life, each concept that I emit is a fact that descended and stamped itself upon the spirit. The cold conception has here transformed into a renewal of the soul. The supreme abstraction of the concept of God draws near and becomes a tangible descent into the centre of one's own consciousness. God does not approach, does not show Himself: He is felt. The cold idea of truth warms up, animates, and vibrates in the pulsations of the entire universe. The symphony of creation is not merely seen through understanding: it is touched by perception. And this is the sublimity of ecstasy.

Thus, the music of things began to sing within me; the beauty, the strength, the love of the whole revives in me. Phenomena, life, the universe, are no longer distant and external, but speak, exist in me. In unification, the sense of distinctions is lost. Understanding is an embrace. I am no longer merely an outsider spectator before the panorama of creation and the architecture of the universe, to deduce and ascend to the Divinity, but I am in inner communion with His vibration. My gaze is a gesture that draws all beings, who live with me in God, close to my heart. And we all sing the same song, vibrate in the same harmony, embrace with the same love, live the same joy of living, suffer and are redeemed by

the same pain, all of us climbing with the same effort towards the same God. From the cold analysis of the mind, concepts here emerge as living figures that speak the reality of sensation. Everything moves, phenomena live, beings respond, souls love. Thought enlivens space. Truth becomes tangible. The whole touches my expansion of consciousness. God, then, is real, present, current, and active, in me and around me. Wherever I turn, this absolute sensation emerges from all things: the universe rises and comes to meet me, like an immense, overwhelming wave. One dies to oneself, to one's own selfishness, to reemerge in all things. The word "**I**" assumes a different meaning. Evolution has broken the dams, and the universe bursts into me.

They are neither theological distillations nor passionate sublimations, but a stupendous lived reality. This is my joy, after having left behind human joys. This is my prayer. My lips are silent, the mind is silent and no longer knows how to formulate thoughts. My **self** is suspended, trembling, on the wings of this vibration that fills the universe; it knows not, knows nothing else but this immense joy, too vast to be fully known. It sings, because everything sings. The music is not its own but merely echoes, unfolds, comes forth, expands within it, until it becomes its very way of being. The autonomous vibration of distinction has been lost and nullified in the broader vibration.

Freedom from all human compressions has arrived, the explosion, the escape not to the exterior, which is the restrictive path, but to the interior, which is the path of expansion. By projecting oneself sensorially outward, the **self** is engulfed in the particular, in the relative, in illusion. There, the veils thicken, barriers are raised, one descends in dimension, ideas are concealed. A dense fog obscures consciousness. It is the path of darkness. I see this abyss, which lies beneath me, in an involutive sense, an abyss of anguish and desire, where the greatest evil is the blindness that prevents the vision of God. It is hell. It lies in the impossibility of

corresponding to the vibrations of divine light. The **self** has destroyed itself in a narrow alley and cries out, invokes, and suffers in vain, knocking on all doors, which remain closed to its expansion. I hear desperate voices rising from those dense envelopes. The poor soul struggles in its torment, in its sensitivity, against the thick and tenacious walls. It must transcend them with its passion, demolish them with the dripping of its blood. With each new spasm, a stone moves and falls. What a feast for the spirit as the first breaches open! I see the prisoners sneak out of the demolished prison, emerge from the demolished walls, and, finally free, throw themselves into the infinite. I see the tide of beings move from darkness into light. This is life. And such is that darkness that, beyond a certain degree, my sight no longer penetrates it; such is that light that, beyond a certain limit, my eyes no longer bear it. And darkness is also dissonance, as light is harmony. Darkness is the density of matter, suffocation of spirit, wickedness, wrath, despair. Light is the transparency of spirit, happiness, kindness, love, and blessing.

I feel the light moving towards the darkness. And the force of penetration and attraction that redeems and lifts. Darkness is inertia, resistance, negation. I feel the shock and struggle between the two forces: good and evil. They reach each other and tear each other apart. I feel the clash, which makes the universe tremble. The light attacks with the violence of love that conquers hearts; hatred resists stubbornly, the darkness screams its terror. And a hierarchy of bonds unfolds, a descent of aids, a weave of attractions and repulsions. I see the whirlwind of love projecting from high to low, struggling to break free. In a supreme moment of world history, I see the vortex of love project with extreme violence, and the tide of pain grow until it touches the vortex. And then, Christ appears. Then, the earth reaches the sky, and the sky descends to the earth, and between the two extremes of love and pain, the miracle of redemption is born. I feel the euphoria of that fusion and the singing of the joy of that redemption resonate in my heart, as my own thing, be-

cause I am also in that tide of pain that was caught and merged in the fire of love.

It is, truly, the supreme maturation of a soul—this that I recount. It is something that cannot be feigned nor improvised. Such words are not written coldly, with the calm satisfaction of one who balances among the things of the earth. There is in me a spasm of the soul that cries out its joy and its fatigue, an explosion, a passion for anything superhuman that is about to arrive. The sublime wants to descend to my pen, which cannot resist and is about to break. I burn like a torch. Yet, I cannot attribute anything more to myself; for the higher my conceptions, the more I write, surrendering myself to God. I feel Him nearby. I no longer know how to beseech, I no longer know how to understand.

I live in an atmosphere of fire. It seems to me that my soul can no longer contain all its joy, in a terrible **crescendo**. This exaltation sets my word ablaze and allows me to express the inexpressible. And I obey and tell and retell still, to savour all my ecstasy, to understand it, to feel it all in its inexhaustible light. I advance with my soul trembling, tight, in the eagerness to understand myself, to affirm and record these flashes of the spirit. Only the harp of an angel, surely, could narrate such things. Here, I distort and insult them. I have no material more diaphanous than the word to express myself, an image less concrete, a thought more fluid and more transparent. I wished for a more worthy medium, and I cannot find it. My inner rhythm suffocates in this stagnation that is human expression, the lights go out, glimmers blend and are lost. What I write shows the disfigured stain where a sublime picture lies. The word is impure, tastes of flesh and earth. Thus, the beautiful deforms, movement crystallizes, thought is mutilated, everything rushes into my miserable stammering. There is no measure, in the human conceivable, that can contain the superconceivable. Yet, this immensity is so simple, so spontaneous, so natural! And I seek to be simple and spontaneous so that the gar-

ments do not overshadow the beauty of the body. I let the words escape as they wish to be born, saturated and transparent, vibrant and burning, as the argument wants. I surrender to the lyrical impetus, because it reveals the inner song that intoxicates me. It is no longer possible to reflect and reason. We have done that too much. Thus, I myself am listening to the voice that emerges from the depths, I myself am dragged in its urge to say: "in this way is born a style not thought or desired, that has the strength of true things." It is the inner vibration that forms it, suggests it, and carries it far, to echo in the hearts of men. Let the form be the servant of the idea. Everything springs from the deep wound from which passion overflows and is made of pieces of my soul, of the palpitations of my heart, of the fever of this tension in which I live. Despite inadequate means, this is always the unspeakable song of pain and love that bursts from the depth of being. Behold, my soul is no longer within the house of the body. The sensation of God passes close by and my **self** dissolves in its rapture. My saying goes unconsciously along a luminous streak that seems traced in the sky by the flight of an angel. I no longer have the strength to stay at my post of analysis, because the sensation springs forth methodically. My flesh sleeps absorbed and I hear its slow palpitations from afar; my soul breaks, in the paroxysm of its tension. I have to compress the instantaneity of thought, and stamp it into words. I am thirsty for God. Humiliate me, nullify me and this elevates me. I burn and prostrate myself, and this nourishes and satisfies me. My insatiable soul is finally satisfied.

I have in my eyes a dust of gold; in my ears, intoxicating music; in all senses, a supreme sublimation. I wish to abandon this inert pen, which knows not how to weep nor love with me. Inside me, the superb and harmonious dance of cosmic forces is taking place, singing a profound and ineffable song. A music of movements and resonances so transcendental penetrates me that I cannot express them. God distributes Himself in His splendour; the mystery unfolds like a melody, the idea is

alive and revives from things in me. I approach the centre where all manifestations meet, where all expressions are equivalent, all manifestations unify. I touch the fundamental unity of the true and the beautiful, the moment they converge and merge, the fulcrum that sustains all vibrations of the universe. I feel the unity that is in the roots of life, in the depth of the essence of things. Beyond the transient, multiple, and divided form, I have found the one substance, indivisible, eternal. I reach, concentrated in a single palpitation, the maximum synthesis of knowledge and love.

Those on the outside do not see, they look and remain in their conceptions and do not realize that a being has left the orbit of human attractions. I am, by now, a bolide spinning dizzily around its sun, bound by its attraction, enclosed in that force field from which it can no longer escape. It did not occur to me, in the enthusiasm of achievements, in the impetus of love, that the abyss was immense and that to investigate the dream was too much for the strength of a man. It did not occur to me that, in the process of progressive attunement in with the source of my inspirational records, in the desire to scrutinize it ever more closely, I was approaching the focus of a fire, a vortex that would have swallowed my will, my consciousness, my entire being. I fought so hard to reach harmonization and it did not occur to me that I was plunging into a whirlwind of forces that would have absorbed the distinct note of my personality. I no longer have my vibration; I lost myself in the vibration of the universe. I no longer have my voice, which got lost in the voice of God. I believed I heard the small music of my thought and it transformed into the music of creation. I had such a need for love in the earthly desert and threw myself, madly, into the centre of my inspiration. Now it almost terrifies me to see it coming towards me like a gigantic incendiary meteorite. The flames already lean towards my soul and some tongues of fire lick it, taste it, and retract to let it breathe. They gradually accustom it to their atmosphere of fire. They retract, leaving me in the despair of my

human blindness and return to kiss me, to set me aflame again. In these alternatives, they attract me and repel me. Those flames launch and wriggle around my spirit to call it to itself, at the centre of the fire.

I burn, yet I am not consumed; I blaze, yet I am not annihilated. Frightfully, the noise of human things whirls around me, and I am alone, a poor naked soul in the dazzling nudity of substance. I still make the childish gesture of grasping, but I have no hands; of closing my eyes to the excessive light, but I have no eyes; I wish to flee, but I am outside of space and time. I feel a vast storm in the sky, and from its bosom, a voice tells me: "**Fear nothing, it is I,**" "**Ego sum qui sum.**" The inexpressible is within me, and I have the strength to speak to it. God is within me, vibrating in my sensation, and I have the strength not to die. I am in Your orbit, Lord, and I plunge into You. In Your love, have mercy on my weakness.

8

THE SENSATION OF GOD

In this way God appears in the soul. The existence of God emerges in it and settles as a sensible fact. That central idea, the universe's synthesis, is touched by consciousness, only this reaches the mystical field. This is the substance of my experience, and I describe it here. On the rational plane, reason seeks God; but in analysis, it does not find Him (science). On the intuitive plane (for example, *The Great Synthesis*), God appears in the mind, but only as a concept and remains as an external vision, distinct from the **self**. On the mystical plane (example: *Mystical Ascesis*), God appears in the consciousness as a total interior sensation, one with the **self** and the synthesis of truth transforms into love (**union with God**). On this plane, revelation becomes rapture. A method for knowledge, too, but unusual and deeper. Science adopts the method of observation. To surpass it, I adopted the method of intuition and described it. This is the method of unification. But, it is such an uncommon position, so far removed from the normal attitude of human consciousness, that on this plane it is not understandable, does not act, nor can it communicate. Here, before the idea of God, alive in my experience, the levels of consciousness laid out in the diagram of spiritual ascension resurface. And one understands what a tremendous sensorial realization it is for the spirit to reach the plane of unification. Thus, it can be said: God is within me, vibrating in my sensation.

I describe it further, let me say it this way, this so extraordinary form of consciousness. I expand in the vastness of my sensations. The sensory pathways multiply infinitely, as the soul evolves. When everything in the ascension dematerializes, the vibration reaches the conscious centre, not only through the channel of the senses — the only pathway normally open — but from all sides, it excites resonances in a thousand forms and each resonance is sensation. Just as on the intuitive plane the doors of understanding were opened, on the mystical plane the doors of sensation are opened. A direct soulful perception is formed.

We are beyond space and time, in the infinite. Human measures do not serve us. The whole is a point; eternity, an instant. They become one. Everything is omnipresent and contemporary. And we then understand that space and time are barriers existing only for our dimensions of the relative—they are merely appearances: another mode of existence, for which God is centre and periphery, concept and manifestation, absolute and relative, principle and form. Without eyes, I see the inner firmament of the universe, where everything speaks without words. The substance moves back and forth, from idea to expression and from expression to idea. Immense movement, which is more a vibration, so still it is. Each life is a pulsation of this vibration. No, I am not mistaken. I am tremendously present in my sensation. I breathe its rhythm in my own life. In this depth of consciousness, life is one. The universe is a great organism of which I, like everyone, am a small, useful, unmistakable, necessary gear, eternally in function.

The truth is within me. I am immersed in it, and it nourishes me. I perceive it through identification. The mystery is the barrier of darkness that the envelope of matter imposes. Once matter is overcome, the mystery disappears. The limitation lies in the illusion of our relative, not in reality. The whole is saturated with truth, shouts it aloud, and the soul

was made to listen. It is enough to break through the crust and emerge from one's own deafness.

The whole is saturated with love; it is the vibration that unites the particular, which seems dispersed in impalpable dust, draws it in, makes it compact, and returns it to unity. I feel that in its diverse multiplicity, the universe is one. The noise of the forces that colligate everything, assist, and guide echoes within me. Each point is found in the whole, and the whole is found in each point. Everything is individualized, but communicative, everything is distinct, but indivisible, everything obeys an inflexible, yet elastic law of infinite adaptations and compensations and is elaborated in the stillness of its inner movement. Thus, I am merged with the whole, and the whole merged in me. I am now omnipresent in space, coexistent in time, as is any consciousness on this plane. Thus, my life is in the life of all creatures, and my perception, my consciousness, is in the entire universe. Here is the sensation of the new dimension, and this is the overcoming and annihilation of all previous measures. Wherever a being exists, there am I, feeling, living. This is the true inner sensation of God. My conception and sensation merge into the conception and sensation in which the Universe conceives and feels itself. No theological or scientific objection can destroy this form of my universal consciousness. The voice of God is stronger than the voice of men.

The infinite is not the immense, the immeasurable, as is commonly thought. It is neither large nor small. It is simple, spontaneous, calm; it is not a tiring extension, a fantastic multiplication of measures. It is a natural and tranquil atmosphere, where limits have fallen, negation has been overcome. It is not a multiple of the finite, but something different. Annihilation as human consciousness makes me emerge on the surface of a luminous and tranquil ocean, free and without storms. Space and time are darkness, divisions, prison, barrier, negation. The infinite is a state of rest located beyond the limits that the human mind, in its relativ-

ity, eternally seeks to overcome, without ever succeeding. There the spirit has arrived; it has surpassed its overcoming and its labours.

It is in this zone of great calm that the spirit hears the profound music that is within phenomena. The aesthetic and logical rhythm of its development, the harmony of balances and purposes. And all this is no longer that small understanding of the mind but comes close to the soul, within it resurges, with it merges into a single, immense chant. This chant captivates it, overcomes it, drags it, and in it bursts forth and unifies into a powerful and marvellous exultation. It would seem that the soul explodes, projecting itself into the universe, and that the universe condenses to close within it. In this super-spatial dimension, universe and spirit have the same extent. So beautiful and sweet is the harmony of creation that attuning in with it, unifying in its resonance, constitutes a bliss which, in its most intense degree, is the ecstasy in which the sensation of God is attained. Prayer is but the initial harmonization. To harmonize, everywhere, in the majesty of Gregorian chant, in liturgical symbolism, in the currents emanating from the thirteenth-century cathedrals; to harmonize even more swiftly before the divine spectacle of creation; to harmonize in the supreme aesthetics of an act of kindness and brotherly love in Christ—this is the path that leads to the sensation of God. Christ appeared and could not but appear to Saint Francis at La Verna, except as the final point of this supreme harmonization.

Human fibres break under the tension of these paroxysms. I heard the harmony of the created, I merged with it, and attained the sensation of God. My heart pulsed with the heart of all sister creatures, and in these palpitations, God's love flowed through me. All voices spoke in me, and I responded to all voices.

A song of love guided me to the centre, from sphere to sphere. Gliding along the symphony of phenomena and the theory of beings, my spirit ascended to God. But the final tension of ecstasy is immense. The spirit

cannot endure for long and plummets from dimension to dimension, to find itself again, as normal consciousness, in the lifeless body. Then I hear, like an echo, the song continuing from sphere to sphere, ascending in the sweetest harmony that fades away, dissolving into earthly darkness. Again the deceit of the senses, and I revive only to hear again the palpitations of my exhausted heart. I retain in me but a memory and a longing; nothing but a bitter yearning for that distant paradise, which down here seems like madness. Which seems like it can never return.

9

CHRIST

These are the sensations and the planes of consciousness to which mystical asceticism leads us. On this plane, I have reached—and only on this plane can one reach—the immediate knowledge of Christ. I know what tremendous thing I am saying and only now can I say it—after maturing through the experiences I have described. Until now, I have been silent. But my whole work has moved to converge, inevitably, towards the summits where points the supreme synthesis of my thought and my life. The figure in which the abstract and sublime conception of ecstasy becomes humanized, becoming even more accessible as presence and thus approaches the normal consciousness—is Christ. His voice took shape and outlined itself in that figure which I contemplate with love and trembling; it defined itself in a Being who took me by the hand and said to me: "You have walked and you are tired, but you cannot stop. You must still go forward and overcome other battles and weariness. Follow me. You can no longer stop. Courage. I am by your side." In the sweetness of the caress, in the impetus of the storm, in the terror of solitude, I heard again: "Follow me, follow me." And this command was engraved in me. At that moment, I became a child, the sight of the earth closed, and the vision of heaven reopened, and ecstasy took me in its tentacles and carried me far away.

And His face that appears to me and draws me in the centre of the fire, the gigantic meteor that comes closer to me, flaming. It was a voice

and has become a figure, sensitive and close, complete in the sublimation of all attributes of the conceivable. The weakness of human representation, the desire of matter to materialize, were granted images, but they are not Images of Christ. Certain saccharine figures, of a soft, external, rosy, and oval gentleness — they are a veil, not an expression, they are distance and suffering for those who contemplate them.

The true Christ is a reality and an immense sensation that repels images. It is an infinity that is conquered through successive approximations. As the spirit ascends, various planes of consciousness correspond to various planes of knowledge of Christ, which are a progressive revelation of His divine essence. In the sensory plane, consciousness does not surpass the concrete representation of the historical Christ, of the concept embodied in human form. In the rational plane, critical consciousness seeks the divine in that figure, without being able to find it. In the intuitive plane, consciousness finds, through inspiration in revelation, the cosmic Christ and understands that it coincides with the Divinity. In the mystical plane, consciousness feels through love the mystical Christ, and from the conception of God moves to unification with God.

Thus, consciousness reaches and touches, progressively, an ever more internal Christ, penetrating into His depth; a Christ ever more real and immaterial, approaching Him first with the senses, then with the mind, and then with the heart, a Christ ever greater, more powerful, more benevolent, more unified, more transparent in His reality—that is: ever more, for man, a perfect model of God. In this progression of immateriality and interiorization, the spirit draws near to His divine reality, feels more evident His truth. I have lived in these various depths of reality, on the different planes of consciousness; I felt, from the conceptual vastness of the Mosaic revelation, which stopped at the God-creator, only power, to emerge the mystical-Christ, the God-love that, from the cosmic conceptual world of the mind, blossoms in the intimate mystical world of

feeling and heart. The Christ that I feel and love is an immaterial, interior Christ, whose earthly manifestation represented the most perfect expression of God. He is a rhythm with which I harmonize and in whose attunement I dissolve, a vibration that I want to make myself, and that wants to make itself me. This may be a Christ too lofty for the common needs of the normal conception, but only This is the real Christ; only in this interiority and immateriality is the Divinity, the presence, the unification in Him conceivable.

Writers recount the vicissitudes of the historical Christ; art attempts to express His concrete visage; the very ritual commemorates Him based on the facts of a life lived here below. Human eyes close to sensory manifestations and only through these, laboriously, can reach the immaterial reality. Thus, the life of Christ lingers preferentially in the human sense, in the bloody drama of the cross, more than in the divine sense — the luminous triumph of the resurrection. But that is the inferior moment, denser and heavier, in which the spirit comes into contact with matter. It is the less divine, less beautiful side — if in Christ there can be less beautiful: the moment in which the luminosity has the strength to immerse itself, without extinguishing, in the darkness. This is the historical Christ, genius, reformer, martyr, the man seen by all. It is the tangible and undeniable fact, in which the super-sensible materialized — the fact reached even by materialist writers and slanderers, powerless for flight and who did not know how to walk beyond. In this aspect of Christ, the infinite closed itself in the short rhythm of a man's life, so that even the blind could touch it. And this is perhaps, for those who feel the true Christ — the greatest wonder of divine love.

The historical Christ, indeed, died, and seems to have ended. But there exists a deeper Christ, and He continues to live. It is of this one I speak. He is alive in my sensation and in my passion. Present in us, beyond space and time, eternally. Only the flesh dies, only matter disinte-

grates, not the spirit. The real Christ has never left the Earth. He could not be harmed by that minor human vicissitude of life and death. Christ simply revealed Himself, twenty centuries ago: but was alive in the revelation that foretold Him. He is alive, even if it may not seem so, even if perhaps men did not wish it, He is alive in the Church that professes His teaching. And this, for reasons and means super-human. Christ is — beyond past and future. He does not emerge and does not disappear, does not be born and does not die. This Christ comes, not from the outside, in human form; his arrival occurs within, in the spirit. It is a spiritual fact, it is light of understanding and love. His reality cannot be sought in physical phenomena. The foretold Kingdom of Heaven is, above all, in the heart of man — and this is the field that must be ploughed; this is the creation that must be made. Only such a Christ, felt with an inner rhythm, can be a bond of souls, a principle of fusion and unification in which all the children of God can revive in divine unity. Christ, with His passion, threw the bridge of love across human selfishness, between Himself and them. He opened and stirred the vortex of altruism. He gave the first impulse to expansion. He made unification possible.

The real Christ is complete in His trinity of historical Christ, cosmic Christ, and mystical Christ. This trinity projects its image onto the three evolutionary phases or planes of existence in our universe: matter, energy, spirit. It finds its correspondence in the human microcosm, an organism made of body, mind, and heart; of senses, conceptions, and feelings. The historical Christ is the form, the manifestation on the physical plane; the principle takes back matter and flesh to elevate them to itself, through love. The mystery of redemption is based on this withdrawal from the various planes to the lower plane, by a principle of balance and cohesion that imposes it, so that evolution does not drift away and advances compactly. The cosmic Christ is a concept-law, is the principle of organization that governs and regulates the world. The mystical Christ is love—a principle of harmonization, cohesion, and unification. Thus, the

Trinity completes itself by enveloping itself: it is to the principle of cohesion of love that the principle-law entrusts the redemption of the flesh. And the Trinity is one, present in its three modes of being. "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life," He said. The Way, that is, the norm of practical life on Earth, to reach God; the Truth, that is, the synthesis of knowledge, the thought of God; the Life, that is, the force of love, the unity of souls in God. And in the phase that I study here, of mystical ascesis, the soul reaches the most fruitful aspect of Divinity — love. Without Christ, who was, above all, a manifestation of love, how could man come closer to God? The coming of Christ to Earth was, therefore, the descent of the spirit to the flesh for an act that is the third moment, in which the first two are completed: love. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," (John).³¹

³¹ NOTE: - The author here does not explicitly confront, as this is not the proper place, the question of whether Christ, who never called Himself God but always Son in the presence of the Father, identifies with the God of the Universe, the supreme engine of creation and the ultimate term of everything that exists. When comparing these pages with the chapters on God and Universe in the volume — *Problems of the Future*, it seems that while in that volume the author speaks of the universal God, the unique center of everything, a supreme abstraction beyond definition and all representation, not only in sensory form but also in human conceivability, in this volume the author intends to speak of Christ only as a perfect manifestation or expression of that God, in a form relative to earthly life and to human conceivability.

In any case, it is not in the present volume, in which the author expresses his most violent sensations, which deeply wounded him on his entry into the mystical world, that he could occupy himself with specifying what, only later, in other states of soul, he was able to do in successive volumes and in other states of spirit, especially in the volume: *God and Universe* (see XIV - "The Essence of Christ"). (N. of A.)

10

LOVE

It is this immaterial, inner, living, and present Christ that I feel, breathe, live, that penetrates and identifies with me. If the sensation of God is essentially reached through the mind, the sensation of Christ is essentially touched through the heart. The synthesis of conception transforms and completes into a synthesis of feeling. The cosmic aspect of the God-principle multiplies and is given in its second aspect of God-love, the mystical Christ. I must, therefore, abandon the language of reason for another much more difficult—the language of love. Only those who have matured will be able to understand me.

And this Christ is the form in which the Divinity humanizes itself to come closer to me. Access is made through the path of love. And this is the ignited gigantic meteorite I described. And Christ arrives, and I receive Him, not through reason, authority, or History, but He descends directly into my sensation, an inviolable inner reality where human will does not act. This is a conquest of mine, as it can be for everyone, that the external world cannot undo; it is a reality it cannot expel from my soul.

One cannot understand Christ by approaching Him with the spirit of a historian, an exegete, an erudite and wise critic. This belongs to the exterior and stays outside. One must approach with a loving spirit, for only to those who love are granted certain intimate and deep compressions:

because love is the unique path of understanding. It is the tremendous force that led Divinity to humanization. Indeed, the Gospel, more than a book of wisdom, wants to be the book of love.

Thus appears to me the inner figure of Christ. The veils of mystery fall, and the Passion emerges in its essence. Beneath the historical and human life of Christ arises a deeper and more real life, which alone contains substantial and inner meanings. Only by reliving it in such depth does one feel, at every step, the divine bursting forth, irresistible and blinding through the veil of form. I now have the sensation of the apocalyptic development of cosmic forces that this life contains, interwoven into a grandiose symphony, in which the spiritual development of humanity echoes and completes itself. Only in this sense might I perhaps write, if I have the strength and if I am worthy — a life of Christ, first read by my soul in the depths of the heart through the force of love.

Christ appears to me thus like thunder I hear, emerging from the night of times and echoing from century to century, as a force progressing in giant strides through the History of the world. Christ is the fulcrum of the dynamism of human ascensions, is the immense voice of the spirit that sweeps everything in its force, is the outline of the weary path of life, is the divine fertilization of the human to divinize it. Through love, the divine figure of Christ appears to me. His historical form is but a moment, a flash, enclosed in time. His reality is eternal and contains the gesture of God turning the pages of creation and the evolution of the universe. The force of this gesture is within History; it sustains it, guides it, elevates it. The world plummets, and that force catches and lifts it; the destinies of peoples are in jeopardy, and that force saves them.

Christ is the Word humanized that merges into the long human vicissitudes. And the Word that the dying time speaks to the birthing time, that the universal rhythm transmits and repeats, the conception where millennia are born and die, emerge and vanish peoples and civilizations.

This divine force that with so much impetus exploded in the Mosaic Genesis descends from its heights and comes towards man. God's creative gesture softens in Christ into an embrace of love. The mystery of redemption is a mystery of love. The infinite and thundering force of the God of Hosts assumes a deeper manifestation, softens into a more intimate modulation, and achieves the unheard-of miracle of knowing how to restrict itself in the gentleness of a humble embrace. In Christ, God wishes to descend from His throne of glory, high and distant, great and terrible, and approaches to penetrate deeply into the heart of man. In this sublime act, He hides and covers His force, to become equal to the humble and the poor. God expresses Himself, no longer in force, but in beauty and feeling. He transmutes the terrifying flash of brilliance into the sweet song that girds and draws; the armed gesture of justice into the gentle gesture that forgives. I feel this internal change of the divine Trinity to another aspect: this reshaping into a more complete and complex expression, to meet the needs of the time, to unify with the human soul, to achieve in it its most vivid expression.

I feel Christ as a radiating force, like the sunlight, saturating our spiritual atmosphere, so that each soul may reach it, as every plant to the Sun, according to its capacity to receive. It's a light that descends, generous and impartial, even into the mud, and remains unstained; it brings always renewed purity. And a power indestructible despite the assaults of time, the decay of forms, the obstacles of evil. I see it present at every moment, in every being, in every people, in every civilization: its history is the History of the world; I see it changing and advancing with man, following him step by step, soul of his soul; I feel it sweetening as the dross of the envelope falls away and human nature, more sensitive, has less need for violent pushes. Until Christ becomes the united soul, in a song that has the magic to nullify pain and achieve redemption. It becomes an immense and stupendous chant echoing throughout the universe. I hear it now as a voice that goes from form to form and repeats

from creature to creature. That in the humble sings the same music of the great; that no longer has limit or measure; it is the symphony of the universe's unity. It is the voice of great souls, it is the voice of simple souls; it is the voice of the downtrodden spirit that in pain expiates and rises; it is the thunder of social convulsions that submerge and create civilizations; it is the cry of triumph of the martyrs, it is the timid smile of the humble and unconscious flower; it is the first cry of a life and of a destiny — it is the exhausted reclining in death, dawn of resurrection.

Christ! You are the kindness that caresses, the love that inflames, the light that guides. You are also the trial that falls to me, for my own good, the pain that liberates me, the death that restores life to me. You are everything, O God! Whether through joy, love, pain — it is always Your hand that guides me to the only goal, which is You. Whether You encourage or chastise, caress or punish, you always draw everything to You, as the supreme reason for life. Now I have reached the supreme violence, which surpasses the rays of Sinai, the violence of love. It seeks out my heart, to tear it out and take its place. Then, the soul arrived at the harbour, reached its goal. In the flight of times, Christ prevailed.

Before the coming of Christ, God was a just and severe law which man worshipped from afar; He was the command that demanded obedience, instilling fear. He expressed Himself as a force that asks not for understanding, that does not unify in love, that remains distinct in the heart of man. With Christ, the divine manifestation reaches a new dimension, draws a degree closer to the life and sensation of man, begins a slow process of attraction and absorption, culminating in unification. It is a type of action entirely new, that desires to extract the spirit from human nature, wishes to take evolution beyond the animal orbit. God was a law closed to man's contact. Now, He opens and projects Himself, gives and communicates, attracts and unifies. With the arrival of Christ, the divine flings open the gates and pours forth in a torrent across the earth,

the dikes break, and the flood begins. It will be continuous. The opposites, earth and heaven, attract each other, are fields of contrary forces that need to balance, compensating and merging themselves. The tide of human pain rises from below, prostrate and invoking, high and terrible, devouring distances, destroying obstacles placed upon the path. Pain elevates the destiny of peoples and renders them more worthy. Divine love felt this uprising of desire, this swelling of aspirations, and the celestial vortex projected itself, eager for contact; the two spirals touched, and Christ appeared as a ray vibrating between heaven and earth; the divine descended into man, so that the human could be raptured into the divine.

Thus Christ grafts Himself, as a cosmic force, into the centre of human evolution, decisively influencing the development of the spiritual phenomenon — and a phase of ascension begins that head towards the divine. A new world, made of feelings and aspirations previously unknown, starts to reveal itself, emerging from the depth of the soul. It is a divine manifestation to which Christ had given the initial impulse. His coming represents, in the field of life forces, a substantial change, a fundamental shift of balance whose centre now gravitates from matter to spirit. The trajectory of evolution, engulfed in the most disastrous descent, experienced a jolt and resumed its ascensional march. The coming of Christ is the impulse from heaven descending to realize the new work of man's ascension in the direction of overcoming all aspects of his animality. And Christ, who holds the power of renewal in His hands, positions Himself at the central moment of man's evolution, between the extreme limit of descent (Hellenic-Roman materialism) and the presentiment of ascension, to untangle the laws of a surpassed life and rebuild it in the form of a new, more dignified, and higher life. Christ is the initial moment, the sensitive sign, of the birth of this force that will never cease to act for the future, present in the infinity of things, in the depths of souls, in the form of life, in the works of man. And the action will be con-

stant, the presence tenacious, the ascension slow and continuous, the elevation will be progressive until the realization of the Kingdom of Heaven. The truth will become an ever more evident path in the spirits; increasingly, divine love will warm hearts. Through a long and exhausting struggle, the ship of the Church of Christ will cross the great ocean of the life of peoples; the martyrs will sacrifice themselves for the idea, and the initial movement will be elaborated and act, completing itself in detail, ever more precisely, the great project of Christ; the colossal bases of a new civilization will be laboriously laid, transforming the world from its foundations. Christ was a seed. But what worlds a seed contains! A seed is, like the word of Christ, a powerful concentration of forces, capable of realizing them slowly, germinating and growing.

Christ did not destroy: He continued and fertilized. He plucked man from one plane of life to transport him to another, higher one. His revolution is always present. Fundamentally, it is nothing but the slow and inevitable maturation of the laws of life, being, for this reason, an integral part of the organic plan of the functioning and development of the universe. The contrast between the forces of good and the forces of evil, the clash between spirit and matter — these are struggles encompassed within a broader balance, are momentary weariness of evolution, disorder contained and **usefully** framed within a greater order. An energetic intervention of exceptional force was necessary to divert and so decisively renew the course of History. To extract the prisoner of matter from the prison of the flesh, that light had to possess the power of lightning. Yet, in that force, the balance is not disturbed, the fusion is slow, the work is completed in order. And this is its greatest expression: the force contained in sweetness. Christ's caress carries within it the gesture of the creator of worlds. The same tremendous God of Moses knows how to evolve His manifestation and provide His expression in the relative. The time had come to open the doors of truth, and Christ tears it from the mystery of the temples into the light of the Sun: takes man, guided by

revelation, by the hand and leads him further. The veil of the temple is torn. And today, He continues to accompany man, who researches through science, because science itself cannot but reveal, ever more evidently, His truth. He is present in the intuition of the genius, in the heroism of the saint, in the revelation, which is continuous. For He is above all human ascensions.

11

THE REDEMPTION

The mystery of redemption is a mystery of pain and love. To understand, let us return to the fundamental concepts. We have already examined in another book³² the stupendous phenomenon of the annulment of pain through evolution. Pain is the fatigue of the ascent, which laboriously leads to happiness, which thus must be conquered. But, if pain drives evolution, evolution progressively annuls pain. Thus, the annulment of pain occurs through pain. With His example, Christ came to show us these profound aspects of the Law. Pain is a characteristic of a certain phase of our evolution, where it necessarily functions as an agent of transformation; it disappears when its purpose is fulfilled, just as a high plane of life is achieved. Pain is a condition of life inherent to matter, during the human phase. In the dematerialization of the being, this condition disappears. Pain is a dissonance that is reabsorbed in harmonization; it is a density that vaporizes in spiritualization. Christ came to teach the path of overcoming pain, through pain and spiritualization. Before Christ, pain was fierce, terrible, without mercy. Christ made it the main route of ascension, of freedom, of redemption. He made it a friendly force, indispensable for the conquest of our good and our happiness. The enemy beast softened, became domesticated, is a useful collaborator: the thing feared and cursed becomes holy and beloved, and we clutch it to

³² The Great Synthesis, chap. 81 The Function of Pain - (Author's Note)

our heart as a lifesaver. Christ overturned and remade the human conception, making the defeated a saint, a hero, a victor. Christ descended and made Himself present and sensitive in the depths of souls that suffer, joining with them in His love, taking their pain as His own, each day, just as He did on the cross.

It is a marvellous phenomenon that I am experiencing, this of overcoming pain, which Christ teaches. It is logical that pain, being an instrument of ascension, detaches from the **self** when ascension is completed. It is necessary, in the order of the universe, that pain falls when the evolutionary function of trial and lesson is overcome. When we have understood everything and thereby exhausted its function of school and of balancing expiation in the order of moral impulses, then, it falls, like the other illusions of life. Then, not only do the external conditions of pain no longer occur, for the measure of debt has been reached, because a subject useless to the purposes of good is out of balance (it is about innate automatic balances of the Law), but a new fact arises. Even if pain remains as an external fact, evolution brings about such a profound transformation of personality, that it escapes it. Evolution, taking it to a new phase, has given it a new mode of being in which pain does not resonate with the same reactions of the human level; in other terms, the ascension has taken the spirit to such a degree of harmonization (divine love), that there is no longer dissonance that has the strength to penetrate and alter it. Then, even if the environmental conditions remain identical, the shock of that force no longer finds antagonistic impulses nor reactions against which it rages in its expansion — and disappears without resistance. The receptive instrument has changed, and this change of nature was enough to completely transform the range of its resonances. Over the consciousness is superimposed an opacity of hearing; the spirit responds only to that order of vibrations and deafness on that plane is replaced by a receptive power on the higher plane of love. The positive fact and the negative fact converge towards the progressive

softening of the painful sensation of pain, in the glorious sensation of love. The mutilation of desire and the compression of suffering are transformed, then, into the multiplication and expansion of love: pain is turned into happiness. Now, pain is love, in this it affirms itself and never finds itself. It joins Christ, to the love He brought us — understands and achieves His redemption.

Great and wonderful law of balance and justice this by which pain, when it has fulfilled its function of leading the soul to the overcoming of animality - moves away in silence! How wise is the law of God, in which evil is confined and subjected to the ends of good; suffering is just and fruitful; pain is a condition of happiness! It is a force enclosed in its plane, from which one cannot escape; freedom is only possible by ascending. Pain cannot act beyond the limit circumscribed by the Law, where its function of trial and formation of the soul must be exhausted. Higher up there exists only the pain of the just, which is a holy thing, free, is mission, martyrdom, triumph and above all, love.

The drama of Christ's passion, the apex of His descent, touched these pinnacles of human life, the central core of the law in the human moment. Christ revealed to us, in His action, the mystery of this reabsorption of pain into love. I must discuss these problems because they are the substance of Christ's work. Let us look, however, more deeply. He came not only to teach. He also came to pay. Not merely to show us the principle of necessary atonement but to suffer, Himself, with His torment, this atonement. He did not come just to make us understand, through word and example, this wonderful phenomenon that I described, of the nullification of pain, its spiritualization, and the reharmonizing of its dissonances into the harmony of love. Christ descended not only to teach us the possibility of liberation. He placed Himself at the centre of the phenomenon and lived it. In the centre of human pain, which He made His own. In the centre of dissonance, to painfully reabsorb it into the harmo-

nization of His love. He made human enslavement His own and had to achieve liberation with human toil and suffering. To become man is to immerse completely, to the bottom, in the human plane, in its atmosphere, in its weaknesses, in its sensations; in its iniquity. It means to make this iniquity one's own and to have to answer for it, in His name, before the Law of God. Thus, Christ became guilty, in His Person, of human iniquities, having to atone for them.

What stuns and astonishes our comprehension in this descent of Christ is this deepening of divinity into the filth of human flesh.

Only by knowing that He is both God and man, can one grasp the dizzying magnitude of this act and what tremendous force, therefore, is divine love.

What need could the Holy of Holies have to tread the paths of pain? Not for Himself, certainly. He was perfect. He had no need for purification, for ascension, or for redemption. Yet, this became a fatal necessity, the moment He merged with human nature. All flesh and all blood seem to have ascended with Him, after His martyrdom of flesh and blood, eternally ennobled by this contact.

Many say: Why the excruciating torment of the Cross if He was God, the Almighty?

They do not understand that that pain is the shadow of human sins which, without such atonement, could not be neutralized.

Christ did not wish, in front of the people who asked Him for a miracle, to save Himself and come down from the Cross. He could not do so in the presence of the Father, whom He represented. He could not, before the Law, which He personified.

Having accepted the cup, with bonds tightened, the passion was a whirlwind of forces in motion in which the Word was expressed. Christ

acted at the heart of the Law and, with his free will, if He had violated it, would have denied Himself.

The people who stood at the foot of the cross did not comprehend this inevitability of passion, this inviolability of principles, and how He who had willed it could not disown it. **"He saved others, and He cannot save Himself!"** - they said. **"If He is the king of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him!"** The people, who were the world, imagined Christ to be a man who should think of Himself. If they supposed Him a God, it was in the sense of a human god, whose main purpose and use of His own power would be in a selfish manner. At the pinnacle of His passion, Christ did not exist for Himself. From the Cross, He looked upon the world divided by an abyss of incomprehension. The world imagines a God and a law in its own likeness, not yet perfect, which admit modification, retouching, discretion; it confuses freedom with license, power with abuse — and does not imagine that all this disappears when one ascends. The world believes that, as here below, there can exist in the Above isolated and selfish consciousness; that the absolute orders of the Law can be replaced, according to whims. And it invokes the miracle as proof of power, whereas the greater power lies in order.

But, this volume only wishes to be an impetus of faith and passion, a protest of love and veneration to Christ; it represents only the first explosion of mystical states in the author's life. Here, in this state of soul which, thereafter, will be resumed and developed in his other volumes, he does not intend, in any way, to confront the problem of the essence of Christ and the significance of His passion and redemption. These are broad problems that, to be resolved, require a more extensive preparation and explanation. They will be considered, with the greatest maturity that can only be achieved in the last volumes of the work, only in which these issues can be definitively resolved. This would not become possible ex-

cept in a particular explanation, in which the whole system will be resolved, especially in the X volume: **God and Universe** and in the last: **Christ**.³³

³³ See the note by Prof. Ubaldi at the end of chapter 9 of the second part of this volume. It is worth adding that the problems related to the spiritual nature of Christ, the Author has not only expounded them in his book **God and Universe** (Chap. XIV - The Essence of Christ), but also in **The System** and **Fall and Redemption**, which follow it and are intimately complementary to it. (Note by the Translator)

ASCESIS OF THE SOUL

Thus begins Christ the mystical ascesis, the elevation of souls to unification with God. He becomes the great inspirer, the invisible propelling of spiritual life; human evolution rises behind Him, to follow Him. Without Him, life could not have reached the mystical plane—with Him, it prepares to reach it. The history of man continues to be written in the great book of life and starts a new page: the page of love. A new synthesis blossoms from the work of millennia, a new clarion call, emerging from the depths of time, summons to the harvest, in the course of unstable and restless civilizations, life displaced from its axis and changes the centre of human attractions. Selfishnesses open up, consciousness expand, brotherhood begins, the voice of Christ resounds from heart to heart in a unique song that merges and rises, responding to the glory of the heavens. The world begins a powerful march towards the realization of the Kingdom of God, which is not a free gift to human inertia, but a laborious conquest made under the inspiration of Christ; the ascension is not the comfortable enjoyment of divine merits, but human fusion in His passion.

Walk, walk. The great movement begins. Christ goes ahead, in front of everyone, with the example of His pain and His love, of the cross and passion a light that advances leaving behind a trail of splendour. By this luminous road, the world walks and follows. Christ is a splendid Sun that attracts to Himself the little flames of human souls. From Him radi-

ates a love under which they revive, rise, ignite new sparks. It's like the beginning of a fire. And the little flames grow thicker, rise, rise, until they touch the sky and unify in the splendour of the great central Sun where, reabsorbed, they are lost.

Walk, walk. Christ goes with His cross, always before everyone. He has no properties, nor riches, nor human power. He is a bare force, suspended between the horrors of the earth and the splendours of heaven. He is not in History, but is superior to History; He is not enclosed in time, but is lord of time. In his reality, he is immaterialisable and precisely for this reason he is alive and present. His reality is interior, lies in the palpitations and in the torment of our spirit. Precisely for this reason, He is here with us, among us, sensitive to anyone who knows how to feel Him. He is alive and present and the world (because He is not made of matter) does not recognize Him.

He is a vibration. His dwelling is in us — a resonance of thoughts and actions. He humbly goes pilgrimaging from door to door, asking for hospitality; goes knocking from heart to heart, begging for love. And the world tells him: **"Who are you? Move on, I do not know you."**

Walk, walk. I hear arriving, over the wave of time, echoing from century to century, this new voice of God, bringing the good news of kindness and love: sensed, prophesied in Israel; reached, preached, lived in the Messiah and then followed and in action in the Church. I hear it arrive, it concentrates like a force in the coming of Christ, becoming mistress of the world's balances, and then opening in spirals in constant expansion projecting upon humanity to illuminate its soul. The rhythm is continuous, linked to a call that goes from century to century, propagates from generation to generation. It repeats in an echo of appeals and responses, of palpitations and impetus, from heart to heart; one hears, gradually, between earth and heaven, an immense music. At first, they are isolated voices, bitter invocations scattered in patient waiting. But,

souls listen, attentive, to this new word of love. A new force has invaded the world and spreads. Human ferocity softens in a tremor of tenderness. Under the kiss of Christ, nature too changes its language, even to the Canticle of the Creatures, by Saint Francis. The human soul opens like a corolla and blossoms to the canticle of God. This chant echoes and expands in a thousand resonances, reverberates and multiplies to the last creature, humble and despised — spreads and floods the earth. And the music of the little things here below develops and repeats in the grand resonances of heaven, which opened to listen; the passion of the soul rises, and the love of man unifies in the love of God. This chant attracts and enraptures. Slowly, from the earth, humanity rises like a tide that grows and ascends in a single canticle of passionate souls, that merges and is lost in the music of heaven.

Walk, walk. Christ ahead and the world behind. How long is the path to the Kingdom of God! How many stumble and fall along the way! How much effort of the soul, to unite earth with heaven! Initially, it's just a small group; few courageously set out on the march. The burden of the flesh is heavy, and many cannot move it. But the soul of those few blazes with such ardour, the irradiation from heaven is so active, the good news resonates so harmoniously, that even matter is gradually stirred.

Those few are open channels, communication pathways. Thus, the light dispels darkness, and a strange shiver penetrates and enlivens the inert density of the earth. Christ goes ahead and draws all after Him: He is always on the march, ahead, on the path of ascension. He took the standard of evolution in His hands and said, "**Follow me. I am the future.**" Only a few beings, misunderstood like the Master, follow Him, bleeding and insulted. But His voice is so sweet and unusual that many, fascinated, strive to hear Him and walk together to understand that strange peace the world does not possess. Some words are heard, some vibrations reached resonate in the soul through the deaf shell of the

flesh. And the small group of Christ attracts and gradually swells as it walks. Some words echo and repeat; new ears start to listen; new weary souls come, imploring. Some join, and then others and the word multiplies the word, the example multiplies the example, redemption multiplies redemption, ascension multiplies ascension. The wave grows, the group becomes a crowd, a vast, countless crowd, to the ends of the world. The roads of life open up. The narrow, thorny path widens and rises; I see it disappear into the sky, like the luminous trail of a meteor.

I follow in last place, after everyone. At every step, my soul falls and tries to lift itself, sins and hopes to redeem itself, suffers, expiates, and dreams of rising; and I stumble, stop, and step back. But these falls re-immense me in humanity, in everyone's life, humble me, and make me a brother to the humble. It is necessary that I still be down here, in my imperfection and in my work. If I fall, my sight blurs, but I cannot live in my blindness and am compelled to ascend. I cannot live without the sensation of Christ. Love and pain, pain and love. Walk on, walk on, my weary soul. But one day, on the rough path of my efforts, I felt a step beside mine, I felt another shoulder draw near to mine, lift my cross and carry it for me. Since then, I have not been alone. Another heart leaned over mine, pain turned into love, and no one will be able to tear me from the indissoluble alliance. However, I fell again and then became disheartened by my weakness and was afraid, for my unworthiness. Then, the Voice told me: "**Do not fear. My love is stronger than your weakness. Rest your head on my chest and rest.**"



So, I picked up the Gospel again, to reread and remember. His sweet and powerful word pushes me like a strong wind that takes me far, to His world, which is not this world. I reread slowly that music as vast as infinity and my soul descends, from passage to passage, to the deepest meanings of His word. That music calms me, this depth satisfies me. Only there, I find the unlimited spaces that my soul desires. That sweet word is a sword of fire that penetrates my soul and crosses it like the gaze of God; and the most harmonic vibration that I can conceive in the universe. That word resonates in my heart like the harp of an angel and dissolves pain. My spirit does not have echoes deep enough to express the multiple, immense richness of that vibration. I feel it reach me, marvel-

lous, and I am terrified to hear it extinguish in my sordidness. The purest vibration of that wave distorts and deforms within me, receives disharmonic resonances, and I cry for myself and for my terrible opacity that obscure and distorts everything.

But, by what right do I dare to speak of Christ? Since I do not understand the absurdity of such intimacy, I don't hear the rebellion of the universe that says: "Back, filthy one! Do you not smell the stench of your baseness?" Then, I flee, horrified by myself and look again from afar, from the depth of my misery, at that beauty to which I no longer dare approach. I do not know how my pen does not shatter under the violence of this sensation, in the contrast of the consciousness of myself and the irresistible attraction. This torment of forces beats me down, lifts me up, nullifies me, and yet, becomes near; it tears me apart and yet, caresses me. I do not know how my heart does not burst in the exuberance of joy, in the impetus of passion, when that music still enraptures me, lifts me up, leads me high, to lose myself in the heavens. How I suffer seeing the blind who diligently search for Christ in History and learnedly argue and attempt to reconstruct His figure among the ashes of time, while He is near and sensitive. He has risen, is alive, walks ahead of us. Let us reopen our eyes that have forgotten Him and we shall see Him again.

No! We do not see Him. In twenty centuries of History, that subtle fragrance has evaporated. Our minds and our hearts, from rubbing against these concepts, have become dirty. Our continuous action has covered them with dross. The spirit flees from the earth, and the more colossal the forms become, the less apt they are to contain it. The great edifice is a giant that will remain mute and empty, on the verge of collapse, if not shored up by the only true force that can do so: the spirit. Let us abandon the futile human procrastinations, the sagacity of the earth and of time! If the spirit vaporizes, there is left a body without a soul; a decaying corpse. Beyond the forms exists a substantial religion, the only one

that can withstand terrible moments. There is an intimate and vivifying substance, the unique force that sustains everything—an imponderable without which the most sumptuous temples crumble. Everything is useless dead weight, everything is dangerous dispersion, if there is not a way to ignite and maintain, in the souls, which are the true temples, the spirit of the Gospel. It is not the human positions and their consolidation that sustain the divine edifice. Security, by eliminating struggle, by smoothing the ascent of Calvary, dulls the capacity for conquest. Christ is an active and present force above all in souls. He cannot be destroyed; He cannot be hidden. If the organism that expresses Him no longer contains Him, He will be reborn elsewhere. When this flaming and evanescent soul of forms escapes, even if to human eyes it appears very firm, everything is inwardly corrupted. If the presence of Christ does not sustain, if the Divine has to withdraw, then the abyss opens; and Christ, humble and simple, positions Himself in another dimension and continues His work elsewhere.

So, who are You, Christ? I asked my pain, which taught me everything, including how to find God again, and it replied: "**He is the weak whom you must help, the enemy to whom you must offer forgiveness, the poor to whom you owe yourself. He is passion and renunciation, love and ascension. He is embrace and elevation of the soul—and walks the Earth, day by day, seeking, begging for hospitality in hearts, because the Owner of the World has no house nor roof and wanders, like a pilgrim, begging for love.**"

MY POSITION

The moment has arrived to reveal everything about myself, down to the deepest depths, to assume my position and my responsibility. I mentioned in previous pages (**Second Part - Chap. 3 - Pain**) how I ought to express all my truth, to testify to my assertions, both in word and by example, to provide assurance of the idea I possess. And I stated (**Second Part - Chap. 1 - On the March**) that my caution would be vile if at the decisive moment I remained silent or did not reveal everything. My last volume culminated, in conclusions³⁴, in the statement that **The Great Synthesis** is a connected revelation, in its evangelical substance, to the gradual development, on Earth, of the thought of Christ, which is a continuous emanation. Then, I felt that I too was moving along the line of Christian inspiration and realized with what an immense *noure* I was in tune with. With this, I defined the significance of that work. Let's not limit ourselves to the frame, to the editorial garment, to the human placement. The content surpasses these confines, which are merely the result of the moment's necessity. I referred to the gravity of the historical moment, which justifies exceptional methods for the resurrection of Christ in the world. Then, it was too early to say more. My new maturity, which appears in this volume, was needed to continue; this new testimony was necessary so that the reader could better understand. And even now, I

³⁴ **The Noures**, chap. 6 (Conclusions). (Author's Note)

destroy the bridges behind me, so that only one path remains open to me: the path forward.

How much I said of Christ and, especially, how much I will say in the last and most intense scenes that follow, it is a confession made in terms so deeply felt, so gravely full of commitment before God, that one cannot admit to falsehood. The balance of this study excludes any malady of conscience. Nor are such statements made with human objectives, because they represent a terrible burden for those who, like me, assume full responsibility for them. This is the testimony I must give today, by absolute inner command, of the truth of ***The Great Synthesis***. The intimate connection of my soul with Christ, here exposed, confirms today and revalidates my serious statements of yesterday, on a path of tenacious and inflexible consistency. It is the testimony of its Christian content, a central reason in the renewal of civilization. I stated it unequivocally; it is necessary that they also understand in some of my terribly eloquent silences. My goal is to build; you will never see me here accuse, attack, demolish. My purpose is the good, is to unify and not to sow dissensions, irritations, and antagonisms, by arguing. My method has to be, necessarily, the method of Christ — sacrifice, forgiveness, love. The difficulties and the annoyances are only for me. The truth is valuable in itself, not because of me. The truth is what has value, not I.

But, you might ask what all this means, what do I want, and where am I aiming to reach. I do not know precisely, today. Certainly, one does not say all that I have said just to launch a book. I only know that behind me there's an immense force, to which I obey and follow, without knowing, myself, the future developments. I sow, but do not reap. I must be completely detached from the fruits of my labour. My reward lies elsewhere, is only in Christ and His approaching. I do not learn my human path but day by day. So it has been until now. Do not attribute to me, therefore, perfections and merits, for I do not have them, and if I do

something — it is not mine. And you will ask: is it about a movement? Everyone, be at ease. It is not a movement in the human sense. Man is too attached to his distinctions, divisions, and human organizations, because they include interests. I leave all these things to them that please them so much and that for me are worthless. Nothing changes in what is external, because the exterior does not count. It will be said: it is a utopia. No. The true forces are in Heaven, the forces that renew the Earth. We have seen and felt their marvellous operation. A man cannot perform certain movements even through his heroism and martyrdom; they emerge in the historical hour, in the blood of peoples, in the balance of civilization. These forces, if they so wish, will propel man beyond his own will to places he could not reach on his own, like an exponent that seems high but, substantially, may be insignificant. It is a fact that certain substantial movements of the spirit do not descend upon the Earth but exist outside of any enclosure, between the world and Heaven, and have never developed by valuing human categories. Thus, it is not about any property: everything is directed solely by the force of the spirit. Man thinks too much about corruptions. For this reason, I want neither houses, nor headquarters, nor positions, nor the widespread pestilence of human organizations. Nothing that can attract the lower instincts or stimulate the always swift reactions of the inferior impulses of the common man. No stench of money that so attracts the greedy and gloomy flatterers.

They flee, thank God, in the face of a dish where there is nothing but toil, pain, spirit passion. This is my security.

Woe to beliefs that do not exude solely the fragrance of renunciation!

This is my strength before the world: the pure and naked idea as it descends from heaven and cast like a seed into the wind, so that it may germinate under the secret impulse of the laws of life. Only immateriality is a guarantee of invulnerability. The force of the idea that I have developed and always followed does not deny itself and trusts solely and al-

ways only in itself. Behind it stand the forces of the infinite, and they have sifted me tremendously at first. Now they unfold, as I verify, with method and logic.

The movement is spiritual. The goal is a kingdom that is not of Earth: the Kingdom of Heaven. The form is aristocratic: it confronts intellectuality and culture, because they are the aberration of the century. The inferior strata, which are denser and less mature for compensation, are not touched. Everything descends, then, automatically, by gravitation, in assimilation and also, by becoming dimmed, in realization. We remain in a pure atmosphere, at least, at the moment of genesis and conception. Substantial forces do not act from the outside, but go directly to the heart of man; they embed themselves in motivations and these cosmic forces are here, present in action. Here everything is strong because it is immaterial; it is indestructible because it is imponderable. Those who are in matter, if they wish to destroy, encounter void and do not know what to grasp. Those who are in the spirit understand and do not think of destroying. This is a germ so spiritual that it does not take human form; it is the substance of faith, it is a pure dynamism that will fall everywhere and can bear fruit in any human division. It is a passion for goodness that can exist in every home, in every institution, in every opinion; it is a principle of honesty from which every authority can only rejoice. It is a purity and sincerity in which every soul will feel reborn. It is the light of God that is given to all above human monopolies: it is a pure distillation of strength and goodness reached at the source, before it reaches channelling and human impurities. It seems like nothing because it has not yet descended to a fixed and concrete form. It floats in the air like a perfume, like dew still not dense. But this is the most dynamic state, the state of genesis. It is the spirit of the Gospel that returns in its splendid primordial phase. It possessed nothing, except martyrs.

In its origin, the fire of the spirit was liquid and gushed abundantly from the great open craters. Today, man is immersed in matter; a century of science has volatilized the evanescent perfume of heaven. Today, we gather the last semi-extinct sparks and religiously preserve them in lit lamps, a tired and pale reflection of the original blaze. But, this is not enough to dispel the darkness that becomes denser and more threatening. The monument of written truths, preserved in an imposing envelope formed through the centuries, is not sufficient. The spirit is a living force that dwells in the heart of man. It is a force, not a written word, and as a force, it spreads and exhausts; it cannot be confined in the immovable; extremely mobile, it feeds on life, is a radiation that descends from Above, and a heat that dissipates unless continuously receiving new heat for the communion of the soul with Heaven. "**Litera Occidit spiritus autem vivificat.**" (II Cor. 3:6)³⁵. Often we exchange the continent for the content, touching the envelope thinking to touch the fire, but in truth, we remain cold. Habit has accustomed us to the form: we hear incendiary words and remain indifferent. What a heavy human burden the Church has to drag on its divine path! So much do we rub our impure souls against holy things that, instead of sanctifying ourselves, we make these impure. We lower everything to our level, in order to be able to carry everything with us, for our use and consumption.

But true faith is a fire that sits with difficulty within the circle of human things. It is a perfume that cannot be enclosed in bottles. It is all a festive spontaneity and, if it must be codified into law, it is by the sad necessity of being adapted to the life of the blind. This faith is today necessary, necessary is this spontaneous and direct eruption of the forces of Heaven, necessary is this explosion of irrepressible energies like the lightning and the storm. I ask what things could a handful of strong men

³⁵ "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life." Words of Apostle Paul, in his Letter to the Corinthians. (N. of the T.)

could do, powerful by the discipline of the spirit, armed with this heroic psychology, directed towards the renewal of civilization — what things could they do in the face of the inert mass, the jocose and blind majorities that seek nothing but pleasure, without passion for ideals nor will for martyrdom, without knowing anything of the great plans of life. It is necessary, as for plants in each season, at each closing of a cycle of civilization, a new and fresh sprouting, that reaches directly to the sources of life, and a blaze of sun that ripens the harvest. Once, in times of calm, of spiritual inertia, it was possible to remain silent and live of complacency — but not today, when the enemy is at the gates. We are faced with the dilemma: to resurge in spirit, or to die in matter. History prepares a tremendous convulsion of pain. And the voice of God for the deaf, is the way of redemption. It is the baptism of the storm that brings back purity; it is the passion of the soul that makes one rises again. It is not destruction — it is renewal.

Let us not fear, Christ approaches, not only as justice but also as salvation. In centuries of tranquillity, the heavens too remain calm. But in times of storm, the sky opens, and among the thunderbolts, it casts flashes of light. When the times are ripe, a wound opens in History and gushes blood and vital lymph, without which humanity seems to lack the strength to continue on its path. The enemy is reaching the centre of the fortress. Christ must start again from the beginning. In the supreme and decisive moments, only those who are substantially strong and stocked with spirituality, not merely human skills, can withstand. But evil, while it destroys, also purifies, and in the hands of God, is guided to the limits of good.

Evil is blind and knows it not — but the good, which guides it, knows. Storms rebuild and are welcomed.

God chooses His means everywhere but very rarely among the official ranks, among the powerful and the wise. The poor beings who man-

age to be admitted into this movement risk, at every moment, being pulverized. They will have to provide alone, without support, the supreme testimony of their truth. And this can only hover later, over a consensus of souls, which can only be formed slowly, through maturation and by inner paths, and only through complete experience and when life ends, that is, when that consensus can no longer bring to the one who acted, any help or comfort.

But also the High is stingy with aids, it does not give signs nor proofs. These would be a kind of patent of authorization for the peaceful exercise of one's own mission. No. He must be exposed to all winds, struck by all assaults. His soul must be thrown naked onto the dust of the roads, where everyone can trample it. No protected and safe positions that lull and make arrogant — but humiliations, struggles, uncertainty; not the joy of harvest, but the fatigue of sowing.

Much more rugged than that of the Earth is the seal of Heaven! This exception, which is a terrible example for ignorant mediocrity, must undergo the severest controls, so that the road may not be flung wide open by rebellion and error. The law is that, each surpassing of norms is not lawful unless it enters into norms that are humanly stricter, morally higher. He who lives protected by authority, yielding to it the weight of his responsibility, will fall by this path. He who is chosen, will have a much greater sum of duties and only with the help of God will be able to resist and conquer. He knows this. A mission is a path that narrows increasingly, sometimes even to martyrdom. He knows this and does not flee. He must bear witness. If God is not near, such path cannot be trodden. Only he who stands by God agrees to plow such fields. In this climate, no human motivation withstands. The true call is recognized by the absence of any earthly motive, by a particular method of struggle, by a psychic colour unmistakable. And only then does he run and advance, when human instincts have been torn up by the root and nothing else

but God can be in him. All this is a daily sifting, is a continuous control of capacity correspondence, is a permanent exercise, is a balance of forces that take the soul to that point of its mission that it is capable of bearing, and not beyond, because then it would be abandoned and fall.

I feel, after all, lesser objections arise which, occupied with other problems, I have not yet considered, but which I must consider. All of this, it may seem, is nothing but the human **self** screaming within me, becoming arrogant and agitated. Modesty, modesty. The true mystic is above all humble, and this is the book of pride. What is it to ascend to the lectern, they might ask me, and to make vain assertions of the highest contacts of spirit, not proven to others, and that imply a gratuitous position of superiority and authority certainly not acceptable to the others.

Consider, however, what this book is. It is a desperate invocation to God, from a soul that, seeing what the world is, and what awaits it, offers to save it, having nothing more to give — itself. (**See chapter XXVII PASSION**). Even if it is threatened with destruction. The common psychology of critics moves on another plane; it would not be possible to please all people and divergent demands. But here I feel quite differently: I sense the immense misunderstanding I will encounter, and yet, I cannot hold back. This marks the beginning of my most intense sacrifice. I speak loudly and strongly, I disturb those who arrive, I dismantle the accommodations, I sow fire in spirits. I am violent in spirit because I must shake and save. I am under no illusions: I must pay for my assertions. Better to die than to think I cannot maintain them. These are not things that can be drowned in silence or disappear into indifference. The time for even more evident testimony will come, not just of words, but of action and pain. My path narrows, and I cannot turn back. The purification must be severe and demanding in proportion to the mass of assertions made. Anyone on earth has the right to confront someone who speaks

thus and tell them: "I demand proof." And I must be ready. And I well know that modern society, which avoids blood, knows how to crush a man in a much more painfully subtle way.

And it was in the face of this presentiment that I felt I could not renounce the duty to bear witness to my truth. Failing to fulfil this duty would, for me, be a betrayal of my mission. I cannot. And here I am to suffer the consequences. There is no alternative. Spiritually, the world is already ablaze. It is not permissible, at this moment, to fold one's arms and stand by as a spectator, for the storm comes for everyone. Any spiritual absenteeism is now guilt and villainy. The world must decide and choose its values, a principle must prevail. The neutrals will be dragged along and become servants. And the words I speak should not remain only in the high heavens but distant from universality. They must **also** descend to the precise form of struggle and conquest that the historical moment imposes, a moment of tremendous and decisive action. The words I speak must know how to specify, within the bosom of evangelical universality, the thought that today we have the duty to launch into the world, and in this **specific** thought, made of life, I must offer my contribution. And if this book can appear as an unforgivable act of pride and audacity, it is right that I pay. Here I am for that. For me, there exists another battle in heaven, where the earth does not reach, and I am at my post. May the sleepy be shaken. Sleep is today the worst of stances.

I understand that, for those who live in the normal plane, in which historical movement is less perceptible, my attitude may seem, from the outset, exaltation, dangerous audacity, absurd pretension, strange megalomania, effect of immoderate pride. However, I cannot live, in today's pressing hour, according to human measures and prudences, which are proportional to human ends. I confess, yes, that I feel all this as a great duty, a charge of great responsibility. Do not see in all this, and especially in the unification of which I spoke, a high position and advantage con-

quered forever. See, instead, a position of work in which I must maintain myself at the cost of a continuous tension of spirit and which I can lose only if I cease to be worthy of it. The unification is not an aggrandizement of my human **self**, something that so many fear, but is the eclipsing of this **self** in a larger unity. It is not self-exaltation to speak of this new **self** in which my being disappears. For me, it is, on the contrary, an act of supreme consecration. I examine myself and confess without any pretension to infallibility. And this is all I feel now in my conscience. I am not to blame if this is so, by its nature, for whoever lives it, the mystical phenomenon — if I find myself living it now and if it is outside of normal experience and beyond understanding.

Some things are not said — they might still object. But, I have the duty to set an example, to give back what I received, **to give** others the joy achieved, the duty to indicate the way and to witness my experience. I have the duty, heavy and very serious, but necessary for those who sleep, to disturb consciences. Once the duty is fulfilled, silence. The phenomenon, naturally, remains and very much alive, but, once the need to manifest it for a beneficial purpose to others ends, my mouth closes and everything will remain closed under the seal of my silence, a mere personal fact presumed only by its consequences. But, making myself understood first is now part of my duty. It was necessary to explain and this sincerity might be a proof capable of shaking souls. I see no other way to do this. What can matter, in the face of the urgency of the hour and the perfection of the goal, before the good of so many, if for all this one must expose oneself to criticism and suffering? To normal human nature, the naked and abstract idea is repugnant. It is necessary for this idea to materialize in a being that lives here, struggling, suffering, witnessing. The common man demands this materialization to against it bang his head — it must be given to him. However, here I have the humanly painful sensation of a public confession, the sensation of the last spoliation of my personality which thus no longer has its own angles, nor secrets, nor refuge,

because it gave everything, exposed itself completely and now, already belongs to others.

I say it and will repeat it so that even the distracted reader may perceive: out of charity, do not attribute to me anything exceptional and superior as a man. Nothing would be more false and more harmful to my work. Never forget how deeply I am immersed in this human nature, against which I struggle so much day by day. I make a statement. If you do not want to understand it, the fault is not mine. I will not, therefore, change my path. I make once and for all this very clear distinction: do not attribute to me any good that I might do. That **is not mine**. This is the truth. Instead, attribute to me all the defects, the weaknesses, the faults that my work may have. All of this, yes, is truly mine.

PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENTS

I must complete the study of the phenomenon also in its religious aspect. Speaking so intensely about Christ, it was inevitable to refer to His Church. My asceticism led me to the most Christian of mysticisms. I myself had to reach the mystical plane in order to understand and assert these conclusions. The last sections of this volume, which I call psychological moments, will describe my latest spiritual achievements. I would like to remain silent, but the Voice told me: "**Speak always clearer and always louder.**" In certain paths, it is not possible to stop. I have looked at the Church with the same respectful and reverent spirit with which I have looked at Christ. I will be the last to raise my voice against it. But, my heart trembles for the gravity of the trials, for the proximity of the moment. The dilemma is tremendous: either to re-find strength in the spirit, keeping it naked before Christ as He made it, and only such a supreme covenant to respect in the world, in contact with Heaven, — or to continue consolidating terrestrial positions, thereby losing the supreme and divine strength and aligning, for consistency, at the level of human forces, limited and vulnerable, as man himself.

An immense, essential greatness is within reach in the new civilization. Who will wish to avail themselves of it³⁶? It concerns not saving an organism, but saving a world in need of Christ³⁷. This book stirs a tragic and imminent global conflict upon which future millennia will depend. Woe to the visible Church on earth if it strays from God's invisible Church! There is another religion, deeper, within religion, that surpasses all forms and without which no religion is valid. It is a universal feeling that is the soul of all faiths and makes itself known through its truth. There is a surface religion, made of practices, formal, sanctioned, strong, triumphant, organized, and marching like an army. And there is another religion, without clergy, without authority, poor, suffering, simple, strong only by an immense faith and victorious in heaven. There is a greater Christ, who is not only in images and temples but in every place where a soul suffers and ascends. There are also sanctuaries in the heart of man and moments when the soul can speak directly with God. It is necessary to reaffirm this imponderable without which no religion is religion. It is necessary to revive as in the times when the things of the spirit were present and did not come as a distant echo from the depths of centuries: they were still incandescent and fearless forces, not cooled and crystallized. It is necessary to return to the virgin force of the first Gospel and the first Franciscanism. Only in this way can we face the future with hope.

³⁶ The reader is urged to consider with seriousness and impartiality the very serious words that follow in the text. The offer was also sincerely made to the Church of Rome, so that it might renew itself for its own good. The response came with the condemnation of the book. It was written in 1938. The author continued offering his work of goodness to various human groups, for the salvation of the world. In the end, it was Brazil that understood and accepted it, thus placing itself at the forefront. Unfortunately, everything in History is preparing for these prophetic pages to come true. But, when they were written, no one wanted to believe and they were rejected. (N. of the A.)

³⁷ Clarifying further and expanding on these concepts, the same Author wrote "*Prophecies and Current Problems.*" (Translator's Note)

In this feeling culminates the mystical catharsis of my soul. My asceticism is not, therefore, a circumscribed phenomenon or act closed within my egoism, but it expands and bends over the world. My passion demonstrates that the metanoia³⁸ to which the Gospel leads us, the overcoming and reversal of values it imposes on us, all its revolution of spirit, are not utopia, as many believe, unfeasible just because it was not and is not always realized according to religious and social practices. Whoever asserts this is blind to the imponderable. The light and the good that I receive from Above, I must return and I live for this. By charity, do not misunderstand me, attributing any value to my person, which has none, judging capable of the slightest moral perfection this poor worm that I am. And this is also true and I must witness it. I am but a vile and fragile instrument caught in a gigantic mechanism. My refrain is this and I repeat it every night, at the end of the day's fatigue: "**Lord, I am your servant. I ask for nothing but this.**"

Gradually, we have come far from the strictly scientific proportions in which this study began.

During the journey, there emerged in my consciousness culminating moments, of more evident sensation, of more intense emotion. I isolated them and here I expose them successively because in the development of this work they would have undone the logical development of the argumentation. They are different visions, but they always express the same path of my ascension. They are, perhaps, the example of a new art, based on a new scientific-spiritual psychology.

³⁸ **Metanoia** - a word of Greek origin (metánoia) meaning conversion, not just in the sense of repentance from errors and sins, but also, and significantly, a "**change of spirit**", "**change of mind**". See Mt., 4:17; 21:30; II Cor., 7:8 etc. In this true evangelical sense, the Author used the word metanoia in the original text: "**.... la metanoia a cui ci guida il vangelo, il superamento e rovesciamento di valori che esso ci impone, tutta la sua rivoluzione di spirito...**" (Note of the Translator).

Here I conclude my work. The images have unfolded without commentary, in a persistent crescendo in which those who do not believe and do not feel, but only observe and reason, may see the development of the phenomenon as it was laid out at the beginning, in its scientific aspect. These images, after having traversed various spiritual levels and planes of consciousness, and the most contrasting moments of my subconscious and my superconscious, after having developed in various perspectives of the inner reality of the imponderable, exploded in a supreme vision: "**Passion**," the last cry in which my voice fades away. This image is lived reality. Those who wish to label me as mad, re-read the scientific part, where I have given solid bases to this my interruption.

Such is my point of arrival, today. Tomorrow, I do not know. The truth is that my life moves on. Whoever has followed me up to now knows this. But, the higher developments are today beyond what I can conceive. Christ is such a complete beauty, a vastness so immense, a concept so conclusive, a perfection so absolute - that it is not possible to surpass it and imagine beyond. It is the satiety of desire, the ultimate termination of mind and heart. His figure has no shadows to be dimmed; it is an infinity and to it nothing can be added, nor can it be surpassed. But precisely because it is an infinity, it has no pauses nor end, and one never finishes traversing it. Life, which never ends, will be for me an eternal immersion in that limitless depth.

BROTHER FRANCIS

I have wandered through all this my Umbrian land and beyond its confines, I ran in pursuit of its subterranean offspring, resurfaced in neighbouring lands. In these, I lingered at length, to find myself. In their austere and sublime silences, my soul experienced its most intense maturation. The very high horizons of their mountains gave me the sensation of God.

I wandered throughout this Franciscan land of Assisi to sister Gubbio; from Subasio to Alverne; from Porziuncola to Greccio. I passionately interrogated the ancient stones, so they might tell me the secret of their history. I clasped them to my heart, bathed them in tears. And I said: Tell me, you who saw him, the humble and poor Saint Francis, do you remember him? It is not possible that a breath of his immense respiration has not lingered in you too; it is not possible that his burning love has not passed through you with a vibration so powerful, that until now it has not remained and that you must communicate to me. Did you not hear? And why do you not speak?

Speak, immense horizons, narrate to me the ecstasies, the labours, the sorrows of that heart. From clod to clod I wandered, invoking the distant memory. I asked the slopes bathed in sun, the forest-clad mountains, the paths, the humble cottages, the lost chapels, the sweet corners of the field—always awaiting an arcane Inner revelation that would tell

me: it is here, it was here, do you not see? Here lies the small figure of the Saint, burning, consumed by his passion; do you not hear his harmonious and persuasive voice speaking of perfect joy? Listen³⁹:

“Once, as Saint Francis was traveling from Perugia to Santa Maria degli Angeli in the winter time, accompanied by Brother Leo, he was tormented by the intense cold. At that moment, he called Brother Leo, who was ahead, and thus he spoke: O Brother Leo, even if the Friars Minor gave in the entire world a great example of holiness and good edification, nevertheless, write and take careful note, that **in this does not lie the perfect joy**. And walking a bit further, Saint Francis called him for the second time: O Brother Leo, even if the Friar Minor restores sight to the blind, heals the paralytics, expels demons, makes the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the mute speak and, what is much more, raise a dead man of four days: write that **in this does not lie the perfect joy**. And walking a bit more, Saint Francis loudly said: O Brother Leo, if the Friar Minor knew all languages, sciences, and scriptures, and if he could prophesy, revealing not only the future but even the secrets of consciences and of men, write that **in this does not lie the perfect joy**. (...) And continuing to speak in this manner over the course of two miles, Brother Leo, greatly amazed, asked him: "Father, I beseech thee, by God, that thou tell me **where lies perfect joy**." And Saint Francis answered him: "When we arrive at Santa Maria degli Angeli, thoroughly soaked by the rain and frozen by the cold, muddied and tormented by hunger, and we knock at the convent's door, and the porter comes out angry and says: 'Who are you?' — and we answer: 'We are two of your brothers' — and he says: 'You do not speak the truth; you are two vagabonds who deceive the world and steal the alms of the poor; get out of here!' — and he does not open the door for us and leaves us outside, exposed to the snow and the rain, cold and hungry until night; then, if we bear patiently such insults, cruelties,

³⁹ From The Little Flowers of St. Francis, chapter VII. (Note from the Author.)

and rejections, without being disturbed and without complaining against him, and with humility and charity we think that the porter truly knows us and that God made him speak against us, Brother Leo, write that **in this lies perfect joy**. And if we continue to knock on the door and he comes out disturbed and drives us away as annoying vagrants, with insults and slaps, saying: 'Go away from here, miserable thieves, go to the hostel because here you will not have food or shelter;' if we bear this patiently, with joy and love, O Brother Leo, write that **in this lies perfect joy**. And if we, constrained by hunger, the cold, and the night, we knock and call again, and beg for the love of God, with many tears, that he open the door and let us in; and if the porter, more scandalized, says: — 'These are bothersome scoundrels, I will give them what they deserve,' — and comes out with a knotty stick, grabs us by the hood, throws us to the ground, rolls us in the snow, and beats us with that stick, knot by knot: if we endure all these things with patience and joy, thinking of the blessed sufferings of Christ, and that we must bear all for His love, O Brother Leo, write that **in this lies perfect joy**. (....)"

* * *

It was cold, yet so warm in the heart! It was dark, yet such light shone in the soul! The storm was harsh outside, but God sang so loudly from within!

Listen, listen! Do you not hear the voice from the depths? Yes. The Subasio remains the same, and below, Assisi rests; around it, the crown of the Umbrian hills. They are the same, the slopes filled with woods of

Greccio, the view towards Rieti and Fonte Colombo; the same, the dark and deep reflections of Lake Piediluco and the profiles of its great stern mountains. The same, the vast silences of the immense Trasimeno. I hear the sound of an oar, in the slow walk from shore to shore, and there I find my soul, that walks without ever resting. From the earth echoes that blessed step of Francis, which I follow without reaching. I interrogate the inner resonances and hear, amazed, a humble murmur in the most secret palpitation of my heart.

Tell me, forces of life, why have you not kept a sign of the meteor that passed through here, vanishing into the sky's transparencies; tell me, sister creatures who traverse life with me, does no distant echo return in the timbre of your vibrations, if such an impetus of passion was impressed upon you by the chant of Brother Francis? Yet, in the music of creation, I hear the coming and going of the evanescent harmony of that chant of God that merged within you when the soul of the Saint passed by here. You then echoed, understood, and responded, sang in chorus the great symphony he was intoning, the symphony of divine love.

Give me again that chant, it is the canticle of God. Sister creatures, help me to ascend, to vibrate, to feel. That chant will enrapture my soul from this infernal noise, far from the earth, forever.

Then, in an immense and profound silence, softly echoes the divine music. Each form of existence emits a note. I pray in my prayer I hear God as an immense and sublime chant that emanates from all creatures. All expressions of God sing, the earth and the sky, the light and the life, the order and the thought. My soul becomes very tiny, yet it emits harmony, and with each note, I gradually tune in; the resonance invades me, the vibration elevates me, the rapture leads me. It is no longer I, but a harp on which the Universe resonates. And a prayer in which silence falls. And the union with God.

From the depths of time and space, I hear this potent voice of God, which whirls my soul in a tempest. I hear the symphony of the vast horizons, the luminosity of the heavens, the harmonies of life, the voice of the world, singing: Christ! Christ! Christ! Thus cries History: Christ awaited, Christ present, Christ active in the heart of civilization. Christ, repeats to me the beauty of art, the depth of wisdom, the victory of goodness, the greatness of spirit. This chant expands and penetrates me. Each note echoed within me, slowly, from the humble to the grand voices. My soul tightened and absorbed within itself the stupendous vibration and, following this harmony, ascended with the song. Christ! — the entire universe repeats to me. Christ I feel arriving, resplendent, from the heavens, so dizzily high and beautiful as a dream that should have been in the fervour of Francis in the supreme consecration of Alverne.

VISION OF THE GOTHIC CATHEDRAL

One day, I felt my destiny as a bundle of converging and ascending forces, and I found it again in the strength and architectural musicality of the Gothic cathedral. The arcades, always narrowing more towards the door's span, express the lines of concentration from the exterior to the interior. And I entered young into the austere temple of the solitude of thought. Outside, it was for me noise and suffering, and I could no longer enjoy the easy joys of the outside world. And from a young age, I accustomed myself to breathe that severe atmosphere, saturated with profound concepts. My eyes learned to see in the mystical penumbra and were nourished by the splendid lights from Above, which invited to ascend. My gaze was lulled in the harmonious music of architectures, in the diaphanous dream of the mystical stained glass, in the sweetness of the images of eternal and holy things. Thus, my soul slowly became disenchanted from the earth and opened itself entirely to the vision of God. And, as in the Gothic temple, it was also in my destiny, a convergence of lines of force, that led me upwards, upwards, along the central nave, to where the structure of the edifice opens its arms in the shape of a cross. It led me to the sonorous culmination of the architectural symphony in which the cry of the dying Christ explodes, there at the top, in the centre of the temple where, above the high altar, that cry is repeated in the sacrifice of

the mass. I have lived in that longing of converging forces towards the Above, constrained to a compact concatenation like a Bach fugue. I dragged myself along the central nave, leaving behind me a trail of blood. But, arriving at the great altar in the centre, my soul gathered the cry of the agonizing Christ, and tightened, in an embrace that will have no end, to that reclined head. Around me wafted the breath of the ascending stone. In the harmonies of the last lights, in the vague throbbing of the supreme spaces of the temple, in the indefinable of the last dream, the vault shattered and in me appeared the thought of God. My body stayed down below, united with the cross. But, my soul fled forever into the glory of the heavens.

PROPHETISM

Today, I ascended the heights of time and from distant horizons, I hear profound resonances emerging, attracted to me by a harmony of thought imposed by the present moment of the world's life. I hear the powerful chant of History that goes and returns, repeats itself in titanic cycles, slowly in ascent, in falls, in resurrections, in a renewal always higher of life, in which, however, the past always reappears. In waves, civilizations are born and die, come and go on the great sea of time. They are the palpitations of the progressive idea of God, which is always moving towards its realization.

All this resonates within me, becomes a vibration of mine, and into it I dive. And then the vortex grabs me and transports me in a whirlwind where I hear the summoning sounds of life. I hear the passing of the hours, the imminent precipitation of balances, the furious storm at the doors—I hear the voice of God announcing the maturity of time. The inner signs scream, unnoticed by the blind of the hour, closed off in the calculation of the moment. Under the skies of History, the heralding storm petrels appear, the more ready consciousnesses awaken, sentinels of life, and they let out the alarm cry; the admonishing voices rise and fall like pearls from the magnificence of the heavens, before each calamity.

I hear a deep, rhythmic, incessant drumming; I hear the footsteps of time, marching with a fatal rhythm, like a fatal, immense mass of lava

that descends slowly and submerges everything. Where are the shoulders to hold it back, the chests to face it? These are serious times, and the heavens fight alongside the earth. One does not live on bread alone, on numbers, wealth, or human power anymore. Can the forces of the spirit be absent just because a century of materialism has denied them? The attitudes of human thought cannot disrupt God's law. And always, whenever man has violated the divine balances of justice and goodness, the righteous reaction of the Law has been felt. Therefore, let those who sleep lift their heads. We are no longer in the time to explain and demonstrate. That work is done. It is the time for physical and tangible shock, which shakes and drags everyone along.

God loves us. It is necessary to alert the deaf, the inert, to soften the rebels. It is necessary for the world to learn again to pray, that in humiliation and misfortune it may become brotherly and rediscover its God, who was forgotten. God is a path of passion and love that is traversed in silence in one's own heart; it is a real consecration of oneself, it is a humble embrace from brother to brother, to help each other along the thorny path of human ascensions.

Fear nothing, for those who have Christ in their hearts. The storm will purify. Far will fly the trappings in the furious wind, and the immateriality of the spirit, only it, will resist and survive. The human will fall so that Christ may shine higher and truer.

Hosea, Hosea, prophet of Israel! It seems to me I hear your voice surpassing the barrier of time and reaching me: "God is love." This great word of yours, herald of Christ, which no one, not even Moses before you, had said and has sustained humanity for millennia, was the newest word erupted from your martyr's heart. Pain made you a prophet and prophet of love.

I see all of you lined up in your work, prophets of Israel. I hear you all merged into that vast language in which the earth and heaven re-

sound. Times when the word from above descended throbbing and man lived in alliance with God. Times when the soul soared to reach the heaven! What greatness, this continuous contact with God! He seems distant from us; amid so much science and wisdom, it seems we have lost the idea of Him. He is no longer present in our actions or in the events of History. All forces are calculated, except the supreme; in all positions of life, one never thinks of the greater impulse, which is God.

I hear Isaiah: "a remnant shall return," that is: a seed remains. Today we can repeat his words, which are a presentiment of the Kingdom of God, promised by Christ and awaited by the world: "... the beings will do no harm nor evil, for the earth will be full of the awareness of God, as water covers the bottom of the sea."

No. God is not a dispensable element in the life of an individual or of peoples. He must be felt, close, and He is, only when deserved. Only a God who resides in the soul, controls the passions, guides the actions, and makes the heart tremble—only this God is life. Therefore, is misfortune necessary for the spirit to cast off its cloak and stand anew naked before God? What does the form matter when we, in substance, sacrifice to Moloch and only the admiration of his splendour is in our hearts? Then, even in splendid temples, God remains silent because He has moved away from our soul. And God departs and speaks elsewhere, to the humble, to the weary travellers of the ideal, who are always en route, like Saint Francis, struck by all and alone with God.

Then, destiny knocks at the doors of History, the heralding trumpets sound, the prophets reemerge, for the world awakens. Who hears and understands amid so many false and confused voices? Must we then, re-

peat the fateful "**Dies irae, dies illa**"⁴⁰ still alive today in art, in liturgy, in music, the **Dies irae of the prophet Zephaniah?**⁴¹ What will become of this remnant people who will be the seed of the future civilization? It will be a people unseen today, as was the first group of soldiers of Christ in Roman greatness, a people made of the humble and pious, who now suffer, feel, and hope. And of what use will strength without right, power without justice, science without conscience be to the world? Woe to those who wield the sword, for they shall die by the sword. The shattered ethical order will bring destruction.

How differently one prays when fate threatens and pain strikes, unlike when all is tranquil, the heaven seems secure, and the proximity of God is guaranteed by the authority of the earth! But faith is a tempest, not a throne of glory; it is a torment of ascension, not passive acquiescence. It is an unceasing, trembling dynamism, a spasm of the soul in search of God.

I would want to shout with Jeremiah: "Oh! my heart, my heart! What terrible suffering! Oh! my heart! How it pounds within me! I cannot stay still, for my soul has heard the sound of the trumpet, the cry of war!"

Jeremiah, who shaped everything according to Hosea, by reviving in him all love and all pain; Jeremiah, the highest and purest expression of Hebrew Prophetism! I would want to repeat his concepts, which express the essence of religions, that is, the superiority of substance over form, of a pure heart over external actions. Better yet: "...the pagans who observe

⁴⁰ "Dies irae, dies illa...": "The day of wrath (justice), that (terrible) day...". First verses of a medieval hymn by Friar Thomas of Celano, disciple and first biographer of St. Francis of Assisi. It evokes the day of the Final Judgment — informs Paulo Rónai — and is part of the Office of the Dead. (N. of the T.)

⁴¹ It is considered that Celano's hymn was inspired by the prophet Zephaniah: "The great day of the Lord is near! Day of distress and tribulation (....)" (Zephaniah, 1:14-18, 2:1.3). (N. of the T.)

their false and senseless religion with true fidelity and perfect devotion—they are indeed more pleasing to God than you, who possess the true God but forget Him and are disobedient to Him." And Jeremiah, who dared to speak such grave words, died in a foreign land, stoned by his own people!

But Jeremiah also spoke of the gates of the Babylonian exile, which transformed the people of Israel and their religion, sifting grain by grain, separating the good from the bad, the essential from the superfluous. In the great curves of History, the earth must be painfully stirred to its depths, to be prepared for new germinations. And the exile in pain purified Israel until there remained only that residue, that seed of which Isaiah spoke. And the cycles return and History repeats itself. Among the flames of destroyed Jerusalem, the old forms were also shattered, but the spirit that was in the prophethood and could not be burned, survived. The State was destroyed, and the religion separated from it, it became light, as if liberated, and was able to rise anew and live higher up; until Ezekiel went to his people to teach them the love of brother for brother and the strength of the spiritual bonds that know how to fuse souls, forming and maintaining the ideal unity above any form and against any material attack.

As in his great vision of the new Jerusalem, there today emerges in the minds a vague presentiment of the new civilization of the third millennium, in which the Church will be truly powerful and invincible, because made solely of spirit.

Oh! What a tremendous labour this being born, living and dying, to be reborn, relive, and die again — this duty to evolve in order to rise from falls, to redeem oneself in pain, to liberate oneself and return to the spirit!

We return to the sources, the virginity of origins, to the purity of the first spring. The eternal vision that shook Zechariah emerges. And Histo-

ry pulses and throbs through the same eternal movements that laboriously push it forward. Evil triumphs openly, and the pure of heart, who suffer bent over the furrows, while watering the new sowing with their sweat, look and say: "Where is our God of justice, if the wicked are happy and the violent are successful?" But they do not know how fruitful pain is. Everything germinates, bathed by divine lymph. Only in this way are born the great and strong things that withstand the gales and defy the centuries, while the creations of evil are dust that will return to dust, cast far by the whirlwind of time. Those who sow along the paths of good, sow and continue, for the seed germinates, containing already in the trajectory of its movement, its law of life and the discipline of its development.

This idea of the presence of God in the destiny of man and nations, this idea that emerges from every page of the Bible, an idea that runs through and unites all the prophetism of Israel, is not absurd, even though today it is an anachronism. It is the fundamental idea that governs life and this idea has not died.

It is the central idea around which the world revolves: God and man, man and God. It is the very music of the spirit that extends from Israeli prophecy into Christian mysticism, as the same contact with God. It is the same conquest of spirit that takes place, it is always the same problem that stirs and lives, — that of human ascensions.

THE ASSAULTS

One day, when my spirit was prostrate, overwhelmed by the excessive intensity of its life and laid low by the weariness of the flesh, an evil spirit, a visage of Satan, approached me with a sidelong glance, laughed in my face, and whispered in my ear: "Clown!" He was a liar and seemed to have cunningly chosen this moment to catch me at fault, attempting to triumph over my weakness. He felt strong, but spoke with the haste of a thief who steals, aware that the opportune moment is brief and does not return quickly.

The lower forces, as soon as the tension of the asceticism drop and open a breach in the soul—they can arise, by the law of balance. I was prostrate and sad. The sky was closed and this was the comfort. "Clown"—I heard repeated to me. "Where is your strength of spirit, the infinite, the harmony of creation, the presence of the Law? If you are a friend of God, why does God not descend to comfort you?" The atrocious mockery danced over my suffering. These are the gloomy hours in which the vast horizons close, the sky remains inaccessible to perception, becomes unreal, and escapes into nothingness.

Then, the spirit of evil flung its fetid breath in my face and said to me, "Clown!" The splendid world of the spirit is far away. The flesh is there, weary and screams its torment. In my ears, there is only the noise

of the collapse of my crushed soul. I throw myself to the ground. I no longer know how to pray.

These are fearsome moments in the life of one who struggles for an ideal. Vast voids and terrible silences form in the soul; hours of loneliness and desolation pass in which the deepest self withdraws, leaving the soul blind and agonizing. The lightning of intuition abandons me, I fear that courage which once dared all; my brow is on the ground and tears against the stone. It is the revolt of the biological forces, the revenge, the defeat of an hour. What is happening within? Why does God forsake me? Because I know that in those nameless and hopeless silences lie the subterranean paths of the ascension; I know that from these annihilations rise the great turgid masses of thought and passion, emerges the marvelous vortex where all lights shine. It is in the depths of these depressions, when the soul lives its most atrocious hours, that it hears the first note from which creation will spring. For faith and conception spring from these spasms of the soul that, to emit sparks, must hurl itself against the rough and sharp cliffs. My thoughts are drops of blood squeezed from an inner torment where my soul struggles to give birth to conception. This flowering of writings is the martyrdom and holocaust of each day. Each spiritual assertion is a piece of flesh left on the thorns of the path. To walk and bleed is the life of thought. Continuous production means continuous suffering.

There are moments when the brutal reality of life, the world of imperious necessities, retakes control and harshly reminds the free spirit of its enslavement—which is the truth of the moment. Matter has its revenges, its tremendous vengeance. Darkness then reigns, lies triumph, sarcasm smiles, misunderstanding spreads. And the ignorant, the false, the wicked who hold material means in their hands confront us, shouting: "Money! Money! I am the power! I reign!" And then truly, the earth is a desert without hope. The spring dries up, the song falls silent. Tears fall

upon the dry soil and human selfishness greedily drinks in the pain of others. The idea disperses in the wind, the wavering faith escapes. And he, the hero of thought and love, is left abandoned and alone. Alone, with eyes wide open in the darkness, where the light of his dream has extinguished. Alone, with a shattered heart to which love no longer reaches from above; alone, with a mind ruined, where the song of the heavens no longer resonates.

The intoxication of the dream was very beautiful, and the happiness of immolating oneself far from the earth. Go, weary soul, through the deserted land, without hope. God watches you, but your punishment is not to see Him anymore. God helps you, but your martyrdom is not knowing it. God loves you, but your torment is not feeling Him. Your lyre has broken. In your heart, there is a defeat of passion that does not know how to weep. That gaze, sparkling with thought and kindness, has lowered itself, humiliated. That gesture, extended in an act of love, has fallen, debased. That head, which conceived the highest concepts of life, is crowned with thorns.

Do not comfort him. It is his time. Darkness hastens to exhaust it; pain hastens to polish that soul with its greater blows. Hurry, forces of evil, for you are enclosed in the time that follows you and destroys you. The spirit falls silent and becomes frightened, but you exhaust yourselves. It concentrates, draws to itself the energies of life, and gains strength from your assault. The reaction accumulates and the hour is near when his cry will explode, to tear apart the darkness and rediscover the light.

The spirit is an angel who descended from his resplendent heavens to Earth. To love, he became defenceless and left far behind, now no longer knows where, all the weapons of his defence and appears, fragrant as a flower, good as a little child. And he arrives at the earthly hell. A scoffing laugh receives him, a storm wind delivers the first strike on that

fragility of the sensitive. The sweet song he brought with him ceases, shattered. It is necessary to learn to sing it here below, in the earthly hell. Here matter reigns, full of strength, armed with cunning, knowledgeable of strategies, vigilant to catch the spirit in fault. It knows the passages, the traps, the lie that disguises, the mockery that defeats, the betrayal that kills. The first encounter is brutal. The beast responds: "I am not your kin, I hate you, I do not want light. Are you a creature of heaven descended here below? Well then, you are the foreigner, not I. Accept the laws of my world. Here force reigns; keep your justice, here it does not serve. Here lies reign, keep your truth, which also does not serve. Here one curses and hates, so keep your kindness and your love. What do you want, ridiculous fool? Your Gospel is madness. We have a law. It is fierce, but it is ours. We do not accept yours. Be gone, foreigner! You insist? We will destroy you."

But the angel advances. The fight has begun, but he is accustomed to suffering. Then, the attack changes. Matter clothes itself in flattery and lies, ferocity hides and reappears smiling with charm. The ground becomes more treacherous. The angel advances in a world of inconsistent and mutable appearances, of deceitful forms. He goes to pick a flower and picks a mockery; he believes he is contemplating the truth and it is a mask that falls off, laughing. Every being has two faces; shows the false and hides the true one. It is an unreal world, where everything flees and dissolves; it is a macabre dance of mad skeletons who believe they are wise and beautiful. It is the triumph of tinsel, a scent that smells bad, a kiss that bites, a caress that kills, a world of false lights, where everything is darkness and silence.

But, the spirit advances. Force has not conquered it, and lies has not defeated it. It sees the true colour of life and wishes to soothe the suffering from which it is made. It sees gold and famine, armies and crosses, power and blood. The commands of the god of pleasure are powerful! The

world asks it for false love; it is made of inferior forces, but it desires to realize itself. And the fight continues. Satan disguises himself in his infinite guises and changes tactics. I see him return and he does not say "Clown". He is reasonable and cunning. He says to me: "Reflect, leave utopia, quickly. Life is beautiful and must be enjoyed". The siege of flattery is slow and patient. It is an inner imagination; it arises unnoticed in the roots of desire. It insinuates deceitfully, everywhere. It seems like nothing and already envelops the spirit in its tentacles. And when it realizes, it is already caught and imprisoned. A prudent insinuation, with slow gesture, with a thousand arms of an octopus, tightens while caressing in a long suffocation. It acts with caution and has allure, like the serpent. Thus forms the whirlpool where the world submerges.

The fight continues. Poor my soul! It thirsts yet must not drink: the fountain is polluted. It hungers yet must not eat: the food is poisoned. It is exhausted yet cannot rest: the ground is unsafe.

But, still the appearance of Satan changes. My belly is satisfied. What beatitude! Inertia of spirit, all its vibration neutralized in a pause of calm. Animality dominates, the play of life reduced to the lowest planes, the inner consciousness dozes satisfied in the balance of primary functions, in the happiness of the brute. The storms are far away. What joy, at last, to rest! How many satisfied bellies go through life, believing themselves to be everything, happy just to be full. Little souls located in the belly! The belly desires, opines, chooses — beatitude of satiated flesh. I too have known this, waiting for the lion to awaken, break the inertia with its roar and once again plunge the gaze into the heavens.

The spirit advances, but the enemy also walks and penetrates the fortress of the mind. Faith disintegrates into doubt. Have I fought and suffered so much in vain? Will not the dust of things cover all my labours? I invested all my capital of thought and activity in the Gospel. For this reversal of human values, I lost the positive, tangible, recognized ad-

vantages. And in the end, if it were an illusion? Have I thus dragged myself through life, humanly destroyed, and all for a dream? And if the spirit betrays me? Where is Christ if I cannot see Him? Why never a sign of evidence? Where is this world that no one perceives and that all facts deny? Why, why believe? What a tremendous disillusionment to gather chimeras! And this world is so ready to vanish, and I advised and suffered in reality — and the last compensation will be defeat! “Fool, do not trust,” says Satan. Why believe? It was a chimera, and now you are defeated. You deserved it. Rebel, free yourself, tear down and destroy the edifice of illusions. Save at least the last hours. Enjoy. Do not let yourself be betrayed forever. This is life, do you not see? There is no other life but this. My joy is here, heaven is far away.

But the spirit advances. And then, after the attack of scorn, of pain, of necessity, of force, of lies, of pleasure, of inertia, of doubt, — the assault of despair is unleashed. I feel it approaching in the form of a phantom and I feel terror. Darkness thickens around my soul. I am blind and mute in the power of the storm. A diabolical shock penetrates my entire being and my soul plunges into hell. It is an involitional precipitation from plane to plane, a loss of light, of lightness, ever downward, into an ever denser envelope. The assault has seized me, tightens its grip in its tentacles, drags me from vortex to vortex, mutilating me, suffocating me. The enemy has broken the chains and is within me to torment me. It is their hour, the hour of darkness, the ghastly hour of their vengeance. It lunges at me. My soul struggles in its tentacles. Vain are the days dragged through hard and necessary work, vain are the sleepless nights, vain the time that leaves me ruined. The darkness tears me apart. I need to run and cannot walk. I must flee and am bound. I petrify in a silent, black pain, without tears, without hope. I ignore God, I numb myself, I am lost.

Then my sensitivity becomes a harbour open to all newcomers. A thousand *barontic* forces appear, tremendous and confused; a thousand faces take shape within the radius of my consciousness. I am carried on a torrent of torment that sweeps through my spirit.

Later, when the force of evil is sated with all its assaults, in all their aspects, I hear it flee, mocking, delighted with its splendid mockery.

19

TEMPTATION

The higher the soul ascends, the more it is assaulted by the forces of evil. The law of balance contains its reactions. The more you suffer and ascend, the higher you will rise and the more you will be tempted, but also, the stronger you will be to overcome.

These forces take on a concrete form: Satan. It is the image of man when evil takes possession of him; the force personifies in us when we are wicked. He is, therefore, real and close. It is a vibration present in our consciousness. It is among us, within us.

It also appears in the great mystics the secret and terrible moment, in which the great dream felt in the ardour of faith decomposes into a horrendous chaos. It is the revenge of baseness, the hour of darkness. And Gethsemane is the mockery of drunken and triumphant madness that amuses itself with the martyrdom of the saint.

This insult is Satan. It is a low, brutal, huge, black force, immersed in unconsciousness. And a stupid and fierce onslaught: it explodes, vents, exhausts itself, extinguishes, and stops, stupidly, without having reached its goal, without having understood anything about itself.

I have lived these struggles. Then the soul feels itself teetering on the edge of an abyss, which opens its jaws to swallow it. The great dream realized in the torment of each day seems to threaten ruin.

* * *

The fight begins. The enemy descends within me and takes place in my heart.

Is it I or is it he? Who is it that denies and who affirms, within me? How can I thus cleave myself, between my joy and my torment, between triumph and defeat, between my ascension and my abjection?

Within me gather the forces of good and evil. I am both these and those: two halves of myself horrifically battle each other.

The fight has begun, and on both sides, I receive deep wounds.

"You have betrayed me," says the man within to the spirit. "Be cursed, traitor of my life."

"I am exhausted," says the spirit. "I am no more, I see no more. Lord, have mercy on me."

My soul drags on, pursued by the earthly hell. The reality of everyone insults and repudiates me. "Fool," they say to me. The crowd repeats: "Madman, die. You well deserve it."

My body is hungry, it is tired. The source of my songs has dried up in my parched throat. The world tells me: "Die." Yet, it was for its pain that I listened, was moved, and surrendered myself.

I ask for help. Mockingly, Satan murmurs: "If you are by the side of God, ask Him to save you and raise you up."

But, everything remains indifferent on the outside. Therefore, I am wrong and the others are right.

I then lift my eyes and cry out: "Lord!" And the sky opens and a voice descending from Above says: "Be calm, my son!"

Then, I find the strength to say: "**Vade retro, Satana!**"⁴² And the evil withdraws.

* * *

However, Satan returns. My mind doubts, and the world still shouts, "Madman! Your ideal is absurd. It is not in this world that it can be realized. Where is the man of whom you speak? Where is the prophesied punishment, the justice of God? Utopias. In evil, the world walks more merrily than ever. Go, fool, walk alone. The world knows how to have fun without you."

"Doubts? Then, invoke your God to enlighten you, to unleash the purifying storm, to remake man. The world knows its way and needs you not."

And in truth, the world walks and does not ask for salvation.

I then cry out: "Lord, help me! I am lost!"

What can I do alone and tired against organized and powerful, swift and tenacious evil? And the heavens open and a light descends from above and writes on my heart: "Be calm, my child!"

⁴² "Depart, Satan" or "Withdraw, Satan." — In the Latin translation of the Gospel, these words are found, directed by Jesus to Simon Peter when he reproached Him for having announced to the disciples His great rejection, His death, and resurrection. (Mark 8:31-33). A similar expression is also found in the narrative of the Temptation (Matthew 4:9,10). (Translator's note.)

Then, I find the light again and can say: "Begone, Satan." And he leaves.

* * *

Satan, however, still returns. My heart is a desert. Every human love within it has dried up. I am alone and forsaken. I am cold. First, the body's hunger cried out, and I overcame it. Then the mind's thirst cried out, and I overcome it. Now, the heart's passion cries out, and I do not know how to win.

And the world tells me: Madman! Who do you want to respond to your love? Walk, walk. The world knows well how to love without you. Does your heart moan? Well then, invoke your God. Let Him answer you, satisfy you, and show men His love.

And I see the world indifferently rushing only to its passions.

Then, I lift my heart up high and cry out: "Lord, I love You!" And the heavens open and a palpitation descends from above, trembles within my heart, and there sings: "peace, my child!"

Then, I rediscover love, cast a fiery glance at Satan, and say to him: "Begone, Satan, forever, for I have conquered. United with me, in my heart, is my God. Your forces shall not prevail." And Satan flees hastily, defeated.

My body, my mind, my heart could not renounce God. The path of pain was the true one.

INFERNO

From the distant past of my *involution*, across the infinite ocean of time, a wave broke loose, approached me, enveloping me threateningly. It assaulted me and submerged me.

It was a real force, an impulse once grafted by me onto my fate, emerging from my past, from the animality not yet overcome.

Lord, I neither knew nor wished to overcome the forces of evil.

My heart, which was Yours, I threw into the sea. And then the wave swallowed me and I plunged into the abyss.

The torch of my love was extinguished. The black waters enveloped me; the waves piled upon my head; desolation penetrated me to the depths of my soul.

The immense whirlpool caught me, enveloped me, and I was submerged to the roots of the mountains.

The seaweeds twined around me, sealed my mouth, prevented me from breathing, and the sea, above me, closed again forever.

From the depths of the abyss, my voice can no longer reach my Lord. I am petrified with horror. My despair is hopeless. My soul disintegrates.

How dreadful to no longer be able to say: "Lord, Lord!"

But, I deserved it. He must punish me. I feel only justice, no longer love. I die because I can no longer see Him. Between me and God there is an abyss that I can no longer overcome.

I no longer know how to pray, I dare not invoke Him. Here I am, alone, in the depths of my hell.

Where is my Lord? I seek Him, but I am blind and I would not even know how to see Him anymore. I am deaf, I would not know how to hear Him. I am mute, the lyre of my song has shattered. I am dead, yet, I am alive and wish I could die.

I knew God and lost Him. My soul is a thunder of despair.

Hell, hell, annihilate me in your spirals, destroy my soul, so that my despair may end.

FALL OF THE SOUL

What has happened to me? I was happy, master of the light and strength of the spirit; I dominated a vast panorama, was free and sovereign—and from that luminous height, I was cast down into a sea of darkness.

I return to myself tired, bewildered, nauseated by myself and by life.

What lethargy in my limbs! The dynamism of the spirit has faded, nothing remained in me but lazy and inert matter, I no longer know how to drag it along. I am a stone among stones, abandoned on the road.

There is a cold of death in my viscera. In my bones, I feel a sense of emptiness. I crawl through the viscous earth, wrapped in mud. In my heart is the sense of my worthlessness.

Lord, drive me away. I deserve it.

I was in the glory of your light when a vain, tenacious, treacherous flattery, full of allurements, like an octopus, approached me slowly, embraced me with a caress; then, it tightened its grip more strongly, paralyzed every defensive movement and overcame me. When I wanted to react, it was too late. It dragged me along, blind, mute, bewildered, bound, into the depths.

Fatigue overcame me, lessened the tension of the ascent; matter, ready for revenge, took possession of me.

My God! How sad I am without You!

Because, after all, the sweet and treacherous poison has exhausted its virulence, the spirit began to rise again and only now have I seen my depletion.

I no longer have the courage to pray, I no longer have the strength to ascend, I no longer have hope to act. Down here, my beautiful dream is a mockery. Christ is an absurdity, because here reigns a truth made of the din of struggle and selfishness. Here there is no peace of soul. Here everything insults my past. The ideal for which I lived and gave everything is considered an ideal of madness. It reopens the eyes in such a murky light that it is almost extinguished, obstructed by vast zones and slits of opacity. A confusion of chaotic forces writhes within me, in a burdensome dissonance, the divine harmony of life. I see these forces intertwine in horrendous deformations that wound me with their sharp angles, rough and disordered leaps, impulses of struggle and rebellion. They dance around me in dizzying vertices that envelop me in a sensation of spasm, with the fierce emission of desperate screams, where there were harmonious songs and joy-filled peace. These forces slide down an ever steeper slope, projected into dreadful abyssal depths and down there the darkness becomes so solid that no flaming sword of light will be able to shatter it. And the vertex is open and active; once souls are caught in its spirals, its attraction hurls them into the gloomy abyss. It is a vertex of forces into which a throbbing stream of souls plunges, screaming in despair, clinging to their despair.

In the terror of this vision, my spirit awakens and, through the terror, I regain the strength to rise again, tense, to the rarefied atmosphere from which I fell.

Awakens and, as it struggles, to resume the ascent, still the echo of the mockeries follows it: "Fool, fool! Do you not see that while you give, all others only intend to take? And when you have given everything, you will be alone and deceived. Yes, mocked before the earth and the heavens

which, when they wish, also close their doors to he who has struggled and suffered much."

But the ascension has begun and gains strength from its own momentum and the echo of the wild cries of insults fades ever further away, overshadowed by the song of the dominant harmonies.

My soul resumed its ascension, encountered the tension again, reached its atmosphere, where the highest truth of the Gospel shines and the echo no longer repeats the wild roar of selfishness that insults — but repeats the song that says: "**Give and you will receive, love and you will be loved, forgive and you will be forgiven.**"

I have arrived. I am in a iridescent dawn of lights. In God, everything shines in infinite joy, rests in supreme harmony. My soul has found its peace again.

These are not dreams, nor are they fantasies of a poet. They are living forces in action among which I moved, and which struck me down and raised me up; they are realities, imponderable though they may be, but no less true and current.

This drama that my soul lived is true, that destroyed it and regenerated it, that always frustrated it, so that it would know the terror of darkness without hope.

MEA CULPA

I have sinned, Lord. Mea culpa, mea culpa⁴³.

Once, heaven and earth smiled on me with Your smile. Now, everything seems gloomy, melancholic, and deserted; I have lost all light and all resonance in my desolation.

I die because I cannot live without You, Lord.

From the depths of my guilt, I no longer dare to lift my gaze, nor do I even know how to direct my prayer to You.

My soul freezes, now that Your light no longer warms me.

I am despicable. I know I betrayed You and denied You.

Now, I have nothing to offer You, except my guilt.

The spirit was ready to follow You and ascend with You. But the recalcitrant flesh wanted to return to the mud.

It chained me down and overcame me. I did not have the strength to drag it along.

The horror of my baseness frightens me, for You are still beside me and looking at me.

⁴³ "Through my fault, through my fault." First words of an ancient prayer of the Church, the "**Confiteor**" ("**I confess**"): the worshipper acknowledges, before God, their sin, fault, or responsibility (N. of the T.)

You look at me, as always, with a look made of love. That sweet gaze of forgiveness pierces my soul and, yet, more than any reproach, it annihilates me.

On my heart, I feel the immense weight of the remorse of having betrayed my sweetest friend.

I offend You and You caress me; I insult You and You forgive me; I abandon You and You come back to seek me.

Do not come near, Lord. I am not worthy to beg for forgiveness. I am not worthy, Lord.

At that time, You came to me and said: I need your soul. And then I said to You: Lord, take my soul.

However, it is stained with guilt. Does it not disgust You to descend upon such a mire?

"I love you," You told me. And You reclaimed my soul, full of vileness, and healed it with Your love. Only You, only You, Lord, could do it, not I.

I possess nothing else, nor can I become another creature.

Take my soul, take my life. It belongs to You until the last breath.

23

CANTICLE OF UNIFICATION

I hear the voice of God singing through the universe; I listen to the beings that respond, in an endless song.

I see the light of God spreading and giving life; I see the beings nourishing themselves from its reflection and progressing in endless rows.

I feel the pulse in the Infinite of the divine order's rhythm; I hear resounding, from sphere to sphere, the harmonies of creation.

I am ecstatic in the music of divine things; Truth has descended to my soul.

The centre of my life has withdrawn to the depths, there where God waits for all.

I have surpassed the confines of being, all veils have fallen. I have reached the ultimate end of human ascensions.

The firmament has torn, and You, Lord, sublime, appeared in the heavens and then, I prostrated myself to worship You.

You have enraptured me and I, who have found You again, go singing a song, from heaven to heaven.

Yet, I have lost the consciousness of myself. You are everything: I am in You and You are in me.

In You, the nothing that I am becomes the everything that You are. He identifies himself in me and I identify myself in Him.

Beyond the mutable, I reached the Immutable; beyond the relative, I reached the Absolute; beyond diversity, I touched Unity.

I lost the sense of separateness. The mystery of unification was fulfilled within me.

I no longer engage in the spirals of pain, for Your love has conquered it, Your love has redeemed me.

Your will has seized me, Lord, and I cannot distinguish myself, nor resist.

Your thought descended upon me, and I can no longer think except of You.

Your love has conquered me, and I can no longer love except You.

I died and then I resurrected. For since You live in me, I revive in You.

Your hand, Lord, has probed and delved into the depth of my heart, to rebuild everything. You have placed Yourself at the centre of myself, to proceed as owner there.

My joy consists in surrendering myself to You, in no longer separating my tiny being from Yours.

I am transparent to Your light, which wholly invades me.

I live in the rhythm of Your order, which vibrates entirely within me.

I feed on Beauty and Truth in which You shine; Your love satiates me.

I am in Your embrace, O Lord, and I no longer desire to find myself again.

I contemplate the design of the universe, listen to the breath of creation, feel within myself the resonance of Your thought.

You have revealed to me the divine web of love that governs beings, and in them, I find You again; we are all workers of a vast organism, open in the eagerness to return to You.

To ascend, to ascend, this is the canticle of the universe. Your love binds us all, like brothers.

I live by Your Law, for in me beats the pulse of Your thought and Your will.

In the depth of my soul resides Your peace.

24

BEATITUDES

What does it matter if I won or lost, if I am well or unwell, if I am rich or poor, loved or cursed, if You are here, Lord, and I am no longer alone, and You are by my side and cheer me?

What does it matter wealth or external misery, if inside me sings the magnificence of the universe?

What does it matter if I have nothing more, if I am despised and ignorant of my tomorrow, if I have reached the source of eternal things?

It is cold, but I am ablaze because Your love burns within me.

It is dark, but I see because Your light illuminates me.

All is silence, but I hear the sweet music of Your voice.

My flesh has lost strength on the path of duty, but my spirit exults.

My senses are empty, but my soul is satiated.

The universe is full of You, and I possess You.

Hasten, sister creatures! Come rejoice with me; help me to sing the song of divine love!

Listen: for many, many years I was alone, but now my Lord is with me.

Many, many paths I have travelled, but now I have arrived.

Much, much have I struggled and suffered in search; now I have found and am happy.

Where is my despair? I find it no more.

Where are the painful thorns of my torment? I see only roses...

Where is the roaring of the unleashed forces of evil?

Come listen. The music of creation sings within me.

Come, help to rejoice with me; I do not have the strength to be so happy!

Come, draw near to me, creatures of God, help me to sing, to pray, to love.

Understand the miracle. I was enclosed in a castle of pain and the castle crumbled. I was blind and now I see. I was deaf and now I hear. My heart was compressed in an iron muzzle and the muzzle shattered. I was submerged in a sea of ice and now I find myself enveloped in a blaze of love.

Upon my brow rested the kiss of the Eternal and I was resurrected.

Enough, Lord! Restrain the ecstasy of my heart, which shatters...

Make me suffer still, only so that I may learn to love You even more intensely!...

CANTICLE OF DEATH AND LOVE

The final canticle of life is unleashed.

You are good and great, O my Lord. I have conceived You in Your infinite power, in the stupendous dynamism of the universe. I feel, however, that everything in me is exhausted and I know only this: I die and I love You.

I hear, like a scream in the night, the entire whirlwind of my body that does not want to die. I rise; yet, for You and I say: Lord, sustain my soul, I feel weary.

To reach You, Lord, I tore my garments on the brambles and lost them along the way: I left my flesh, shredded, on the pebbles of the road, and poured out all my blood. I covered myself in dust and unravelled through long fatigue. I no longer have tears to cry, nor voice to invoke You, nor strength to walk and to suffer.

I faced the titanic forces of life, to overcome them. They rebelled and made me a rag. I trembled in the loneliness of sleepless nights; I dragged myself from the paths of my duty, with nails and elbows, when my feet were already bleeding. I have lived to suffer, and I have suffered to love You. I believed in You, without ever having the right to the external sign that persuades the senses. I loved You desperately, without ever being able to experience the joy of reciprocated love.

The last effort of my life consists of lifting my heart to entrust it to Your bosom, O Lord. It is my final gift.

* * *

Forgive, Lord, my eagerness. Weak is my flesh, and atrocious is its storm.

From my entrails rises a sadness of death; shattered are my limbs, I am submerged by an unspeakable bitterness. My soul prostrates in the utmost struggle.

Raise up, Lord, the creature that invokes You.

At the threshold of death, I seek You with a glance, that Your sight might save me.

I already see You, resplendent, in the depths of my pain and already hear the voice of Your resurrection.

My body dies, and in the depths of my soul You sing; at the core of my physical agony, the canticle of greater life is chanted. It resonates through the heavens, on starry nights. The foliage, at sunset, whispers it to the foliage; the creature, in caresses, passes it to its sibling creature, and the wave repeats it to the wave, across the limitless seas. We are celebrated by the lights that cross the firmament, the toning ray propagates it, the suns radiate it and the boundless universe resounds and shines in it. The canticle rises from things to me, expands in my agony, triumphs in my death.

It is my new life. God of power and love, at last, I feel You. My body lies shattered, but my soul has reached You. Finally, in the grand canticle of the entire universe, I hear the voice of love that answers: “My creature, I love you.”

26

PASSION

Assisi, Holy Thursday, 1937

Pilgrim of pain and passion, I approach you, Lord.

You have shattered all my human affections; one by one; you wanted only your love to remain.

And when my heart fell to the ground, bloodied, on the dusty road, trampled by everyone, you then picked it up and told me: "I am your love. Only me can you love.

In an iron muzzle, you compressed my passion; when it wished to explode into the world, you closed all the doors to it and cast it within me, so that, in this constriction, its glow would grow deeper and more powerful, burning in an ever-greater blaze, and internally inflaming, blazing until finding you, Lord.

You dosed my torment, you provided slow asphyxiation, you wanted me to draw near to You by my own search and effort.

Now I understand that to Your divine love I could not arrive except through the tearing apart of all human love.

To You one does not arrive except through the storm, for you are the whirlwind and the power, you are the essence of strength.

I feel that the flame of Your fire approaches and casts flames upon me. Suddenly, one of them touches me and coils around my soul, squeezes it and clutches it to draw it to itself, at the centre of the fire.



It then loosens the pressure and lets me fall back into human affairs, only to take me up again, another time, and yet again, always stronger.

That fire awaits me, and into it I will fall.

* * *

It is the Week of Passion, and the holy hour approaches when You, Lord, in Your agony, cast to the world the cry of redemption and love.

In these days, You have carded my soul so that I too might live Your passion of pain and love.

Over my sensibility, vibrating and resonating, passed the brutal shock and the fierce insult, and in it they took lodging, submerging themselves with joy in my excruciating pain.

You were present and close, but, to my misfortune, I did not feel it.

The new pain, however, lifted my sensation back to You, and in the depths of my estrangement, I found You again, as I have lost You many times, and in my prostration, You came to meet me and appeared to me once more.

What do You desire of me, Lord?

* * *

I arrive in Assisi, at the dusk of Maundy Thursday. Seven candles and another seven, in two very visible orders, burn, solitary, in the basilica of Francis.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ In this Giotto-style basilica, on the evenings of Holy Wednesday and Maundy Thursday, at twilight, the "Office of Darkness" is celebrated, extremely evocative due to the artistic ambiance, the liturgy, and the solemn chanting, and above all due to the almost absence of attendees, who, by their distracted misunderstanding, always disturb. (Author's Note)

They extinguish slowly, one by one, with a long and sad chanting, where the Church weeps and the world pleads; outside, sadly, the day fades away, filtering its agony through the historic stained glass.

The symphony of liturgy, of lights, and weeping sings in accord a slow somnolence of death in which the agony of the passion extinguishes.

However, when, with the last light of the day the final candle is extinguished, the last chant of the psalm bursts out so tragic and heartrending, interrupted by the sad beating of rods on the ground,⁴⁵ that my tempestuous soul is overwhelmed, for then I hear within me the world's pain screaming, supplicant, weeping with the Christ who dies.

It is already night. The luminous stained glass darkens. Everything is extinguished on the bare altars. The Church, which at this hour shelters the pain of a God and the pain of man, has shed its finery and lies bare at the feet of Christ.

In this sad, yet calm air; in this atmosphere of pain, great but conscious and resigned, I hear the clamour of distant crowds, who neither want nor know how to suffer; I feel the spasm of the human tides that pain and passion pursue and torment.

My soul trembles.

It lies prostrate at the foot of the cross and gazes up at the drama of a God dying for love. Only His gaze gives me the strength to live.

⁴⁵ The writer refers to a liturgical rite of Holy Week. When translating "Passione," not understanding this passage, I received an explanation from Prof. Ubaldo in a letter dated May 3, 1950. It is a rite of the Church in which the Passion of Christ is depicted, including the scene of the flagellation ("scena delle battiture"), when the Lord was tied to a column and whipped with rods. In the rite, the rods, long and slender, strike the ground, expressing the flagellations imposed on Christ. "This," writes Prof. Pietro, "produces a somber and sad effect. In that scene, I felt within me the pain of Christ flagellated by the rods." (Translator's Note)

I live Your torment, my Lord. I ascended with You to the cross; Your pain is my pain. I agonize and die with You.

I would wish to invoke mercy for all, but I do not have the courage. You have no more blood to give; you die naked and cursed and are innocent. What more can I ask of You for the sake of mankind?

I know it: You will still grant me tremendous lacerations; but with each new tearing of my flesh, I will say to You, "For the love of You, Lord."

And when, already without strength, I fall, and the seductive caress of human things comes to me, my soul must refuse any rest or comfort and say, "For the love of You, Lord."

Flagellate my spirit daily, so that it may be awake and ready at Your command.

With my renunciation, I will nourish the flame of my love for You every day.

No! It is not renunciation, it is not pain: it is expansion and joy. "It is for the love of me, Lord."

What can I do? Now, it is useless to resist. I plunge into You, Lord; the orbits whirl dizzily; maturation continues in the world and in me through opposing paths.

The hour is intense for everyone. It cannot be stopped. Long prepared, it rushes forth. I fear to look.

* * *

The siege tightens. The drama of Christ's Passion intensifies within me; the drama of human storms hounds those outside.

I descend to the crypt and prostrate myself at the tomb of Francis.

The spirit of the place fully seizes me, so powerful that it casts me to the ground. I rest my burning forehead on the bare stone to calm the fever and soften the blaze.

You have led me here. For what? What do you want from me, Lord?

I begin to stammer: "Take my soul."

I am waiting, trembling, tense, wordless.

I remember. You have already told me in a dark hour: "Follow me, follow me."

Something grave and great, which I do not understand, hovers over me. I feel the hour is solemn. You are close to me, it is Christ, I feel You. Francis is a living force, vibrating from that tomb, and he watches over me and assists me.

Something powerful, immense, wants to rise from the depths of my heart but cannot. It is too intense for its strength. The idea stirs, compresses to explode, seeks the word that expresses it, that set it in its final form.

Finally, the voice emerges and my soul cries out: "Lord! I will follow You to the cross!"

Then, I feel within me, singing: "You are at the centre of my heart."

My soul, liquefied in tears of jubilant love and passion, prostrates itself, powerless.

At that moment, however, it resounds from above, from the upper temple⁴⁶, from the lower church painted by Giotto, in the chant that psalmodies to the apex of its passion, it resounds like lightning echoing the explosion of my torment, condensing my storm, resounds in the clamour of music and the rods striking the ground, the final cry of the dying Christ.

This cry strikes me and wounds me. Something tears apart in me; a fissure opens in my soul.

The ultimate call summons me: it is the lament of Christ, it is the pain of the world, it is a convergence within me of higher and lower forces; I feel my soul escaping me, swept up in a vortex of titanic forces, I feel the Voice urging within me and I repeat: "Lord, I will follow You to the cross."

I am crushed by the weight of a solemn promise.

* * *

I return to the middle church, painted by Giotto.

The last candle goes out. It is night. I still hear, even closer, within me, the repeating cry of the dying Christ.

He is here, present at this moment.

⁴⁶ The Basilica of St. Francis consists of three superimposed churches. The scene takes place in the middle church and in the crypt below, where the tomb of the Saint is located. (Author's Note)

Then, before my eyes, the vision of Earth and Heaven tears open.

Heaven weeps the agony and the passion of love of a God, the Earth trembles, convulsed, in the presentiment of a nameless storm.

The drama of man and the drama of God converge in this supreme hour of passion.

I look, terrified. I see a whirlwind of forces projecting toward the Earth, and I see the Earth shaken, stirred, submerged in a sea of blood.

It is the grim hour of the world's passion. And it seems hopeless. The siege tightens ever more; soon it will be closed, and it will be too late to escape the compression.

The hand of the Eternal grips the fate of the world; the forces are ready to unleash for the fatal clash. The hour of darkness, of triumphant evil, of the supreme trial is near. Happy are those who will not be alive on the earth then.

The love of God must withdraw for a moment, so that justice may be done and the destiny, desired by man, be fulfilled.

Some time ago, I already said—prepare yourselves, prepare yourselves—and you did not listen. Soon, it will be too late.

The drama is near, I feel it, it becomes mine, I touch it, it resonates desperately in the depths of my spirit.

I repeat: "Take, Lord, my soul."

And three times I repeat: "Lord, I offer myself to you for the salvation of the world."

"I will follow You to the cross."

Three times I repeat, and I feel that You, Christ, hear me, accept me, and that I am united with Your passion.

I understand that You guided me here, to the temple of Saint Francis, so that, over His tomb, close to Him, I could repeat this new promise, solemn, decisive, after the first, after five years of hard journeying.

I understand that You awaited this new offering from me, because now a harsher pilgrimage begins and a more arduous effort awaits me.

The chant ceased after its last paroxysm.

All lights have gone out. The temple is silent, in the dark.

My soul reaches, alongside the soul of Christ in Gethsemane, its ultimate desolation.

The last crack of the rods striking the ground shakes me.

At that moment, I truly felt the earth tremble.

* * *

How beautiful it was to behold, outside, before sunset, over the gentle and extensive Umbrian valley and the reflections of the Tescio⁴⁷, the pines swaying in the wind, against the diaphanous splendours of the distance!

And later, the full moon rising from Subasio,⁴⁸ the bulk of the temple, unreal among pale lights, and the vast sleeping plain.

⁴⁷ Torrent from the vicinity of Assisi. (Author's Note)

⁴⁸ Mount Subasio, at the foot of which Assisi is built. (Translator's Note)

A time for sweet dialogues of the spirit with the soul of the created, in the intense presentiment of spring. A time of tender memories for me, in this sweet land of Assisi, where I have lived so deeply and loved so much. A time when Heaven and Earth reflect, friends, a common smile and embrace each other in a fraternal hug.

They seem at peace, but it is only the appearance of the moment.

Within me lives the vision of reality.

I truly felt the Earth tremble.

END