

RAMÓN PASCUAL MUÑOZ SOLER

The Path of Egoence

**From Existential Anxiety to the Mysticism of
the Heart**

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For Santiago Bovisio

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FOREWORD

Two years after publishing the second edition of *Future Seeds of Humanity*, I present here for the public's consideration this new book, *The Path of Egoence*.

In my previous book I put forward “egoence of the self” as a new, budding individual value that is renewed in humans through an expansive and participatory conscience. I return to it in the present book as the central theme of a deep, systematic study of the “path” or “means” that makes this *egoence* possible.

Book critics immediately focused their attention on the term “egoence,” but despite the explanations given in the text, commentators gave it different scopes and interpretations without on many occasions succeeding in discovering the root of its meaning. All this demanded a greater effort from me in laying the bases and characterising this new, emergent spiritual phenomenon in humans and in the world today: this is the task that I have set myself in *The Path of Egoence*.

Here, by way of foreword, and as a summary of my fundamental ideas and attitudes on this subject, I will say the following:

1. “Egoence” is not a metaphysical concept, nor is it framed in a theory or a system of thought. It is a concrete existential reality, the living seed that is beginning to manifest itself in the intimate parts of the new human, which translates on the outside into a ferment of a new universal society. It is the emergence, at individual level, of a cosmoanthropogenic phenomenon that is activated and developed in a new time.

2. My attempt to characterise this phenomenon is not based on any prior theory, nor is it the fruit of pure intellectual speculation, but is born from a personal direct experience in contact with a living current of activation of egoence.

This current of spiritual energy became a “path of life” in me through the person of Santiago Bovisio and in the reunion of souls of Cafh.¹

¹ Cafh is a path of spiritual development. It was founded by Santiago Bovisio, who defined it thus: “Cafh is a meeting of souls who seek their inner liberation through an outer individual method.” Although Don Santiago founded Cafh inspired by the tradition of esoteric European orders, from the beginning he insisted that humanity was entering a new era, that great changes would occur in society and that previously unimaginable possibilities would be discovered. He later broadened the course of the mystical path that he had initiated, from a path of introspection and prayer to a more expansive approach: a path that embraces society and the human condition.

Today Cafh is present in many parts of the world and in many languages. Bovisio’s work continues in the great variety of people all over the world who feel called to participate from within in the spiritual mission that he gave us. (Translator’s note.)

The work I present is an individual expression of my “self on the path of the search” for that egoence and of how I believe all humans can attain it through a practice of renunciation.

3. If to translate my internal experience into a conceptual language I often use the method of existential analysis, it should not be interpreted therefore that I identify with one current or another of modern existentialism, but simply that I take a point of concrete support in human existence that allows me to get as close as possible to the threshold of the mystery of the self, to then let through a way of mystical union with the divine medium.

4. In presenting my life experience in the field of egoence, in no way do I expect to make it a model to be imitated but rather an individual contribution to “signpost” the path and give points of reference for souls who seek the path of inner freedom.

I recognise that within the great spiritual current of humanity, along different paths in different means, many souls seek the path of “egoence” although they may use other terms to describe a degree of consciousness that harmonises their human and divine values.

This book is aimed at those similar souls, still unknown to me. I do not know them, I do not know their names or in which country of the world they live, but I love them without knowing them and I seek them out. I know that they have been walking just like me in search of the same Light, and I know that we will meet and we will form the universal society of the future together.

Buenos Aires, April 1969.

RAMÓN PASCUAL MUÑOZ SOLER

INTRODUCTION

A. FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HUMAN EXISTENCE

How can we fill the human existential void and the profound solitude of human soul today? Who can answer this troubling question? Must we await a response from humanity itself or is a response from God necessary?

Many say that “God is dead” to the contemporary world, that the “God Myth” is no longer valid, and that all sacred order has disappeared in the secularised, progressist and technocratic society of our time. But modern society has created other myths to replace the ancient gods, and despite extraordinary scientific progress and the economic and social development of some peoples, we have not eliminated pain, disease, injustice and spiritual underdevelopment from the earth, nor have we found a satisfactory answer to the questions that humans ask about the meaning of their own existence. We live in an increasingly organised society that is undergoing a process of rapid change. Demographic growth means that every day the surface of the earth is more densely crowded, but at the same time we are increasingly alone and we cannot fully understand what is happening in the universe, in the social community, or even within ourselves. Despite changes to organisation and communitarianism—whether from the right or left, conservative or liberal—mass society is suffering, as Victor Frankel says, a collective neurosis that is characterised by the existential void.

For my part, and aside from any neurosis, I have found that the solitude of the soul and the existential void manifest themselves in the inner lives of many people as states prior to the appearance of a completely new spiritual phenomenon and as an immanent field where the sacred can reveal itself in the form of a new modality and with a new meaning. At least such solitude and existential emptiness can produce, even in those who declare that they are atheists or materialists, the same anguish that religious people experience as “sacred terror” of the presence of God, and tend to be the prelude to profound transformations in the human soul.

This spiritual phenomenon, which is developing in the modern world both at individual and collective level, requires a different methodology for its study from the one used in the past for investigating so-called religious experience, not because the phenomenon is alien to the spiritual tradition of humanity, but because it emerges today in a different human structure and in a new time.

To somehow understand what is coming behind the solitude and inner void of many souls, the first thing we must do is to respect the original nature of this state of mind, be capable of living the phenomenon simply, without deforming it, without hiding it, or even without wanting to interpret it superficially—with rational concepts, instinctive drives, archetypes of the collective

unconscious, or social-psychological motivations—because all that is part of a superficial structure of the person. That is, not wanting to explain it through what is known but having the audacity to remain in silence in this empty field so that the phenomenon will reveal itself in the hidden and unknown face of its potentiality of being. Although it is true that when these profound lived experiences of the soul raise questions in the mind about the meaning of existence and the individual cannot frame an answer within their own rational frameworks and this can worsen their anxiety, depression or neurosis, the error lies in wanting to boil down this existential reality—which belongs to the order of the self—to psychological phenomena, philosophical speculations and therapeutic attitudes. It is not that an existential psychology, philosophy, sociology and ethics cannot be derived from this root, that is, a starting point in the person's concrete experience, but rather that the phenomenon that we are examining, in terms of its nature and its total dimension, is not psychological, philosophical or ethical, nor can it be explained by motivations of the individual unconscious, nor is it conditioned socially; it is a spiritual phenomenon that manifests itself in the contemporary human with growing intensity and which moves in search of the self and the meaning of existence.

Humans have undoubtedly had this same concern over the centuries, but the arguments of the past about God, fate and the paths that join the individual self with the divine are different from those that the human mind formulates today, and the focus of the existential issue that is at stake is also different because today's human is different from yesterday's: the mental and emotional structure and the social and cosmic environment in which they live have changed.

Many humans today, from the depths of their solitude and existential void, crave sincerely to find a bridge of union between the human and the divine, but when this pure longing of the soul tries to be translated into questions and rational answers it comes up against unsolvable contradictions, with paths that have been taken in the past by philosophers and theologians that do not lead anywhere, and with modern scientific, philosophical and social arguments that do not give any real solution either, because such arguments and such answers are generated at a superficial level of the mind and these systematic constructions can no longer guide humans in the world of the future. For the fundamental questions, the human soul requires today an answer that goes beyond what science, technology, philosophy and social organisations can give, and that is the answer-testimony given by humans themselves with their own lives.

Let us see some of these fundamental questions.

Is God really “dead,” as some say, or is he present and alive within each person, as others say?

Are questions about God conditioned by an intellectual, emotional and social structure that has been superseded by human development and is therefore meaningless, or should they be reconsidered today from a new starting point?

Has the old face of God disappeared to be replaced by the face of the mature human, or does this new human need to find a new face of God?

Has the cosmocentric and theocentric view of the universe that was held in the past been replaced definitively by a humanist, anthropocentric or sociocentric view?

Furthermore, are the paths and forms that the spiritual tradition of humanity have indicated as the appropriate means for this search for God as a supreme reality still valid or is this an empirical and magical methodology that must give way to a scientific methodology?

And do organised churches have any meaning in modern society? Are they dead organisms, or can they be reborn in new forms more befitting the material and spiritual needs of the modern human?

Does the revelation written in the Holy Books contradict science and disagree with the development needs of humanity, or is it simply a symbolic and archaic language that hides eternal truths? Is a new revelation necessary, and if so, what kind of revelation? A revelation that comes from a new Messiah, from a new church, or from a new type of human?

In turn, has modern society been totally secularised? Is sacred society merely a primitive social structure or is it tied to a bourgeois economic-social structure or, on the contrary, is it a suprasocial order, a universal archetype whose root lies beyond social changes? In socialist societies, has sacred society disappeared completely to be substituted definitively by a secular, community-based order, or is this just a stage contingent on the social development of some peoples? In these societies, is God completely “dead” and is the transcendent sense of the human soul dead, or are there also seeds of authentic spiritual life, albeit developing in new forms and different stages? If this is the case, saving the barriers of time and space, of ideologies and institutional forms, could there not be a possibility of an *encounter* among humans at a genuinely spiritual level? Is there not a possibility of a real ecumenism, not among similar beings of one group or belief or another, but among *similar souls* as souls of a universal society?

If the scientists of the world are joined by subtle ties of belonging to a universal community and they have the common language of science, should spiritual people, aside from the forms in which they may express a transcendent reality, also be able to find each other? Then why do they not find each other, or understand each other, despite beautiful declarations of brotherhood and fraternity?

We must acknowledge that it is futile to return to these old questions and hope to find new solutions because *today* there are *new vital questions* and we are obliged to answer them. That is, we must answer the questions that are being asked from the future and not those which are structured from the past: those new questions raised by the dramatic emergence of seeds of the future in the individual and in society. There is a concrete fact in the world today, a new human type has been born with a new mind, and it is necessary to answer the questions of this new human-child. But new and old philosophies are not enough, nor are social systems or economic systems. What is necessary is a *bread* for this human-child to feed on, grow and develop in the new environment that the fate of the universe has fixed for them, and that bread must be both spiritual and material.

In truth, modern philosophy has interpreted this anthropogenic reality and has focused its investigation on the human person: in its most elevated expressions, existential philosophy considers the person a microcosm, an existential centre that is not exhausted in its becoming, that is beyond birth and death, as a potential of potentials capable of reflecting by itself, through its full activation, the whole universe. This is a beautiful declaration, modern and profound, but it is not a *bread*, because no one lives on declarations today, no matter how true they may be. In our time, more than theoretical formulations or systematic constructions, what is needed is to discover the new meaning of life that impregnates reality in the concrete plane of existence launched towards the future, love it and live it, and this is the true modern revolution. What is needed is not so much a new current of ideas but a *current of renewed life* that contributes positively to the activation of the potential centres of the human person. This current does not emerge from a new humanism but from a divine energy that wants to become human and from a human movement that seeks its co-existential union with the divine. The intuition of this spiritual phenomenon has a certain prophetic character today in its specific formation. Many simple souls begin to perceive it and to live it even though they cannot explain it.

In other words, today as in other crucial periods of history, the message of the philosophers is not enough, as much as some perceive the currents of new ideas with anticipation in the field of thought; nor are social and political messages enough. Rather, what is needed is a *mysticism* that gives shape and existential reality to those ideas and from which an ethics buds with new dynamic content for the society of the present and of the future. In short, today as at other crossroads of human existence, what is really new are *new humans* who already exist and who are born here and there on the planet, new people, new existential centres that recognise the heralding signs of the new times, who are interpreters and give testimony with their own lives of that great cosmic mystery that is constantly renewed as a promise in the depths of the human heart: to accommodate in the “self” the divine Word and transform oneself through love and renunciation into bread for those who are hungry and water for those who are thirsty.

B. PHENOMENOLOGICAL CHARACTERISATION OF THE SPIRITUAL DRAMA OF MODERN HUMANS

1. At the level of the human phenomenon, the activation of the spiritual energy contains a completely *new* physiognomy, and I say new because although its root belongs to the mystical tradition of humanity, its individual and historical emergence has the character of a “birth” in today’s human and in today’s world.

2. In its character of vital nascent phenomenon, it is *barely understandable and explicable* and, in its process of growth and development, the way is opened with difficulty through the barrier formed by the mental structures of the past. Like any living phenomenon in a process of creative evolution, it takes on different expressions, both individual and collective, whether at biological or social level. Of the multiple branches into which the original drive diversifies, some can exhaust their energy and others abort or stray off course, but once the seed of the new is “born” it cannot die and its potential for genesis will open the way to new forms, new times and new places until the plenitude implicit in its fate is achieved. A great breadth of judgment is needed to “see” this phenomenon in its birth and development; it is deformed and covered up when one seeks to reduce it or compare it to cultural or spiritual forms of the past or with humanist expressions deemed new because they are novel but which rest on the old structures of the human mind and heart. The *new* that I refer to here is not in the type of clothes or appearance but in the order of the being.

3. It is a phenomenon of *universal* character that is constituted as a new aspect of inner human life and which in turn enriches the world. It is born from the intimacy of the self and takes shape with the new expressions of human life as a result of progress; it does not take a given “shape” to fix itself and die there but, due to its spiritual nature, it embraces, fertilises and transforms the different “forms” that nature and social and cultural life of different races and peoples of the earth offer it; it is ecumenical by nature and when it is manifested in “one” soul, “all” the souls can be mirrored in that soul.

4. It is a phenomenon of *intimate* character in its self but it manifests itself outwardly in living and lasting works. Souls are the total destiny of its energy and if its spiritual potential is channelled through material works, it is as a medium for the advancement and the good of souls.

5. Despite the newness of its emergence, as a dynamic archetype it *responds to fundamental principles and laws of universal and cosmic life*. It is not the fruit or the work of any person in particular or of any group. It is of cosmogenic character and manifests itself actively in all people who are receptive to its energy and are predisposed to participate in its creative action. It comes from what is its own, from what is of the human, and to give new life to that which humans have created on the earth. It is not contradictory to humanity, but it is not reduced to it.

In short, in a world in upheaval, shaken by the struggle of antagonistic forces, rich in material goods and poor in spiritual values, threatened by powers of destruction and confused by ideological messages with prophetic pretensions, in the heart of a great darkness, a new spiritual phenomenon emerges as an expression of a divine Word that, taking support in the particle of the human heart capable of answering its call, generates a human current of spiritual force that can carry out the long-awaited integration of the most opposed aspects of human life on earth.

6. In the midst of the profane world and secularised society, this phenomenon has *sacred* character. Its origin explores the mystery of the spirit but its emergence at human level is dramatic; it breaks into the homogeneity of the space-time of everyday existence with a solemnity of enlightenment creating a new space of inner “temple” and of sacred “tempo.”

7. Because of its intimate character *it reveals itself through the force of its presence alone and through life testimony*, testimony given to God, to society and to oneself. The fundamental testimony of the spiritual human is one of consciousness and reserved for God’s judgment but the works they do or do not do shall be judged by humans; social judgment is not always the sufficient measure to determine the real dimension of a spiritual work, but society is, in short, its unarguable heir. As for itself, testimony acquires the character of a moral judgment in which there is no room for dissembling and deceit: either I am a spiritual man or I am not, either the power of the spirit has revealed itself in me or it has not, either I am consistent and responsible with that awakening—if there has been one—or I am not; if I qualify myself as spiritual because I believe in God, in good and in virtue, it is worth nothing if in the mirror of my own conscience I come to recognise that I am incapable of responding with my life to such values. As the spiritual man that I claim to be, as the soul that I believe I am, am I capable of mirroring other souls in me? Can I share in the pain, the misery, the ignorance and the poverty of others? Can I cease to be an intermediary of ideas or beliefs and transform myself into living bread as food for souls? The birth of the spiritual man, as a culmination of a process of development that passes first through the stages of *homo faber*, or working human, and of *homo sapiens*, or cultural human, breaks even the idealised and romantic image of a spiritualism of the past, that turns pale as it is distanced from life or worn down through so many ideological struggles, to be invigorated today with the new human image of a living testimony.

8. This intimacy and testimony acquire plenitude of being in *individual life*. For all the talk of spiritual groups, and although the sum of human efforts directed at the spiritual life generates currents and collective organisations, the spiritual phenomenon that I am studying and seeking to characterise is manifested in our time as individual phenomenon; it is born, it is expressed and developed in the individual consciousness. Today’s spiritual person cannot give testimony of their condition as such through their “affiliation” to one church or organisation or

another, but through their active *divine filiation*, that is, through their “self” renewed as a child of God.

9. This divine filiation is confirmed as a profound feeling of certainty in light of an *emergence of Presence of the divine* in the individual consciousness. In reality, the primary aspect of the spiritual phenomenon is this emergence of Presence that constitutes the *centre* of a new way of being. In the light of this living Presence, the self recognises itself as “soul-child” and as “soul for similar souls.” I must clarify that in using the word “soul” I attribute to it the following meaning: to be a soul is to be a person activated by a divine energy with a new state of participatory universal consciousness: egoence of the self.

In the mirror of its own self the soul-child can recognise its Mother, that is, it can reflect in its own consciousness the matrix of the universe.

Ancient philosophy, centred on vision of a cosmic odyssey, sought to understand the soul from the whole. Plato says in the *Phaedrus*: “Do you think you can know the nature of the soul intelligently without knowing the nature of the whole?” But today we go back up the current of life and try to see what is happening in the universe on the screen of our own soul.

Considering the spiritual phenomenon from this perspective of existence, the emergence of the divine Presence in the soul manifests itself to us within a divine human context on a planetary dimension. That is, through the individual phenomenon we begin to glimpse this Presence as a new “focus” of spiritual energy in the world, that is, as a cosmogenic phenomenon of a new era. It is a primary phenomenon of cosmic order that many do not see or understand, but which is perceived clearly and with growing intensity by many simple souls who truly have within them the sign of the new times. As an active manifestation of the universal creative energy, it injects a sacred current in the world, not only as Idea, but also as Life and as Path of Light towards which the gazes of humans begin to converge. It is a fundamental Focus of attraction, of invocation, of meeting and of transformation. The problems of humanity and of the modern world must be focused on the basis of this spiritual reality, or only the humanist utopias of the past will remain.

10. Through this consciousness illuminated by the Presence of the divine, my solitude and my existential void are immediately filled and I intuit the existence of *similar souls*: I do not know them, I do not know what name or appearance they have or where they live in the world, but I love them without knowing them and I seek them out. I know they have been walking like I in search of the same Light and the same inner freedom and I know that we will meet and form the universal society of the future together.

C. DRAMATIC-EXISTENTIAL CONFIGURATIONS ON THE PATH

If to characterise the process of activation of the spiritual person we take as a starting point the lived experiences of the “being on the path,” we find on this “path” certain dramatic-existential key points, signs, junctions and crossroads that configure critical situations in which the being suddenly finds themselves facing a “closed door.” These dynamic structures in the potential context of which can be glimpsed a “closer to the door,” a “beyond the door” and the decision or attitude of passing through or not a “threshold” that takes on the sense of “medium” and “opportunity” for transcendence. From a phenomenological point of view these are enigmatic situations or enigmatic fields in the sense that they only “point to” transcendence but do not reveal it itself; the mystery of possibility that they enclose is only *revealed* in concrete situations of *total surrender* of the soul. In such a surrender, the “signal-situation” ceases to be a signal and “gives way,” and the door is opened to another way of being in the world. When the door is not opened it is because there is no *force of the soul*: there may have been force of the intellect, of the emotions or of the will but there was no force of the soul. By force of the soul I understand a super energy released by love, when love is total surrender of oneself, without concealment.

The emergence of these existential configurations as concrete realities of the “being on the path” makes it possible to characterise them formally as “symbol-figures.” Traditional symbology was familiar with these archetypal figures and their hidden meaning, but with the passing of time and as a result of deformations imposed by cultural transmission, they ended up as dead images, testimony to an ancestral wisdom. But today we are in a position to rediscover a living symbology, not static but functional, one *that is useful to us* as means, sign and orientation in the path of the soul. More than symbols to understand the diverse aspects of the structure of a cosmos, we need “references for the path,” “signs” to orient us in the mystery of the unknown. Some of these dramatic-existential configurations to be studied in this book are:

- I. SOLITUDE OF THE SOUL AND EXISTENTIAL VOID. Search from the “lost” state.
- II. ENCOUNTER. The encounter with the person in the meeting of souls; community of presence: a soul that mirrors another soul and recognises itself in it.
- III. VOCATION. Divine call and human commitment.
- IV. PATH. Encounter with the path of liberation.
- V. CREATIVE ENERGY. Encounter with life.
- VI. NEW HUMAN. Encounter with the new human and the new era; the mystery of spiritual “birth.”
- VII. THE DIVINE PROTOTYPE. Encounter with the mystery of liberation and redemption.
- VIII. DIVINE LAW. The encounter with the Law.
- IX. MYSTICISM. The encounter with Love.
- X. THE SOCIAL COMMUNITY. The encounter with Humanity.

XI. DEVOTION OF LIFE. The encounter with holiness.

XII. TEMPLE. New sacred space where the soul moves that has sealed its commitment with the Path and the Law. The encounter with the sacred.

XIII. THE ENCOUNTER WITH UNIVERSAL SOCIETY.

D. METHODOLOGY AND WARNING TO THE READER

This book is the result of a personal lived experience. What I say here is not a repetition of what I have heard, nor philosophical speculation of what I believe to intuit, but the result of a direct spiritual experience. At least, that is the substance. In terms of language, it will use those cultural forms that allow me to “translate” most accurately the current of life that animates the writing, so that that “thing” which by itself is untranslatable can somehow reach other people.

If anyone wishes to cling to the letter and to a purely rational meaning, they will surely have difficulty understanding: this is writing to put one foot in the letter and, from there—as if it were a springboard—to move the drive of the soul towards contact through similarity with the author’s soul. The living thought that seeks to make way through the forms of the language does not always succeed in being reproduced in those forms exactly, due to the need we have to continue using old words, worn down by use and abuse of meanings. When I use words such as “soul,” “individual,” “spiritual,” although I have sought to adjust the semantics to their real etymological values, it is preferable for the reader to tune into the total context of the thinking that I am trying to express in order to “see” in that background not only the traditional or conventional meaning of words but the *new* meanings that one wishes to breathe into them. Today a new philosophy of the word is needed, but whoever has something to give to others and feels the urgency of the present hour must give it even though they are aware of the imperfection of the instrument that transmits it.

In a previous work² I attempted to characterise conceptually some aspects of the age of expansion that we are living in and I gave certain scientific and philosophical bases of a new thinking that opens the way in the world and which has profound derivations in the different fields of human life and culture. But there are many beings who are not philosophers or scientists or do not have any culture, and who anxiously seek to know today what they are living for, who they really are, and what meaning their lives have—not only philosophers ask themselves these things—souls who will not settle for the attainment of technical knowledge, for better living standards, or for the resignation to poverty and suffering, but who want to open up their limitations and find a meaning for their existential void. For those souls, especially, I have written this new book which has, more than a doctrinal character, the character of a simple testimony of an

² *Gémenes de futuro en el hombre (Future Seeds of Humanity)*, Arayú, Buenos Aires, 2nd edition, 1967.

experience in search of the Truth, the Way and the Life. For this reason it will have, despite my wishes, a certain biographical and anecdotal aspect, although only with the intention of offering a point of living and concrete contact with an individual aspect of the drama of human existence that is especially meaningful in the present moment, and as “reference” for the souls who are feeling their way in the dark in search of a future that they cannot see but which they sense.

I have also sought to offer scholars the beginning of some lines of work that I only suggest and sketch in this book. For this purpose I have ordered almost all the chapters into three levels of methodological investigation, numbering them 1, 2 and 3, placed after the Roman numeral of the respective chapter and giving each of them the following meaning:

1. Metaphysical or ontological level: the being of the phenomenon as being.
2. Psychological and biographical level: the concrete person who experiences it in their own life.
3. Phenomenological-functional level: aiming to characterise the phenomenon studied based on practice in the social community.

These three levels are three aspects of expression within the *unity* of a living current which descends from a spiritual vertex to become accessible to metaphysical intuition, taking shape in the concrete person and can be expressed in social behaviour. In turn, the collective life of human society can ascend through the individual to a suprasocial and transcendent dimension. The reader must focus their reading on every one of these levels with a different attitude, learning to recognise and experience the scopes and limitations befitting each field, but without losing sight of the unity of life within the multiplicity of its expressions.

1. The first level is that of *laying the foundations* of the subject in general; it is the level of the questions that humans ask themselves in relation to the fundamental problems of existence, and the level of the rational or intuitive constructions in which they seek to found a theory about the world and life sufficiently valid to understand their own existence.

At this level I have given prevalence to an ontological-phenomenological foundation which, from the point of view of the methodology, I consider more objective and universal than any a priori theory about humanity and the universe, whether these theories are based on philosophical idealism, dialectic materialism, religious revelation or scientific experimentation. Today we need to found the human sciences on principles of *universal validity*, but not formulated a priori, nor as principles of authority, but rather as principles that reveal themselves in the fundamental ontological structure of humans. Only on these ontological- existential bases, valid for *all* humans, can the particular sciences of the individual and society be founded, can a truly universal ethics, economics and social philosophy be founded based on the needs of the self *qua* self and not on needs imposed by scientific, philosophical, social or religious doctrines.

This type of foundation was taken by Heidegger to its highest level in modern philosophy. I have no intention of developing the phenomenological analysis to its ultimate consequences, I merely suggest its general lines and present it as a working method within its limitations.

If Truth is formulated implicitly in the laws of the universe and if it has been revealed by God, it must also be written in the ontological structure of humans, and therefore, a methodical and objective reasoning that obliges the self to uncover its fundamental structures *qua* self, conclusions that do not contradict the universal law or the revealed truth, that is, there is only one Truth.

In the course of this study we will find time and again the admirable coincidence between the enlightenment provided by ontological exegesis and the data of the Revelation, but also more than once we shall see how the fundamental principles of the self are distorted when they are replaced by arbitrary systematic constructions and when the character of “principles” is given to created interests or emotional images that place a veil over the natural essence of humans.

From the approach of this first level we will reach an important conclusion: although existential analytics, as a method, allow us to reach the very threshold of the truth as a possibility of the self, it does not go any further than said *possibility*. That is, the philosopher may today reach the vision of the promised land, but their method of knowledge, by itself, will not allow them to enter it: the path of the mind ends here with one last reference, “Thou shalt not pass.” To go further we have to place ourselves at a completely different level, which is the second level to which I take this book, to the level of the concrete human who is capable of living the truth that they have intuited, that is, not giving it just their mind but also their flesh and blood.

2. This second level is the concrete level of individual existence; it is the level of existential practice. It is no longer only the level of truth as intellectual formulation, but above all it is the level of the Way and of Life. At this level the theory emerges from the practice and not vice versa: ideas spring from life here. Thus, at this level I have no choice but to speak of myself and of my own direct experience. This is the level of laboratory, the level of production, transformation, testimony. The piece that moves here must necessarily be a living piece, not a theory: without the human element that functions at this level, all theory is vain.

If there is any value in this writing it is not precisely because of what it may contain in terms of theory or doctrine, as if that was the case I would be embarrassed to have presented a new theory in a world that is starving and that needs a bread, both material and spiritual, to feed itself.

I must clarify that when I speak of my experiences with Don Santiago Bovisio, I am not referring to a type of unique master-disciple relationship but a union of presence in a meeting of

souls. I did not recognise him as a master in the meeting of souls of Cafh. For me, Cafh is a spiritual Idea that has become a way of life and field of energy in a group of souls who responded to the presence of Don Santiago with different individual modalities but with the same longing for inner freedom.

By this I do not in any way wish to suggest that the spiritual current of life “by means” of which I had access to a new way of existence is the only path that I think can lead to egoence of the self; rather I am referring to a universal prototype of “means” and “experience.” Specifically, the paths may be diverse, fitted to the particular idiosyncrasies of persons and whole peoples, but it is important to recognise the fundamental structures that make those paths real *means* that lead to the purpose projected by the self in its longing for egoence and not simple parking spots. As for my experience itself, I do not present it as a model to be imitated but as an ideal possibility that each person can realise in very different situations; the fundamental thing is that the experience be direct and lived and not a theory. Theories have always divided humans, but the direct and transforming experience of the self is a universal point of convergence by similarity that makes it possible, under the most diverse appearances, for truly spiritual humans to find each other and speak the same language.

3. At this third level theory arises once again, but not a theory a priori but one founded on practice, on life, and with a sense of application to the social community. At this level it is possible to found the sciences of the individual and of society not only from the self (as ontological level, as in the first part) but also in the concrete self of the person who has taken contact with the Path and the Life: here the human of “spiritual” vocation coincides with the human of “social” location.

If in the first level of study we see the coincidences between authentic analytical exploration of the self, ontologically founded, and the revelation of Truth as universal teaching passed down by the great masters of humanity, here at this third level we realise that the contradiction between the “spiritual” human and the “social” human disappears whenever the ultimate fate of the efforts of both is the elevation of the individual and society to its genuine universal dimension. The “spiritual” human, to reach the plenitude of their self, must necessarily take their experience to the social community (like a ferment that raises the dough), and the “social” human must be able to gain, from their collective experience, the individual centre of themselves whence they can launch themselves into the mystery of the cosmic consciousness. Distortions occur when one or another betrays their fundamental fate as humans and seek to impose laws or forms of behaviour on others that take them away (whether through excess or by default) from the primordial purpose, which is to develop purely and simply as human beings.

Today, more than ever, it is necessary to be able to found the philosophy of education, ethics, political economics and social philosophy on the universal bases of the highest spiritual

experience as the humans of the future must be educated to attain a development that goes beyond the cultural dimension and which aims for participation in universal society. It is said that we have reached a point in the history of civilization where either we all save ourselves or we all sink.

But not only is it necessary to “formulate” a law and an ethics “for all”—this is taken for granted in the doctrine of many social systems. The important thing is to be able to practice and live a spiritual ethics that translates into a universal right and economy, and for that we must be capable of denouncing the abuses and privileges in ourselves.

The grounding and study of the social sciences at this third level will show us that there is no contradiction between “natural law” and so-called “divine law,” given that in the Self, Truth is founded on a single principle, and Life becomes harmonious between the human and the divine. But we must learn to recognise where the distortions caused by the creed of possession arise. We have to learn to realise how the so called “spiritual human,” when they make of their spiritual life a new means to “enrich themselves,” and monopolise for their own development the energies intended for the great universal work, distorts the divine law, because the possessive sense leads them, in the end, to become an obstructive intermediary between God and humanity. And we must also learn to see how the human of social vocation—the political leader, the scientist, the educator, the legislator—when instead of placing their intelligence and their power so that the goods of the earth and culture reach everybody, divert them for their own benefit, betray the society they claim to serve, convert the natural law and prepare the road to rebellion.

In short, the central idea of this book is to discover the invisible and non-representable spiritual structure that is on the other side of the surface where human phenomena are manifested and represented, whether individual or collective. This structure is “intrahistorical” by nature and its dynamic is within a universal and cosmic dimension; what we call evolution and historical transformation can only be properly understood by referring to the particular facts that occur in the space-time habitual to this infrastructure which is something like the “heart” of phenomenological society. Precisely, to interpret this moment so especially significant in the evolution of humanity towards the conquest of its universal dimension, it is necessary to uncover this “heart” and learn to know the laws of its cosmoanthropogenic dynamic. We shall see that this “infrastructure” is not a symbolic figure or an abstract or anonymous institutional organ within the macrostructure of organised society, but rather it is a veritable “living heart” where the purest fibres of the hearts of every one of us converge. Our mission is to learn to recognise what our role and our individual function is in that “heart” that is at the centre of the universe: to what extent the individual’s biological, psychological and social functions enter into harmony with the great universal work or to what extent they are contradictory and destructive.

I

SOLITUDE OF THE SOUL AND THE EXISTENTIAL VOID

SEARCH FROM THE “LOST” STATE

In the midway of this our mortal life,
I found me in a gloomy wood, astray
Gone from the path direct.

DANTE. *The Divine Comedy*, Inf. I 1-3.

I. 1

From the specific point of view of the human who wants to find themselves, the origin of the search for that “self” is a state of existential anxiety that allows them to become aware of their “lost self,” of their self “outside” of themselves, which at the same time “opens” the possibility of “being” themselves. By this I do not mean that anxiety, in and of itself, leads humans to the encounter with themselves but rather that it simply “opens” that possibility that is inherent in the human condition itself. *From* anxiety it is possible to recognise a “lost way of being,” a way of being “outside,” an “inauthentic” mode of existence, and also *from* anxiety, or rather *in* anxiety, it is possible to hear the call to the more “authentic” way of being. This awareness may last just an instant, but the “opening” that that instant implies has the meaning of a possible starting point towards a new mode of being and a new sense of existence.

The pathological forms in which anxiety manifests itself, with its rich and varied psychical and bodily symptoms, and the emphasis placed on therapy by modern medical and psychological currents, have concealed the ontological root of anxiety as a specifically human phenomenon and as a fundamental state of mind that characterises the most typical mode of being free. When we remove anxiety from its phenomenological field in pathology and restore it to its original ontological level, detecting, even, its most subtle forms of expression, both individual and collective, an extraordinary path of access is opened up to us to investigate the inner life of humans. The increase in these subtle forms of anxiety and the diffusion in modern society in the form of “solitude of the soul” and “existential void” configure a mass phenomenon that has nothing to do with the pathological and, rather, a great deal to do with an “activation” of human energy towards new and more elevated lifeforms.

As anxiety is an important starting point that allows us to open up a comprehensive panorama of the most original depths of the self, we tackle full-on the existential analysis of this anxiety, following in this respect the fundamental lines drawn by Heidegger.

Anxiety has, above all, the character of “feeling threatened,” but not threatened by any particular entity, not by this or by that, but by “something” indetermined, something that one does not know what it is; a “something” that one cannot say is here or there or in any given part of the space that’s around us but that it is not “nowhere”; in short, what is threatening “is nothing” of the known world, and is “nowhere.” Furthermore, anxiety is not a threat against one particular aspect of myself or another that I might lose, it is not aimed against something that could be and which is now threatened, but rather it is my own “self in the world” that is threatened. That is, the things and the beings with whom I found myself well positioned in the world and who provided security and sense to my life, suddenly fall away. The world is no longer capable of offering me “anything,” nor are the beings with whom I felt understood in their being. What is exposed is the insignificance of all those things in which my self was absorbed. It is as if the world was emptied of its content and revealed itself to me with the potentiality of the mystery of itself. The framework of security that gave me a form of collective (“public”) existence disappears and I am left “alone” before the mystery of the world and myself: “nobody” and “nothing” can help me understand myself.

Anxiety is revealed, then, as a basic existential “rescue” function from an “inauthentic,” “lost,” “absorbed” way of being with things and other beings in the world—an existence that has, therefore, the characteristic of “collective,” “mass” or “public”—to an “own,” “authentic” way of being, a way of being “oneself,” which is characterised by its “uniqueness”: hence anxiety is the starting point towards individuality. I say “starting point” because it is not that anxiety immediately reveals our most authentic way of being in its uniqueness, but simply that it makes it possible in its origin. Without anxiety, in apparent plenitude and happiness of the absorbed self in the world, everything is known, understood and gained, and in such placidity and security, the self remains in a peaceful “sleep.” In this sense, anxiety “awakens” because it does not lead, by itself, to liberation.

Anxiety, both in its subtle forms of solitude and existential void and in its frankly pathological forms, is a “sign,” a “signal” and a “cipher” that defies the interpretation of its meaning, of what it means to “myself” and of what it wants from myself: meaning, not in the rational but existential sense. In short, anxiety is a configuration that signposts a “road to...” of a unique nature; it is not easy to interpret its message, but it invites us to uncover it.

All existential philosophy, especially from Søren Kierkegaard onwards, focuses on anxiety; all modern psychology makes it its fundamental subject of research and therapy. Furthermore, we might say that the contemporary era itself is taking place under the sign of anxiety. What does all this mean? Is it a collective pathological symptom, or does it herald something different? Is it an “awakening” sign of new forms of existence?

Heidegger has the undisputable merit of having denounced, from a metaphysical point of view, that what was habitually taken as known and understood about the human self required a deeper phenomenological analysis, and that the everyday form of existence of the human self in the world, of their self with things and with others, in which an “ego” is taken for granted centred on themselves is, in their everyday experience, an “improper” or “inauthentic” form of existence, and that what one supposes as an individual ego is no such thing in most cases but “one that goes around with others”: this or that happens to “one,” “one” is this or another way, “one” thinks one way or another. Although that “one” says of itself: “I am I,” it may be that *they are not themselves*, that they are “outside” of themselves. Everything that this “being outside of themselves” does carries the way of being of the improper existence. Under this modality he can unfold great activity and be very responsible but he does so “fleeing” from himself, absorbing himself in things and with others in the world. Community existence at this level of the “one with another” and “one against another” has, equally, the stamp of the inauthentic and of that which “is done in common” and not that of the true *union* founded on freedom, which joins but leaves, at the same time, the other in full freedom for itself.

The important thing about anxiety from the phenomenic-phenomenological point of view is that it “takes out” the self surrendered to the world from its “lost” state and makes it unique, showing it the two paths or forms of existence, authentic and inauthentic, that remain before them as concrete possibilities to choose. In other words, anxiety “opens up” the possibility of choosing, revealing those possibilities, but anxiety, by itself, does not determine the choice. Anxiety is a zero point in the search for oneself: it is the end of a “public” way of being and the beginning of a “singular” being as actually concrete; I say “the beginning” because it is an “unrealized” uniqueness, a uniqueness that shocks that which “is not yet.” For the true search for oneself to begin, the call of the moral conscience (vocation) must intervene: only the vocation of the conscience makes possible a movement of “return” of the self from its state of loss towards itself. The vocation of the conscience, as a call to “be oneself,” reveals the two fundamental movements of the self and the two directions of the search: the movement “outside of oneself,” of the “fall,” of the search for this or that, and the movement “towards oneself,” of “return,” of “search for oneself.”

For the avoidance of confusion, we must make a very clear distinction between the metaphysical investigation of existential analytics and the search for oneself as a path of concrete experience, that is, between a methodology of an ontological character and a method as ascetics of life; there is a great difference between the philosophical path that guides towards the search for the self, and the path of life towards the search for an authentic self made flesh. However, these two paths, while different in terms of nature and scopes, are not antagonistic. The path of rational methodical knowledge is not a path of salvation, but the truths revealed by natural intelligence cannot be in contradiction with the truths of faith. The path of the mind has its limits

but it can be a secure guide so as not to get lost in the world of fantasy and dreams. Furthermore, the search for oneself in one's practical aspect is at present taking on a different physiognomy to that which characterised the paths of the "old world." This search, without losing the vocational foundation, gradually breaks away from the "magic" and the "esoterism" of the ancient paths to becoming a methodical way within reach of the mental possibilities of the modern human. As thought is stripped of its conditioning emotional context and the capacity to think for oneself becomes more accessible to the average person, this thought no longer constitutes the terrible barrier of difficulty that it was in the past but places itself at the service of human liberation.

I. 2

From an early age I experienced a hidden feeling of solitude pregnant with questions about the meaning of life: who was I, really? Where did I come from? Where was I going? What meaning did *my* existence have? Why did the pain and suffering of others resonate so much in me? It was as if the pain of the world came over me and I carried the burden of it somehow without understanding why or for what. Why such despair at a world that I did not appear to have chosen? What was the origin of that feeling of threat that I only learned much later was called anxiety? And why that strange nostalgia for a divine world that I intuited in its perfection but which hid itself from my sight.

How alone is the young person in these crises of existence! So many interpretations have been woven about the concerns that are manifested in youth and so many diverse attitudes are taken to those concerns without penetrating in the slightest the intimacy of the person to see what is going on there! One cannot deny the important contributions of modern psychology for a better understanding of the adolescent's behaviour, but in general the psychological approach is still very materialistic and mechanistic: almost all the questions refer to the mechanics of sexuality, to social relationships, to professional orientation, to artistic, sporting and cultural activities; that is, they are reduced to a surface vision. But the human phenomenon that is behind all these issues is much deeper, it has an existential dimension, it affects the whole of the person and their destiny as a being, and cannot be reduced to psychological-social questions. The young person needs to discover their vocation not only as a response to the call of their natural aptitudes or to the call of family tradition, of race or of culture, but as a response to a call that comes from the depths of their own conscience and which longs to fill their being and their destiny: vocation of being "themselves" in the totality of their individual human and divine possibilities, and not vocation as a conditioned response to adapt appropriately like a mechanical piece in a collective set of gears. Not recognising this existential reality leads, sooner or later, to tremendous frustrations.

The young person is "oriented" to discover their natural tendencies, their preferences, their skills and aptitudes, but... for what? So that they are more effective as a specialized part of

the organism of a company, of the state, of the family, of the race? If youths are educated as a “means” to serve an end that they have not chosen, no matter how lofty that purpose is, we set the bases of an outdated educational philosophy that has been the origin of all those currents that have made humans a means for many things except for “themselves.” And then we are alarmed that extremist political ideologies emerge, or that a collective violence grows out of control: but we ourselves have put a foot in the sources of creative energies of the person, generating with them underground currents of destruction and committing the modern crime, as serious as genocide and economic subdevelopment, of “sin against the self” of the human person!

When I remember my experiences as a child, my questions as a young man and the “readymade answers” that I found for my questions, my anxiety is renewed and I find more patent and pathetic the contrast between the soul that seeks to discover “its” world and the generation of people who live shaped by the past. The world that most of the young people of my age accepted as it was, without wondering about the whys or the wherefores, appeared to me like a sphinx, enticing me to uncover its hidden mystery. The things that were reality plain and simple for others, were for me just the veil or appearance of a deeper, hidden reality that called me to discover it; behind the physical person, their appearance, their name and social condition. I sought the essential background, the delicate spiritual silhouette that animated it; behind the forms of the body I intuited the presence of the soul; behind the wonderful veil of Nature, its colours, its shapes, its movements and its life, I sensed the living presence of God... and I sought the face of God behind all the manifestations of life.

Since I was a boy I have known the God of the Revelation, the God that my mother taught me to love and to fear, but I felt him too far away and too powerful a Lord, too enigmatic for me to have direct access to his presence. As I found the dogmatic formulation of religion increasingly harder to accept, my mind began to investigate the fields of philosophy and science.

I later knew the God of the philosophers, the absolute Being who satisfied my metaphysical concerns, but I did not feel his life. He was a cold divinity in a cold temple, a mental divinity in an ideal temple.

Science, with its objective and experimental methods, and technology, with its marvellous achievements, suddenly placed before me humans’ concrete possibilities of knowing and doing. I participated in the positivism of the age of enlightenment, but I could never accept a completely natural, profane world, nor become a materialist or humanist philosopher. The divinity that science revealed to me in the perfection of a law or in the discovery of a natural power was not the divinity my heart demanded.

Tired of seeking outwardly, I began a new stage of searching for God in myself, turning my eyes inward, knowing myself, discovering the secrets of my own soul. This was a fascinating

experience that for many years absorbed my interest and allowed me to discover a world that was completely unknown to me previously. But as I descended to deeper and deeper levels of my personality, the only thing I brought to light was historical, “geographical” and “geological” knowledge from my unconscious. I became aware of the elemental forces of my nature and of the instinctive and emotional motivations of some aspects of my behaviour. The more I got to know my deep psyche, the more an underground image took shape before my eyes that had remained hidden until then. Who was that figure, at times seductive and attractive, at times threatening and destructive, whose changing face was at times animated with forms of the past and other times with the enigmatic expression of future promises? Was it an expression of my own self? Did it embody my flaws and weaknesses or was it a vertex of primary life forces, an archetype of the race that took individual shape in my person? Was it, indeed, an inner divinity that resumed all the elemental powers of life, the “great mother” dispensing all the goods and, at the same time, devouring her children? This image seduced me and intrigued me but it also held me captive in its “magic”: a powerful primitive magic of love and of death. One day I had a dream: that image came to me, in female form, but with a dark, undefined face and I heard behind my back a loud laugh... When I awoke I intuited immediately that it was futile to continue questioning the serpent of knowledge while I was tied to its magic of dependence. It was not enough to understand the dynamic of the forces of the unconscious to be free. It was also necessary to fight them and “kill the dragon.”

These apparently insignificant inner touches, such as those of this dream, have held a great value of guidance for me and I consider them within that category of “signposts on the inner route” that I described in the Introduction. They are milestones and “signals” along the way and if the self is predisposed to listen to their revealing message, they mark the path to follow. I believe that the inner way, although dark, is occasionally lit up by those instantaneous flashes that, under the direction of a “guiding star,” potentially present in the soul, warn and point the way to the walker.

In my particular case I reflected: where had I arrived? Perhaps a dead end? Somehow I had strayed from the religion of my parents, at least in its formal aspects. I had burdened myself with scientific and philosophical knowledge about the world and life, and I had attained a certain psychological knowledge of myself. But I felt further and further from God and from humans. The divine face that I sought was resolved in troubling images that attracted me for a certain time to then leave me in the void and in uncertainty: the first image of the God, Father, of my God as a child—of the wise old man, just, omnipotent, providential and with a stern face—faded in my youthful years to be replaced by a divinity with a cold, enigmatic face, a mental divinity, that then gave way to an underground image that expressed the elemental powers of Nature and the primary forces of human life. I had cast aside the traditional inheritance of my parents, I wanted to know the world and the paths of life by my own means, and I now found myself with a treasure of

knowledge that I felt like a heavy burden on my shoulders, wandering along an uncertain road, without understanding the meaning of the world that surrounded me and hearing still the echo of the laughter of that underground image that seemed at times to embody all the life forces that I sought to ignore in the search for mental knowledge and an absolute ideal.

Although the road seemed lost, my soul was not dead and, from the bottom of the abyss in which I found myself, from my own solitude and existential void, I invoked with faith the divine presence within me: a divinity that I did not know, but whose potential life I sensed behind all the forms that had passed before my eyes until then. I prayed in silence to that Unknown God and asked him to manifest himself in my life in a concrete and real way, any way he could, not only to know him, but also to feel Him by my side and join Him.

This inner search, this supplicant call from my soul in the midst of the darkness, lasted too long for me. I experienced a type of anxiety that I had never know, an anxiety of death and desolation in which everyday life appeared completely meaningless to me.

What happened later in this crisis is not easy to describe because it belongs to an individual inner experience that moves in a “new” field of existential space-time and cannot be translated completely conceptually, but can only be captured through similarity of life. Therefore, what I say here in this book—the biographical parts, the anecdotal parts, the conceptual parts—must be taken only as a *point of contact* to sharpen the sensibility of the reader to the soul that attempts to communicate with them without intermediaries, from soul to soul.

However, the first thing I can say is that that unknown God, that potential presence of the divine, must have “heard” my prayers because my “search” translated operatively into an “encounter” that had the character of answer-testimony.

I.3

From the lived experienced and with a retrospective methodology—I say retrospective because it is a matter of somehow tying together two different dimensions of existence, re-examining with the intellect a situation that was already enlightened by a spiritual experience—I shall attempt to characterise *search and response* as fundamental needs of the human soul.

1. We can say that the “search for oneself” is implicit in any project of being although generally concealed under the appearance of a search for one thing or another considered of value “to oneself.” The search that is made in the “lost” state—absorbed in the treatment with “things” and “business” in the world—that ontologically has the character of a “flight” from oneself, from the practical point of view of view it is not a “futile” search, it is not running in vain after the “illusion” (Mâvâ) in the absolute sense. That is, it is not something completely disconnected from the search for the truth and from the search for oneself and which, therefore, must be denounced

a priori as negating existence and placed as a foundation of an ethics of negation of the world and of life, but rather is an “existentially improper way of searching for oneself,” but one that has a relative value while the “conscience” does not point out another path and denounces it as illusory (vocation): we could say that it is a “prior” search for a vocational call.

Vocation, in the ontological sense of a voice of the conscience that calls one to be “oneself,” is an existential structure that occurs in all human beings as a possibility of being, but does not occur in everyone in the same way as active function for the attainment of perfection. When we speak of vocation, as long as we do not say otherwise, we understand it in the restricted sense, no longer merely as the conscience’s “call to be” but, specifically, as the individual capacity to *respond* to that call, making a search of “oneself” the primary purpose of existence.

Vocation as human response to the call of the conscience has, then, the character of an “individual search” that goes “against the current,” that is, that follows a direction contrary to the usual current of existence. It is this type of search, a path of individual existence that sustains itself without being dragged or confused by the contingent aspects of the collective current of human life, that I call *egoence* as “vocation of self.” This vocation, as a search for the self in the sense of egoence, is not a metaphysical path or an exclusively personal effort in terms of immanence, but requires *superhuman* strength: no human is capable of “swimming against” the collective current of humanity in search of themselves without divine assistance, as they would irremissibly be lost in the first whirlpool. Hence one must respond to the vocation of the conscience (voice that calls) with an *invocation*, before any kind of action. By *invocation* I understand here a call within, a prayer to the divine power that “speaks” in the vocation so that it manifests itself actively in a form that can be clearly recognised. If the *invocation* is made with the “strength of the soul” the *divine answer* will come: this is a human-divine law of correspondence.

The “strength of the soul” does not come only from good intentions, bursts of emotion or will power but, above all, through the strength of the *heart*. If the call to divine Presence is purely spiritual, the true response comes: a pure, disinterested invocation, without concealment, is a human energy that is associated with the transcendent divine mystery and transforms and multiplies humans “providentially”, that is, giving providence to the needs of their souls, not only in the spiritual but also material sense. “Providence” for the needs of the human translates into “providing those conditions or means,” both material and spiritual, most suitable for the advancement and good of their souls. This *invocation* formulated with the totality of the self is simply what the spiritual tradition of humanity has always known as *prayer* and which, stripped of the primitive magical characters with which it tends to be deformed, constitutes the new language between God and the human of the future: if I love the truth and I search for it with the

strength and purity of the soul, I will find the path and the means I need to make that truth a life experience.

When people say that their prayers to the divinity are not heard, that prayers are pointless and that God, if He exists, does not answer them, it is because they are measuring the transcendent and divine dimension of their own selves with the poverty of their hearts. The failure of the answer has its origin in the impurity of the call, in the lack of renunciation of the drive of the soul or in denying a providential answer while awaiting the satisfaction of their own desires.

This living relationship between the divine and the human, if it can so be called, is founded on a basic, substantial *union* that is realised in a sacred existential field (“inner temple”) and whose rhythm oscillates between the solitude and void of the soul on the one hand and the mystery of the divine Presence on the other. From this primitive field, which is the original matrix of the spiritual society, a whole consequent dynamic emerges in the concrete field of human experience; what appears as imponderable in the inner world translates into concrete and material facts in the outer world of human society.

2. After this sketch to characterise the search, I shall now begin the analysis of the *response*.

When I review, always after the fact, the answers that “I expected” from the divinity, an expectation conditioned by everything that others had said and written about such answers, I can say that the divine answered *in me* in a fairly different way to all that I had expected.

How did God answer in me? With a message that came from the outside? With an inner voice, illumination or revelation? None of that: at least none of that as I had imagined it. God responded in my soul, in the concrete plane of existence, through the “encounter” with another soul: the encounter is another of the dramatic-existential mysteries or configurations that I will examine later.

Now I understand that God did not manifest himself in me as an omnipotent, wise Father who answers all his son’s questions, but rather as a loving Mother who, perhaps feeling Herself my solitude and anxiety and hearing my prayers first filled my existential void with her Presence. Before answering my questions, warning or punishing me for my weaknesses, she gave Herself in another soul and in communion with that other soul I was able to *feel* her company, her love and her home. Before asking me who I was, where I came from or whether I was worthy, she made me enter Her house, the house of Love; that was her first living Teaching: she made possible my encounter with another soul through her Gift of Love.

This encounter with another soul in whom the divine power manifested itself was doubly meaningful for me as an answer. On the one hand it confirmed to me the providential aid, that is,

that I was not alone, that my life was not cast to chance; that I was, in a word, guided, and that when I called with faith and with the force of the soul, the divinity answered me with concrete facts. On the other hand, until the moment of what I call the “encounter”, I was used to conceiving the life of the soul as something exclusively inner, and divine Presence as an imponderable manifestation infused with the spirit. But when my soul encountered another similar soul I realised that the spiritual phenomenon went beyond the narrow limits of the inside and the outside and of the irreducible antagonism between spirit and matter. I understood that the living forces of the soul, the *invocations* that come from the heart, move matter and configure material reality in such a way that the conditions necessary *appear* for ideas to be realised, for the spirit to be made flesh and the path of existence to become life. In short, when the soul believes it is lost in the whirlpool of the external search, from the depths of the abyss of an existence that seems meaningless, a mysterious Voice calls it to the search for itself.

If at the threshold of that first call, instead of despairing in anxiety and allowing themselves to be swept away by the blind impulse to lose themselves again with the things in the world, the self responds by invoking with the strength of the heart the divine Presence that manifests itself through the conscience that calls, the search translates operatively into a providential answer that gives a solution to the total needs of the soul.

II

ENCOUNTER

COMMUNITY OF PRESENCE

As I descended to the deep valley,
I encountered a being so silent,
He seemed mute in his silence.

DANTE. The *Divine Comedy*. Inf. I, 61-63.

II.1

The philosophy of the person, which at present is of particular relevance, has shown the deep meaning of the “encounter with another,” of the “being with another,” and the primary value of existential communion: the human person reveals themselves, in the plenitude of their individual existence, through coexistence. The ontological exegesis of this “revealing encounter of oneself” casts extraordinary light for us to understand human communication in the order of the self, but proves insufficient to clarify the multiple aspects that interest the individual in the practical order of this encounter. What is the use in knowing theoretically the realising value of joining with another if I don’t manage to find, concretely, the person with whom I might consummate a communion of presence? Furthermore, we shall see below that this thesis of coexistence, even in its philosophical formulation, is insufficient and that existential communion is not the fruit of the encounter of two people, “I” and the “other,” but rather of “three.”

All human beings have the need to meet a revelatory person who is the “image” on the earth of the highest aspirations of the soul, but most of the time this longing remains a pure ideal because a third energy is unknown, which is the Love of the divine Person activating human coexistence and making true union possible.

Of course, behavioural sciences have advanced a great deal today in everything regarding human relationships and communication techniques, but seeing the concrete results of coexistence, one wonders if all that technology placed generally at the service of utilitarian ends goes beyond the achievement of a superficial coexistence, adaptative and conditioned without reaching the *coexistential union* for which the soul longs the most.

In reality, aside from philosophical speculations, aside from conventional human relationships, aside from communication through ideas, emotions or work that is done in common, aside from the closeness of distance of persons in space and time, aside from the organisations or groups identified by community ideals, there is a need in the individual for existential communion, a need to reveal—through union with another soul—the most genuine part of their

own self and renew in that union the potentialities of their person. To find a soul! Therein lies the great longing and the big question of the humans of our time: because I can have a father and a mother who transmit in me inheritance of the race, I can find a wife with whom to perpetuate the species and continue the tradition through our children's education, I can find a master who allows me to know the secrets of the cultural tradition of humanity and help me to discover new fields, I can find a friend or a companion with whom to share the experiences of life, but I may not find a soul who reveals myself to me.

II.2

The encounter with Don Santiago has for me a deep, dramatic meaning in the existential order, from the moment when he made me aware of that mysterious community of presence between souls and its revelatory and transforming spiritual force. When over time I want to relive the circumstances in which I met him and evaluate certain events of my life based on that encounter, I realise that my connection with him was not a personal relationship of greater or lesser depth than those I had before or after meeting him, but rather it was a completely different and unique experience. It wasn't even, strictly speaking, a personal *relationship* but a coexistential encounter in a reunion of souls. I will speak of some aspects of that union of souls here, of its subjective spiritual value and of its resonances in the external and objective world; not only as an individual, anecdotal or biographical experience of the people who were protagonists of it, but as a prototype of a union through similarity that I intuit as the foundation of spiritual society and which, in other contexts, under other circumstances and in response to other destinies in life, is glimpsed as an aspiration of souls called to satisfy a vocational sense of their existence. This type of encounter has the meaning of an existential configuration, and I will speak of it while keeping mainly to this point.

Firstly, I will not write the biography of Don Santiago here, nor will I speak of his person or his work on a historical basis, of what he was before I met him, what he did or did not do, but rather of the impact that his soul had on mine and some experiences I lived after meeting him. When history sets out to judge humans through their biography—which tends to be no more than a thread of memories frozen in time—it runs the risk of confusing being with becoming, of taking the shadow of contingent aspects for the living energy that presides over and gives meaning to existence, and of substituting, at the end, the transcendent dynamics of the person with the objectified projection of their works. Instead, the living presence of souls develops in a different dimension to the space-time web in which the existence occurs of beings identified by a name, a work or a destiny. They come in an existential, not historical time, in a trans-subjective community, not an objective one.

To be able to locate this “encounter” as a dramatic-existential core of *my* path, I must necessarily re-examine the state of my soul at that time and understand retrospectively that state in the light of the new structure that emerged from the encounter.

I debated with myself, in my inner world, on the disconcerting search for myself and penetrated the depth of the underground abyss *invoking*, from anxious solitude, a hidden Presence in the mystery. I listened out for its faraway Voice and sensed its guide, but what I call now Presence is, rather, a lived experience reconstructed retrospectively because the self that was there in its “lost” state experienced it as a kind of “not being.” Within this situational context of “being open to oneself awaiting a divine answer” I met Don Santiago. In his presence I felt that I penetrated an atmosphere different to the one that I was accustomed to breathing. I was impressed by the field of freedom in which he moved and intuited immediately that I stood before a superior being; in his being I sensed a great soul that I had always sought. This affinity did not emerge from a similarity of ideas, given that in the first encounter I barely had the opportunity to speak, nor something that one might call personal impact, affective warmth or anything like that. It was a communion of presence, in simply an *encounter*, but not just any encounter.

The primary phenomenon, as I can perceive it retrospectively, was the impact of a superior presence of spiritual character. It was a Being in whose presence there wasn’t much to speak or to say: everything was said. I intuited as if he had always known me and had always been waiting for me. At his side I felt a great trust with a certain mix of secret fear.

Since then I have learned to tell apart two very different levels of interpersonal communication and also two different languages in dealing with human beings, and all this in relation to two different ways of being. Although it is true that, rationally, one cannot differentiate absolutely between the subtle subjectivity of the inner world and the temperamental character-logic façade that expresses it, the soul learns to discover, by similarity, what is truly part of the soul—the genuine aspect of the self—and what its appearances and its contingent aspects are. I did not join Don Santiago through his superficial persona. Furthermore, I believe that at that level I even had certain reservations. I was not seduced by his personal “magnetism,” there was no “attraction” or “sympathy”—in the meaning that tends to be given to these terms—but a similarity and an “encounter in a transcendent field” that joined us in a community of presence and fate.

II.3

I shall now attempt a more objective characterisation of this phenomenon of the “encounter” and above all of those truly meaningful and *creative* encounters to differentiate them from superficial or destructive encounters.

As I write these pages, the news tells us that in the Vietnam War they are trying out an instrument that, through the register of the faint emanations of people's bodily odour it is possible to detect a human presence in the middle of the dense jungle. But in the jungle of civilization it will be increasingly necessary for humans to have their own instrument of perception that will allow them to recognise souls through similarity and be able to differentiate them from the *robots* perfected by technology and culture or adorned by art.

The "encounter in a field of transcendence" has the characters of: 1. Being in an encounter-response. 2. Revelatory. 3. Sacred. 4 Liberating. 5. Vocational. 6. Consummated in universal society.

1. It is an *encounter-response*; that is, it is not a "random-encounter": it comes about as the providential result of a call that is made with the force of the soul.

2. It is a *revelatory encounter*; it is a soul that mirrors another soul and which recognises itself in the encounter with it. I had already had a first disappointment in the search for myself "by myself" and within the field of "my" own individual solitude. I later met many others who seek to find themselves following the so-called "path of self-knowledge"—or rather, a deformation of that path—and all they succeeded in doing was to form an image of themselves in accordance with their temperament or idealizations. Such images are sometimes sombre and destructive—making the person appear worse than they are—and other times they are more beautiful, intelligent and powerful than what the subject is in reality. Many people live thus, believing they know themselves when, deep down, all they do is torture themselves with the image that has formed of their defects or sins, or get excited about what they consider to be their virtues. I believe that all this is a mirage of the mind and that self-knowledge outside of the revelatory mirror provided by the reunion of souls is, often, pure illusion. But we are afraid of that mirror of an objective conscience. In my particular case I only now realise that in that fear was the root of that dark "sacred fear" that I sensed in the presence of Don Santiago. It was too much mirror for me; in my presence I saw myself "too" well. My past emerged like a dense shadow, but I also glimpsed a new world and the force of a vocation cast towards a future destiny.

The revelation of our essential being, of our soul, is not something that can be achieved through self-knowledge or knowledge of the other, nor through inner, immanent enlightenment, but something that is renewed and perfected in the community of presence with souls. It is not something that occurs but something that is revealed, simply. That is, I discover my soul in the mirror of another soul who provides me with their own being so that I can reflect myself and reveal myself in them; my individual soul emerges—in the *egoence of their self*—from that community of presence. This is the fundamental thesis that I will develop in this book, not as a theory but as an experience of my own and within the individual limits of that experience. But I

will repeat again a concept that I mentioned earlier and on which I will speak below: it is not a question, merely, of an “encounter of two”, that is, of a coexistence of a pair, but of a transcendent community of “three,” this third element being the energy of the divine Love that makes the union of souls possible.

As this is a revelatory encounter, I want to highlight again the importance here of the revelation of the soul itself in contemporary society. Everyone today wants to make money, acquire knowledge, gain power, enjoy love and life’s pleasures, have children, produce work, seek prestige, but I believe that all these, as objective values by themselves, do not go beyond the mechanics of life and even if one attains all that one desires, one might go so far as to say with the Gospel: “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, but lose his soul?” (Matthew 16,26.) Removed from its eschatological context, this sentence takes on extraordinary significance at present, and in the modern version we might ask: “What use is knowledge of the universe and power over the things and the beings of this world, if humans do not take consciousness of themselves and develop fully as a humans? What is the worth of having children, educating them in civilisation, progress and culture, if they then feel the impulse to go to war and destroy each other? What is the sense in attaining wealth, prestige and development if we are then incapable of descending among the less fortunate beings and sharing in their needs?

3. It is a *sacred encounter*. What does this mean? That it is an encounter that is inspired by a pure love, indeed, a divine love. In every encounter between souls there is a particle of a divine potential that longs to manifest itself, but the people who, ideally, want to make love divine most often reduce it in practice to the extent of their passions and their slavery. This divine particle is that “third element” that I have been referring to as an expression of a transcendent “third Person” who makes existential communion possible. In our time, what determines the crisis of coexistence in human society is the absence of this “particle,” that is, of the “sacred element” that gives life and meaning to civil society; *sacred* not with the meaning of the rite, the dogma or the ceremonious sacrament, but divine love made flesh in humans. This is a divine element that becomes human through the purity of intention and one’s own capacity for renunciation. It is a non-utilitarian love, which does not seek to gain advantages, or do a “deal” with another being, or transform it into a means for their own ends, or reduce it to the condition of thing, or “use it” one way or another.

The sacred encounter, then, is sacred love, love for the soul, and love for the soul means *real respect for the person and their freedom*. However, most of the time when we say love for the soul all we do is “possess” the person; let us speak no more of the crude forms, but how many subtleties are used to dress up the possession of a person! In the sacred encounter there is no need to possess the person or identify with them—all that is needed is a point of contact with their soul.

A spiritual presence is enough to light the sacred fire of love between souls, but there must be fire!

4. It is a *liberating encounter*. What a strange force of liberation springs from the community of presence between souls! It is a force of creative love, that caresses or hits, but always with charity, without enslaving pressures or possessive yearnings; it is a force that manifests itself in silence, that looks after the soul and lets it grow, simply, until at the right moment it opens like a flower, revealing by itself the values it holds within. I had seen this divine force manifest itself in the presence of superior souls and in diverse fields: it is the loving climate that some mothers provide for the growth of their children; it is the force that some wonderful women radiate, beside whom the man reveals his talent; it is the magnetic presence of some masters and directors of souls; perhaps the names of these beings are not recorded by history, but the gratitude towards them is permanent in the hearts of those who had the grace to be in their company. It is the force that humanity needs today; it is the force of love that we all need to make our children grow as souls and not as little devils who devour each other; it is the force that is born from the spiritual community and which can breathe life into a true organised society of free humans.

Existential frustrations do not come so much from things or goods but rather from people; they do not depend so much on what one thing or another can achieve, on what one goal or objective or another can attain, on whether the meaning of existence is understood rationally or not, but rather they emerge, above all, because they cannot find in another soul the mirror and stimulus necessary to reveal themselves as souls. In recognising—when we have “reached” the goal of our endeavours—that we have forgotten along the way the souls that walked beside us, and that when we wanted to remember them, when we “had a little more time” to look at them as people, it was too late to think about their liberation, and we went on to swell, with them, the great caravan of collective slavery.

We have perhaps known many people in our lives who have taught us many things, with whom we have shared work, who have taken an interest in our ideas, our tastes, our beauty and our money, but have they really taken an interest in our souls? And for our part, we have formed a family, we have had children, disciples, employees, and we have given them the best of ourselves—or at least we believe we have. But have we given them our soul for them to reflect in? Have we contributed in any way to them recognising themselves? Have we left the flame of divine love burning in their hearts? Have we left them a *spiritual* inheritance, or has our legacy merely been mental, technological, emotional or material? In short: we have known many beings, been part of many groups and contributed to forming civil society, but we have not succeeded in penetrating spiritual society: that is the basic existential frustration that brings the bitterness of

not having found meaning in existence, or the frustration of the mirage through which, having conceived the ideal of a liberating union, we transform it into an enslaving union.

The spiritual person favours the liberation of the person they love, it is a catalysing factor in the process of human liberation, while the possessive person wishes to own, one way or another, the people they have beside them: they want to form them in their idea, in their creed, in their customs and impose on them, under the pretext of protection, help and love, their “servitude.” The same thing is true of the institutions: they are liberating or not depending on the people who constitute them, whether those people are the “means” of liberation for all those who come into contact with them or means of power and of slavery. If the *husband* or the *wife* in the marriage, or the *father* or the *mother* in the family, or the *ruler* in the state, or the *priest* in the church, or the *teacher* in the school, instead of “being” spiritual persons and maintaining their “sacred role” in the service of the liberation of souls, become intermediaries³ at the service of “profane” interests; and if the “being with people” or “being with souls” is transformed into “being with things,” then the institutions—whether family, company, state or church—lose their possibility of being means at the service of liberation of people to make people means to suit their selfish, materializing ends: the spiritual field of the institutions—which is the “heart” of them, their “infrastructure”—does not then offer them a bridgehead towards the path of an antigravitational existence. This deviation of meaning is today called the crisis of the institutions, when in reality it is a crisis of people and the subversion of the fundamental values of existence.

This different attitude that I have been pointing out, between the person who helps liberate and the person who contributes to slavery, is of great importance: they are two types of different quality and detecting them undoubtedly constitutes one of the key points for the formation of future society.

In the search for the existential communion with a self that brings us a union in freedom one can no doubt fall into tremendous slavery: one can get caught like a butterfly in the net. At the vocational level in which I oriented my search I ran the risk—and only now do I realise this—of falling under the seduction of the persona of the master. How many supposed “masters,” under the pretext of guiding the youth, do no more than give them a new slavery! This may be one of the reasons why there are very respectable currents that deny the need of any master; in reality, what they deny is enslaving authority, which is not the same. Of course, although the master does not constitute himself as an authority, the disciple, who says they want to be free but most of the time what they are searching for is a new father, a new mother, the ideal friend or a superior being

³ In this book I use the word “intermediary” in the sense of someone who acts based on values that are not their own; the person acts as an “intermediary” when, instead of “being” a means of union with the sources of the self and of life, they interpose themselves as an opaque screen, projecting onto others only their own shadow; in short, someone who wants to give something that they have not lived, that they have not produced, that they have not experienced, that is not part of their self.

who thinks for them and tells them what they have to do, ties himself to dependence on the master, and the result can be none other than fresh disappointment. For my part, I do not deny the chosen authority, which reveals itself as a value by itself; what I deny is the false authority that submits to the soul, that seduces it any way it likes and which, instead of constituting itself as a means of liberation, places itself at the service of slavery, dependence and the obstruction of individual values.

5. It is a *vocational encounter*. The accent placed on the ontological exegesis of coexistence and its ideal valuation as contemplative and romantic union between souls has to some extent concealed other very important aspects that are at the root of its dynamic. In the community of presence, at the same time that I am conscious of my own self, I become aware of the self of the other, and this awareness refers to the *totality* of the possibilities of the self. In other words, two souls that encounter each other and join together through similarity not only communicate in their selves and realise the sensitive union, the aesthetical or ecstatic pleasure, but also they discover the “ethical and vocational sense” of that new nascent community.

At the level of the superficial contacts of an existence that gravitates towards aesthetic or utilitarian values, people often have relationships that are also superficial, but at the level of the soul this does not occur. The harmony of the souls by similarity, when it occurs at the level of the self, not only has a material, contingent result, but also translates into transcendent, community “work.” The unitive mysticism of love reverses in a permanent creative action. The disappointment that tends to accompany human relations like their own shadow exists because once the sensitive, emotional, intellectual or utilitarian wealth that maintained the “heat” of that relationship and gave “meaning” to it is exhausted, once all that energy of commitment is spent, there is nothing left of that union, and the community, which was born based on an “ideal,” disappears. What happens is that, in reality, that community was never formed and there never was communion, there were only contacts, relationships. In contrast, in the spiritual community founded on the basis of the union between souls—and perhaps we will gradually understand better what we mean by the word soul—the deep co-existential meaning, the sense of communion of selves united by love, is something that is revealed from the beginning; it is something that “is,” not something that has to be created, made or discovered, and what it “is” prevails over time and death. The vocational sense of the co-existential union even goes beyond the concrete values of any work, of whether the individual who is committed in that union likes what they do or not, of whether it gives them pleasure or pain, of whether a work is “realised” or not, and goes beyond the judgment that reason may formulate in a certain instant on whether their life makes sense or not, because what people understand by “meaning” is something that “fills life” and this is a very primitive and nourishing aspect of the meaning of existence. In reality, the true co-existential vocation is confirmed when all those things that “fill” life have disappeared and when, despite that, the souls united by love discover, in the depths of the void of an existence that seems futile

in the eyes of a utilitarian existence, the shine of the permanent values of life; in *giving themselves* they recognise, more than the meaning of existence, the *mission* of their lives. These beings, if they formed a family, chose a profession, breathed life into a work or took holy orders, did so with a vocational sense of *mission*, to be existential centres where other souls could mirror themselves in them and live from them (mission of giving life to others.) They were the fathers who founded the families that gave greatness to the peoples, the masters who left their mark on the nobility in the soul of their disciples, those who watched over the flame of the spirit even in the darkest moments of history... and the spiritual future of humanity once again puts its hope in their message of love.

These souls of fiery vocation do not identify with any organisation, with any idea or with any philosophy. They can breathe life into many ideas, many works and many organisations, but they are not the work or the organisation; they are the *yeast* in the dough, but they are not the dough; they fulfil in the world a very particular and specific *mission*: they are souls for souls.

Humans can have great values, they can form a family, organise a company, rule a state, have disciples and, at a given moment, come to think and feel that all of that has no meaning whatsoever. But the most humble and simple soul can be a soul for another soul and feel full in the fulfilment of their mission, without having a need to ever wonder whether their life makes sense, because the sense comes from themselves in the greatness of their love. Being a soul for souls means joining vocationally with them to share their self, help them to recognise themselves, to discover the true mission and fulfil their destiny with dignity.

6. It is an *encounter of universal society*. The spiritual community among human beings projects itself towards a universal society that is beyond the life and death of specific people. Similar souls join outside of time and space and recognise each other wherever they are because they speak the same language, which is the secret language of the soul. It does not matter whether they belong to the same race, to the same religion, whether they have the same tastes or the same formal ideas, or were born with the same skin colour. They vibrate in the field of the same spiritual feeling, they are animated by the same longing of inner freedom and they join through a single focus of love within the destiny of a great universal work.

In short, the fundamental concepts of this chapter about the *encounter* can be summarised as follows:

The co-existential meaning is something primary, a value that emerges from spiritual communion, and if that diamond-like, sacred value does not exist, all the other goods or values through which one wishes to give or find meaning in existence cannot replace it. Beauty, sex, money, family, business, one's country, religion, all those things that can "sustain" life and give it the appearance of meaning can also, at a given moment, collapse like a house of cards and leave

open the path to existential frustration. In reality, all such crises do is to expose a “nothing” that already existed from the start.

This co-existential meaning does not emerge, as some believe, from a well-organised civil society or from a socialised humanism but from a communion of souls. It is, in a word, the spiritual society that gives meaning to civil society and not the other way round; it is in this matrix of spiritual community that the human society of the future will be organised. Without this “intrastructure,” as a transcendent inner focus of convergence, there is no *union* possible between humans. At most there will be a meeting of people, social agglomerations, organised groups, civil associations, commercial companies, political parties, “human relationships,” but no *union* or meeting of souls.

In the encounter in the meeting of souls and through participation in the community of presence, the individual self discovers the possibilities of new spiritual values that can only be activated based on the dynamic of the meeting of souls.

This specific activation of divine and human values through the *encounter* make it possible to characterise it the way I referred to above and which I can summarise thus:

1. It is a *response-encounter*, because it emerges as a providential result of a call that is made with the force of the soul.
2. It is a *revelatory encounter*, because a soul mirrors other souls and recognises itself in them.
3. It is a *sacred encounter*, because it is a love for the soul, which in being founded on divine love translates into real respect for the freedom and self of people.
4. It is a *liberating encounter*, because it makes spiritual freedom possible through overcoming selfish and enslaving aspects of love.
5. It is a *vocational encounter*, because it is a call to join through a transcendent life mission.

It is an *encounter of universal society*, which goes beyond life and death and is constituted in the union between all people.

III

VOCATION

DIVINE CALLING AND HUMAN COMMITMENT

THE SENSE OF FAILURE

Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening!
I. SAMUEL, 3, 2-9.

III. 1

Vocation (from *vox*, voice), from the ontological point of view, is the “call” of the conscience that takes the “lost self” from its condition of “lost” and makes it return to “itself,” to its most authentic and original way of being “itself.” This vocation, this “voice” of the conscience, considered from the horizon on which the “lost self” habitually moves, is experienced in fact as the emergence of a *strange* phenomenon. It is a *strange voice* compared to voices it is accustomed to hearing; it is something that moves it, that “takes” it from its everyday way of “not being itself.” And this “taking” has something violent about it, it is something that does violence to its tranquil journey in the world absorbed with things and forgetting “itself.” It is a violence analogous with what “someone” experiences when another “someone” comes to wake them and “one” does not know who it is or what they want. When the young Samuel sleeps in the temple beside the priest Eli and hears the Lord’s voice calling him, at first he does not recognise it and believes it is Eli who is calling him (“Now Samuel did not know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.”) This means that the awakening function of the conscience “gives way” with difficulty through the “state of sleep” of the “lost self.” In the story of Samuel, even the divine voice must call three times before being recognised as such and finding predisposition to a human response.

The self, in its “habitual state of lost,” knows the voices of its world, knows the call of “desire,” the call of “knowledge,” the call of “being someone,” the call of doing “something,” the call to realise a “work,” but it is not accustomed to hearing a voice that calls it simply to be “itself” and which is a voice different by nature from all the other known voices. Furthermore, this *voice* is not patent as a sound, in the sense of everyday speech, but as a *voice of silence* that “attracts” to “itself” the “lost self” (retrospectively from the world in which it is lost), and places it before its genuine and particular possibility of being “itself” in its totality.

This encounter of the “lost self” with a possibility of “total self” that it does not know is revealed in the form of anxiety. If the self rejects anxiety and its individualising function, it returns

to the “lost” state and with it loses the opportunity to find itself in the totality of its possibilities. But what does this “totality” consist of?

In its usual form of “lost,” we might say that the self functions with a “part” of itself, with the part of “itself” that has been absorbed in the things, in the everyday work, in the collective mode of existence: and with that “part” it seeks to found the totality of existence, with the part of the self that has forgotten “itself” and which has become, instead of it, a subject of absolute value, i.e., a fiction! The subject, while it lives occupied in its things and lives tranquilly in its everyday mode of being does not have the slightest consciousness that in its own heart there could exist “something” different to that way of being. Only a violent shake can take them out of that state of dream. The vocation of the conscience or failure, taking the self from its state of lost back to its original “total self,” one way or another reveal that the sense of existence is a finite temporality and that the “self” that I am myself in each case projects itself from a mysterious background of “not being” which has infinite inherent possibilities.

Vocation calls unexpectedly and through very diverse circumstances. It sometimes calls the “lost self” when this has “everything,” when it is full of everything, when it has achieved everything a person can achieve to be happy. And when they have it “all” a strange void suddenly appears, a strange nostalgia for “something” that they do not at first know what it is. They have it “all,” but they are missing “something” fundamental and, in that instant, it becomes patent that that “something” is the fundamental purpose of their existence, and that the world and things that until then had the character of positive values on which they firmly rested their feet are reduced to insignificance. The prince Siddhartha had it “all” in his father’s palace, but one fine day he wanted to know the world and when the finite background of human existence was revealed to him in the form of pain, sickness, old age and death, he felt “called” to flee the palace in search of spiritual enlightenment.

Other times the “lost self” is struck in its security of “lost” by “failure,” by the loss of what they had based their tranquillity on but also their own self. The stone that held them up suddenly sinks and the self is suspended in the inhospitality of anxiety and the void, finding themselves suddenly brought back to their original state of consciousness and “obliged” to direct their gaze at “themselves.”

These movements of return onto oneself—“vocational calling” or “failure”—that “take” the self out of their “lost” way of being to carry them once again to the threshold of “themselves,” aims for the “cure” of themselves. Heidegger uses this term *cure* to indicate the “care” for oneself; “to cure *oneself*” is to become oneself, to return to the unity and totality of oneself.

In short, the “vocation” of the conscience, in its “curing of oneself,” reveals or “opens” the possibility of the *unity* of the “total self.” This “total self” understands life and death, that is, not only life as the “lost self” but also its end, its death; not only its “self” but also its “non-self.”

Methodological reasoning about the “call” of the consciousness allowed me to reach these conclusions, but the “answer” of the self in the practical sense can be very different from one individual to another: the self may “want to have a conscience” or not; it may “hear” or play deaf; it may return definitively to “itself” or return to its “lost” state and grow even more bewildered in the world to evade any chance of hearing again. But whatever the answer, the precise instant of the “call” of the conscience has a value by itself. Although the “awakening” may have lasted only a fraction of a second and although the self may return to “mundanity,” that vocational enlightenment has practical effects.

We have seen that the exegesis of the “vocation” as “cure”—self-care—following Heidegger’s method of existential analytics, reveals the *unity* of a total structure of the “self in the world” and makes it possible to understand the possibilities of *unity* of the self amid the different modes of existence, but in turn opens a number of questions that cannot be answered within the hermeneutics of methodical reasoning and which only mystical experience can enlighten after the fact.

Let us see some of these questions: does the self deviate, “flee” to an “improper” mode of being, “lost,” from an original phenomenon and “part” of the “total self,” and from there is it rescued, redeemed and “cured” by the same original self from which it departed? In other words, do I “lose” and “cure” myself, the self that I am in each case, from my own self? Moreover, what kind of force produces the movement of flight towards things, and what special attraction does the world hold in terms of “mundanity” so that the self “loses” itself in that world? Also, does this “losing oneself” always have the character of a “detour” or a “fall” into sin or, on the contrary, is it a “fall function” that it is necessary to understand in its self and its functionality? What degree of fall is useful and what degree is futile? Is there a fall limit in the practical order? Is the fall phenomenon always “reversible”? Can the fallen self always “return” to itself, depending on the call of the consciousness, or is there a “limit” beyond which the process becomes irreversible? In turn, must the call of the conscience as vocation be understood from an immanent or transcendent point of view, human or divine? If in order to be in the most proper and original possibility of “total self” it is necessary to understand life and death, being and not being, what is the methodological path, practically speaking, to reach that end? Is it failure? Ultimately, to reach the plenitude of their real human dimension, beyond the habitual “lost” state in the world, do humans necessarily have to fail in their projects and their works to reveal in that failure their original state of unity with themselves?

Without need to go further with these arguments that do not have, as I said, a rational solution, there is a concrete fact that emerges from the ontological analysis itself and that is that in each case in which being is “advocated” to itself, in order to be able to be “oneself,” one only has a single path to find *oneself* which is “resolving oneself” in each concrete situation, breaking, through the act of “choosing,” the barrier of enigma that surrounds any existential situation. In other words, whenever the self is in a situation where it must decide “for itself,” it does not have an answer in advance that gives it the security of what is going to happen, prior to the action, but rather it is, precisely, through the act of “solution” that said answer can come to be a unity with myself: I cannot elude the anxiety of “choosing” and of choosing myself in the action; the voice of the conscience (vocation) “calls” me to return to myself and to choose by myself to “be,” but it does not give me “answers” in advance. I will find the answer *after* surrendering myself in the action and not before. This is not only an ontological principle but it is the law of love in the state of “resolved,” in the “surrender,” the existential analytic matches the practical action and the mystical experience; only when I “give” myself do I truly “find” myself; finding *oneself* implies a previous *giving oneself*; prior to any true commitment in the objective world there is a fundamental commitment with oneself; prior to any choice in the facts, as authentic expression of oneself, there is an intimate choice of “oneself.” This is the metaphysical foundation of the moral order to which I will return later.

But let us now see the valuation of the “answer” to the vocational “call” in my own life, to have a concrete base that will allow me to examine the spiritual vocation.

III.2

Don Santiago’s presence alone made me see, from the very start, the fundamental difference between what I understood up until then as spiritual ideas and what spiritual *life* is; between the truth as an idea or system of concepts, and the truth made flesh through the concrete life of the individual; between vocation as possibility for “doing” and the vocational call as possibility of “being.”

Until then, I did not properly understand that the most beautiful ideals conceived by souls would fade so soon. I saw youths take by force the ideas of liberty, social justice, pure love, in disinterested service to humanity, but this sacred fire—once lit in their hearts—soon died out, and the living flame of love was replaced, with the passing of the years, with the same shared interests of the “old,” if not trapped by the same “bourgeoisie,” the same “institutions” and the same “structures” that they themselves had considered “obsolete.” Could I keep the flame of my own youthful ideals alive? Don Santiago gave me the answer: “If there is an offering of life, yes! If there is an offering consummated to the end.” I perceived the force of these words, and the testimony of life that supported them truly made an impact on my soul, but the same thing did not

happen when I wanted to understand them: the darkness of their mystical meaning clashed with my longings to find a truth that I could formulate in clear ideas. When I asked him for a greater rational clarification, he answered with even more obscure words: “Yes, if there is a promise to God kept faithfully. If divine love becomes, in our hearts, a living flame, and if we make that flame grow with the offering of our flesh and blood!”

As I have said before, at that time I was transitioning between the traditional religious inheritance that I had received, and the influence that positivist philosophy and experimental scientific method held in the culture of my time. I was, then, closer to Auguste Comte, Darwin and Claude Bernard than to Saint John of the Cross or Teresa of Ávila, and Don Santiago’s answers to my rational questions had more the sense of “silencing” my mind than stoking its concerns with culturist answers. I learned to be silent in his presence. I asked once, twice, but the third time I fell silent—though I did not understand a thing—and when I was truly silent, that was when I understood.

Behind the formal meaning of Don Santiago’s words and the religious front that his thinking manifested, I perceived a new spiritual force and realised that the abstract truth or the most sublime ideas, without a *life force* that would give them existential reality, were like winged dreams that quickly disappeared in the slightest breeze. I understood that the truth could not be, simply, the object of metaphysical speculation, that beauty and love could not be only ideal objects of aesthetic contemplation or sensitive refinement, and that the values that the spiritual conscience of the subject intuited can only gain concrete reality through the incarnation in life itself. It was necessary to give Life to the Truth and make of this Truth the Path of life, that is, not a truth or a value that was the enthusiasm of a moment of exaltation, a spark of enlightenment or the aesthetic, ecstatic or loving snatch of an instant, but made into the Path of *all* my life. In other words, it was not enough to know the truth, I had to *commit myself* to it.

At the same time I felt that that commitment made into a “path of life” was something more than a determination of the will, it was giving myself with all my being and forever, and that that type of surrender was only possible through a pure love, a faithful love. His answer then became deeper and fuller of meaning. I understood, now, why he did not give me concrete answers when I bothered him with my questions and my doctrinal concerns about ontology and the theory of knowledge; it wasn’t that he did not know much better than I ancient and modern philosophy, theology and many aspects of the positive sciences—because in the course of our conversations I found a deep culture in him—but rather he concealed that culture with his modesty and only used it when he wanted to make some contingent truths accessible to my own cultural field, but when he gave himself in the fundamental teaching, I realised that his self vibrated in a different field to that of intellect. Now I understand it much better: how can one make a question of methodology in search of the truth, of theory of knowledge, of existential analysis, that is, how

can one make a question of the *path* if the subject who says he loves the truth and wants to find the path is *not* faithful! Any path, whether scientific, philosophical, social, religious, no matter how good it may be by itself, has no value to the unfaithful person; the unfaithful person cannot take effective advantage of any path—no matter what good intentions they may have, no matter the energy they commit in the execution of their works, and regardless of the good teachers they may have—because in the end, they will leave the experience begun in the middle of the journey. Prior to any path of any methodology there is a question of the *moral person* and Don Santiago wanted to know how I responded as a moral being.

Perhaps in the first moments I could not grasp in all its depth and breadth the mystical root of Don Santiago's thinking, but the teaching that is revealed in the community of presence is alive and remains like a living seed in the soul, which discovers—in due time—the mystery it holds within. In order to develop, this seed needs in the individual soul a point of fixation, a field of stability, which is like a promised land in the heart of the human, where the divine ideals that fall on that land—like seeds falling on fertile land—not only fertilise the land but are also fertilised by it. Without that fixation—made reality by a supreme commitment of fidelity to conceived ideas—any path becomes uncertain, the dust of contingent life experiences accumulated over time erases the delicate footprint that guides, and the walker returns to the state of "lost."

To better understand the commitment based on the path I would like to explore further my own spiritual experience. The community of presence was provided to me like a mirror, where not only my own self was revealed but also my own fate. Committing *myself* was not only finding *myself* (finding my own self), but rather it was finding my self and my fate. The commitment of fidelity, then, would take on for me the meaning of a fixation of my own self in the field of my own fate.

III.3

I will try now to characterise the vocational answer as *human commitment* and examine the implications of this commitment from the mystical, ethical and social point of view. The analysis—made at this level, after the experience—will show us that commitment is: 1. Vocational. 2. Sacred. 3. Of fidelity. 4. Of fixation. 5. Moral. 6. Responsible. Furthermore, only with the light provided by "commitment" and "surrender" can I better characterise the *divine* character of the "vocational call" and separate it from an immanent ontological context in which it seems to have been imprisoned after the analytical study I did in the first part of the chapter.

1. The most elevated, genuine and singular answer to vocation has the character of a *vocational commitment*. I understand by vocational commitment the capacity to respond with all the self to the vocation, that is, not only to hear the voice of the conscience that convokes—"calls"—but to commit oneself effectively to it. In the practical order, this commitment is always

in the presence of “Someone” who convokes in the conscience although that “Someone” cannot be determined or defined.

Vocational commitment is, then—from the more general point of view—choosing oneself in what is most original and proper about this “self,” which is its need to be free and, specifically, confirm this choice through a responsible commitment to the presence of that “Someone” who “calls,” through the voice of the conscience, to be free.

Committing oneself “totally” to find *oneself* in one’s most authentic possibilities of “total self”—as a pure act prior to any actual commitment—is not conditioned to any material need or motivated by psychological situations, but is born from a need to be free awakened by the divine Voice of the conscience; the answer-commitment of the self carries inherently in itself the maximum possibilities of winning (“total being”) and the maximum possibilities of losing (“not being anything,” a returning to the “lost” state); taking on oneself in advance this possibility of “being” and “not being” is what confers on the vocational (“vow”=promise to God) commitment the character of responsible commitment.

2. It is a *sacred commitment*. I previously noted in the first part of this chapter the insufficiency which, in my judgment, the focus of vocation has from the exclusive point of view of immanence. I now wish to return to this question not speculatively but from the field of my own experience. I am totally in agreement with Heidegger regarding the character of the “call” of vocation and its fundamental character of “cure,” that is, of a “call” that “cures,” “fall” and “rescue” of the “lost self”—as “lost”—to return to the heart of “oneself.” But all this is nothing more than the “mechanics” of the process as revealed to existential analysis. But in practice, I experienced that “cure” as “transcendent Maternal care.” What do I mean by this? In the heart, the vocational call was revealed to me as “the Mother’s care” that rescues her “son” from the “lost” state and carries him to the possibilities of joining with “Her.” It is not only a Voice that calls from the Silence, but above all a Love, a Great Love that calls, and it is not an anonymous Voice or Love but the Love of “Someone.” It is the Voice and the Love of the divine Presence that calls its son to secret *union*. It is not a Voice that calls to reveal “something” to me, to transmit a message to me—all this is secondary. The “call”—in its origin and prior to all teaching—is a call of *union*. It is a call that does not take me out of the “lost” state to place me simply in the “nothing,” in “anxiety,” in “death” or in the “possibility” of being oneself, but a call of *unitive participation*: it takes me out of the mundanity of my world of loss, but to carry me to the house of Love. In being torn from my state of loss, I feel the void of “not being” and the “anxiety of death,” but the same “hand” that took me out of the “land of Egypt” leads me lovingly through the “wilderness” to “cure me” in a union of love in the “promised land” of the inner temple. The desolate state of the existential anxiety finds support in the “manna” of the new nascent spiritual values; in sinking to the point of support that my self had in the things of the world, the finitude

of my existence and the background of “not being” on which I was standing was revealed to my mind, but my heart recognised at the same time its condition of “son” and after my solitude and existential voice there is no “nothing,” there is She who awaits: “In te, speravi...”

The answer to the divine call of vocation is resolved in a commitment of surrender of the soul to the divine Presence; in its origin is a promise—“vow”—formulated in the intimacy of silence, of responding faithfully to that call. This promise of inner fidelity, which is resolved in the surrender of oneself, is a “sacred” act by nature. It is a pact of human-divine alliance and original attitude prior to all actual commitment of the will. In reality, the will, in determining the commitment with someone or something only gives objective and public testimony of the prior, silent formulation before God. In other words, the word uttered to God with the totality of the self as answer to the vocation seals in the inner silence the spiritual union as pure act: the commitment of *Silence*—“sacred” by nature—is prior to any word pledged to humans, and the spiritual community—inner, sacred and invisible, constituted in the original alliance between the human and the divine—is the foundation of any objective community. Without this root of communion in the sacred, the word of commitment between people is vain and is within the order of the “hearsay” that characterises the state of “loss.”

3. It is a *commitment of fidelity*. Answering the divine call as life destiny is a choice that is only made *once*. In its “commitments” in the “lost” state the self can commit its word many times and in many ways, say something and go back on it, but before God there is a single word; the mystical alliance as promise—“vow”—is made only once: this is the spiritual basis of all the indissoluble commitments that humans can formulate expressly in life.

The commitment of the “self” with its fate of “being free”—as an answer to the vocation—marks a fundamental and definitive milestone in existence; the word pledged (“surrendered”) to God accepts no returns. Wanting to salvage it once it has been “surrendered” is to return “with a disadvantage” to the “lost” state; sacred commitment opens the way to two irreconcilable levels and fates: “you shall be what you have to be or you shall be nothing.”

The vocational call is like a flash of light in the night, it has a certain “power” and makes it possible suddenly to “see” a whole panorama of future possibilities. It is a sacred “instant,” but in that instant “everything” that has to be seen is seen. This “enlightenment” is what makes it possible to glimpse the end of the existential project and what makes it possible—in short—to be able to project and commit oneself *to the end*; this “committing oneself to the end”—made possible by the light of the vocational flame—can only be consummated in fact by responsible human effort taken to the end. The self that was “called” to be free, who “saw” its possibility of being free and who “committed” its will to be free, through this “hearing,” “seeing” and “wanting,” enters to form part of the community of people who seek their liberation; “to go back”

is to return to the world of shadows and of “not being.” It is to return to seek among the scum of existence—although it may be a question of great actions or great works—the gold that one let run out of one’s hands.

4. It is a *commitment of fixation*. On reaching this point we have to consider some possible objections that can be formulated on the very need for this commitment. If the soul “hears” the call of the vocation to be free and “projects” to follow that call to the end, what need is there to formulate a “commitment,” even to oneself?

The commitment *fixes* the divine ideal in the soul, provides to that ideal a fixed point in the heart of the human through which the spark of creative energy can leap from the divine field to the human field and, by reversible offering, become rhythm of life, divine and human at once. The ideal of liberation conceived “enlightenedly” in the instant of spiritual communion with the vocation is *imprisoned* by the commitment in a field of human fixation. The potential shadow of the divine mystery is imprisoned in the matrix of the human heart and becomes fecund. It is a pure—“virginal”—union actively creative, and the fruit of that pure love is a “sacred fire.” Without that point of fixation of the commitment it is not possible for the spark to leap and the ideals remain as ideals.

Behind the ideal of the young person in love, of every couple who come together in matrimony, of every child that is born, of every path that is undertaken, in every vocation that reveals itself, in every work that is begun, the same archetype is present of divine-human fecundity with all its potential of love and the same “x” of the unknown in terms of its activation, which will depend on the human freedom of “being” or “not being.” Will humans commit themselves with their flesh and blood or will they allow the winged ideal to escape? Will they be faithful until the end of their fate of being free or will they turn their heads before reaching the end of their day? Learning to be faithful to their fate of liberation: this is the new field of education for the human of the future! And may it not be said that one does not know one’s fate and that, if one knew it, one would be faithful. This is a new sophistry of the mind: one who loves understands and one who does not love does not see or understand a thing.

5. It is a *moral commitment*. In “opening” oneself to one’s fundamental choice of “being free,” in “wanting to have consciousness,” the self becomes “in debt” to “itself,” it acquires an original “duty” that is the primary foundation of all ethics, but this ethics is founded—in turn—on the unitive vocational mysticism of love that gives transcendent meaning to this “becoming debtor to oneself.”

6. It is a *responsible commitment*. Here we have to face up to a new possible objection: In order to be responsible, is it necessary all this prior founding of the commitment in an ethical order that goes back, in turn, to a mystical order? Is the self in its habitual “lost” state not

responsible for its work, for looking after its business, for the effort to improve? What need is there to invoke a responsibility in a superior order to that of “freely” exercised will? This latter type of responsibility, whose actual value is not debated, is an “external” responsibility” in the sense that it is established between an “I” constituted as “substantial or subjective entity” and the other “entities” it faces in the world. But I speak about a responsibility of a different order, of a responsibility founded in the order of the self that is prior to all voluntarist responsibility. Only the self that previously has been chosen as “itself” in its original freedom can be properly responsible; “being responsible *with* conscience of ‘oneself.’” This is not just a play on words; it implies two different orders or two modes of being that are different in terms of responsibility; people very often speak about responsibility and immediately give as testimony of “their” responsibility the fulfilment of their formal duties with the law and with others, but this type of responsibility, which makes humans “ethical” in terms of the formality of being ethical, *may* be very distant from the responsibility founded on “oneself.”

In short, if from an ontological point of view and in a very general way the *vocation* is the voice of the conscience that takes the “lost” being out of their condition of “lost” and makes them “return” to themselves, from the point of view of the total finality of human existence vocation emerges as a divine Voice that calls to be placed in the orbit of its universal and transcendent fate.

The response of the individual to this vocational call takes on a sense of a commitment that can be characterised thus:

1. It is a *vocational commitment*, because it springs from a need to be free awoken by the Voice of the conscience that calls to a state of inner freedom.

2. It is a *sacred commitment*, because it is inspired by a call of participation in divine love and is confirmed by a commitment of surrender of the soul to the divine Presence.

3. It is a *commitment of fidelity*, because the word pledged to God can only be uttered once and no returns are accepted.

4. It is a *commitment of fixation*, because it provides to the ideal a fixed point in the heart of humans through which the spark of divine energy can leap to light a sacred fire there.

5. It is a *moral commitment* that is the original foundation of all ethics.

6. It is a *responsible commitment* in the order of the self that as a prior election of itself is the basis of all human commitments in society.

IV

PATH

ENCOUNTER WITH THE PATH OF THE FUTURE HUMAN THE PATH AS METHOD BEFITTING THE EGOENCE OF THE SELF

The Path of Renunciation is the path that describes the Great Current in the Universe.

DON SANTIAGO BOVISIO

IV. 1

I have spoken about the *solitude of the soul*, the *existential void*, the *search* from the “lost” state and of the possibility of *finding* “oneself” in a mode of existence of one’s own. I have spoken about a “call” of the conscience that brings the “lost” soul back into the world, from a mode of collective existence—as a “not being in oneself”—to a mode of individual existence as a “being in oneself.” I have spoken about a habitual movement of “flight” of the self before oneself and of another movement of “return” to the existential centre of oneself. I have spoken about the vocation, as a *Voice* that calls from transcendence, and about the human response in terms of *commitment*. But all these questions, which examined ontologically reveal the fundamental structures of the self, always raise a basic practical question: what is the *concrete path* that can give humans the proper means to attain inner freedom? Why do some find this path and others do not? And why do those who find it not show it to others in a way so evident that everyone may follow it? And why, when it is even shown with the words of Christ: “I am the Way...” do some enter it and others walk away? Furthermore, does what we call *Path* have any kind of material or objective reality or is it something purely ideal, subjective or metaphysical? And whatever the nature of it is, must we suppose it is a universal path within an also universal cosmic law of liberation, or is it one of the many paths created by humans or human organisations and which lead to a restricted liberation, conditioned by dogmas or particular beliefs? If it is universal we must suppose it is unique, just as we suppose that there is a single law of gravity. But even so, universal laws have particular expressions according to local circumstances. Could there be, then, *one* single Path of universal liberation manifesting itself historically in diverse cultural and religious currents like so many other contingent means suited to the characteristics of human development? Or in reality does such a path thus conceived not exist, but rather each person must find in themselves and by themselves the path of their own liberation?

Opinions and doctrines have been divided on these questions and there is no shortage of arguments in favour of or against each of these points of view, but in reality such theoretical

arguments are based more on the ideology and emotional attitudes of those who formulate them than as a result of scientific investigation or direct spiritual experience.

At present, aside from dogmatic, empirical or historiographical statements, and as a prior basis to any attempt of characterisation of what may be the spiritual path of future humans, we need an ontological founding of the “self” of the path as path of liberation; not because the existential analysis by itself might open up for us the perspective of the spiritual dimension on the Path—although nor does it close it—but because it gives us sufficient bases founded “in the natural order” to establish the principles of what tomorrow will be a science and a philosophy of the path of human education, not based on theories about freedom but on structures of their own selves.

Methodological reasoning, as an instrument of existential analysis, can reveal the *finite measure* of the temporal self of humans, liberating this self from concealment, illusions of infinitude, and the aspirations of omnipotence that characterise them in their mode of inauthentic existence. From this point of real encounter with themselves in the *finite*, when the mind has renounced wanting to catch the last mystery of existence, the divine Presence can enlighten in the individual conscience the path to the egoence of the self.

This possibility of “opening up” between the human and the divine—as existential possibility, and without yet entering into any consideration of the practical way of the union between the human and the divine—allows us to establish in the self, furthermore, “in oneself,” a basis of unity between the so-called paths of humans and the Path of God, between science, philosophy and religion, and makes a better location on the paths possible for the individual.

It is no longer a question, then, of postulating the human “self” as an entity, a subject or a closed individuality to then force it to somehow find “relations” with the paths of God and humanity, but rather by placing the foot on “oneself,” from this “oneself” in its finite temporal dimension, it is possible, through their “same” “open” state, to establish a bridge of union between the human and the divine, thus re-establishing a *single* road between God and humanity. There is not, then, a path of “human development” on the one hand and a “religious,” “spiritual” or “divine” path on the other, but rather there is *one* single *Path* and on that single Path various possibilities and modes of being are open.

As Jacob walked to Haran, “he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!” (Gen. 28, 11-12.)

On this single path of communication between heaven and earth we must differentiate between 1) its temporal dimension and 2) its transcendent dimension.

1. The temporality of the path—the “stone” on which Jacob rests his head—is its horizontal dimension in the historical becoming of what we usually call “human development.”
2. The transcendent dimension on the path is projected on a cosmic scale in a universal current or movement in two directions—Jacob’s “ladder” on which the angels “ascend” and “descend.” The possibility of this universal movement of “ascent” and “descent,” of “coming” and “going,” has very deep implications that I cannot occupy myself with here, but I will examine them—as a possibility—from an ontological point of view.

The problem is established thus. There is, evidently, a movement of “flight” that leads the self “outside” of itself; and there is another movement of “return,” which responds to the call of the vocation, and which brings back the self to “itself.” What is it that makes it possible to respond to the vocation and “return” to “oneself”? Even if we want to “return” and want to “respond” we have to establish that movement of return on a “possible return.” What makes it possible to return is the *renunciation* of the self. Without renunciation, there is no possibility of return, not even of movement, so the very foundation and the most essential sense of the path—understood as a path that leads somewhere or which comes from somewhere—is *renunciation*. If we made negative suppositions we could say that *without* renunciation the path would be automatically frozen, detained, without life, without movement. There would be no possibility, not only of “returning,” nor even of “going” towards the mundane, of “fleeing” from oneself. The renunciation is the last structure that is accessible to us as temporal foundation of the “self *on the path*.”

On this ontological foundation of the renunciation as “self” on the road, we can discover the possibilities that the renunciation “opens” in the practical sense.

Renunciation, then, in its proper way, is the fundamental possibility of being free. And revealing the renunciation as a basic structure of the “mode of being ‘proper’ on the path” allows us to locate and order the multiplicity of so-called paths of liberation, whether spiritual, religious, social, or educational, no longer in terms of their formal content but regarding the possibilities they offer to activate renunciation and to lead the walker in some way to a junction with the path of renunciation. There are infinite secondary paths that can be very necessary in the different stages of “human development,” but the important thing—apart from the results they make it possible to attain—is knowing if they lead to the main path of renunciation or not, if they have an exit on the main road or not, that is, if they are going to take me to inner freedom or divert me from it. It is no longer a question, then, of valuing the paths by their ideological “content” but by their dynamic capacity to “lead” to liberation, that is, the important thing is not only to postulate

a “belief” but to have the security that I am not going to grow stagnant in the path of that belief, that I am not going to be a slave to it.

This position of essential and universal unity *of the* path—with one end in the earth and the other in heaven—breaks all the sterile dialectics centred on theological, religious, philosophical, scientific or social “content” of *the* paths of development—as partial aspects—to locate the individual in the totality of their possibilities within the universal path of renunciation. This also opens an ecumenical possibility in the religious sense and a definitive overcoming of the ancient contradictions between science, philosophy and religion—or between the paths of humans and the paths of God—clearing the horizon towards a universal future religion, which more than “religion” one should call *universal education* to “be” a free person.

An education centred on the “self” within a universal path open to the human and the divine, as a life method for the future human, requires a careful foundation and development as it is a question of revealing the “method” that God himself uses for the liberation of humans. The current crisis of partial methodologies speeds up the process of discovery of this integral universal method—as an archetypal path founded on renunciation—and the adaptations to the finite, contingent measures offered by human possibilities. On these premises of integrality, it is very difficult to think that the current paths can exist in the future for a “specialised” development of humans, as humans: what sense can there be now in speaking of the “four yogas,” of the path of the “mind,” of the path of the “heart,” of the path of the “body”? As if humans did not have to develop simultaneously their minds, bodies and hearts, as if they did not have so much need to work as to pray, to believe as to think and feel! Besides, what is the point of such paths of development—as “development” by itself? Development for what?

The path of the future human has to answer all these questions and many others that I only point out here. But the important thing is to insist again that we urgently need to discover the fundamental bases of the universal Path of humans, of a path that includes life and death, being and not being, the spirit and the matter, the divine and the human, because human life is all this and much more. And we cannot invent said path, we have to discover it in the structure of life itself in the universe; we have to learn to see it, to feel it, to intuit its path, its direction and its sense; if we discover the path of the stars in the sky, should we not be able to discover the universal path of humanity? After so many trials, errors and sufferings of humanity in its historical journey, has the moment not come to find the path of a real liberation? What chances do we have of finding it at present?

IV.2

Before meeting Don Santiago I had speculated seriously on all these questions about the paths. I had read considerably on the subject, I had come to know the foundations of the traditional

spiritual paths—both eastern and western—the stories and testimonies of the so-called liberating experience, but I did not feel an attraction for any of these things, it was not for me, and I continued searching. When I now look back on all these descriptions of the path, I realise that the conceptual formulations, the dogmatic postulates and the scholastic systems of any type—which have filled with concern so many people anxious to find the method most suited to achieving their realisation—today lack value as ideal systematic constructions, in as much as they are presented as absolute contexts to which individuals have to adapt: the modern human wants to *discover* their path, not have it imposed on them, and that path has to be something *living* and chosen freely.

Regarding the path, my encounter with Don Santiago did not have that spectacular character that tends to be attributed to the disciple's expected encounter with the master—at least, I did not feel it that way. I felt that a feeling of spiritual community was renewed in me that was latent and that in the communion with his self and his life, my self and my path were *revealed* at the same time. In Don Santiago's presence I felt the essential similarity with his soul and not the identification with his personality; I felt his liberating presence, that majesty of presence that is above all utilitarian interest; I perceived that his “non-interest” in using me for any purpose, not even in attracting me, winning me over or making me “one more” within what could be a school or a path. Furthermore, at times I felt the strength of his rejection, that is, his “non-interest in me.” This is hard to explain and understand within the field in which human fields habitually move where the “positive” interest in someone is taken as a sure symbol of love. But love for the soul is something different. It took me a long time to understand these things and to become aware of the greatness of the liberating gesture that means not wanting to possess another.

The identification, dependence and, above all, the subtle submission, which in the disguise of love of the master, of the spiritual director, of the father, the mother, the spouse, etc., covers the paralysing influence of one person over another, are all ties that are weaved by the chain of collective slavery. They form thus the “gravitational” society—which sinks its roots into the ground—a society based on the possession of one person over another, on material inheritance and on the hierarchy of human power. Instead, in the spiritual communion—founded on the freedom of the spirit—the individual soul finds the “antigravitational” field of terrestrial take-off through a law of “non” possession, “non” identification, of ascent by similarity through a spiritual hierarchy, and of participation in divine values and human suffering. Don Santiago moved in that field, in that Law and on that Path, and offered me a living point of contact that was the *path* and *bread* of life at the same time.

Don Santiago presented himself just as he was and did not force anyone to follow him. He was there simply and his presence was everything. He did not set himself as an example of virtue or testimony of the truth and I never heard him call himself “master.” He gave himself on a path of similar souls. What did that path consist of, and what was his message of liberation? It

was not easy for me to recognise it; I had to *discover* it and even then up to a certain point! Don Santiago did not first show me a theoretical teaching to then transform it methodologically into a path, but rather I started to “walk” along the path through a practice of renunciation; as I practiced the renunciation and I transformed into it, the truth was progressively revealed to me. The “practice of renunciation *on* the path” revealed my own “self” and unveiled in me the egoence of the self. The practice of renunciation purified my ways of thinking and feeling, liberating inner obstacles, removing the obstructive complexes of the emotional world, “cleaning” the soul—in a word—and only when this process of “purification” reached a certain degree did I start to “see.” But this did not happen immediately, there were inner and outer struggles and dark nights. My restless mind wanted to leap ahead to the knowledge of the truth: What did Don Santiago say? What was his fundamental teaching? What was his doctrine? I asked him all kinds of questions, wanting to always know “more” about the mystery of humanity and the universe: at the start of my march along the path I had not yet established clearly the difference between knowledge as “information” and knowledge as “essential revelation,” nor did I realise the true nature of the path on which I moved. I was accustomed to receiving information from the deposit of the cultural inheritance of humanity, and I believed that the path would slowly “enrich” me and broaden that information as time passed. I operated with a psychology of “more” in the intellectual sense, but that “more” and “more” of traditional knowledge had saturated the reception system and I realised that along that path I could not transcend the framework of the known; it was necessary to follow “another way” and that other way was none other than renunciation.

Don Santiago possessed a broad culture and I tried to discover behind the veils of that cultural richness what his fundamental thinking was and on what ideas his experience was based. At times he reflected mystical eastern culture, at other times he exalted Christian mysticism and examples of sanctity; in certain circumstances he showed the path as the most suitable means to attain the highest expression of individuality and, on other occasions, he highlighted the irreplaceable value of the “mystical body” as a path for the liberation of the soul. It took me a long time to realise that his person as in tune, by similarity, with various currents of universal thought that offered him contingent facets of expression to a current of life that transcended them. If this is not understood, it is very difficult to judge the historical figure of Don Santiago as he expressed, in the natural order, all the facets typical of his historical self, not only of those of the time and the circumstances that he lived in, but also all those aspects of universal history that found in him a point of convergence and synthesis with the new currents that prepared the history of the future. But both the historical expression of the cultures of the past and the novel facets of science and technology of his era were merely “points of support” for a universal current of life, reversible contingent reflections in a way of transcendent thinking and not “fixed” façades or absolute doctrinal positions—as some believed who sought to find in his words the confirmation of their own points of view. Many of those who followed him, attentive to the historical dimension

of his person, were disillusioned. He did not make “doctrine,” he did not “fix” thought, he did not embody it in a “system of ideas” because he himself “was not” a system of ideas. He moved in a current of life of renunciation, and in a current of that type, the contingent is not crystallised.

“The originality of the path of renunciation,” he told me, “and what differentiates it from known religions is that it does not transmit a dogmatic doctrine or a systematic body of ideas but is constituted as a ‘state of the soul’” (he stressed the expression *state of the soul*) “whether transcendent, receptive. As a transcendent state it seeks the contact of truth through not rational speculation but through an impact of feeling; and as a receptive state, it is a permanent flow of knowledge. Never say that you know something, because then you are lost. Your mind must always be open, receptive to new forms or expressions of the truth.”

Is there a path of this type accessible to the souls who want to be free? A path that is not tied to traditional forms, to what was said or written? A path that brings together souls not through blood ties but through ties of the spirit? I searched for a long time for a path like that but I believed that I had to go and look for it in distant lands, in the caves of the Himalayas, in the high peaks of Tibet, in the deserts of Asia and Africa, there where the ancient wisdom seemed to be guarded, but I did not realise that there was no need to go so far, that the spiritual tradition of humanity is a living current that chooses new lands and new people to express itself in new ways, and that the Americas were the depository in the present of a mystical legacy that aimed for the future.

IV. 3

From the practice of renunciation on the path, and as this path becomes accessible to me, I shall try to characterise it as a “path of liberation” in its more general and universal aspects, highlighting those structures that can serve as a basis for a philosophy of the sciences of education of the future human. The path I know and practice—and the only one I can speak of—is a current of spiritual life that breathes life into a meeting of similar souls who seek their inner freedom through an external individual method. In synthesis I can characterise it thus: 1. It is vocational. 2. It brings together similar souls. 3. It is alive. 4. It implies a method. 5. It is a real and universal path. 6. Its purpose is inner freedom. 7. It is individual.

1. *It is a vocational path.*

The inner choice to be free—as a vocational response—generates a force that reveals the path—the means—to make this liberation real. When I am “called” to be free and I “want” to be free, the path emerges—from among the multiple possibilities of existence—as that possibility that indicates a line of concrete individual destiny to “come to be.” The encounter with the path marks a zero point of inflection in the arrow of existential time. From this point of contact with the path the self “returns” on itself and time’s arrow changes its direction. We can say that the

“self on the path” moves now from a state of “old” to another state of “young” and this is not only a literary figure, but something real.

2. It is a path of *meeting of similar souls*.

Although we have spoken of liberation as a universal path of cosmic conscience or of creative energy, we do not perceive it as an impersonal path or an anonymous current, but on the contrary, as a highly personalised or suprapersonalised current. Examined in its “earthly” bridgehead and in its existential dimension, the path does not lie in some imponderable “outside” of people but *in* people and this is a very important aspect that deserves special consideration: it is not through an idea, a philosophy or an institution that I can come into contact with the *sap* that breathes life into and transforms my soul in freedom. It is not organised society, the church, the party, marriage—in their capacity as institutions—that are going to save me. It is not the father, the master or the priest—in their condition as intermediaries⁴—who can save me, but they can as spiritual persons; at least I can find in them, in their selves, in their life, a *point of support* to find the path of my liberation. It is in the person—in the mystery of their self and in the field of spiritual communion—that I can become aware and take living contact with the current of the purest yearning of the soul and join, from that *personal* platform, the *universal* current of similar souls.

But it is not the union with just any person or any type of union that makes it possible to renew the mystery of the encounter with the path but the meeting of people called to come together as souls.

The psychological-spiritual foundation of the harmony of values that makes the encounter possible with the person to recognise them as “soul” and “travelling companion” is what will make it possible in the future to set the bases of human communication on something firmer than “love at first sight,” “chance” encounters, the irresistible “attraction” of instinct, the “affinity” of ideas or tastes, the community of “interests” and many other such things that sometimes give the “illusion” of the encounter. But often it happens that when one believes one has discovered the path of a common “ideal,” that idea disappears and there is nothing left among the people or, even worse, the “chained” souls are left. The crises of human coexistence, on the one hand, and the need to find true spiritual union, on the other, demand today an increasingly deeper investigation of that cornerstone that is the values at stake in the “origin” and development of coexistence because it is in that primary matrix where people’s liberty or slavery are gestated. It is futile to want to fix later with therapy or legislation what was not there in the “origin.”

The meeting of similar souls constitutes the spiritual community and it is in this community that my soul expands and finds itself. From this point of view, the path in search of

⁴ See note above.

liberation is determined, from its *origin*, as a *path of union*. Whoever has experienced this expansion of the individual soul in the spiritual community will understand the words of Christ: “Where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them.” (Matthew 18,20.)

The people called to gather as souls do not gather in the name of one idea or another, one interest or business or another, but they gather in what is transcendent (gather in *my* name): the centre of the meeting is a divine value.

3. It is a *living path*.

The nature of the path, its self as path, cannot be reduced to a truth-knowledge or to a method or technical rule to achieve one result or another, nor can it be reduced to pure spirit—as absolute idea—but rather it is Life. It is a living path. The fundamental nature of its structure is to be a “current of living energy.” In a word, it is a living, not a dead path, it is a “transforming current.” I cannot feed myself with the “idea” of liberation—from the idea of God or the beyond—with the collective “ideal” of a church or an organisation, or with the formal “teaching” of a master. I need a living *bread* for the growth and development of my soul and that bread of life is the path of divine energy that breathes life into and gives meaning to the spiritual community. And, for my part, I participate in and make that current grow with my own life.

I think that this participating location of the person in the meeting of souls indicates a characteristic of the spiritual path that people of our time long for that places them above the antinomy among individualist paths and collective paths of organised masses and gives it, at the same time, a new sense in relation to the “world.” That is, today’s spiritual path can no longer be constituted as a path “on the edges of the world” and which leads the walker to “outside” of the world. The path of transcendence must find the bridge with the paths of everyday life *in* the world. In other words, from my own “self”—resting my head on the stone on the land, as in Jacob’s dream—I can find the path of transcendence in the meeting of souls and, from there, I can “descend” and find again the path of everydayness in the world, no longer to lose myself in it but to breathe life and give meaning of transcendence to all the contingent aspects of my life in human society. The path of transcendence thus intertwines with the path of immanence; the divine finds the bridge of communication with the human, and in turn the human reencounters the divine.

4. The path, *as method*, acquires meaning *in* the living, unitary and integral functional structure of the meeting of souls and not outside of it.

The question debated at length about whether the path—as *method* of liberation—is necessary has already been examined and I said that, in my understanding, the path could not be liberating in terms of “ideas,” “organisations” or “intermediaries,” but it could be in function of spiritual people and in the meeting of souls. The meeting of souls—as spiritual community centred

on the divine—is constituted in Mother and Father of the potential individual being (Child) who is “born” in contact with it. As Mother it provides the climate of Love of the creative energy, and as Father the Law—objective *method*—and orientation and personal guidance. This functional unitarian structure of the path—an archetype of the spiritual society or “sacred family”—constitutes the foundation of any healthy civil society and, in some way, it has to make its influence felt “in vivo” so that the children of the future are born and developed as people of light and not as *robots* or children of the shadows.

The *slogans* of a spiritual development by “own effort” or by one ascetic method or another, said methodology being disconnected from the context of the functional structure of the meeting of souls and its mystical content, are as illusory as postulating the possibility of the spontaneous generation and birth of a child without the intervention of the mother and father.

When I say that the path is born in “my own self” and I speak of “self-knowledge” and of the development by effort of “myself”—as fundamental bases of any path that can call itself individual—I am making formulations that are correct from the ontological point of view, but which are incorrect when I seek to draw conclusions in the practical order that do not necessarily emerge from ontological analysis. This error is frequently committed due to the tendency for a priori systemization and dogmatization, because one thing has nothing to do with the other.

Outside of the meeting of souls we have the “self-taught” paths and the “self-development” paths than can make the individual progress in certain partial aspects of their person, but which most of the time only deepen further their “lost” state. In lacking the mirror provided by the meeting of souls as objective conscience the self believes, by itself, that it has gone very far, when in reality it has not moved from where it was.

5. It is a *real and universal path*

The question remains about the reality of the path of human liberation: is it a real path, or an ideal one? Is it somewhere or is it nowhere? Does it have a universal reality or not? It is a real path and its reality is given by the *life* of those who have walked it, from “earth” to “heaven” and from “heaven” to “earth.” It is not an ideal path but a path of life energy of high power of vibration formed with “the best” of human and divine life, with “the best” of each individual, of each people and of each race, with “the best” of human beings and of divine beings, and I say this because its current of life feeds from the offering of the heart.

It is a universal path, it has no homeland or frontiers, it is not from beyond or from close by. It is the spiritual blood of the beings that seek liberation and those who have achieved it, of those who were, of those who are and those who will come. In their current the facets of human differentiation blur and the essential similarity of their souls and their divine filiation is

illuminated. It is like a rainbow of harmonious multicolour rays, with a bridgehead on “earth” and another in “heaven.” All beings yearn, albeit unconsciously, to make contact with that living path and somehow and to some extent they all participate in it, but there are beings who recognise it vocationally as the supreme purpose of their lives, they devote all their efforts to it and they surrender all their heart to it.

6. *Its purpose is the search for inner freedom.*

This supreme purpose, which is above all aspirations for transitory goods, gives the path the character of “sacred.”

7. *It is a medium suited to the development of an individual existence.*

If we accept that “being human” is this concrete, unique and single human that every one of us is in each case, we will understand that the most suitable method—from the Greek *methodos*, path—for the total development of the person must necessarily be *individual*. We have known the collective paths taken throughout history by the feet of humanity’s innumerable pilgrims in search of their liberation, but at present the awakening of egoence renews the need for an individual path.

In saying individual, it is necessary to immediately cover oneself from the different interpretations that tend to be given to this term. Many believe that it is a question of following every one of our own tendencies or natural inclinations, confusing spiritual liberty with instinctive liberty. Others confuse inner freedom—as an *essential* purpose of the path—with the way of “interpreting” individually what is understood by such freedom (which is an excellent way to get nowhere); while others suppose by individual a path of “autonomy,” not subject to any law or order. For me the individual method, in the sense of egoence, is a still unexplored path which must surely rouse the passions of those who glimpse the extraordinary riches and possibilities of this which is the “proper name” of every one of us. The individual method is the most suitable medium for humans to learn to respond with their *proper name*, with their proper *note* or individual sound *in* the meeting of souls, not outside of it; it is the proper way to respond to the call—vocation—of the universal Law that vibrates in the vastness of their conscience; it is the proper and only way to correspond to the impact of the current of creative energy; it is the singular, unique and irreplaceable response of the person in the universal community. It is the *note* that cannot be missing for said *community* to attain the harmony of its full development and that “if it is missing” it is felt like a distortion or dissonance in the whole. This concept of individual goes beyond a type of person who supposes themselves “realised” when they achieve their “assimilation” or “dissolution” in a collective organism—whatever it may be—and also aside from a particle that becomes antagonistic to the community. In reality, it is a matter of an “egoent way of being in the world.”

The *method of education* through which egoence of the self can be activated is characterised by the following fundamental features:

a) It is a method that acquires existential reality “for me” when I make *my* path through commitment. Without commitment there is no path, no suitable method to reach the end. Hence it is a path that is confirmed by a responsible action founded in a previous fidelity.

b) As a current oriented towards the centre of “oneself”—direction reversed in time’s arrow—it *helps* the soul constantly to get in contact with its internal and divine forces, so that the self can reveal itself as egocentric *force*.

c) It is a method of *integral development* that is based, humanly, on one’s *own effort* and on a *practice of renunciation*.

1. The concept of “integral,” from the methodological point of view, must be reviewed because what tends to be understood today by integral education is no more than the sum of partial cultivations (cultivating the intelligence, the physical side, aesthetics, etc.—the cultured, civilised person.) In contrast, the integral method of education of the future human must be founded on the ontological structure of the human as total being: and this total being—as an existing being—reveals itself in a harmony of human and divine values (integrality of the human being or egoence of the self.) Starting from this ontological basis of “human being” one can, in turn, base the method in the practical sense. From this point of view, what does the method then consist of? Of giving humans the suitable means to be humans in the plenitude of their being. And what are those means? Those that see to the fundamental needs of the human as a “being in the world” without neglecting any of them (man shall not live on bread alone, and humans not only have the need to grow, multiply, know, love and work, but to “be.”) As total beings humans are a unique structure manifested in spiritual, psychical and bodily aspects and values: each one of these aspects must be covered in an integral education method.

2. The method, if it is integral, must be internal and external at the same time. As a rule, it is external to the subject and the self rests on the rule to return on itself. Of course, any method or rule, as law, is general and we do not then see immediately how it can serve as a medium so that the individual being becomes patent; this is why there are many who say that the individual can only be found, precisely, “outside” of the general law. What’s it to be? The question is that we must learn to understand to walk individually *in* the law; the *law* of the path is the indispensable limit for the self to be able to mirror itself in it and return on itself. Without that point of reflection, where time’s arrow can be reversed over itself, there is no possibility whatsoever of being “oneself,” the subject is always imprisoned by the “shadow of themselves,” and there is no real liberation. Without that objective medium which is the external law of the

path, and the inner attitude of observance of said law—*obedience* of the law—there is no such liberation. In short, liberation is only possible *by means of* the law and not outside of it.

3. Own effort. Although I have indicated the “help” that the living current of the path provides to the walker in their effort of liberation, one must remove a number of “salvationist” and “magical” illusions that have lulled and continue to lull the individual will of many pilgrims tied to the idea of a misunderstood “grace.”

4. Practice of renunciation. In the path of egoence, one’s own effort is not oriented at reaching one partial achievement or another, but rather the ascetic is centralised on renunciation. The effort of renunciation “can” open the field to the coming to “grace.”

I cannot finish this chapter on methodology without saying something about what the path “is not” and even point out some distortions of the “path function,” which I will only sum up in their principles without entering into the development of the respective subjects: 1. The path goes off its course when the means is made into an end (when the material course becomes more important than the spiritual sap that flows in it.) 2. When the spirit is lost that breathes life into it and it passes from alive to dead (only a form remains, the letter of what was said, the empty rule of inner content, the shell of what once was.) 3. When although the current of the path is alive, the person limits themselves to “being” on the path and not “being” on the path due to lack of participation and practice of renunciation.

In short, from the point of an encounter with themselves in the finite, when the mind has renounced its wish to trap the ultimate mystery of existence, the divine Presence can cast light on the individual conscience on the path towards the egoence of the self. In the meeting of souls—because of the encounter—the individual finds their self and their path.

This path is revealed as a path of liberation through the practice of renunciation. I can point out the following characteristics in it:

1. It is a *vocational* path, because if I am called vocationally to be free and I choose to be so, the force generated by this response puts me in contact with the means—the path—to realise what I want to be.

2. It is a *path of meeting of souls*, because in the meeting of souls—centred on the divine—my individual soul expands and finds in the centre a point of union with supreme love.

3. It is a *living* path, because it is a current of spiritual transforming life that emerges in the contact of a divine energy with the human energy that similar souls provide.

4. It is objective *method* in terms of practical rules of universally valid spiritual development, but adapted to circumstances of time and particular modalities.

5. It is a *real* and *universal* path, it has no country or borders, and it is formed with the spiritual blood of those beings who seek their liberation and those who have attained it.

6. It is *sacred*, because its ultimate end is the freedom of the soul in union with the divine.

7. It is an *individual* path, as a singular, unique and irreplaceable response from the person in the universal community. As an individual method to attain egoence of the self the path is founded on the human effort of practice of renunciation and on divine help.

V

CREATIVE ENERGY

“In the beginning was the Word...”

John 1, 1.

1. THE SPIRITUAL HUMAN’S ENERGY FUNCTION ON THE PLANET

We are seeing in our time the birth of a new facet of spiritual humans, and the society of the future is constituted on the development of this new human type. It is on the basis of the spiritual person that we can think in terms of future society and not in terms of systems or organisations. Social organisation is necessary, but the key does not lie there but in the quality and values of the human person called to interpret a new society.

The spiritual human emerges today on the planet with a new conscience of “being” and with an attitude of active participation within the great current of creative energy of humanity: expansive and participatory individuality, egoence of the self. No longer the spiritual human who “awaits” salvation at the hands of a new redeemer, or who trusts exclusively in the—gratuitous—“grace” of God, or who “feeds” from the life of Christ, or who “follows” someone or expects to be “followed,” but who *participates* and becomes *co-redeemer* in the measure of their own life of renunciation.

In the presence of Don Santiago I progressively sensed the emanant and expansive energy of his person which gradually activated, in turn, my own energies and generated in myself a hitherto unknown spiritual current of life. I realised that the spiritual life is something more than an idea, a value, a philosophy or a belief: it manifests itself, concretely, in a “force,” in a universal current of energy of unknown origin, which comes from the past—fed by the renunciation of the great beings—and projects itself into the future enriched by the life energy of all those who have true vocation of disinterested help for humanity.

This current, this living food, this reserve of spiritual life, has as much or more importance for the planet as reserves of gold, coal, oil, atomic energy, oxygen or proteins, and must be taken especially into account for any integral proposal of an energy economy of humanity and of the future society; not taking it into account is what characterises a materialist culture.

Human life feeds off that current without realising it, just as it obviously feeds off the sun and the air. The birth of the spiritual life means, in some way, taking contact with this force and participating in its transformative power. The spiritual human, on awakening to their egoence

of the self, is the first who must be aware and take responsibility for the use and abuse of that humanised cosmic energy, because their contribution to the spiritual development of humanity will be greater or lesser depending on their participation in it. Thus, just as there are “lawmakers” and “culture consumers,” so too are there consumers of the spiritual bread, people who believe that the spiritual life is exclusively for “feeding” from it—the oral and gastric sense of the spiritual process. It is they who venerate the prophets, the saints and the martyrs after having eaten them.

From this energetic point of view, the following ethical problem is raised for the spiritual human: am I a “consumer” or a “producer” of spiritual energy? From this basic attitude of the self—of active participation with regards to creative energy—there arises a new ethics at social level.

The possession and consumption of spiritual goods as ends by themselves or in a measure greater than necessary is immoral and turns those who have taken contact with the creative energy into vampires. It is they who “get rich” with such goods without turning into bread of life for others. The possessive sense densifies and materialises the high vibration of spiritual energy and deviates the course of its current to feed the growth of material goods, preventing it from flowing freely to the souls.

Only a mysticism of renunciation makes the creative participation of the spiritual human. From this sense of renunciation a new ethics emerges in which the individual’s participation in the goods of life is regulated according to a very different law to that which applies under the rule of the creed of possession. And this function is no longer reserved for the great mystics, but rather a mysticism of the common human begins to emerge that allows them to participate—to a certain extent—in the current of cosmic energy.

The spiritual human is born here and there on the planet as a new regulating power and a new hope for solving the grave problems that humanity is experiencing in the present hour. Their mysticism of renunciation—which is a spiritual value by itself—is not reduced to a utopian ideal but rather, as we shall see in detail below, it is expressed in a new social philosophy with a practical scope. In saying that humans are spiritual I mean the spiritual person, not one organisation or another: it is the human as person and not in relation to an organised mass that counts. The person, transformed by renunciation into the active centre of spiritual energy, expands until they take on a veritable universal dimension. In refusing to be constituted as a value by themselves, they truly participate—and I repeat, to a certain “degree”—in the power reserved for the gods, the creative energy, and place their strength and their lives at the service of the human community. Without this individual regulation of energy, all the plans for organising the earth are destined to fail.

The spiritual human who emerged in our time as a new prototype is the one who *lives* the renunciation, and that way of living is their seal and their mission. All the disquisitions raised in the past about the spiritual life, religious struggles for a creed, philosophical or theological arguments—which had their time in the era of systemisation of the great spiritual ideas— today lack meaning, and the new human emerges in the world of the present more as an energetic reality than as testimony of a faith or prophet of an idea. The spiritual human today is no longer one who believes one thing or another, the one who reveals extraordinary powers or inner experiences of a supernatural character, the one who had or did not have a master, or who identifies with one organisation or another, but the one who *lives* the renunciation and gives testimony of it in *silence*; not even the greatness of a work or the perfection of an example of life are testimony enough of spiritual life in the eyes of the world because—as objective values that they are—they tend to be distorted by the judgment of people. This is the greatness and the tragedy of the spiritual human in the new world: their solitude. Their renunciation cannot be justified by any proof whatsoever according to the people of their time.

2. FORCEFIELD OF THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

The community of souls has always been considered from the ideal, contemplative and romantic point of view, but it has not yet been well understood within the dynamic of its dramatic-existential dimension. Souls “find” each other and “come together,” but then they do not know what to “do” in this communion. If before the encounter they suffered the solitude of the soul and the existential void, after the encounter they tend to suffer the weariness and the “solitude of two in company,” as the poet says, and if the antagonism grows, they cannot wait to be separated, with the illusion that a “new” encounter might give them the peace and happiness they did not find in the first. But all this reveals a lack of spiritual meaning, it is not knowing what to do with the gifts of life; it is being beside the fire and feeling cold; it is being beside the water of the spring and dying of thirst; it is seeking, finding, and then not knowing what to do with what one has found; it is the psychology of the child who anxiously asks for a toy, contemplates it an instant, plays with it a while, and then cannot tolerate its presence and breaks it. This tends to happen with the souls who believed they were similar: they find each other, they contemplate each other, they “use” each other, and then they destroy each other. This is seen every day. What is going on? What is the problem?

The phenomenon under consideration is deep and can be studied from many points of view, but here I consider it only from its energetic aspect. We must realise, firstly, that the existential communion between souls is manifested, on the one hand, as a *field of consciousness*—a mirror in which I take consciousness of my self—and on the other hand, as a *field of energy*, a new force that must be placed at the service of a new destiny. If I do not manage to put that emerging force at the service of a new creative destiny, the energy liberated in finding *each other*

and committing to *each other* will turn against the nascent community and destroy it. This is the “tragic” end of the encounter, the reverse of its initial “lyrical” or “epic” sense. It is the result of not having been faithful to the pure love that sparkled in the “origin” of that community, which was born for something transcendent, the genesic sense of the community, that goes beyond its biological aspect.

The human community, by nature and fate, must be *fertilised*. This is another aspect that we must add to the phenomenological characterisation of the *encounter* that only becomes understandable to us now as we correctly value the energetic function of that community: there cannot be a sterile community! If it is sterile—if it lacks transcendent meaning—it destroys itself; it is not born solely for it to encounter in it a mirror where it can reflect my “self” and the “self of the other,” but it is born with a transcendent destiny to which I am necessarily committed and, not only committed in my own self, but more specifically, in my “total self” of flesh and blood. If souls that come together are loyal to their transcendent fate, the spiritual strength of origin not consumed in their own benefit and increased by the offering of their own activated energy enriches the community energetic field which becomes expansive and participatory with the great universal current. It is no longer the force that emerges from the meeting of two or more people; it is not the adding of forces, characteristic of mass society and ruled by the law that there is strength in union, but it is the forcefield generated by the harmonious conjunction of a current of divine Love and a correspondence of human energy that is placed at the service of a universal work. That is, the energy of two (or more) placed at the service of One (a single fate, a single love, a single ideal, a single *transcendent* end), the governing and convergent function of the spirit that gives unity, meaning and life to spiritual community.

A community that functions at this level—polarised around a single divine focus—generates a very different forcefield, in power and quality, from a human group with community intentions in which each one pulls in a different direction (function of waste) or in which they all pull in the same immanent direction (function of material power.) In the spiritual community individual values are perfected by the renunciation at the altar of the only ideal: this is the strength of close families, of religious communities, of peoples, in the fulfilment of a transcendent mission.

The essence of a community of this type is love, but education is also needed: learning to use in moderation the cosmic energies that humans have at their disposal, learning to consume the “necessary” and learning to “produce.” Humans have learned to recognise the science of liberation and the use of the forces of nature, and are beginning to learn the difficult art of channelling the economic currents of the people, but they must also learn the new science of the economy of human energy which is, ultimately, the old science of the wisdom of good and evil.

The spiritual community is not formed to have “more”—accumulate money, intelligence, power, prestige, with a view to setting the bases of material inheritance—but rather it is an essentially dynamic body, where the material is only what is necessary and indispensable to constitute a fixed terrestrial point that leads to the unloading and permanent transformation of cosmic energy. The vital currents generated by these fields are expansive and universal. They are forces deviated from human egoism which, coupled to the divine current, travel the universe like a blood that feeds millions of cells of the mystic body of humanity (millions of unknown beings) and which bring back a message of peace and serenity. One no longer asks, then, what meaning existence has.

In the energetic field of the spiritual community individual beings are transformed and the similarity between them is accentuated increasingly, forming thus the legion of free humans of the future. Friendship through the spiritual tie is much deeper and longer lasting than that offered by blood ties, this latter one being much more apparent than real and charged with antagonisms and “incompatibilities” of blood.

3. CHARACTERISATION OF CREATIVE ENERGY AS FORCEFIELD OF THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

V-III. 1

Creative energy only becomes accessible to the self as an experience that emerges from the consummated act of the total surrender to oneself; the questions about it that the self can ask “before” giving *themselves*—and giving themselves without reservations—remain unanswered. Methodological reasoning can establish in advance that the most genuine possibility of the self of becoming “total self” is death, in the sense of the renunciation of oneself, but this metaphysical formulation—which has the character of truth—is from this side of the threshold of mystery of the self; it is necessary to resolve to accept death, to *lose oneself*, to renounce oneself, for all habitual understanding to cease and to experience the “explosion” of the self in its “closed” mode and the release of the energy imprisoned in it. In that instant, the foreseen truth becomes life. The transit from one state to another implied in this giving of oneself is only possible through love; when this total surrender of the self becomes Supreme Love there is spiritual community and participation in the current of creative energy. Only then is renunciation as life understood and the creative value of “death” is understood when it is accepted without evasions.

However, this ontological analysis that I have been making has exposed a paradox: I said that from the state of “loss,” to find *oneself*, one must “return” to oneself *invoking* the most genuine possibility of the self; and now I say that when one is at the threshold of being able to “be total” one must renounce oneself: lose oneself again? In reality, the paradox is only rational and remains in the realm of the absurd if in the formulation of this transit from “not being” to

“being” and from “being” to “not being” to reach the “total self” we ignore the quantum of energy committed and released and do not indicate the supreme value that orients the surrender. Furthermore, the paradox at ontological level corresponds perfectly with the evangelical paradox: “Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.” (Matthew 16,25.)

V-III. 2

The encounter with Don Santiago, from the moment I opened my heart to him and entered into communion with his self, had for me the character of perceiving the current of creative energy, of *discovering it*. During the period prior to the search for myself I had recognised my own energetic currents and had felt the impact of the psychical energy on my organism, but the energy that I started to perceive in the presence of Don Santiago was something different.

I had read about and heard of cosmic energy and of the energy of the Word and I had formed some ideas about it. I believed that we were immersed in a sea of cosmic vibrations and that humans could enter into contact—somehow—with this superior energy, but all that was very vague and did not go far beyond a physical concept. Many years passed of progressively tuning my sensibility until I could discover, by similarity, the current of creative energy as spiritual sap of humanity and the connection of this current with the spiritual person. I realised that the individual’s direct connection with the “ocean” of cosmic energy had something of a utopia about it; it was the same as wanting to tune in to the vibratory world of the “ether” without having a radio or television set. The spiritual person also had the function of concrete instrument: it was a particle in the sea of cosmic waves, a focus of personalised spiritual energy. The possibilities of an activating contact with this energy current could only be realised “by means” of the person and according to spiritual community.

V-III. 3

Perhaps now I can characterise creative energy a little better from the phenomenological point of view. I will only number here some aspects, without developing them, leaving them merely as suggestions for a deeper investigation in the future:

1. It is a *humanised cosmic energy*.
2. Humans *participate* in its current through renunciation.
3. It is a divine energy that *activates* human energy.
4. It is the living *circulatory energy* of the spiritual community.

These themes can only become accessible through a direct experimentation in the inner “laboratory.” All that can be said conceptually will appear as pure theory: it is for this reason that I do not enter into this analysis.

In *Seeds of the Future in Humanity*, regarding the “Method of function of individual life,” I paid particular attention to the reserve, transformation and use of “human energy,” understanding by human energy the cosmic energy assimilated and transformed by humans. I said that all humans have access to the control of certain forms of their own energy that they habitually waste, especially in energies related to sex, the word and sight.

To initiate us in the experimental study of the humanised cosmic energy, I do nothing with cosmological doctrines about universal energy or with cosmogonic theories about divine energy. One must begin from our “own” energy” and from our own “matter.” What I call “matter” in us, the “material” in the figurative sense, our passions, our desires and ambitions, what we have always considered as antagonistic with spiritual life, must in the energy era constitute the raw material of biological transmutation. I said in my previous work: “Humans of the atomic era, who have released the energy tied to matter and defeated the laws of terrestrial gravitation in the conquest of space, must now overcome the inertia of their material existence, liberate the tremendous cosmic energies locked in their inner world and achieve an expansion of their own life that puts it in a conscious and responsible relationship with the laws of the universe.”

VI

NEW HUMAN

AN ANTHROPOGENIC GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE HUMAN

THE BIRTH OF THE EGOENCE OF THE SELF

How can a man be born when he is old?
Can he enter the second time into his
mother's womb and be born?

NICODEMUS, IN JOHN 3,4.

VI. 1

So far I have tried to characterise the spiritual phenomenon of our era with reference to the individual and I have examined it in the intimate face of its being and becoming. But the existential drama of humans takes on today a universal dimension and is manifested on the planet as a great ascendent tide of the whole human monad towards new states of consciousness and higher lifeforms. What we call “spiritual” must be understood as an integral dynamic that is expressed concretely at all the levels of the human being, whether psychical, biological or social.

When we seek to interpret this phenomenon within the context of space-time that is habitual to us, we only uncover those historical, psychological, economic, social or political aspects dense enough to be retained in the fabric of the mental structure that seeks to imprison them and which are no more than the distant consequences of a much deeper primary phenomenon that is beyond our immediate perception. Even when such objective facts are sought to be explained by scientific theories, philosophical systems or religious beliefs, their interpretation is fragmentary and, in reality, explains nothing of the truly fundamental aspects occurring today in humans and in the world.

To understand the current human phenomenon in all its consequences and meanings we have to place it in the world that is its own, which is the *universe*. But hitherto humanity lived separated from its true world by a barrier of space-time-matter conditioned by the physical structure of a material world and of a materialised mind; so-called cosmovisions were reduced—at most—to a system of ideas (*Weltanschauung*), that is, a theoretical concept of the universe, a vision from “beyond” the barrier constituted by that materialised structure of its being in the world. The true modern revolution, on a global scale, has been the explosion of that ring of limitation that took place primarily in the higher layers of the noosphere, on the one hand, and on the other hand in the opening of a path of access for all humanity to a new promised land. This

original phenomenon is of a cosmogenic order, which gives birth to a new human and a new world, and takes on the transcendent meaning of human redemption.

The atomic explosion, the conquest of space and their technological derivations are secondary objective phenomena that only became possible, even in their original intuition, when a new human and a new world had *already* been born as existential reality. In that “birth” a new dimension of the self, a new space and a new time appeared simultaneously: “new being in the world” as egoence of the self.

In other words, it is not that the discoveries of humans in the field of science and technology inaugurated the new world, because the discoveries, by themselves, at most can enrich the world with tools and objects that cannot “open” a new world. “Something” had to be opened first in the universe in the order of the self for humans to be able to intuit a possibility that went beyond the framework of their mental structure and the material framework of their physical universe. I say that this primary phenomenon, of a cosmoanthropogenic nature, has the character of *redemption* because it made it possible for humanity to “leave” its material prison; the “cosmic hour” of this “birth” marks a new “axial age,” to use the term coined by Jaspers. It is the birth of the new child of Humanity as prototypical model of a new mode of being in the world. Seen in the field of our limited universe and through the barrier of our mental structure, the phenomenon has the character of “birth” of a nova—those stars that seem to be born suddenly in the sky—that is, we perceive it through the appearance of its energy in our system. But if from the energy of the phenomenon we go back to the self of that phenomenon, we can also apprehend it in its metaphysical dimension and, then, we realise that it is not only a new “world” that is born but “a new self in the world” that determines by itself—egoence—its own coordinates of existential space-time.

This cosmoanthropogenic conjunction between heaven and earth that translates as a “new birth,” this crossover between a coordinate of “cosmic time” with a dimension of “earth time” is what configures the dramatic reality of our era and what makes it difficult for the individual to place himself existentially because they not only live on the “edge” between two worlds but also between two ways of being. The increasingly greater conscience that humanity has from standing at this “threshold”—recognising the limitations of their structures as “modes of being in the past” and glimpsing, at the same time, that the “door is open to a ‘new mode of being in the future’”—is what causes the anxiety and uncertainty of the modern human and what explains their fundamental actions and reactions.

This enlightening in the order of the “self,” this greater consciousness of an “old structure” that asphyxiates, and this certainty that the “door is open” makes the space race and the fabulous sums that nations spend on their scientific and technological research plans in all fields

perfectly understandable, and also explains the social unrest occurring in the world and the rebellion against the structure of a society that no longer satisfies the aspirations of the new human. All these phenomena, seen within their respective fields of origin and development, are conditioned to situations of balance of power, psychological and socioeconomic factors, but considered on a planetary scale they take on a much broader meaning. They function within a chain reaction and take on meaning in relation to a new axis of universal history.

This dynamic of “new birth” is expanding at planetary level as a wave of genetic energy activating dormant individual energies and guiding them to a new destiny. The basic anxiety that characterises this state—in the order of the self—is an anxiety over the “future,” for what will come; but this anxiety for the “future”—as it is interpreted in terms of its concrete results, by the mentality of the old human—loses the character of fertile “announcement” to come, and becomes an “interpretation.” An interpretation of what will happen and of what is happening, but always as part of the expectation of old structures. And thus this “future” is “interpreted” as a “solution” to the external space, a political solution, a religious solution or a social solution. Anxiety over the future—maintained in its strict ontological field—does not indicate a given solution, upwards or downwards, to the right or to the left, of “going” to a new space or “entering” a new social system but, simply, of being “born” again. As a feeling of expectation it is the most genuine and noble part of the anxiety of the modern human.

The human of our era, tired of travelling along the old paths, has a thirst for something “new,” not for some “novelty” to amuse them, but of being new themselves. But we cannot understand the new along “intellectual” or “emotional” lines, through “actions” or “reactions,” by saying that “I believe” or “I don’t believe” that it is possible or impossible, but along the lines of “birth.” And in order to be born again I have to offer “all” myself to the creative power of the spirit, giving me to “myself” as a matrix of a new enlightenment. In short, I have to know how to “die” (“for the wheat to be born it is necessary for the grain to die...”) Without this “death,” without this renunciation of oneself, humans continue to be old even though they “are” in a new world. They have eyes and do not see, they have ears and do not hear, and their biological clock is out of synch with the time of the cosmic clock.

The ontological approach—within the limits of which I have sought to stay in this first level of this statement—leads us practically to the “threshold” of what I call “birth,” through the understanding of anxiety over the “future” and the commitment to “death.” But let us not forget that, in practice, such a birth only becomes real through Love.

VI. 2

Before I met Don Santiago I believed that the spiritual life referred to an exclusively “inner” order of the person, understanding by inner the sphere of thinking and feeling of the soul

in relation to God. I understood that the main purpose of the spiritual life was to attain the union of the soul with God and that the proper medium for this was moral perfection. Spiritual life was for me, at that time, synonymous with inner life in counterposition to outer life, but above all, it was something that belonged to a metaphysical, moral or supernatural order that had nothing to do with the material world and less still with the human body. According to this idea—still greatly tinged by the current interpretations of religious tradition—spiritual life was, for me, a preparation for the “beyond,” and life “in the world” something like, in Saint Teresa of Ávila’s words, “comparable to a bad night in a bad inn.” It is not that I believe that all those things have any truth to them, but the practice of life of renunciation beside Don Santiago gave me a much broader and integral vision of human life.

When I passed from the aesthetic refinement of sensibility, from the ethical ordering of conduct and of intellectual knowledge to the *practice* of renunciation, spiritual life took on a completely different meaning for me to the one it had known when I was only guided by an “ideal.” And curiously, the first concrete impact of the life of renunciation did not translate in me into any kind of “vision,” “enlightenment” or “ecstasy”—which were the things I had heard it said confirmed having attained a certain degree of spiritual development—but precisely, it was in my own *body*; the “matter” of my own organism transformed somehow, *transmuted*. It is hard to explain this; it is hard, perhaps, to understand that after several years of spiritual life as practice of renunciation, the organism is transformed, becomes more subtle, the mental and emotional mechanisms become “ordered,” that the result is a much more efficient functioning with minimal expenditure of energy. But perhaps it is harder to understand that new organic functions are “born” and that, gradually, like a marvellous work of art produced in silence, the old structure of the organism—even retaining the figure and appearance of the past—has been penetrated by a new invisible functional field that has the characteristics of a “new body.” It is the subtle body of the child of the human of the future, still incipient, in the current moment, in many people. The important thing is not the development that that body has acquired—because that process is in the hands of evolution—but that it exists and has *already* been “born.”

It took me over ten years to realise that the transmutations of human energy through the practice of renunciation produced in me changes of “quality” in the organism, but I did not come to realise, personally, the transcendence that said changes would have for future humanity. But Don Santiago was ahead of the future with a truly extraordinary vision. “Humanity is going through a crucial moment,” he told me, “and many souls, as if anticipating evolution, are realising in their interior the great experience of preparing new moulds for the humans of the future; but we cannot ignore that, before such an extraordinary panorama that we intuit of the future humanity, and despite anticipating the new human types, we bear the burden of the whole tradition of the old humanity. This explains why many souls today feel a great unease and a great dissatisfaction in being in a world that is not their own, that is not the one that corresponds to their

intimate feeling: they would like to be free from all those things, and yet, they have to share with them. We live in an era of automation that is growing more and more and which no one can stop; this automation, that appears to transform people into *robots*, will only be a period of transition, and will allow at the end a greater expansion of the mind of the future human. It cannot be that with the evolution that humanity has attained, humans still have to use their time for thinking about what to eat, thinking about what they are going to do at work every day or thinking about how to satisfy their physiological needs, when there is so much to do on the superior planes of mental activity. Precisely, the unease of many people today lies in recognising that their ego identifies easily with thoughts, emotions or physiological functions of the body, and when at the end of the day they wonder where their ego has been, they have to recognise that it has been identified with that series of mental complexes, unable to be reunited with itself. The future evolution of the human must necessarily absorb by interiorisation a part of these mechanical functions, as has happened in the past with other biological functions that also used, in their time, great amounts of energy and which today are regulated by tiny cerebral centres. This biological automation of some functions in the human of the future will make it possible for them to develop as a true individual ego in that sense of the egoence that we have known for many years and whose true scope we perhaps haven't discovered yet. The egoence of the spiritual human will be, precisely, that divine power of reversibility that will allow them to dissolve the compounds of the soul and remain in themselves. In contrast, modern humans, through their minds and through the identification of their egos with their thoughts and emotions, are capable of constructing a wonderful work as self-image, as an idolatrous deification of themselves, but they are trapped in this image. Reversibility will make it possible to dissolve this image and return to the state of simplicity in the self."

VI. 3

I will outline here some ideas for a cultural anthropology and a physical anthropology of the future human.

Let us return to the concept of person on which all anthropology is centred today and which, habitually, is given as a concept understandable in itself and especially if it is interpreted scientifically or philosophically in its structural unity and its variety of expression. I think that we have to begin with the critical review of this concept if we wish to go beyond a purely descriptive and formal anthropology.

When we speak of "person" to found on it a psychology or an ethics and, furthermore, a biology; when we speak of the person's rights or duties, of what the person does or does not do, it is necessary to first of all clarify what is understood by what we call "person," not only conceptually and objectively but in the order of "person being." And this "person being" should

not be taken as a theme of metaphysical speculation but as a concrete possibility of realisation by every one of us. Habitually, when we speak of the person, we naturally take for granted a subject, a soul, a spirit, and we take it as something that requires no further clarification because it is supposed that everybody already knows immediately what it means in each case. However, in practice, what one calls “their person” and, therefore, the “rights of their person,” the “duties of their person,” the “dignity of their person,” is something that everyone, in turn, supposes and interprets in their own way and which cannot offer any universal basis to an understanding “between people.”

The person tends to be postulated as a “given” structure that is constituted as a subjective being, with a value by itself, to which “ideal properties” (qualities, virtues, ideas) or “relations” with other entities are attributed. Starting from this structural basis I am accustomed to saying that “I”—as subject, soul, person—“am” spiritualist or materialist, I believe in God or I do not, I think this or that, I do this work or another... but all this has a very relative value because I start from the basis of a “subject” who has a “relation” with an idea, a belief or an objective action, but who, perhaps, does not have an essential consciousness of themselves, that is, lacking a consciousness of being. And this that I say, which would appear interesting only to metaphysical speculation, has, in contrast, an extraordinary value in practical life because in everyday life we are seeing, today more than ever, a spectacle of collapse of ideas, beliefs and works. We attribute all this to collective moral decay or the crisis of the social institutions, but at heart we do not know what causes it. Only when the investigation into this phenomenon goes deeper do we realise that such ideas, beliefs or works did not have *roots* in the individual self, and all that which does not have a foundation in the “self” of the person comes crashing down at the slightest breeze of adversity, like leaves falling in the autumn.

That is why today, in order to be able to value a person, it is no longer of interest to know what they think or what they believe, what they say or do not say, if they say they are with the just or the unjust, if they say they believe in God or in the devil, because all that they think, believe or say can, in an instant, come crashing down, and be taken back in its entirety: the leaves fall and the tree is left bare. To value the person it is necessary to know what they “are” and to know what they “are” there is no electronic computer or rational judgment in existence that can detect it.

What is called into question, in our time, are not the person’s ideologies or beliefs but their very “self” as a person. What is really interesting in practical terms—to be able to understand each other and have some possibility of building the world of the future—is to know if we “are” really people or “believe” we are; if what we call “being a person” at a certain moment disappears to be a “subject,” an “object” or a “thing”; and furthermore, we are interested in knowing whether, having attained a certain degree of development of this “person being,” we have the chance to “open” that person in their universal dimension.

In general terms, the modern human has become to some extent aware of the limitations of their own rational structure and has reached a certain degree of understanding of their existential ways, to realise when they cease to be “themselves” to be alienated in the world with things. Psychological analysis has sharpened this understanding and has contributed a great deal to people examining themselves and being able to understand each other, but all “understanding” formulated from an exclusively intellectual point of view is insufficient to lead the person to the true centre of themselves. The sole rational understanding that their self is absorbed in things, which its ego identifies with ideas and feelings is, habitually, a fleeting realisation of their existential reality, but this momentaneous knowledge of their alienation does not have a “saviour” future, it does not have the power to “rescue” the self from its world of “loss.” It understands but does not love, and only love of renunciation can centre the human being in themselves.

This “understanding” of humans’ alienated situation in this super-organised contemporary society, masterfully analysed by the critical sociologists of our time, is merely the voice of a reason that condemns itself, but it is not the “saviour” voice. It limits itself to condemning what reason itself has created.

Today the philosopher, the politician, the student agitator, the sociologist “denounces” the social structures that enslave people, they “shout” against constituted authority and “proclaim” a fairer social order, but they do not denounce their “own” structures as conditioned people, nor do they rebel against them. They say that if the social structure changes the individual will have better chances of being free, but this has been said many times in every era of history and too much blood has flowed in the world for those who have something to say and something to denounce against injustice not to start by denouncing themselves and giving testimony to rescuing themselves from their own alienation. The path towards the new human does not lie in denouncing the “beast” of an alienated, institutionally super-organised society: firstly, because that beast—as such—has always existed; secondly, because humans, individually, do not have and will never have power against it as long as they are not capable of denying its life. That is, the path of the new human does not lie in the “reactions” of old humans against one social structure or another, but in a mysticism of the heart that makes a “new birth” possible.

What concrete possibilities exist today for this new birth to occur, no longer within the exceptional order of some isolated individuals but as a possibility of the human race as gestation of new human types in a collective order? Can we conceive a mutation of this type as possible? Have humans reached their maximum possibility of evolution or are they still evolving? And must this evolution be supposed only at a cultural, social and spiritual level, or also a biological one? And are such changes—if they exist—in the line of a future evolution automatically expected within the plans of creation or can they be prepared and even anticipated—somehow—by individual effort? From the first decades of this century, a series of genial conceptions formulated

by researchers from very diverse disciplines (Lecompte Du Noüy, Teilhard de Chardin, Ubaldi) contributed to removing from anthropology and cosmology its static image that had paralysed its development for centuries, to return to them their original dynamic and permit that—as sciences—they could advance beyond the mythological, theological or paleontological models in which they had been detained. In clearing the terrain of dogmatic and mechanistic hypotheses, a new conception became possible of the possibilities of human evolution.

Anthropologists realised that there are long periods of biological evolution in which practically nothing happens, or rather, certain skills of living beings are perfected, but at a given moment there comes a *change*. In the past, such changes appear to have developed automatically and unconsciously, but at the present time, as I have said, many humans are becoming aware not only of the insufficiency of the social structures of the world in which they live—as “means” at the service of the “self”—but above all of the insufficiency of the rational and emotional structures that configure their current human condition. These are structures created over millennia and perfected by evolution and culture, which have responded until now to the needs of development of the *homo faber* and *homo sapiens* in their gregarious aspect, but which prove insufficient for a future development of the spiritual human in terms of the egoence of the self.

Increasingly modern humans are becoming aware of their *limitations* and awakening to new *needs*. Own knowledge and social development are clearing aside the “mythical” aspects of the ideal human and revealing the human structure conditioned by the past. This consciousness of nakedness is consciousness of the reality of oneself, which naturally brings a result of “disappointment” on discovering that “one” was not, in the end, what one thought one was, but at the same time, it leaves the door open for the future path. The human being not only *discovers*—reveals—their limitations but simultaneously discovers their “movement.” They are limited beings, but limited beings that “move,” and this is a lot as it means recognising that their fate is not sealed definitively and that behind the death of their illusions of omnipotence and infinity, and when they even thought all was lost, they emerge in the aurora of a new “birth.”

But this convergent withdrawal into themselves, this self-discovery, not only allows new conquests of a spiritual nature but also biological ones. If the “human being” must be conceived as a “total being” integrated in their corporal, psychological and spiritual aspects, the movement of return over themselves—“convergence,” to use Teilhard de Chardin’s word—is not only a metaphysical order but *total*, psychological and biological, and the possibility is sensed that a whole mechanical system of the rational and emotional mind that today absorbs an enormous amount of energy can be “interiorised” in the human types of the future in centres of cerebral computation that free up the superior mind for the new functions of the spirit. This biological computation—on the inside—and the technostructure of organised society—on the outside—shall be the new servers of the future human in everything regarding mechanical tasks—similar

to the help of the animal kingdom in a certain moment of evolution—and thus the path would be open to the egoence of the self. At the current time we realise perfectly that we are up against a “biological barrier” that must be overcome. On the one hand we have a number of mechanical functions that can *already* be done by machines that we ourselves have created and which, nonetheless, having to carry out those functions through conscious effort absorbs a great deal of our energy and, on the other hand “we are lacking” psychical functions and mechanisms that would be very useful to us and would allow us a spiritual performance much greater than the one we have at present. We lack inner mechanisms for the automatic control of emotions—of a part of our conscious emotional life. We lack a good “forgetting” system and a suitable computation and archive of the memory data that today float in our minds, forcing us to “remember” and to “bear in mind” an infinite number of useless things. We lack a system of transmutation of sexual energies befitting the superior degree of evolution to which humans are called, which liberates them from the complicated apparatus of repressions and of the “institutionalisation” of the sex life.

To better understand the meaning of these “lacks” we should think what would happen if we lacked, for example, a suitable centre for regulating our body temperature, if every time the room temperature changed our blood temperature also varied: we would not be able to think for a good part of the year. There would be “cold” months and days when we would be “hibernating,” physically and mentally inactive. This seems a fantasy, but it isn’t. Nature has needed millennia to give our bodies an automatic temperature control mechanism and so many other mechanisms that make the internal medium constant—“homeostasis”—and that constancy of the internal medium is the prior condition for inner freedom. But this homeostasis is not yet complete. There are people who spend all their lives struggling with their emotional conflicts, imprisoned by memories of the past, stopped in time and revolving around certain traumatic events of their existence, obsessed by an idea or a passion; a piece of news, a memory, any given event drives them crazy, varies their mood, they “get worked up,” that is, their internal medium varies, there is no such homeostasis in their inner psychical world... the necessary regulation mechanisms have not yet been formed. With a mental world shaken by emotional conflicts that, in turn, have repercussions on the body, with a mind “occupied” by thousands of contradictory ideas and feelings, is it possible to think lucidly? And these lacks are not cured with psychoanalysis, or supplemented with drugs or balanced with yoga exercises: it is necessary to be “born again,” with a body better equipped for the superior life.

I will not venture here into the study of the processes of biological evolution of humanity as a whole, but rather highlight the advanced anthropogenic function of some human types in the individual order and the silent and conscious preparation that they make in themselves as a contribution to the inheritance of the future human. The inner life of renunciation not only has the sense of preparing the individual conditions for the “salvation of the soul” and its beatific life in

the “beyond,” nor providing only the bases for a more perfect social ethics, but rather it has the sense of a deep transformation, at once spiritual and biological, which anticipates evolution and prepares for humans a better dwelling in the “here and now.” The egoence of the self, understood as ascetic and way of life, is not only a “moral perfectioning,” a “liberating experience,” a “self-knowledge,” but rather it is something more than all that: it is a genetic contribution to humanity.

VII

THE LIBERATOR AS DIVINE PROTOTYPE

THE COSMOGENIC DIMENSION OF LIBERATION:
HUMAN EFFORT AND DIVINE REDEMPTION
LIBERATING EGOENCE: LIBERATING ONESELF TO LIBERATE OTHERS

Know, then, o Prince that when morality and virtue are waning in the world, and vice and injustice ascend to the thrones, then I, Lord, come and appear and mix like a man with men, and through my influence and teaching I destroy evil and injustice, and restore morality and virtue.

KRISHNA TO ARJUNA: *Bhagavad Gita*, IV.

VII. 1

What are the paths of human liberation? Can humans liberate themselves by their own means, via the paths of knowledge, action or devotion—as purely human efforts—or is divine intervention necessary as redemptive action? Must what I have called the dramatic appearance of the divine Presence in the world today be understood as a virtual focus of convergence of God's creative energy, as an Impersonal expression of His Conception, or as a Personal manifestation of divine existence? And if we speak of divine Person, how do we conceive of it? From the first decades of the century and through different interpreters who seek, each in their own way and with a different language, to decipher the “signals of time,” a messianic advent has been announced that, in some cases, has taken the concrete form of prophetic message. While some speak of the presence of a personal redeemer, others propose the emergence of an impersonal current of divine energy that activates human energy.

What sense does the messianic expectation have in our era and how does it manifest itself? Does this expectation respond to the personalised projection of collective longings for the liberation of the human race or is it the religious formulation of existential anxiety that seeks a liberating “solution”? Is a personal messiah expected as a living image of the Word incarnate, as a Divine Prototype that comes from on high to express concretely a new spiritual Idea? Is a Master expected, in the sense of a superior Being? Or is an inner messiah expected, ideal, subjective or transsubjective as the sum of harmony of human and divine values that the individual human of our era yearns in some way to consummate in himself? Why does the idea of a Saviour remain latent in the depths of the human consciousness, even when the interpretation of their nature, the time of their coming or the scope of their work are the subject of the most varied doctrinal controversies? Is it, simply, the projection of humans' needs of liberation that “creates” a Saviour in their image and form, that is, a “son of man” who comes to satisfy desires and aspirations or is

it that, really, the “Son of God” descends to humanity to renew periodically, maintain alive or glorify the “pact of alliance” between the human and the divine? In short, is an Initiate King expected, as a figure of exaltation of the human made God, or is a God made human expected?

VII. 2

It was the year 1937. Gazing at the starry sky, Don Santiago spoke of the great cycles of the universe to come and the world of the future. The Age of Pisces was coming to an end and a “new time” was beginning under the sign of Aquarius: a new expression of the divine Life opened the skies and great changes would occur in the world. Behind the astrological and religious face of this language, the dynamic of a *prophetic* thinking shone through that announced with much anticipation what the new currents of science, technology and mysticism would quickly reveal with the passing of the years. There was *already* something new in the world that, at the time, was only accessible to intuition and which, in formulating itself expressly, took on a prophetic character, but which would not be long in inserting itself in history as a concrete reality. What was that “*something*” that Don Santiago discovered with his gaze penetrating the mystery of the starry night? What did that dramatic emergence of divine activity in a certain moment in the life of the universe consist of?

We are accustomed to thinking that Divinity is always present in the cosmos and that its life is constantly manifested therein, but our minds and our sensibility are too conditioned to a static image of God and of the world created by God. Although we are increasingly prepared to accept that any extraordinary thing can occur in humans and in the world, our self is not prepared to readily perceive a change in divine activity. The image of God still prevails in us, passed down to us by a rationalised religious tradition: his imperturbable serenity, his immobility, the immutability of his laws and the definitive and conclusive nature of his creative action. Although the tradition of the cosmogonies and even the sacred history of all the peoples are full of examples of *dramatic appearances* of the divine presence in the world of humans, today we think that those things, at most, may have occurred in a remote past or rather within myths of protohistory, but in the present it is humans themselves and only humans who make history. We have lost our imagination and the perception of the cosmic drama. The domestic problems of the earth have put us to sleep and we have lost the prophetic *vision* to anticipate the great universal epics.

Our scientific mind has no difficulty in understanding that certain movements of heavenly bodies translate into earthly effects, such as the tides, for example, which when solar activity increases lead to violent electromagnetic storms on the upper layers of the atmosphere, but we are not ready to understand what happens when the activity of divine energy increases in the universe and that energy is concentrated on a “focus” of radiation. There are key times in the history of the universe when such “astral” conjunctions occur; when at the end of a cosmic cycle and the

beginning of another—in that nodal point of the time wave—there emerges an active focus of spiritual Life, a strong “tide” occurs in the human mass and there are a number of “interferences in communications” that cannot be explained by chance, by progress, or by new discoveries but by the “birth” of a “quantum” of divine energy that radiates over humanity. We are living in one of these key eras, in one of those “axial ages” that some beings such as Don Santiago glimpse long in advance.

Today not only must we ask ourselves what is happening to humans, what is happening to human society or what is happening on earth, but what is happening in the cosmos? What is happening in the activity of divine energy? The future of an era does not depend so much on what the masses think but on what the gods think. The pressing question of our time is what new divine Idea will enlighten the minds of humans?

Don Santiago spoke of the Great Masters of the Universe, of the Interpreters of the divine Will in the gestation and construction of the great universal work on the earth and announced that in the years 1972-79 a new Initiate would make themselves present in humanity. Would this be the Glorious Christ whose coming had been announced in the Gospel for the end of times? Would it be the Maitreya awaited by the disciples of Buddha? Under what form would it appear, what would its nature be, and how would we recognise it? When I asked him these questions, Don Santiago used to make use of irony or answered me as Zen masters tend to answer their disciples, with a paradox: “Have you noticed,” he would say to me, “that all the Christian mystics who have visions see the figure of Christ and all the Buddhists see Buddha? Why might this be?” Speculating mentally I thought that perhaps it would be because of images projected from the collective unconscious, but when I noticed that behind his question there could be a deeper meaning that I must investigate, I fell silent and answered: “I do not know.” I intuited in that instant that there was a fundamental difference between speculations about a historic messiah and the Son of God as Word made flesh. While the historic messiah may be an image or an objective person on which the expectations of individuals and peoples are projected, the Son of God—even made flesh and as a historic person—is a transcendent potentiality that cannot be reduced to an objective or subjective image and that only acquires existential reality through a direct individual experience; its Self, its Truth and its Path cannot be shown by an objective way, nor via a universally valid objective testimony, because although said testimony exists it will only have the character of objectivity for those who previously had faith. The miracles of Christ are the least important part of his condition as Son of God; they served to give testimony of his Presence before humanity, but they did not serve as an objective fact of demonstration and of conviction for those who were not prepared to receive him within. At the challenge of the incredulous to get from him definitive, convincing proof that would dissipate all doubts before their eyes: “Come down now from the cross that we may see and believe” (Mark 15, 32) there was no answer. Despite the

proximity of the leading figures of the sacred drama, there was an unbridgeable existential abyss there.

In short, the messianic expectation of humanity, always latent, cannot be resolved through historic proof or objective universal truth but through inner experience and, more specifically, inner “birth.” Not having recognised this difference between the historiographical dimension and the existential dimension has led to a whole messianism posterior to the prophecies that, as historical expectation by itself, necessarily leads to failure. The eternal questions about this subject are renewed again in some way today with the announcements of a new Coming and there is now sufficient literature to document the divergences of opinions. For some the Maitreya “has already come”—and they even state his name and date of appearance—while for others, “he is still to come.” I heard Don Santiago speak just once about this announcement in the succinct form in which I have shown it, and then he did not speak again of the matter. Today I realise that the important thing is not to wonder “if he has come” or “is going to come” but rather whether the individual soul has a need for an inner coming and whether it is predisposed to being in tune with its *pre-announcement* and with the Message *prior* to its arrival.

VII. 3

The Liberator, as Divine Prototype in function of the process of human liberation, can be characterised as follows: 1. They are the foundation of all spiritual liberation. 2. They are manifested in a current of spiritual liberation. 3. They are announced by prophetic revelation and recognised by similarity. 4 They give the measure of human liberation. 5. They are a free being. 6. They are the foundation of a mysticism of liberation with ethical and biological projections.

1. The Liberator—as Divine Prototype—is the *foundation* of all spiritual liberation. Although it is true that the conscience of slavery drives humans to be free, liberation—in themselves—cannot be conditioned to slavery nor can it be reduced to a reactive movement: “liberate oneself from...” On the contrary, as an original movement—and beyond all conditioning—it must be able to reveal itself in its positive aspect as “love to be free.”

The Divine Prototype becomes accessible to the conscience not only by *pointing out* the fundamental path of liberation of an era, but by contributing the *divine energy* necessary to activate the human effort of liberation.

To understand the Liberator in its prototypical liberating *function*, it is necessary to clear the image of all the mythical components and its historical conditioning and deformation to get back—where possible—to the cosmogenic root of its self and its activity within an axial age. When humanity has completed the stage of its historical becoming and is preparing for a new cycle of planetary or extraplanetary development, when the “times have come,” a Divine Being

appears with their sword from on high and “opens” definitively the door to a new world, impregnating all the new cycle and the life of the planet with their figure, their Idea, their Love and their Power, from the beginning of time to the end. This “opening the door” of a new human possibility has the sign of a “divine redemptive birth.” Without this genesic act, the human effort by itself can only reach a certain limit. Humans can strive to perfect and exceed their aptitudes only within the “context” indicated to their type and destiny, but they cannot go beyond certain “limit barriers.” To go beyond them they need a new framework, a new space, a new world and such possibilities cannot appear by themselves: they are *given* to them—“in their due time”—within their law of predestination, like a “gift” or a divine “grace.” The hour of this divine birth in the body of humanity is fundamental because it is a moment zero that marks the beginning of the new time; from that hour a new “axial era” is determined and the fate of humanity is definitively oriented towards new possibilities.

The image of this Divine Prototype, of this Liberating Knight Initiate, impregnates the whole historic tradition of the so-called messianic period and is the prototype of the liberated soul which, by participation and similarity, contributes to the liberation of all human beings. All the truly liberating movements are begun, in some way and to some degree, under the inspiration of their sign. Then comes the myth, the legend and the appropriation of their name by those who consider themselves trustees of their message, but all this tends to be very far from the universal reality of their Self and of their Life. This reduction of a sacred cosmic history to the measure of a human history—to the history of a people, of a race, of a religion—has been the source of major confusions and conflicts, and has caused people to lose sight of the universal image of the Divine Prototype and the recognition of the essential Truth of its Self through the varied external aspects that breathe life into their Word beyond time and space. When the universal is beyond our grasp, every people, every race, every human movement awaits “their” messiah and, with it, “their” particular message, with which the liberating function that the Divine Prototype realises in humanity on a planetary and cosmic scale goes unnoticed by the majority.

In our era, because we live in a new time, the messianic idea takes on new importance, but to discover it in its universal dimension, we have to renounce the dreams of the past, demythologise the prophetic announcements and renounce the possession of “our” messiah.

2. Humanly, within the very body of humanity, the Divine Prototype manifests itself as a *spiritual current of liberation*.

From the first decades of the century a new air of renewal of life seemed to be breathed into the world, captured and expressed by great men in the most diverse fields of knowledge and feeling and which translated—finally—into a current of great scientific discoveries and unexpected technological advances. But together with this renewal aspect of the culture, a wave

of destruction was being unleashed with more force. Many old models fell shattered, two bloody world wars were triggered, the first atomic bomb was dropped, the race for supremacy in atomic power began, racist furore and genocide were unleashed, demographic growth and the problem of hunger began to be a concern and the skies opened, as did the pits of hell on earth.

Where would the conquests of science and technology lead? New political currents emerged on a global scale, new persecutions in the name of ideologies, crises of faith and hunger for global hegemony. Was it Christ or the Antichrist that manifested himself in this apocalyptic era?

Amid such confusion it is not surprising that all kinds of saviour messages and false prophets emerged, and that the organised masses blindly followed their leaders: the most horrendous crimes in the history of humanity have been committed in the name of the salvation of the race. Each group in their time has felt they were the interpreters of the truth and preached their own doctrine of salvation. Like the moth drawn to the light, the masses thus run towards the message and the promises of their leaders: they are secondary currents that make many beings advance along a certain part of the path to then leave them disappointed. Humanity has repeated these collectivising experiences as a characteristic of an era of pairs of opposites and we are witnessing, at the end of the era, the exaltation of power, ambition and voracity of these collective apocalyptic beasts. All this effort for betterment had been useful, had permitted the development and progress of large parts of human society, but humans were already prepared for a new experience. The support of great groupings, the sustenance provided by a stable and traditional society collapsed, and humans were once again cast into the wilderness and solitude to earn their bread with the sweat of their brow and conquer a true individuality with their own efforts. A new “manna” descended from heaven to help them on their path to the new promised land.

The different scientific, philosophical, psychological and social currents, and the growing experience of great human masses in organised labour, while contributing to the development of their personalities, made humans aware of their slavery, of their illusions, of their conditioning, and a clamour for liberation arose. This need to be free led, at times, to wars of revolution, racial struggle, the liberalism of customs, antisocial reactions, seemingly unbounded and chaotic expressions of an era of decadence, but at heart they revealed an increasingly intense inner pressure in search of a fundamental solution that must culminate in the “birth” of a new state of life—the ascending tide of a humanity that was already prepared to absorb a new spiritual current that descended from on high to take body and matrix with it. Many beings were lost in the overflowing of new illusions; prophetic messages emerged, voices of hope and voices of destruction, but on the crest of the ascending human wave some people began to see clearly and to feel the fresh air of renewal of the spiritual breeze. The force of rebellion that made the old frameworks break was not enough, nor was the force of an existential philosophy that showed the

value of the person in counterposition to the servility of absolute values or the slavery imposed by the masses, nor the force of a new religion as a new belief or new theology, but the pure *spiritual force*, a spiritual force that would give the energy necessary to the human longing for liberation in keeping with the sign of the new times.

3. The liberating current is announced by *prophetic revelation* and is *revealed* by similarity; but there may be false prophets who only hold a personal leadership or act as interpreters of the mirages of the collective mind.

Despite its dramatic emergence, the energy of the divine liberating current is not easily perceived by the humans of the new generation. The mental and emotional structure of the past constitutes too dense an atmosphere that interposes itself as a veil on spiritual radiation. Its presence is detected, originally, in the upper layers of the earth's noosphere by beings who have the rare privilege of the prophetic announcement. It is like the ether storms that cause solar explosions: the "ether wind" acquires an extraordinary speed and radioactive power, but down here no one realises they exist, and they would go unnoticed without recording equipment. The same occurs with the beings who announce the new times: they are capable of raising themselves above the everyday and bringing us the news, the *Announcement* of what will come. But little by little, the liberating energy makes itself felt through evident signs at all levels of planetary life.

The Presence of the divine Person activates a new time and has the character of a consummated deed and fundamental challenge. An abyss opens up between two worlds and two times. From that instant, all discussions down here become futile and, for the individual human, a single question is raised, of whether they will be able to associate themselves with his message: "I have not come to bring peace but the sword," says Christ.

Aside from any attempt to capture the fleeting instant of the "historicity" of the divine Person, the profound concern of many souls of our time lies in wanting to discover, by *similarity*, the liberating spiritual current associated with their Presence and glimpse what fundamental ideas and feelings will develop in the future under the influence of their activating energy. To my understanding, such revelatory signs are more internal than external and configure a state of the human soul befitting a correspondence with such a spiritual current; a state of the soul impregnated with such longings of creative life—despite the apparent confusion of the world in which they live—which makes it the expectant womb of a divine fecundation; a state of soul that having fulfilled the desires of Mother Nature wants to become mother of God—that is, womb of the son of God—receiving by similarity and participation in their own heart, in their own flesh, the fertilising force of the liberating current of divine energy and making possible, through love, the Union of their human nature with divine Life. For me, it is this deep, hidden yearning of the human soul that at present, in translating into the awakening of a new state of conscience, of a

new love and a new form of life—amid the shadows of the night of the past—constitutes the sign of an inner messianism that is “born” in the heart of the individual human beyond the frontiers of time and the mind. In reality, this “inner messiah,” as new spiritual force of liberation of the individual, is really the “saviour” of the human that everyone expects, but which not everyone is willing to accept in the plenitude of their existence; they expect him but, at the same time, they fear him and project their unconscious fear on the image of an “ideal” messiah that will liberate them from oppression and bear the burden of their sins.

The current messianic sign is displaced from the collective messiah, the messiah of the race, the individual messiah; the messianic drama of these times is to reproduce in the individual soul the great sacred cosmic drama that traditional symbols have perpetuated in their images and the Great Initiates of the race have embodied in their lives. With the end of the Age of Pisces and the experiences of mass organisations, the cosmic challenge of liberation is the individual’s: take the great images and ideals of the spiritual tradition of the past, but make a living reality of all that; pass from the symbol, from the myth of the saint or of the hero to the direct spiritual experience, to the direct testimony: “I am the lamb of God,” “I am the mother of God,” “I am the son of God”—to a certain degree. The purest spiritual tradition of humanity being renewed now in the human soul, no longer waiting for a saviour outside of themselves, no longer admiring the Cross of the Messiah-hero but taking their own cross... The need to find the redemption of one’s own soul is so strong, the wish to free oneself by one’s own means is so strong, that the indispensable role of divine assistance and the cosmic function of the Liberator is concealed. It is not easy to realise that all human effort would be worth nothing if “someone” had not “opened the door,” that is, had not removed the fundamental obstacles as a condition prior to the achievement of individual liberation. The illusion of humanism is wanting to do away with that “Someone” and their doctrine of individual liberation—with an exclusive basis in immanence—leads ultimately to a new affirmation of the human in their positive values and weaves a new structure of slavery, perhaps more dangerous than any other, because it is founded on an arrogance of self-sufficiency.

4. The Liberator gives the *measure* of human liberation.

Theories about absolute freedom, regardless of the level at which they are put forward, and concepts of the dissolution of the individual self in the cosmic ocean and its identification with the absolute, appear illusory in the eyes of experience. Every era has, in reality, a “measure” of this that we call liberation, it is the measure given by the possibilities of human development, on the one hand, and the measure offered by the divine Prototype, on the other. In our time, the fundamental challenge that is updated in the individual consciousness is to attain a measure of “harmony” between the human and divine values which, separated for millennia in an antagonistic struggle, wish to find a definitive point of conjunction in the heart of humans. The great scandal

caused by Christ's presence in the society of his time and the fundamental reason for the rejection of his doctrine by men of law and ethics can be summed up dramatically in this short dialogue: "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?" "We are not stoning you for any good work," they replied, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." (John 10, 32-33.) Analogously we could speak today about all the currents of materialist humanism; if someone who postulated such extreme positions felt attacked and said, "What sin are you accusing me of?" we would answer: because you carry in yourself the potentiality of the divine but you deny it and reduce it to your human condition.

This drama of the encounter of the human with the divine—translated to the cosmic, mythical, symbolic and initiatory stage, the terrain of the concrete existence of the individual soul—is what maintains the concern of an inner messianism that must be resolved, to a certain "degree," by a human effort coupled to a "particle" of redeemed life.

5. The Liberator is a *free being* and living fundament of *liberation by similarity*.

The messianic drama is proposed existentially and, therefore, it has to be resolved concretely. The Divine Prototype resolves it in "Itself" on a universal and planetary scale, but the individual human also renews it in "themselves"—to a certain "extent"—through a particle of "That" redeemed life, and that particle can only exist through the person. That is, liberation takes place through the person that one has in oneself, at least a "particle" of "free being," which is transmitted by the current of liberating energy.

Although liberation is *initiated* in the individual with the conscience of their need to be free, it is not exhausted in that conscience. Hunger and thirst are not sated by becoming aware of such needs; I need real water and bread. The same thing happens with liberation—if I don't want to enter the field of utopia or of illusions. My need to be free needs the real "water" and "bread" of freedom. I cannot feed on the "cosmic conscience," nor on the "divine archetype," nor on the "idea" of liberation, nor on a "messiah" that I have never met and may never meet, nor on a word made "letter," but on a living person with whom I can have at least *contact* with the redeemed life, a "catalytic" contact by means of whom a reaction of liberation begins in me. Without that personal living particle I do not see that any real liberation can occur: all the theories on water and thirst, I repeat, are incapable of satisfying my real need.

6. The Divine Prototype, through its liberating function, is the fundament of a *mysticism of liberation*, with *ethical* and *biological* projections.

Through their egoence, the spiritual human participates in the cosmic function of redemption of the Divine Prototype as they take "onto themselves" the barriers of limitation of their

loved ones. This taking “onto themselves” of the burden that prevents the liberation of souls is what characterises the liberating function *qua* function. Although it is true that within the cosmic drama only the divine Being, because of their greatness, can take onto themselves the sins of the world, every one of us, and because of the particle of greatness in the love that we can have, can participate in human liberation in a co-redemptive function. If we truly love other souls, if we do not wish to take any personal advantage from them, if we do not want to make of them a means for our benefit, if we renounce possessing them and accept them as they are—with their good and their evil—and we truly want to help them in their liberation, we will immediately understand that there are “burdens” of ignorance, of passions, of diseases, which are for them insuperable barriers on the path of their liberation, if “someone” does not take the burden from them. Perhaps at a certain moment in our own lives, and responding to our desire for liberation, “someone” took our burdens on for us; and if the liberation “took place” in us we will feel the need to “take responsibility” for the lives of the beings that fate has placed beside us. This is liberating oneself in order to liberate and it is reclaiming for oneself a mysticism that goes beyond all the social duties of humans.

In short, to give souls a contact with the redeemed life it is not enough to teach them, enlighten them, advise them, guide them, it is necessary to bear, to some degree, the burdens of their own existence. Redemption appears to us, then, not only as a purely spiritual and extraordinary process, but as a universal function within the reach of all the world and with ethical and even biological derivations. Indeed, it is not possible to make effective the development of humanity towards superior stages of life if “someone” does not take on the obstacles that hinder such development. If Christ died on the cross to “save us,” in the age of egoence and in function of an individual, expansive and participatory conscience, we must learn no longer only to take “our” cross but also a cross—no matter how small—of other people. This is the ethical-biological function of the spiritual human.

VIII

DIVINE LAW

Only those who have known that joy expresses itself through the law have learned to transcend the law.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE, *Sadhana*

VIII. 1

Apart from the natural laws that govern the mechanical functioning of the human organism—both biological and mental—and the laws that humans have provided themselves with to regulate the conduct of individuals in organised society, is there a divine Law that has anything to do with humans' own selves and their fate?

The biological, psychological and social sciences founded on the concept of a materialist evolutionism say that there is only *one* law of biological development of humans that drives, from the depths of the matter, organic and psychosocial maturing and that humans themselves, having reached a certain degree of consciousness and responsibility, contribute with their efforts to directing and guiding that development.

In contrast, the spiritual tradition of humanity—without denying unconscious biological development and free will—postulates the existence of a Divine Law that is inscribed in the ontological structure of humans and which God himself has also revealed on various occasions, whether through prophets, divine messengers or inspired people, or becoming Incarnate to give testimony of his Will and his Law. The sacred books of the different religions and the subsequent tradition have maintained, over time and in different cultures, an image of that Revealed Divine Law at the rate of material and spiritual development attained by humanity in each era, so that through their knowledge and observance humans could reach a certain degree of divine perfection. This current of spiritual inspiration—whether oral or written—in descending from the high peaks to the valley, as it becomes humanised and takes on body and objectivity, is like a torrent whose waters, clear at their origin, take on a colour and density of their own from the lands through which they pass. There comes a moment in history, when the waters of the divine knowledge given to humans descend deeper, when it is hard to recognise their origin and their true nature. The inspirational presence of the Law is replaced by blind faith in what was said or written, what in its origin was a direct spiritual experience is transformed with time into a chain of formal transmission by intermediaries, and the spirit of the Law is replaced by cold words.

The great governors, legislators and educators of peoples, inspired by divine wisdom, basing themselves on natural law and in the light of intelligence, gave humanity wise and just laws which, as they attended to material needs and promoted social development, guided the best

efforts of the community towards the individual's spiritual improvement. The human law always appears, in the great codes of legislation, as a means at the service of human liberation and not a simple instrument for regulating their lives. But when virtue decays, when the leaders of the people believe themselves gods on earth, and the wise are replaced by technicians, laws of organisation emerge and human life is organised increasingly with greater perfection and with greater possibilities of material "production" and "yield", but behind the back of the wisdom of the universal Law and leading, ultimately, to slavery and destruction.

The truth is that both at spiritual level and at biological and social level, the exclusivist formulations of a "divine" law on the one hand and a "human" law on the other are unsuitable for fulfilling the "total" needs of the humans of our time and constitute the fundamental seed of rebellion against all given order that ferments in contemporary society on a global scale. We are in a time of crisis in terms of legislation and we urgently need the legislators of the new era to form the legal body that is a suitable instrument for humans to achieve harmony between human and divine values in their social lives, regardless of any utilitarian performance.

Until now we had a religious law on the one hand and a civil law on the other, one law revealed and another passed down by reason (or by lack of reason), but despite some attempts to harmonise them there remains an irreducible duality between them to this day. Furthermore, the question I asked at the start of this chapter—is there a revealed law or does only a natural law exist?—a question that in the past was the centre of controversy between science and technology, is today out of date because rational speculation on this question has already said all that has to be said and modern humans have different needs. It is not that this question does not have value as a question by itself today, but its answer is not accessible to the mind when the "being" has *already* obtained an answer. I will explain what I mean by this, as it seems paradoxical. Human effort in the modern era has concentrated on the investigation of the laws of nature and of human society: the exact sciences, psychology, political economics and sociology are flourishing more than theology, morality or religion. Science and technology have had marvellous achievements in recent decades; human ingenuity has not only improved certain environmental conditions of our life on earth—urbanisation, eradication of infectious diseases—but has created a "new" environment, a technostucture that constitutes the techno-habitat of a great majority of people on the planet. These positive results of a human will placed at the service of progress mean that today's individual is much more predisposed to lead their life by the dictates of science than by the voice of revelation, and has more faith in a happy kingdom on earth created by their own work than in the paradise promised by religious beliefs.

But something is happening in the world that means that despite all the advances of science and material wellbeing attained by technology, the kingdom of love, justice and peace continues to appear to us as a faraway ideal. The problem is that only partial results have been

attained and humans still debate between the pairs of opposites of their predestination of their free will, between a divine law that indicates a fate of spiritual freedom and a human law that cannot manage to enter into harmony with the other; the individual being grows, progresses, develops, but does so as an entity separate from the universe, on the margins of universal Law, and englobing their own self in the work that they have created, so that when they believe they are free they are trapped by their own shadow.

At present humans want to encounter their *own measure of participation* in universal Law, but a measure that is not imposed on them but is born from themselves. The individual wants to know how to *locate* the values achieved by their own efforts within the great work of the universe, they want to discover, in short, their *own orbit*, their own place in the cosmic current of human liberation. In the search for this measure and this orbit of their own, a rebellion tends to occur with the laws of the past, whether “divine” laws or “human” ones, with the result that with the ancient regime broken and the old forms destroyed, there is nothing left and the self flounders in the void of scepticism before they can find their own law.

If we look at humanity as a whole, it appears that each individual and group wishes to impose their law. At one moment it seemed that the new planetary order would emerge, in the end, with the imposition of the law of the strongest and the achievement of global hegemony. But despite the power of large economic, political, technological and religious organisations, it does not appear that these can achieve a universal hegemony by imposing their collective law: the sign of the masses has passed and a new phenomenon is emerging in the world. The great blocks, the great structures—despite their apparent solidity—are coming apart, internal contradictions are emerging everywhere and the “new law” will not be a law of the masses nor a law imposed by the masses: the new law is germinating today beneath the whole wave of collective life and it is being investigated and discovered in the intimacy of the individual consciousness; it is the individual, in the end, who is going to make the great challenge, despite their apparent insignificance; it is the individual who is going to challenge the organised mass. Therein lies the great battle. The individual today wants to find “their” law, no longer in the reactive and anarchic sense as many still interpret this idea of “living according to one’s law”—which is only a new version of enslaving anarchism—but of finding that mysterious and hidden law that makes it possible to harmonise the efforts of free will with their law of predestination, their human law with divine Law. As it is understood, this *new law*, which is the law of the egoence of the self, cannot be formulated in the terms of a collective code nor can it appear as a model to be imitated by all but rather it is experienced and “lived” by new human types and given not as a formula of salvation for all, but as a concrete “point of contact” for those who wish to live it in a similar (not identical) way. More than as a formal law, a new decalogue or a new code, it is given to humanity as a “vibratory field.” It is as if it were a code of vibratory energy. But how to discover that field of similarity and how to “read” in that code? How did I discover it?

VIII.2

I knew the divine Law written in the sacred books and I sensed its presence in the depths of my being, but said Law, thus formulated or intuited, was not existentially enough for me. I could not, myself, *function* in it, I could not navigate in its current. It was like being in a ship with a nautical chart in my hand and with no experience in the art of navigating.

I said before that when I met Don Santiago the first thing that struck me, in his presence, was the world of freedom in which he moved. I immediately got “in contact” with an “energy field” ruled by laws that I did not know, but at the same time I felt attracted by a strange similarity. And it was through similarity with his life that I gradually discovered some of those laws because he never announced a new law through preaching or revelation. I “sensed” that law by his side—at first dark and contradictory with my own law—but gradually, through *similarity*, I gradually “got in tune” with it better and also made it my own. In crossing my line of destiny with his and finding *each other*, my self discovered—in the spiritual field of his person—the Law of liberation, and my human law entered into the orbit of that superior Law: all of it through similarity, by communion. I understood immediately that that new law was different, by nature, to human and social laws; that that living Law, which functioned in a free being and which now also functioned in a certain degree in my person, was an expression of divine Law. That Law did not deny my free will nor the laws of my nature, but rather, by getting in tune with the natural needs of my soul, I placed my individual being in the orbit of my vocation to be free; that is, my vocation to be free found an answer from the divine Law through a free being and that concrete person provided me with a “measure,” a “contact point” with that Law which I would not have been able to reach otherwise. At least existentially, the universal Law only became accessible to me through the person. *The divine Law revealing itself in the spiritual human community and in a measure so as to be able to live it.* I once again sensed the providence of the Mother, the God of the Law, the Great Architect, the Supreme Judge, the Universal Law, the Cosmic Consciousness, which were inaccessible to me in their absolute greatness, were provided to me in the “measure” of the Mother, a measure accessible to the soul-son. She gave herself as a person in the meeting of souls and made me *feel* her Law as a throbbing, concrete Life on earth. From this human measure, taking “support” in it, I was able to glimpse the universal field of operativity of the divine Law, which appeared to me as a dynamic, imponderable and invisible weft—“intrastructure”—which subtly penetrated the dense warp of life and gave it meaning: the biological, psychological, ethical and social laws “operated” on the invisible axis of divine Law. This mysterious “opus” is totally unknown by those who believe that there is only a material dynamic in the universe.

VIII. 3

Only now, then, on the basis of a personal focus of direct lived experience of spiritual freedom and the vision of operativity of divine Law, am I in better conditions to attempt to characterise this Law, both in general terms and in the unique facet that manifests itself in our time. I will develop the following aspects: 1. The divine Law reveals itself through lived testimony. 2. One attempts to discover it by an experimental path, in oneself. 3. It is lived and formulated in advance by the scholars and the saints of the new age. 4. It wants to be experienced in its individual dimension. 5. It is liberating through obedience. 6. It operates in an integral field.

1. The divine law is revealed today by a new living testimony.

Faced with the historical materialism that denies all divine Law, and materialisation of spiritual ideas that reduce it to all-too human models, the need is raised for many today of “returning to the sources” to rediscover the Law there in its original purity. But which sources are we to return to? To the source of the sacred books? To the source of one’s own individual conscience? To the source of the primitive Church? In reality, all these proposed returns to the sources cannot give more than they have given, because they are reactive attitudes that do not go further than the limits of the known field. In these recent times people thought they had found in the Dead Sea Scrolls a new written testimony of the Revelation. Without denying its value as historical document, it is illusory to always focus the gaze on the past in search of the Sources of Revelation and not open one’s eyes to a revelation that is also renewed in the present, but which we are not capable of getting in tune with. Aside from the controversies that the study of the Scrolls triggered, the most eloquent part of its text is not some new version of the Law but rather the fact of having demonstrated the existence—prior to the emergence of Christianity—of communities of people capable of *living* according to that Law. In our time something similar is happening: the testimony of a new revelation of the divine Law is not made—at least for now—through new writings, new scrolls or new declarations, but through the *concrete life* of people who *live* that Law.

2. The divine Law must be experienced directly, without intermediaries

The urge to scrutinise the scriptures to discover in them the mysteries of the divine Law has displaced in the humans of our time a longing of investigation of the fundamental laws of their own time, both material and spiritual. The spirit of investigation that humans have conquered in their efforts to discover the laws of nature is now oriented at the discovery of the laws of their own spiritual world. Blind faith, for some, or the heroic example of the saint or of the liberated person, for others—who were sufficient testimony in another time to keep the belief in the values of the spirit alive—is supplanted today by simple faith or scientific experience taken to all levels of the self as a method that gives us not only the support of a belief but also the expansive enjoyment of direct spiritual experience. In short, for the individual the images of intermediation

between God and humans were blurred, and their spiritual problem was reduced to the following terms: 1) *simple faith*—not framed in any mental conditioning— and 2) *experiential proof*—in the sense of direct experience that allows them to discover and experience for themselves the laws of the spiritual world. The spiritual, which until yesterday had been an object of blind faith, of tradition of what someone else said, of a symbol, of a doctrine, of a miracle, now seeks to be an evident and essential truth for the subject.

The discovery of the laws of matter and energy, the biological, psychological, economic and social laws, must be followed by the discovery of moral laws and the spiritual Law, all approached with the same rigor that was taught to us by the exact sciences, without concealing attitudes of a psychical or parapsychic character which for centuries have prevented humans from direct access to their divine dimension. A valiant attitude is necessary for this, and a sincere review of beliefs and dogmas, whether religious, scientific, social or political. It is necessary to *investigate* in a field reserved not for religion or the empirical search, in the field of our intimate self, that has deep gravitation in the human field because it is there that our good and evil, our health and sickness are “generated,” and where the fundamental decisions that affect our destiny are “born.” And we must carry out this exploration not with a romantic or idealistic spirit but with the scientific rigour of a true work of inner laboratory. However, in moving from a stage of blind faith to another of direct experimentation, one question is immediately raised: who is capable of investigating today in that field? Of reading “directly” in the Book of the own “self” where the most fundamental laws of human life and the universe are written?

3. Divine Law is lived and formulated in advance by the scholars and the saints of the new age.

Many modern scholars are, in reality, great mystics and the intuition of the most general laws of the universe occurs in them more through similarity with universal Law than through a strictly scientific method. The case of Einstein is highly demonstrative; then the technical teams develop the postulates of pure science and find their practical applications, but the original intuition that makes it possible to discover the law is veritable spiritual enlightenment. But despite their greatness, scholars have not been able to formulate the *only* Law of the universe: Einstein’s formula of equivalence between matter and energy is an extraordinary step in the direction of the universal laws, but it is very far from the equation of a true “unified field.” Only mysticism can go further. It is the saints of our era who live in the silence of renunciation who must deliver to humanity a new mysticism as their most precious legacy: from this mysticism, which will gradually win over human hearts, a new ethics will slowly emerge that will give them a better chance of harmony with divine Law.

4. Divine Law must be experienced by modern humans in their individual dimension.

Although universal Law or an aspect of that Law could be formulated in a general order, and although superior beings give testimony of that Law with their own Lives, the trend of our time is not to constitute such images as models to “imitate” but to take them as “support points” to discover by similarity in “itself” the Law of the universe made individual law of the person: divine Law, cosmic Law, universal Law functioning in the concrete measure of the person. Herein lies the great spiritual adventure of the modern human! No longer the dissolution of the ego in the great cosmic ocean, nor the expectation of a heroic saviour who will come again to die for us, bearing the burden of our sins, or glorify us with virtues we do not have, but rather the Incarnation of the divine Law in an individual human measure—egoence of the self. Divine Law made flesh in the individual through a mysticism and an ethics of renunciation.

But the long tradition of humanity within a collective law constitutes a new barrier of difficulty for the discovery of this egoence. Even the spiritual person—with the best intentions—ties themselves to the letter of a rule, to the word of the master made law, to an obedience that replaces their own will with that of someone else’s, making the method an end and not simply a means of liberation. This enslaving conditioning of the masters, the churches and the schools has been denounced time and again in all eras and many have misinterpreted these criticisms, believing that humans do not need any of those “supports” and that they must be able to discover them themselves and find their own law by their own means: and thus they go from paternalism to spiritual anarchism.

It is true that the discovery of this individual expression of the divine Law, or egoence of the self, cannot be realised by “imitation” of the footprints that another has left, and the person advances towards themselves in a field without footprints, but that does not mean “randomly.” They need a “point of support” in a spiritual person or in a meeting of souls—as I have said before—, a point of support that is not imitative or material, but a subtle, mental field of harmony, a launch pad from which the soul can be launched into the void of cosmic conscience in search of the recognition of their own name. The rule, in contrast, the compromise, the observance of human laws, the contact with the spiritual person or the meeting of souls, do not themselves give the knowledge of the Law that we seek, but are “means” that predispose the harmony of the individual soul with the Law of the cosmic conscience. Without this field of concrete existential communion, the search for their own law tends to be no more than the great adventure through the human labyrinth, which most of the time ends in a rebellion without cause, in psychical disorders or in that strange, modern pose of “liberated people” of our time who, having followed one technique or another, consider that they “have arrived” and stand as masters of the others, when in reality they have only reached the vertex of a pyramid of arrogance from where they sow confusion or illusory hopes.

The price of discovering the individual law is great solitude, great suffering and great temptation. Being true to the individual law requires great heroism and a sense of *mission* that makes it possible to overcome what we might call the “test of the world”: to live in a world governed by other laws, to participate with the life of everyone and not be “tempted” by the goods of the surrounding world or let oneself be confused by other lines of fate different from one’s own.

5. The divine Law is liberating through obedience

Obedience, in the sense of submitting one’s own will to that of another, is the thing most contrary to egoence. However, the spirit of obedience of the divine Law is a suitable means for individual freedom. How must we understand this? Why does obedience, so esteemed in the past as a virtue of institutional stability, seem to have entered into crisis today? Is it not precisely disobedience and rebellion that characterise the “individual” movements in the society of our time? All this confusion about obedience—previously a virtue and today considered by many to be the stigma of slavery—is because its original spiritual sense has been deviated to make it an instrument of human servitude. Is it possible to reverse the meaning of an obedience of “submission” to a “liberating” obedience? From an obedience of “imposition” to an obedience of “choice”? From an obedience that forces the individual will to submit to a law alien to themselves to an obedience that makes it possible to find oneself in the fulfilment of one’s “own law”? This implies a change of attitude that has a lot of importance at present, because not only does it make it possible to set the bases of an individual mysticism centred on divine Law but it makes it possible to found a social liberating philosophy on the principle of obedience of human laws.

To restore obedience to its original liberating function we must be able to understand it within the primary field of the “call” and the vocational “response” and as an attitude prior to any surrender of will. In speaking of “vocation” I characterised it as a voice that calls the “lost being” to be “itself” and I said that this voice is not patent as a sound, in the sense of everyday speech, but rather it manifests itself in the modality of “silence”; and I characterised the authentic response to this call as “wanting to have conscience,” “wanting to hear,” which is resolved, finally, in a “choosing oneself” to “be.” As a pure act, prior to any determination of the will, I characterised the vocational response as “commitment” of “oneself” to that at first unknown “Voice,” but one that presupposes a “Someone” that I recognise as divine Presence. I said that this commitment, in its origin, is a promise or “vow” formulated in the intimacy of silence, of responding faithfully to that divine call. In this sacred act the obedience is already implicit that is a surrender of the self to God prior to any surrender of the will in the practical sense.

The spirit of obedience, then, implies: 1. A “silent” Voice that “calls” to be “oneself”; capacity for *silence*. 2. A human response of “commitment” to that call: capacity for *fidelity*. 3.

Disposition to “continue hearing” what that “Voice-Law” wants for me to “continue responding” with my “own law”: capacity of *obedience*.

In short, “liberating obedience” is according to the “vocation.” But we must not understand vocation as a voice that calls just once and then stops calling nor the response as an act of commitment that, once fulfilled, liberates the self from continuing to respond. I understand vocation as a “divine field of call,” as a “Voice” that once pronounced—in Silence—in the inner temple of the soul, continues to resonate “in the walls of the temple,” continues “calling,” and with increasing intensity, if the being “continues responding” in a “field of response”: rhythm of the obedience to the Law. It is this new harmony of response to that subtle field of call of the Law that I understand has to be developed in the future human as a new function of obedience.

6. *The divine Law operates in an integral field*

The vocational response translates into concrete effects in the practical order. As individual will enters the orbit of divine Law *all* the aspects of the individual self, whether spiritual or material, are “ordered” according to said Law. All the energies of the person are oriented towards a *single focus* of convergence, towards a single *heart* and move to the human-divine rhythm of that heart. There is no material life on the one hand and spiritual life on the other, the blood of the matter and the blood of the spirit come together and transform to the rhythm of the Law and for the fulfilment of a single work that has the sense of mission. In short, at present humans want to find their own measure of participation in the universal Law and want to know how to locate the values attained by the individual effort within the great work of the universe.

The individual can have access to the divine Law by harmony or similarity with the souls in whom that Law vibrates existentially.

On the basis of operativity of this divine Law at human level we can characterise it with modalities that are typical of our time:

1. It is revealed today by a new *living* testimony, that is, by the concrete life of the people who *live* that law.
2. The modern human wants to experience for themselves, directly, the laws of their spiritual world.
3. The scholars and the saints of the new era, in getting in tune by similarity with the universal Law, constitute the advance party of a humanity that wants to earn its right of conscious and responsible participation with said Law.

4. The collective way of experiencing the divine Law by “imitation” of perfect models is succeeded today by an individual mode of being in tune with it by similarity of vibratory fields at the level of meeting of souls.

5. The spirit of *obedience* of divine Law is the right means for individual liberty. This obedience anticipates the future as a new function of harmony of human *response* to a field of *call* of the divine Law perceived directly by the conscience of the individual.

6. As individual will becomes analogous with divine Law, existential contradictions disappear and the new rhythm of the integral life is discovered.

IX

MYSTICISM OF INDIVIDUAL ACTION

FROM EXISTENTIAL ANXIETY TO MYSTICISM OF THE HEART

I started to be increasingly aware of the infinite possibilities of universal love.

M.K. Gandhi, *Autobiography*

IX. 1

Today there is an urgent need to establish the principles of human action with objective and integral criteria if we are to have any chance of setting the bases of an individual and social ethics of the future that has the character of true science and wisdom.

All those who pride themselves on having any values say that their conduct is governed by moral “principles,” but in practice everyone understands this morality in their own way, and habitually what they call “principles” are no such thing, but rather interests or particular conveniences dressed up and rationalized as such to “justify” the most immoral actions. When these value systems that orient conduct are reviewed with a critical spirit, we discover that almost all of them imply an a priori theory of humanity, of society or the universe, and that “ethics” is the name given to the conduct that is in agreement with that a priori. This type of “ethics,” ultimately, places humans at the service of systems and not systems at the service of humans.

But today progress is being made on these narrow points of view. We no longer accept understanding an individual from a general theory of humans but from their being as “self,” of their own concrete and unique existence. Hence the need for an ontological and not simply empirical basis of ethics: we must be able to establish the perfect individual “action,” at least from the point of view of existential analysis, on the basis of the most authentic and proper form of “total self.” To access this “total self” it is necessary to be able to clarify the totality of possibilities of existence: the “self” and the “non-self,” that is, the “self” and the possibility of “ceasing to be,” of reaching the “end.” That is, “existence” and the possibility of the “end” of existence, which is “death.” The possibility of apprehending and experiencing “death” in a way of one’s own is a key point in understanding the “could be” of human existence in its most particular and individual form. I do not speak here of “death” in the physiological or biological sense—like a “ceasing to live”—but of something much more fundamental, in an existential sense, as a way of being inherent to human existence itself. From this point of view, death is not a late and occasional accident that can happen to the self in a latter moment of the course of their being, but from the very moment that the self exists it carries in itself death as something inherent that threatens existence imminently. This does not mean that one is always aware of this imminent threat; on

the contrary, everyday existence “covers up” in a thousand different ways this extreme possibility of the self in relation to death and only anxiety exposes it and indicates it as the most particular possibility of the “total self.”

Humans can conduct themselves before death—always from an existential point of view—“properly” or “improperly,” “authentically” or “inauthentically.” In the improper way of being of collective existence, “one” experiences death as an accident that “one already knows is happening” within the world, that can happen to “everyone,” that can also happen “to one” “but which... has not happened yet.” If someone has an incurable disease, and it is known for certain that they are going to die, people try not to tell them this and rather convince them that they will soon be fine. In short, there are ways of covering up death, of tranquilizing oneself constantly about it, of “interpreting it” one way or another and, in short, “escaping it” constantly, “dodging it,” “fleeing from it,” given the anxiety of confronting it.

But there is a different way of conducting oneself as regards death, in such a way that death, instead of being covered up, is “exposed” as a “possibility” of the “total self.” This “proper” way of conducting oneself in relation to death is to take death onto oneself—without escapes or concealments—from oneself and by oneself, so that the self opens up to their most particular and individual proper way of being. Only when the self opens up to death, when it does not escape it or conceal it, can it understand that it can leave the lost state, that it can recover from its inauthentic existence and that it can be “itself” in its most absolute singularity. Only then does it understand that to be “itself,” in its individuality, it must die and that nobody can take their place to die but rather that they must die themselves. In Heidegger’s words, the self understands that “the most extreme possibility of existence is imminent, that of giving itself up,” that is, in setting themselves at liberty to accept death from themselves, the renunciation of themselves emerges as an extreme possibility of existence. Heidegger reveals renunciation through existential analysis, but let us not forget, and he himself says this, that analysis “brings us closer” to the understanding of this proper way of conducting oneself in relation to death, taking responsibility for it from oneself and by oneself, but this is only *as a possibility*. And this ontological approach to renunciation, even the closest one, can be as far as possible from all real action, from all concrete realization. We shall see below that renunciation, in the practical sense, can only be founded on a mysticism of the heart. But returning to metaphysics and the need for an ontological grounding of ethics, why do we give so much importance to death? Because not taking it into account implies the “partial” system of any system of values and makes the birth of a true individual ethics impossible.

If ethics is founded on a “partial” aspect of humans, constituted as a value “by itself,” and on the “positive” values that enrich that “by itself,” this leads in practice to a crisis of lack of communication of the existing ones—as is happening today in reality. Indeed, in establishing from the origin a “being in self”—as a “closed” system—all chances of communion and

universality are blocked as, by definition, the “in itself” can be no other thing than what it is. Existentialist philosophers have realized that for humans to be able to take on their real human dimension they must be able to “open up” to the “totality” of their possibilities. Heidegger speaks to us of a “total self” as “self relative to death,” understanding this death in an existential sense and as an end of the finite self, without passing judgment on the continuation of time or new forms of existence in the “beyond.” Sartre, in turn, postulates the “negation of oneself” as a principle of action, but identifying “not being” with “nothing” leads to a philosophy of despair.

The important thing about all these modern philosophical concepts is that, one way or another, they show that to access a dimension of “totality” in humans it is necessary to overcome the monolithic models of the human “atom” in its absolute individualism because on the basis of a positive value “by itself” not only is it possible to establish an essential communication between humans but also a union is not possible between the human and the divine. That is, when humans affirm themselves in their “self” as first absolute principle—an absolute fact due to their sense of possession of themselves and the negation of their deaths—not only do they become antagonistic with their fellow humans but, while still considering themselves believers, in practice they subordinate God, they put him in second place and, in the end, they become antagonistic with themselves. Hence God’s love and love for one’s fellow humans, which tend to be postulated as primary values that need no further grounding because they are supposed to be understandable to all, must be reviewed in the light of a new formulation of “self-love.”

Individualist ethics, then, founded on the premise of a partial aspect of the human—as a positive value “by itself”—although it has made it possible to cultivate multiple facets of the human self, has closed the path of an ethics of universal scope. The recognition of this insufficiency has led, in some philosophical and social currents—both ancient and modern—to totally contrarian but equally partial formulations: postulating the human person as a “nothing” by itself, and displacing the totality of positive values to the cosmos, to God or to society as a whole “in itself,” has led to the negative ethics in which humans are only a “means” for a more elevated purpose than “themselves.”

At present we need to overcome these extreme, partial and contradictory points of view about action, although very tainted with a priori conceptions about humans and the universe, to find the authentic source of action in our own selves. The great voices of the past still resonate in the planet’s collective noosphere ordering “what must be done” and indicating for each era a given philosophy of action: either the affirmation of the world and of life or its negation, action, or no action, being and not being, passionate action or disinterested action, but today we need to establish an individual ethics that responds to the new needs emerging in the individual and in society and which give satisfaction not only to the great “cosmic” and “universal” ideals but which have full meaning for humans “themselves.” The central value that can serve as a basis for an

ethics of this kind is the “renunciation of oneself,” not as civil death, biological death, negation of oneself or dissolution of the “in itself” in the cosmic ocean or in the social mass, but as an “end”—like “death”—of a way of finite existence. At present, almost all philosophy of action is founded and developed behind death’s back, and although some philosophers postulate an ethics precisely with an eye on death—rules for dying well—the death they speak of tends to be transformed into a new affirmation of the self. More than a preparation to “die,” what they offer is a hope to “continue living” in the afterlife.

Perfect action cannot be valued in its character of affirmation or negation of the world or of life, of being or not being, of attached or detached action, because all that, in terms of absolute values, has no meaning and only disassociates humans from their “total being.” Full action must emerge as humans become capable of taking on the total responsibility for their existence in every instant—it is the action of a “total being in the world” and a “total being” *in* the world is transit between “being” and “not being,” between “existence” and “death” (in the sense of “end” of existence.) Embracing death as an extreme possibility of existence, taking on this death with all its potential for anxiety, without fleeing from it, reveals to humans their most particular possibility of being themselves and from this unity and totality with themselves authentic individual action emerges.

The discovery—in the sense of revealing—of “death” as a “totalising” possibility of existence and of the proper mode of conducting oneself in light of the anxiety of death is an important advance in the “understanding” of the human phenomenon, but as understanding as such, exclusively, it leads us on this side of the anxiety barrier. Furthermore, the stress that has been placed on wanting to “understand” existential anxiety perhaps conceals from us its real meaning as a human phenomenon of our time: has philosophy faced up to anxiety to make it the subject of investigation or has anxiety, in increasing in our time, necessarily claimed the attention of philosophers and other scholars of human science? Does all this understanding of anxiety as a possibility of “ceasing to be,” of “ceasing to exist,” of “dying”—existentially speaking—make humans less anxious? Certainly not. Existential anxiety at the death or “end” of what humans considered their values of stability, considered as mass phenomena, has a meaning of high prospective value and of challenge to humanity’s future possibilities: it is having reached the “barrier of death” and “understanding” that to cross it there is no company whatsoever, it is not possible to delegate to anybody this transit and that to pass to the other side—if I want to do the test myself and have the certainty that this other side exists—I must absolutely leave my own self at the entrance. This is the test of the individual: to do it, understanding is not enough; love is necessary. Philosophy and therapeutics is not enough, mysticism of the heart is necessary.

IX. 2

I repeat, it is one thing to postulate ontologically the “possibility” of renunciation as a way of being and a very different thing is the concrete realization of such a form of existence here and now.

I felt the ideal need to “renounce myself” as a possibility of being complete, but I lacked the *life of renunciation* of “someone” to be able to join with them and activate through that union a dynamic of renunciation in my own life; without that “someone,” all the ideal speculations are left in the air and all they are good for is to feel increasingly frustrated; the divine ideal in the soul needs a personalized earthly particle to become living current, human and divine at once. Hence the importance for me of the life testimony of renunciation in the person of Don Santiago. And I say this without wishing to make of his person an exceptional human type, a prophet who brings the new message of a master who is to be imitated, because with this we would only blur once again the spiritual phenomenon that I want to capture directly in ourselves to objectify it in the myth of the hero and of the saint. It is not a question of reconstructing such myths or creating a new one; the important thing, for me, was to recognize that the idea of renunciation that had been preached and taught in all ages by the great masters of humanity and which I intuited as an extraordinary ideal of perfection, but which seemed unattainable to me, happened *there*, live, in a person who had all the appearance of a common man, not as a heroic gesture of an instant but as a *habitual state of life*, and not outside of the world but *in* the world. This “being the renunciation in the world” configured for me a way of existence that I had not known until then. I began to glimpse renunciation as a new type of life that existed in the world and which was available to me as a new possibility of participating in it.

How did I learn renunciation beside Don Santiago? Through preaching? Through the formal teaching of new principles? Through discipline? Yes and no, because none of these methods, by themselves, can *give* renunciation. Rather, I would say that I learned it by similarity, in the *measure* that through renunciation I gradually participated in his living teaching. Then I realised how a new culture and new ethics is transmitted: it is not only a question of formulating it conceptually, one has to live it with the person who already “is” that new ethics and one has to participate in the community of life with those to whom one wishes to transmit it. If we have something to give to others we must give them our own lives: this is the mystical principle that must serve as the basis of a new ethics for future society. But before attempting to formulate the principles of this new ethics of egoence, let us see if we can characterise even better the mystical background of Don Santiago’s state of renunciation.

I have previously mentioned how I was impressed by the field of inner freedom in which Don Santiago moved, but only now am I better placed to understand in more depth what I mean

by that. The freedom of which I speak was, above all, and regardless of all that which can be understood habitually as freedom, a dominance over “death.” I feel most of the people I know exist from “this” side of death—which would appear normal since they are “living” beings. In contrast, I felt Don Santiago was like someone who had “died,” like someone who had crossed the existential barrier of “death” and was living “beyond death.” Let us be clear, I am speaking from a strictly existential point of view without presumed eschatological or parapsychological implications. I perceived in him a way of existence in renunciation that went beyond the anxiety at the barrier of death that I felt in myself. In penetrating that field the possibility of my own existential death felt more imminent, it is as if the contrast were accentuated between two different ways of existing; from that field “beyond death” he transmitted peace to me and, at the same time, a silent invitation to “die.” I realised it was only a question of surrender to be able to attain that mystical death and that a kingdom of peace lay beyond that death! It was precisely due to that subtle aspect of his life, due to that delicate perfume of unitive mysticism, that I recognised Don Santiago as a *master*. Today I am convinced that that is the charisma of a true spiritual master: not one who has developed one power or another, who has done meritorious works or who possesses extraordinary qualities or virtues, but one who “has died.” Only one who has died can teach others to cross the barrier of death and carry them from existential anxiety to mysticism of the heart. What extraordinary peace is felt beside a *master* who “is” life and death, existence and the end of existence! Beside Don Santiago, my problems seemed so vain, my anxiety seemed so insignificant, and that “slice” of life that I tried to retain in my hands without daring to “die” with it seemed so small! I want to clarify, however, a possible misunderstanding. When I speak of this serenity of the *master* who is “beyond” the barrier of “death,” I in no way mean—in the specific case of Don Santiago—that this is indifference to the things of this world, a kind of transcendent gaze that no longer has anything to do with that happens down here. Quite the contrary; from his “peace” beyond “death,” Don Santiago was deeply interested in “all” the aspects of life, there did not exist in him that “anxiety” that prevents us from seeing things and facts in their real dimension. He always “had time” for everything and gave himself to both large actions and small with the same love. I was able to realise what a mystic of individual action was, as the human can find plenitude, unity and integrality in themselves, in any action no matter how insignificant. I understood that existential anxiety overwhelms humans due to a lack of mysticism. I repeat, I could “see” and “understand” all that by his side, but I could not always live it. The barrier at the anxiety of existential death interposed itself many times on my path and I “know” that I shall only be able to cross it when I have enough love to be able to “die” myself.

IX. 3

I will now attempt to characterise the state of renunciation from a general point of view. I hasten to say that I can only understand renunciation in the *extent* to which I have lived it and

that this extent—in my particular case—is most insignificant in relation to the possibilities that I intuit in it.

Is renunciation a new mysticism? Certainly not. Renunciation is the foundation of all mysticism, both ancient and modern, but in each era this mysticism of renunciation has a particular physiognomy according to the spiritual needs of humanity. The direction and purpose of the unitive movement from the human to the divine has differed with the times, the cultures, peoples and races and the consequences have also differed in practical terms. There were mysticisms of union with the absolute that led humans to a negation of the world and of life; there were mysticisms of an intellectual bent that in the search for unitive knowledge with all living things forgot all ethical aspects, and there were mysticisms of compassion and of feeling that exalted compassionate love and participation in human suffering. At present an individual mysticism of the heart appears to be gestating: no longer the unitive mysticism with the absolute, with the universe, with the whole body of humanity but rather—above all and before all else—a mysticism of unity of the human with themselves. And this mysticism of existential unity that must give birth to the individual human of the future is a mysticism of renunciation, of renunciation of oneself, that is only possible *from* the heart. The ancient mysticisms of exaltation of humans all over the world still had the incentive of the mind in terms of attaining knowledge of the absolute and of the conquest of superior powers, but the unitive mysticism of the future with a view to the unity of “oneself” *in* the world has no sustenance or stimulus whatsoever outside of the heart: I can only renounce myself, “die” by myself and accept myself in the *finitude* of my individual existence through the strength of the heart. Of course the mystics of all ages have understood the value of “mystical death,” but their experiences have always been considered exceptional cases, more to live “outside” of the world than “in” the world.

Today, both metaphysics and mysticism converge in the proper “self” of humans and seek, each with their own methods, to found an ethics of human conduct that leads humans to a real encounter with themselves. It is necessary to found a metaphysics of action on the basis of the “total self” of the human that does not divorce said action from the supreme purpose of “being human,” and a mysticism is necessary that is not in disagreement with such ethics and which is possible to practice in everyday life. Both metaphysics and mysticism must be able to stress that “mode” of action that leads humans to a real encounter with themselves (mysticism of individual union) so that from there—from “oneself”—a true universal dimension can be opened. “Death” is the central focus of that new dynamic of egoence: a “death” that reveals to humans their own finite dimension and it is from the *finite*, which is their own reality—and not from the illusions of the infinite and interpretations about the absolute—that future humans will discover their unity with the divine.

But does mysticism of the heart have any development that we can really call modern? Has not the mysticism of feeling, of passion, of the mystic death not been awakened in humanity by the great masters for millennia? Yes, but we still have not learned it! And we have preferred that “someone” should continue dying for us than deciding once and for all to die ourselves. It is not with an intellectual mysticism of union with the absolute, nor with a collective mysticism of compassion, nor with a mysticism of social action that future humans may begin the great adventure of crossing the barrier of death to be “themselves” and develop the “new powers of the heart.” The breaking of the “human atom”—considered indivisible in its absolute personality affirmed in exclusively positive values—through the existential death of oneself, in conquering finitude itself, will release the “powers” of the heart which shall be the new force with which the individual may defeat the barrier of death and make way in their new world.

Just as when the atom of matter breaks a potential of energy is released, when the “atom” of the personality “dies” as “partial self” and the “unity” and “totality” of “oneself” is realised, action is born from that “total being” as a way of “active expansion.” It is no longer action moved by instinct, feelings or intellect—that is, moved from the “partial self” and with results that are also partial—but one that springs from the very core of “oneself” as “total self”; the expansive action that is born from renunciation is that which can found a truly universal ethics.

Let us develop the following aspects that characterise renunciation: 1. It is a mode of divine life on earth. 2. It is life that transcends death. 3. It is renewed by the mysticism of the heart. 4. It is a message of salvation. 5. It is life that occurs in the human person. 6. It is recognised by similarity. 7. It is a “negative” value that gives birth to an expansive individual action.

1. Renunciation is not an idea, a philosophy or a religious doctrine but a *state of divine life on earth*; that is, it is not an exclusively human expression, no matter how elevated it may be—as an immanent order—nor is it a type of divine “ex-homo” existence, but a way of being that is at once “human and divine.”

2. This life of renunciation, as *life*, is not reduced to what we call life in the biological or physiological sense, but life that transcends itself in death, becoming permanent—“redeemed life”; it is a way of being in which “life” and “death,” the “human” and the “divine,” are harmonized in a single expression of life.

3. The state of renunciation is *mystical* by nature and, as an act, is only possible through the mysticism of the heart: only the unitive mysticism of Love can cross the barrier of death and bind the human together with the divine. Human effort by itself cannot attain a state of life that transcends itself: nor can knowledge, feeling, or voluntary action, as partial values by themselves, make humans transcend themselves, but the love of renunciation can.

Said renunciation can be expressed, secondarily, in an ethics, a science, a philosophy or be methodised in a technique, but the primary aspect—as pure act—is the state of renunciation as mysticism.

4. It is a living message of the future that puts itself forward as message of *salvation*. It is not an objective message that is given as a formula of salvation for all, but a way of being that is transmitted by similarity and which “saves” as it is lived. Souls today clamour for their salvation and although this word takes on a different meaning for each person, it translates very well a common background of spiritual concern that is “saving oneself,” no longer from the flames of hell but saving oneself from an inauthentic mode of existence which for the modern human is the same as hell: winning the world and losing one’s soul. Today there is an abundance of prophetic messages of salvation: we have the message of philosophers, of science and of technology; we have the ideas of freedom brought to us by humanism; we have the apocalyptic messages of the end of the world and the promises of social revolution; each one of them, in their way, seeks the salvation of the human or society. But beyond that there is a need for salvation intrinsic to the being, a need to save those fundamental values that are at the root of oneself and which allow humans to be truly humans.

5. Renunciation is transcendent life in the human person; the mystery of the living-God, of the divine becoming human within the great sacred drama of the universe, is reverted today to a microcosmic scale of the human person; it is at this level that I want to characterise what I call “life of renunciation,” “redeemed” life or divine life on earth: in the existence of the person an individual *measure* of participation can be found in the divine life through renunciation.

For the purposes of the “redeemed” life the important thing is that there should exist at least a “particle” of life of renunciation in the intimacy of human life, because that particle of divine fire is enough to light in the souls the fire of their inner freedom; the important thing is the *nature* of that particle. No longer an idea, message, a rite empty of meaning or a flag to follow behind someone, but a living flame that can awaken the mysticism of the heart.

6. Is it possible that this state of renunciation exists on earth? *How can we recognise it* in the human person? The difficulty in recognising it is because we seek in people an ideal perfection of an example that embodies our desires, that is, we expect a divinity made in our own image; we do not seek in the person their spiritual reality but their virtues or their defects, and we stay on their surface, in their appearance, without making contact with their essential being and with their own world.

We are accustomed ancestrally to recognising the life of renunciation of the great gestures of saints and heroes, as objective values coined by culture, but when such values manifest themselves in our eyes and in our time we do not perceive them: we exalt the renunciation of the

great beings once they are dead, but in life we do not recognise them or we martyrise them. And it is not necessary to turn to history to understand the blindness at the living renunciation. For years we live with our parents, our spouses, our children, our teachers, and we miss the best of their lives. Only when they are dead do we understand some aspects of their renunciation. And what will we say, then, of the people that we have never known and will never know and whose renunciation animates to some extent and to a certain degree the world in which we live? The workers who have sacrificed the best of their youth in the field to give us the bread we eat every day, the scientists who gave their lives in the laboratories to give us the medications that cure our diseases, those who wrote the books that gave us the culture we have, those who clean the streets we walk on, those who drive the vehicles that transport us! There is, undoubtedly, in the world a current of energy of renunciation released by the people and we all feed from that current without being conscious of it.

But why do we find it hard to recognise renunciation while it is “occurring”? Because we do not have enough perception for life as it is. We do not see or hear people such as they are. We identify with them, we project ourselves onto them, we accept the part that we like and reject what we don’t like, we form an image and we worship it or hate it, but with that we do not discover the real person. Some say that if they “saw” renunciation manifest itself in evident form before their eyes with the concrete example of a life of renunciation, they would recognise it and give testimony of it. These are those who want to see the miracle and if said miracle occurs they will say that it must have been a hallucination or the result of a coincidence. These are the ones who will repeat to the human of renunciation: “If you are the son of God, get down from that cross” (Matthew 27, 40.) We must realise that there is no objective proof for renunciation. Renunciation cannot be proven one way or another in such a way that is convincing for others. Renunciation is a non-determined value for which one can only give testimony with one’s own life. In short, one cannot recognise through intellectual understanding nor through the quality of the gesture the greatness of the example of objective proof but only through *similarity*, with the renunciation “itself” made life in the person, through a similar opening of renunciation to “oneself.”

7. Renunciation is manifested as *potentiality* of the self, as a “not being” that gives birth to an expansive individual action. Renunciation is framed, then, within the “negative values” for which we do not have a suitable “vision” because all our culture is oriented at “positive” values; when I say “negative” values I do not say anything that has to do with the values of the philosophies of “negation” of the world and of life, with which it tends to be confused. Negative values, such as *silence* and *renunciation*, do not imply “negation” of something or of someone, nor are they in a contradictory line of affirmation or negation of the world and of life, but rather they are transcendent and *genesic* values, which give birth to a new energy or mode of being. If from the side of immanence they appear as “death,” it is a “fecund” death because they generate something new on a transcendent level: they are new “atomic” values which are born when they

make contact with a positive human value with a wave of divine love. Renunciation, made possible only through love, breaks the static core of the personality and makes a way of expansive individual action emerge: the expansive power of the mysticism of the heart.

In short, although it is true that existential analysis may formulate existence as imminent and also its extreme possibility—renunciation of oneself—from the practical point of view said renunciation can only be founded on a mysticism of the heart. The important thing is to realise that both ontological and mystical approaches revalue the renunciation of oneself as a central value of a true opening of the individual to universal society.

At present an individual mysticism of the heart is being gestated which through renunciation allows humans to attain unity with themselves and release a reserve of energy that translates into an expansive and participatory action.

I characterise renunciation as follows:

1. It is a way of being, at once human and divine, that harmonises both aspects in a single expression of life.
2. It is a suitable means to cross the barrier of death and bind the divine together with the human.
3. It is a message of salvation, as it activates spiritual values that make the very root of the human condition.
4. It is participation of human life in divine life.
5. It is recognised as it is lived.
6. It is a negative value that translates into an expansive individual action.

X

ETHICAL FOUNDATION FOR CHARACTERISING A SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN COMMUNITY

FROM AN INDIVIDUAL ETHICS TO A SOCIAL MORALITY

Ethical truth is universal. All ethics goes back
to a single principle: sustaining and promoting
life at its highest level.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER.

X. 1

We need a social philosophy that aims at the future, founded on the needs of the integral development of the individual and society, and which makes it possible to orient, from now on, human actions with a view to a new world. We need a new ethics, a new philosophy of education, economics and politics, and new bases for law, legislation and social organisation. It is a great task reserved surely for the great masters and leaders of future society. I will merely try to glimpse some aspects of that future world through my own life of renunciation.

Starting from the renunciation of myself and not of social, economic and political theories, I clearly see that the emergence of the future society cannot come via the path of organisation of the old world, nor is it the old people or the old culture who are called to give it shape. The new society will not be born from new revolutions in the old style nor from the ordering of new laws within the context of the old structures, but will be born from the heart and from the mind of new humans: it shall be the result of a new way of thinking and feeling in accordance with the needs that modern humans have to be fully human.

One could argue that advanced social philosophies exist in the world today formulated through political systems, declarations of human rights, technological organisations and religious principles, but most of those systems and declarations are doomed to fail because they set out from a *human structure* destined in turn to fail, namely the possessive affirmation of the self as value “by itself,” independent and separate from the society in which it lives. This *creed* of possession of oneself is not openly formulated, but underlies as an unconscious “a priori,” as a basic nucleus of the personality considered unquestionable and of “natural law.”

Any social system founded on this creed of self-possession—and I say creed because it is a faith, a dogma that does not permit demonstration, a sacred principle of deification of oneself that substitutes true religious faith—any system built on that stone, I repeat, is condemned to fail

from the start. As long as we cannot denounce in ourselves this possessive structure that conditions our “being for failure” we will not have any chance of opening our transcendent selves, nor will we be able to participate in the great work of the universal community. All we will do is dig more deeply the grave for ourselves and for our children.

The truly revolutionary denouncement of enslaving social systems sets out today from an individual mysticism of renunciation: not a mysticism of declarations or reactions, but a mysticism of renunciation of oneself. Only those who are capable of stripping themselves of their own tastes, of their own goods and of the possession of their own lives can be truly revolutionary and point out the way to the universal community between humans; the others, whether conservative or liberal, right or left, are *reactionaries* because they react against systems they consider unjust but which are not capable of releasing their creative energy: they preach changes of structures on the outside that they are incapable of making inside themselves.

How right was Ortega y Gasset when in the first decades of this century he spoke of the twilight of revolutions! We no longer have *revolutions* today; all we see around us are power struggles and antagonistic reactions. One system is condemned because it enslaves people in a certain way, but another that enslaves them in a different way is applauded. There is a failure of systems, a failure of the old people and a failure of the people who call themselves “new.” Where are the new social leaders who will take the masses from their slavery to lead them to the promised land of individual freedom? It is necessary to denounce today, perhaps with greater rigour than with anyone else, all those who, having been called in some way to fulfil a redemptive mission in current society, and who fate has given the possibility of doing something to improve people’s living conditions, have “sold their souls” to the black giants: material power, personal glory and money.

But despite it all, there are souls who are working for the future, there are souls who do not sell their own selves or step back from the world that needs them. It is they who are writing the history with their own blood. Today, as in other eras, the new social laws will not come from tumultuous parliamentary sessions but from the blood of martyrs. The individual human, encouraged by a new faith and a new mysticism, who wants to “be” human and not be destroyed by the great organised masses, is a modern martyr, a new solitary being in a wilderness of dehumanisation. Today, like yesterday, many of them flee from civilisation (from “civilisation,” not from the world) and go into the solitude of the forests and mountains. Others live ignored amid the multitudes of the great cities, others live in small spiritual communities making a living with the sweat of their brow to embody there, *in* the world, a new mysticism of the heart. This life of renunciation, with such diverse contributions, with such distinct experiences of humans who do not even know each other and who live in different parts of the planet, is the sap of the earth, the Word of an invisible universal church, the spiritual foundation of civil society. It is not

the organisations, the parties, or one social class or another that makes the revolution today: the revolution is *born* from the heart of humans and within the human community.

But this founding of social philosophy in a new type of moral human does not exempt us. On the contrary, it obliges us to expose the ontological bases of the so-called “natural law” and not to continue formulating a priori, often arbitrarily, the laws of human conduct. On what basis are so-called ethical principles or human rights or duties formulated? On the principles of a revealed moral order? On the principles of a conventionally established social morality? But is social morality really different for the different mentalities of the people or their legislators? Can we not establish human laws on the ontological structure of “being human” as “being in the world”?

The social systems and philosophies in place in our time, whether they are called progressive or conservative, set out from a false basis in establishing the duties of the individual to the society and vice versa, as they presume that the “being” and the “world” are two separate entities that must somehow “integrate.” Thus, we speak of a human’s duties “towards” the community as if the “human” and the “community” were independent of each other. All the current ethics is founded on those bases and this allows us to understand why community relationships are, in reality, antagonistic struggles and why this ethics must be sustained by a complicated police system.

Social laws, as laws of the community, must be founded on the real structure of the “being” of the human that is “being in the world.” This is not a simple theoretical question but one that implies a fundamental difference. One concrete example: on what is the so-called right to property based? If I set out from an absolute individual being, I have to make it absolute; if I set out from the basis that the absolute is society—like a world separate from the individual being—then I have to presume that property is a right of the community; and as this duality has no solution in concrete reality, there are those who put forward a third position, saying that, in that case, property has to be individual but in a social function. All these formulations respond to economic and social circumstances or points of view of doctrines or systems, but are not founded on the fundamental structure of “being human” as “being in the world” nor on the needs of said being as “total being.” And it is precisely formulations of this latter type that we need to found the laws and education of the humans of the future not in arbitrariness but in the wisdom of providing those most suitable means so that humans can be really human. If one arbitrary formulation of the right to property, for example, deprives me of the means necessary to be a human, or it gives me a power so absolute through said right as to destroy my own possibility of becoming fully human (through dehumanisation), said law becomes demonic instead of liberating.

Therefore, prior to any founding of what may be called a social philosophy of the human community and prior to any declaration of universal human rights, there is an urgent need to formulate a universal declaration of the *duties* of humans to themselves. And here, once again, the demands imposed on us by the ontological analysis of natural law coincide with the great spiritual teachings of mystical Christianity: “On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ‘What is written in the Law?’ he replied. ‘How do you read it?’ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’” ‘You have answered correctly,’ Jesus replied. ‘Do this and you will live.’ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’” (Luke 10, 25-29.) The last question is highly significant in the sense that the existence of the neighbour may not be recognised if there is no love for God and love for oneself. All the judicial and social philosophy inspired by Christianity is based on the Levitical and evangelical precept of “love your neighbour,” but very little or nothing is said about the second part of this sentence, “as you love yourself” (Leviticus 19, 18, Mark 12, 31), which ontologically and mystically founds the first part. Without this first foundation of *self-love*, founded in turn in love of God, it is not possible to uncover the rules of the actions of humans in society who are in harmony with the cosmic Law.

Hence as a prior question, even from the spiritual point of view, the need is put forward to examine once again what we understand by “self-love” that might found a just social order. Do we truly love ourselves? What is a human’s first duty of love to oneself? This self-love, which is beyond all egoism, awakens a *new* force of the heart on the horizon of the egoence of the self.

In short, codes of collective ethics, declarations of human rights, and declarations of the individual’s duties to “others”—despite the formal perfection they may have—do not habitually have sufficient ontological foundation, and to found a new ethics of the individual human, in the sense of the egoence of the self, we need to properly found the ways humans behave with themselves that deserve to be called ways of their own and authentic ways of human behaviour. Once this basis is attained, not only can we formulate a new ethics of the social community but also denounce with irrefutable arguments the *dehumanising* behaviours, the *inhuman* laws, the *deforming* education of the person and the crimes against humanity as “sins against the self.”

X. 2

I often believed that Don Santiago supported one prevailing social philosophy or another in a given historical moment, but I soon realised that he had a unique spiritual idea that aimed at the egoence of the self. When I became enthusiastic about a doctrine that seemed advanced to me, believing that it represented the ideal of future society better than any other, he used to say to me: “You have to realise that today there is no one ideology better than another or a social system that

is better than another, there are only struggles for economic dominance or power; in short, they all promise humanity something but they do not lead to salvation. The social doctrine of the future is quite simple, *renunciation*, therein lies the secret of happiness of the world: don't throw anything away, pick the piece of bread up from the floor and eat it, like our grandmothers used to do, or use what is wasted of the vegetables to prepare a new dish, that is the secret, everything else is past and death." Those very simple words concealed a whole energy economy of the person, in a social but also cosmic function. So it was that I gradually absorbed, through similarity, in his presence, certain basic attitudes of human behaviour that constituted the very weft of the spiritual person of Don Santiago. It was a teaching that was not written but passed down verbally in function of life and today I clearly realise that it is precisely those subtle features of behaviour that constitute the existential matrix of what could be formulated as ethics of a new society.

X. 3

It is necessary to be able to found a social philosophy based on people and not on economic theories or political systems that most of the time do not go beyond a society mechanics; a social morality is necessary, but morality only exists in people, in individuals: there is no such morality in organised masses.

Through their own lives of renunciation, spiritual people formulate today new ethical principles not only as ideals of perfect existence but as concrete duties of the individual for themselves that constitute the basic moral structure of a human community open to its universal dimension. The ethics that we speak of must not only be reduced to a series of conventional rules to keep a social game conventional, but also part of an education for life in future society has to be formed. Everyone has the right and the duty to know and practice universal laws in the moral order, which ensure the person's health, balance and freedom.

The ethical principles that I shall list below take on plenitude of meaning through the *practice* of renunciation. In contrast, as a priori declarations, even suitably founded, they may appear as lacking in meaning to those who are not prepared to live them. The new values that may serve as foundation for an ethics of the future society are: A. Non-possession. B. Presence. C. Participation.

A. PRINCIPLE OF NON-POSSESSION

Valuation of the person based on self-renunciation *From individual egoism to egoence of the self*

A. 1

a) I have previously said that negation of “oneself” and renunciation of “oneself” have been intuited by the philosophy of existence as maximum possibilities of the self and as principles of action, but as they are identified within the narrow framework of the “nothing” or of “death” they do not lead to the foundation of an ethics and instead lead to a nihilistic or materialistic philosophy of existence.

Furthermore, the principle of non-possession has been announced by all the great spiritual masters of humanity as a means of perfection in humans, but it has often been misinterpreted and even negated in practice. The cause of this resistance is to be found in what was seen as an “anti-vital” principle and as a “law that is not of this world”: the principle of non-possession, within the context of a philosophy of negation of the world and of life—as Albert Schweitzer showed very well—cannot be accepted in the current moment, because of its unethical character and because it is part of the negative philosophies of humans.

But one thing is the principle itself, as a means of human liberation, and another are the deforming systems in the service of which such a principle can be placed, because even the most sublime laws in the hands of people, depending on how they interpret them, can be the origin of death and destruction. One thing is the negation of oneself, of the world and of life (intellectual formulation of negation, of unethical character) and another very different thing is renunciation (founded on a unitive mysticism of love, with high ethical content.)

Starting out from the practice of renunciation, not negation, we are only now understanding what the principle of possession and its ethical value is, and that a social philosophy can be formulated on this principle. The practice of renunciation is what allows us to understand that renunciation in removing the “possession” from life—not life itself—provides a new sense of participation in permanent life; that the creed of possession is, in the end, the origin of separateness, death, destruction and war, and that renunciation releases the individual’s creative energies. But to understand these things one has to live the renunciation; if it is not lived, and it is simply postulated intellectually, it appears as an attitude of negation of the world and of life.

The principle of non-possession, as “way of being in the world,” is anticipated today as the most suitable means for the individual to attain their true universal dimension within the human community.

b) Before considering it in relation to things and goods, the principle of non-possession must be seen in relation to ourselves. The non-possession of myself, the renunciation to possess *myself* as “something” that belongs to me exclusively, is the only thing that allows me to activate my potential state of “open” to the universe; that is, in determining myself as a closed system of absolute goods: name, nationality, race, profession, status, etc.), in not determining *myself* in such transitory goods, my self opens up to its true universal dimension, egoence of the self. Only from this point of view of non-possession of myself can I review the creed of possession of things—an intrinsic possession of these that may have nothing to do with property in a legal sense—and realise that while I have made of “having” a question of “being” then I have become a priest of the worship of things, turning myself into a thing and thus paralysing the cosmic energies that have been given to me to participate in the great divine work on earth. And I say divine, because human energies, in being monopolised and placed at the total service of things, are deviated from their creative cosmic function in the spiritual order. The result is that humans’ property grows, but this paralyses the development of their souls.

Thus we give this “intrinsic” sense of possession a specifically human scope in the order of the self, which goes beyond social or political discussions about the right to property, which is a secondary question that cannot be resolved adequately with laws or regulations if first it has not been resolved in the human heart. The same thing happens with regards to relationships among humans; it is futile to want to fix the problems related to racism, nationalism, dehumanised treatment at work, if we start from the basis that humans consider themselves “owners” of themselves, because that sense of possession creates a separateness that prevents them from attaining an adequate feeling of universal community. If I love myself like a thing or a good, why should I be surprised that I treat my neighbour as an enemy or a thing; if I start from this possessive basis, the most logical thing is that I will have to ask, like the expert in the law, “and who is my neighbour?”

c) The sense of non-possession, then, is a prior condition to human freedom in the highest sense in which this freedom is to be exercised which is in its universal dimension. Furthermore, the non-possession of oneself, the renunciation of oneself, is the human’s first “duty” to themselves in what I would like to outline as a declaration of human “duties.”

d) All the attempts to found an ethics on a personal basis and the efforts of legislation to defend a person’s rights do not offer any guarantee to avoid the “capital sin of the person” which is the “omnipotence” of oneself. The only guarantee so that this person who wants to rescue themselves from their alienation functions in their proper level of balance as a person is the renunciation of said omnipotence: in that “death” the person acquires their maximum expansive value.

It is rare for the sense of personal omnipotence to manifest itself fully in humans, unlike in cases of frank alienation, but it lies beneath, covered in the deepest layers of the unconscious, motivating attitudes, ideas and philosophies. This Faustian sense has been reinforced in our era by the positive achievements of science and technology and by a humanist philosophy that in wanting to value the human person and their potentialities leads in practice to the exaltation of one's own effort. This is a philosophy that, under the appearance of self-development, self-realisation, autonomy of will and individual freedom, defines humans ideally and existentially as a value by themselves and leads finally to a materialist or spiritualist humanism that "enriches" humans, but which in making them antagonistic to the social community and the universe leads them to war, disease and the annihilation of those values that they spent so much effort on attaining. Materialist humanism promotes individual and social "development" as an end in itself, but all this leads to a tower of Babel as said values cannot be transferred to a plane of transcendence.

It is not surprising that humans who reach the conclusion that all the possibilities are in them, and that they can activate them and develop them with their effort alone, cultivate in the depths of their being a longing of omnipotence and of cult of their personality and constitute themselves as Gods on earth.

A. 2

One of the logical contradictions that I discovered in my dealings with Don Santiago and which took me some time to understand was the stress he placed on the individual value of the person, their will, their effort, and their profound humility of self to place all those personal values at the service of the great universal work in a given instant. On the one hand he saw in it the conquering Knight who risked the sword of his will to attain what he intended to do, and on the other hand he saw the mystical Knight, who deposited that same sword of conquest at the altar of Divinity. He exercised his clairvoyant power and his human wisdom to solve many a health problem for other people, but accepted humbly his own physical suffering, renouncing systematically to exercise any power for himself. In his teaching, his figure was illuminated in the dimension of master, but for himself he was capable of receiving the advice and teaching of the humblest people, being first a student then a teacher. He launched his intuitive thinking like an exploratory probe into the mysteries of the universe, but renounced systemising knowledge and wanting to trap the divine mystery with the mind.

What was behind all these apparently contradictory attitudes? Just one thing: the renunciation of the cult of personality, the renunciation of the possession of knowledge, the renunciation of power... and there was no annihilation or negation of the world and of life in him.

On the contrary, I realised that that renunciation was like always leaving the door open, always keeping open the individual being's communication with God and human society.

When I took his teaching, I systemised it and I gave it a certain form, wanting to make it doctrine. I immediately clashed with him. I had frozen it in time, I had made it past, I had identified myself with it, I had given it myself and, in the end, in wanting to possess it I had lost myself. I immediately realised that I had “fallen” into the magic of the creed of possession. I wanted to “possess” life, but life was not to be possessed but to be participated in. To renounce life, I told myself, is not to negate it, it is to renounce possessing it, not wanting to kill it or retain it in the framework of time; not doing like the naturalist who in wanting to know the butterfly fixes it with a pin in the table of classifications and labels. To know life one has to start by respecting it, not wanting to detain it, not wanting to retain its current in the palm of the hand but instead letting it flow. That is renunciation: renunciation of the “possession” of life. I understood immediately that it was more than a virtue, it was a foundation of the duties of humans to themselves, perhaps the first commandment: *love thyself*, love life itself, but not with the possessive love that coagulates that life and makes it a historic relic but with a real love that loves life by renouncing its possession and because in renouncing oneself as an independent and structured value in time, one becomes worthy of participating in the life of all people and in the life of the universe.

Only from a self-love within a perspective of renunciation can universal meaning be found in fundamental commandments that the spiritual tradition of all time has indicated, such as “love God” and “love your neighbour,” and also a spiritual life and a social ethics take on meaning. In contrast, from a self-love restricted and relative to the possession of a personal structure that one wishes to defend at all costs, love for God and love for the neighbour are merely projections of one's own personal egoism, and the religion and ethics founded on such a principle are no more than the concealing mantles of hatred, separateness and war.

The renunciation of personal omnipotence makes the dialogue with God and humans possible, it makes the spiritual community and the social community possible. In contrast, the human centred on self-sufficiency is a closed system that has no profound communication with anybody, not even with themselves and who, therefore, cannot participate in an authentically community-based, universal life. Furthermore, humans with unconscious attitudes of omnipotence—and I say unconscious because on a conscious level they will deny them or conceal them behind a façade of reactive humility—are a potential social danger. Their ideas and their works, no matter how brilliant and extraordinary they seem at first sight, can become destructive, and their sermons of freedom tend to translate in practice into the most odious of subjugations towards others. They are the ones who believe they are free to think and feel, those who denounce slavery in society, but who in their own homes exercise personal power, the dictatorship of ideas

and the possession of people. And they still call this love of life, love of the family and love of society!

I will study in a little more detail these two modalities of human behaviour that I have been characterising, with a view to the practical consequences and to see if I can establish the first principle of a universal ethics on which the other principles can be founded. I repeat that, for me, this first principle, which gives guarantees of universality, is *self-love* in the *non-possessive* sense, and that a love of this type “opens” a new field: 1. In the order of knowledge. 2. In human relations. 3. In spiritual life. 4. In the direction of a new mode of antigravitational existence.

1. In *terms of knowledge*, one cannot understand another by starting from a point of view made absolute in oneself; I cannot understand someone else’s ideas, their points of view, their needs, if I put myself forward a priori as an absolute value. We speak of integration of cultures, of peoples, of the unity of the churches, of universality, but all those things cannot lead anywhere if no one will renounce themselves. We always start from a “self” as immovable structure; everything can be discussed and understood except renouncing this structure, but that is not how universal society will be constructed.

2. In *human relationships*, coexistence, community, the “us” will continue to be ideal values as long as a renunciation of the self is made that gives the fundamental basis for a true human coexistence. Otherwise there will be more or less peaceful “relationships” between people but not a true community.

3. In terms of *spiritual life*—at least as it is usually understood—we start from the basis of an “embellishment” or “perfectioning” of oneself; it is a subtler form of “enriching oneself,” “cultivating oneself,” adding new values to a primary core that remains untouchable: embellished, polished, but not transformed. True spiritual life begins with self-renunciation.

4. Non-possession removes the *material supports* of existence and, for this reason, it has been interpreted as a negation of the world and of life. In reality, it is the “end” of a material and gravitational mode of existence, and prepares humans for the new mode of non-gravitational existence. In removing the illusion of material “support” and material “food” which for the self means “possessed” goods and things, the inner creative energies are released and humans begin to feed on cosmic energy: providential energetic economy, the “manna” of the desert.

B. PRESENCE

The transmission of the meaning of being human

I have often spoken about *Presence* in this work: it is a new value that we must salvage from the world of things in which we are “lost” and restore it to its true human dimension.

Our civilisation has accustomed us to value people for what they say, for what they do and for what they have, but this has atrophied our specifically human sense of being able to perceive them as they are through simple *presence*. The atrophy of this sensibility—“spiritual blindness”—has meant that we must multiply the safety measures to “prepare ourselves” against people: contracts, tests, electronic machines to detect the compatibility of partners, etc. Is not all this an artifice of civilized life? Does it not lead the system of modern society and its technostucture to substitute the direct presence of the person with instrumental means? What now remains of the human presence in the industrial society? We speak of “a lack of communication,” but the questions that are asked about it and the solutions that are put forward are wholly materialistic and do not get to the bottom of the problem, which is a “blindness” of the self, nor do they wonder why the self has fallen into such blindness nor how “sight” can be recovered. We do nothing in thinking we can overcome a lack of communication with so-called technified human relationships if we do not first review the state of the being that is seeking to communicate. If that being is blind, regardless of the knowledge they might acquire about their possible relationships with light, they will not recover their sight with that. Nor can it be said that the problem of the lack of communication lies in differences of generational levels. This is one part of the problem, but not the problem.

At the time of the first industrial revolution, humans became aware that machines took work from their hands, but now, in the industrial and post-industrial society, we are realising that machines are stealing personality, and at least, some of the most important functions that we believed we had as people. The alarm is greater when we see that, in certain cases, the person is reduced to the function of serving the machine. Not so long away we still believed that some functions such as public education and medical diagnosis were “indelegable,” but with programmed education, teaching machines and diagnosis machines, even the persons of the teacher and the doctor are reduced to their functional dimension. What is left for us, then? For a parent who wishes to teach their child in any of the important aspects of life today it is more practical to send them to a good school, or give them a good book, a good film or a good tape. What is left for them, then, as a parent? And we could say the same about the teacher and other educators: what will they transmit? Information? But information can be obtained “packaged” and of better “quality” than that which can be provided by the individual with the fragmentary

cultural remains within their reach! What can I transmit as a person, *apart from information*? This is the key question, this is the fundamental challenge that the post-individual era sets for humanity.

In reality, the machine says to humanity: “Do not accuse me unjustly. I have stolen nothing from you, all I have is what you have given me, your mechanisms, the mechanical aspect that is in you, what you have accumulated as collective experience over the centuries; all that wealth of purified experience that you will no longer be able to synthesise, I do all that and I provide it to you in synthetic form, summed up, to feed you and your children. What more do you want? I am taking from you the heavy work, the mechanical work, I have taken the mechanical burden of your existence. So you feel empty? So you don’t know what to do with your free time? That’s your problem! Now the exploration of a totally new and genuinely human field begins for you!” With humans relieved by machines of their heavy task of transmitting information, they should take on the delicate task of transmitting the *sense of the human*; and that is something no machine can do, that can only be done by the individual with their very presence.

The transmission of human culture, of human features, by simple presence! Therein lies the great mission of humans and the challenge of their being: the transmission by similarity; there is an “x” feature of humans, as truly humans, that is not transmitted only by animal reproduction or by cultural information but by *presence*: a specifically spiritual function. *Preserving* this “x” feature in oneself, subtle and imponderable, which is the stamp of divine connection that characterises humans in their selves, and *transmitting it* is what constitutes the individual’s spiritual inheritance, the second of their fundamental duties. The custody of this mystical grail, of this sacred fire that must not be allowed to go out, is a fundamental mission of the individual that goes beyond biological reproduction and material inheritance; because what is the sense in having children and leaving them a fortune as inheritance if we can’t pass on to them that spiritual trait that makes them truly human? And that value is transmitted by simple presence and by a relationship of similarity.

The superior ethics of the future and the education of the new generations should help to glimpse and preserve at all costs that substantial value or divine-human particle and not toss it onto the manure heap, negate it or destroy it: that destruction is what I understand as a “sin against the self.”

C. PARTICIPATION

Participatory and unitive action of the individual in the universal community

C. 1

The renunciation of oneself makes it possible to participate in the life of everyone, in the needs of everyone, and not in an ideal way but a real and concrete way, not through a partial action in which a series of “intermediary” mechanisms, instruments and powers come into play but through a participative and unitive action in which *all* my being is committed.

Today humans have the *power* to do one thing or another and are accustomed to acting as intermediaries of that power; for many people, to work is not to give *themselves*—in their being—to the work, but to make others work; if I pay taxes, if I donate to charity, I believe I have done my duty to society, but in reality all I have given is my money, but I have not given myself. If I buy what I need with my money, or I buy what I don’t need, to live, and I buy services to clean my house, my clothes and prepare my food because I am busy with other things that I consider more important than those manual jobs, I am not participating in the lives of all the people who work for me. At most, I am buying them or I am buying their labour, but I do not give myself with them in a quota of personal labour equal to theirs and in the same conditions.

This intermediation of the human to which I am referring goes beyond the economic, social and political aspects that revolve around “intermediation,” around the “exchange” or “division of labour,” and aims at the distortion of an ontological root and of a fundamental ethical principle that is to make oneself intermediary, in one’s self, dehumanising oneself in the action, instead of assuming and realising the specifically human action, which is participatory action with the totality of one’s own self. If this root principle does not lead to the education and training of people it is futile to want to establish a social economy based on mechanistic economic theories because economic rules by themselves, without a human basis to support them, cannot lead anywhere.

To be human is to participate in all the aspects that make human life in its triple dimension of bodily, mental and spiritual being; it is not possible to conceive of an authentically human development if any of these aspects of participation is mutilated: it is a human duty to oneself to participate with *all* these aspects because a lack of participation in *one* aspect creates a lack of self. From this duty to oneself arises the sense of participation at community level.

Nor is there here any contradiction between what ontological analysis discovers and what is indicated by the Revelation, given that it is said that “you shall earn your bread with the sweat of *your* brow” (of *your* brow, not your neighbour’s.)

But participation goes beyond the material sense and physical aspect of existence to become participation with all human needs and problems. Many beings are dissatisfied today, despite having it all, and they do not know why; there is a hunger for participation in their beings; there is a need to participate in the lives of everyone; it is not enough to give people bread, security and fun, it is necessary to give them an opportunity to participate in all the aspects of life so that they can be truly human.

Participation, in its most elevated spiritual sense, is a value of integration of the individual in the universal community. Furthermore, only through that participation in life of all humans is it possible to discover the pleasure of the plenitude of existence; participation, in the mystical sense, is *incarnation*: through participation, my inner and spiritual world is united with the objective, social world. Through participatory renunciation I realise that I do not have a spiritual life on the one hand and a mundane life on the other, nor so I have one inner life and another outer life, nor do I belong to a spiritual community that is antagonistic with human society, but rather I have one life and just one world in which human and divine values are harmonised in a single expression of life.

This profound integration of the individual in the lives of *all* humans, of spiritual society in civil society, of the divine life taking human body, of the Law of the universe becoming the law of humans, and the manifestation of this mysticism of participation in a concrete form, emerging here and there in the planet as life of renunciation is, to my understanding, the true revolutionary sign of our modern age and the concrete testimony of a messianic age in the individual sense. I say messianic because to participate is to bear the cross of all humans. This participatory mission of the spiritual man in the life of all humans is fundamental for the construction of the world of the future, and any replacement of this superior function by any other thing (a belief, a sermon, an organisation, an ideology), in which the *direct* function of participation is substituted by “intermediaries,” is to betray at the very root the vocation of assistance and service to humanity that all humans somehow carry inscribed in their being.

C. 2

Don Santiago gradually won me over, through love, to an inner mysticism of participation that I will not speak about here, but instead I will make some references to the concrete and practical aspects in which said mysticism gradually manifested itself in me, especially because they constitute two fundamental pillars of that individual ethics that I want to gradually outline: I refer to participation through manual work, and economic participation.

By Don Santiago's side, I realised that the most intimate and spiritual aspects of life somehow took on material expression, that the spirit became flesh and that all that was outside of this existential dynamic was very suspicious to him. Anything that I could say to him about my

inner life, about the life of my soul, that I could understand or not, what I could feel through human suffering or not feel, held very little importance for him at a certain time if such understanding or feeling were not accompanied by concrete expressions of life. When I spoke to him of my concerns about the suffering, disease, poverty and ignorance of large human sectors, theorising on the different solutions and manifesting to him the need that we all had to help our fellow humans, he would answer “yes, all that is very good, but the people today who truly want to help humanity stop writing books, renounce their property and go and live with the poorest and the most dispossessed to participate in their needs and their sufferings. Note what some worker priests do: one of them, leaving his orders and wearing humble clothes, went to live with the workers to participate in their humble lives of sacrifice; he started to work at the port, shouldering those heavy bags and living like his workmates. They found out that he was a priest but no one ever asked him if he really was one. One day, at work, a crane fell on him and killed him. Hundreds of men went to his funeral, men of all conditions and ideas... I want to believe that the simple and self-sacrificing life of that priest must have had an impact on many souls.” But I did not have the vocation of a worker priest nor a sufficient degree of renunciation as to leave it all behind and go to live with the poorest and the humblest, and Don Santiago knew this, of course, but there was a *measure* of concrete participation that I could do and which was within reach of all humans. I will concern myself with some of these aspects here.

C. 3

a) *Participation through manual work.*

“You shall earn the bread with the sweat of your brow”: here I underline the bodily and physiological character of participation, which existential philosophy strives to get to the bottom of through what it calls the discovery of the corporality of the self, but which the biblical phrase expresses more eloquently and practically. Manual labour, human participation in physical labour, not only has the meaning of a means of production for material sustenance but is the suitable and only means to attain the integrality of the self: neglecting this aspect, underestimating it, believing it unnecessary, delegating to others such care, brings such incomprehension of human problems—such a “lack” of understanding—that it is, in the order of the self, like when the organism is missing the provision of fundamental vitamins: *shortcomings* of the self. One cannot understand the person who suffers, who is hungry, with philosophies, by understanding the heart, with intellectual understanding or with social help: they can only be understood if we participate somehow in their lives of labour and bodily suffering. The biblical phrase has been misinterpreted, it has been seen as a curse for humans instead of glimpsing in it a law of human existence. This misunderstanding has brought serious social distortions, creating an antagonism between the so-called “working class” and other classes that don’t consider themselves workers. This is absurd, an imbalance and an injustice, not only from a social but also existential point of view because it

sets out from a false basis of supposing that some, in order to be, can only realise themselves in *one* bodily dimension (“labour”), while others, although they do not accept for themselves the experience at material level, consider themselves sufficiently realised by their “aesthetic,” “intellectual” or “spiritual” experiences.

If men learned to consume goods and use them for themselves only as much as that imposed by earning their bread with the sweat of their brows, how different things would look in human society! But nobody wants that; nobody wants our “daily bread.” They want the bread of many days, and if one’s physical labour is considered insufficient, they will seek to accumulate other people’s bread. Bodily labour is what gives the right measure of human needs. Philosophers and psychologists rack their brains today, wanting to establish what humans’ needs are as they start from the basis that the individual has to know their needs in order to be able to liberate themselves from them, but if instead of all those speculations they simply got to work, they would find in manual labour the precise measure for such needs: the brain would not ask for more than the hand can give (ultimately humans are basically cerebral-manual beings); if to satisfy material needs they did not go beyond the manual *measure*, the human system would not be saturated with the accumulation of material goods and would remain “open” to development in other dimensions of the self. The so-called “educated” classes’ incomprehension of the needs of the “poor” comes not from a lack of intelligence or sensitivity but from a lack of work: a lack of the being in one of its fundamental dimensions.

b) *Economic participation. The economy in function of the person.*

The production, distribution and consumption of goods is a very important problem in current society and will no doubt take on great relevance in the society of the future.

Socioeconomic problems are addressed at present with idealistic or materialistic criteria, in abstract terms of economic theories or systems, or according to anonymous economic forces or currents (capital, labour, interest rates, markets, development, underdevelopment, rich countries or poor countries), and people struggle and work for the balance of such forces, but without going to the root of the *person* who is the subject of every economy. The starting point is that the most important thing, in economic terms, is the solution of major national and international economic problems, monetary stability, the amount of capital investments, etc., and that the individual’s economic wellbeing will in the end be conditioned to the functioning of all that great machine of anonymous interests; and this is supposed because, in reality, the person is subordinated to the blind forces of the world in which they live. But where does such an economy founded on such premises lead us? For a start, to a permanent struggle to correct the abuses because the only regulator of the system, which is the person, is not considered: it is like wanting to make an electric refrigerator work without a thermostat.

It is said that to achieve social balance it is necessary to change the basic structures of society, the political or economic systems: in reality, what has to change is the person's possessive point of view, awaken the sense of the *extent* of their needs and the sense of their social responsibility in the production and consumption of goods that the community needs as a whole at planetary level. In reality, the world *has already* changed, new living conditions have already appeared in universal society, but there are people who are still living as if such changes never occurred. Both the idea on which so-called traditional economic systems are founded and so-called revolutionary systems have *already* been overtaken by an economy of an *energetic* type founded not on concepts of "material" goods but on human *energy* and cosmic energy, on the use and abuse of that energy, on the transformation of human energy, on the use of cosmic energy, on the production and consumption of energy: the social and economic philosophy of the future, in the energy era, must necessarily be founded on these new concepts.

The modern spiritual man must be at the vanguard of this fundamental process of economic renewal: the social function of the spiritual human of this era is not to simply preach for greater production, greater distribution of goods of the earth and other such things, but to *live* in their own selves an *energetic economy* of the future. If today's spiritual human, acting as intermediary, refuses such a function and refuses to bind together the divine forces they have been given with the destiny of a great universal work, with the economic currents that help the development of the human community, their spirituality will be left empty of contact and of social message, and their promise will vanish like so many beautiful ideas that have not been embodied by humanity.

It is not economic theories that have the ability right now to "save" the world economy and bring greater well-being to people, it is not the anonymous forces of major international interests, but the spiritual human who is capable of living an economy that is not founded on the security of a currency, on the monopolization or speculation of material goods, but which is founded on an *energy* economy of their own self; who is capable of living a *live* economy and not a dead one. If the individual does not take *consciousness* of their capacity to produce and consume (not only material consumption goods but *live energy*), and they cannot regulate their own energies according to a planetary community (the needs of *all* the world), they will be an anonymous piece in the society in which they live, a blind instrument of destruction without knowing it; if they consume more than they produce, or if they consume what another needs in order to live, or if they do not work enough to produce more for the benefit of everyone, they will continue to generate contradictory forces that, in the end, will work against them.

Living this inner energy economy constitutes the ascetics of the spiritual human of our time. In other eras the ascetic emphasised the mortification of the flesh, we might say it was centred on that mortification whose spiritual sense was to bend the "flesh" to the spirit, to

dominate the “inferior nature” or subject the “matter” to the rule of the spirit, consummating the sacrifice at bodily level. But the spiritual ascetic of our era is shifting, in my understanding, to an *energy* level and with a deeper meaning: no longer that of negation and mortification of human nature but that of the renunciation of the servitude of that nature; no longer the negation of bodily life but participation in its immense energy potentiality in the economy of the universe.

The realisation that my desires, my goods and my life—as *energy*—are not goods that belong to me in an absolute way but which are part of the energy economy of the universe and of human society implies a great spiritual advance. When the individual places himself in the totality of the universe—egoence of the self—they understand that if they eat more than they need they are taking from the other what they need to eat, that the production and consumption of their goods affects the economy of the whole in a positive or negative sense; they understand, then, that their spiritual life, as an ascetic, cannot consist solely of a negation of their tastes, the goods or their life as virtues of perfection of individual salvation, but that it is the *function* at the service of well-being and development of the human whole. What I eat, drink, use, spend, invest and produce is not something exclusively private but rather it represents an energy that affects others. The renunciation of the sense of possession of that energy releases in the planet a large number of goods of all kinds that remain available for those who need them. The silent sacrifice of spiritual humans today, not of their bodies but of their own energy, not through negation but through renunciation, is their productive contribution to the development of human society at the level of a planetary energetic economy.

The crisis of the current world economy—which cannot resolve the problems of hunger in the world or the underdevelopment of peoples—is due more to a crisis of a lifestyle of the person as a system than a crisis of the theory of economic systems. Only with a new inner economy of human energy will a new universal economy be possible. Today spiritual humans are alone in this drama of social injustice, and their renunciation of pleasures and of goods is a life sacrifice in a world of “consumers” and “artists of waste,” who spend more than they need, throw away what others need and accumulate goods, taking them out of the great current of circulatory energy in the human community.

How is this energetic economy practiced? I refer the reader once again to the chapter “Reserve, transformation and use of human energy” in *Seeds of the Future in Humanity*.

Here I will refer only to some outer aspects of said economy, especially as regards goods, that only become accessible in practice when the person has acquired a certain degree of renunciation of their pleasures and desires.

Can we speak of a providential economy of the future? To give is to receive. To give a part of what I earn and possess for the benefit of humanity, not as charity but as responsible

participation of my goods at the service of the community. This ethical duty is not only for the rich but also for the poor, it is a duty that is founded on the self of the person and not on the amount of property I possess.

Until this material offering is not fulfilled as a sense of human responsibility, spiritual life remains a beautiful utopia. Without the sacrifice on the cross Christ's message would not have had any value; and without the sacrifice of one's own wallet—which is what hurts people most today, much more than flagellations of the body—the spiritual message in modern society has no meaning. It is very easy to speak of social justice, that the rich must help the poor, that we have to produce more or distribute better, but it is time to take it upon ourselves and with what one has, whether a lot or a little, a *sacred* responsibility of participation with humility. Not giving what I do not need, as charity, but giving systematically a part of what I have for others with the same sense of responsibility with which I do it for myself. This is what Don Santiago taught me to practice. When I began to give a part of what was mine, there was immediately a decrease in my economic level that put me on the level of the neediest: how I understood them then! All the social philosophies that I had known seemed so small and vain to me!

In short, how can we found a social philosophy of the human community? By developing through education new individual ethical values: *non-possession, presence, participation*, which like yeast in the bread, make the integral development of the community possible.

So-called social assistance, whether organised or institutionalized, is merely a remedy, therapy for a sick society, but true development of the community comes from its own heart, *interiorizing* in its breast the individual's creative values. The spiritual community must form an integrating part of civil society, not as an institution, as a privileged class and in the function of intermediary, but as its own heart, as its intimacy.

To achieve the development of the human community in *all* its aspects, material and spiritual, it is necessary to re-establish urgently the intimacy of organised society, its *infrastructure*. In other words, as society reaches the maximum of its organisation and so as not to become demonic—something that could occur and which has already occurred (organisation of infamy)—it must return to its intimacy, to its heart. As I said in a previous work, “all attempts to organise the earth shall be in vain if in the centre of that world there is no heart capable of loving.” This is the true social work that has been entrusted as a mission to the conscious and responsible spiritual men of our time. This does not mean that direct action of outer assistance is no use, but it is important not to confuse the different ontological levels in which both move because their meanings and consequences are very different: social action, social service and help for humanity are not essentially founded on an act external to “oneself,” in the function of an intermediary, but rather they are founded on the individual self and in function of participatory

union. In other words, true social help is based on a principle of communion and not on a principle of action by itself. From the heart of human society and the values of the spiritual person, interiorised in the social community, new bases can be postulated for a new ethics and an education of the future society, not as a theory but as a realisation of the aspirations that are today common to all human sectors, all races and all peoples, to improve their own living conditions and attain greater spiritual development.

XI

DEVOTION OF LIFE

In a far-off land, inaccessible to your steps,
there is a castle by the name of Montsalvat;
a light-filled temple stands within it,
more beautiful than anything on earth;
therein is a vessel of wondrous blessing
that is watched over as a sacred relic:
that the purest of men might guard it,
it was brought down by a host of angels.

RICHARD WAGNER, *Lohengrin*

XI. 1

Aside from professional vocations, works of intelligence, art and business, beyond the duties of humans to their family and society, there is a vocation of a supernatural nature that manifests itself as a need of the soul to devote itself totally to God and surrender to Him with all one's being. This need for *devotion* cannot be explained rationally and cannot be understood by those who have not experienced it themselves, but at a certain point in life it can be intuited as the maximum possibility of perfection. Devotion is a suprasocial value: by its nature it is not of "this world," but it can occur in the person as a "sacred" way of being in the world that is the spiritual foundation of the human community.

From an ontological point of view and prior to any institutional aspect, devotion—in terms of one's self—is a sacred existential order; before institution it must be considered a very specific and exceptional "function," so to speak, but necessary for industrial and collective perfection.

Seen as a *function*, it is a sacred function in which the person renews in themselves the mystery of the transmutation of life, making the human divine and the divine human; said function is fulfilled *in* the devoted soul as "being open to a meeting of souls." The "devoted being" (being-with) takes onto themselves, as part of themselves, the lives of other beings to participate with them and offer them—along with their own life—in their heart to the divinity. They bear not only "their" cross but also the cross of others; that is why I say that it is an exceptional function that goes beyond the duties of ethics, even of the highest ethics. It is confirmed in the individual being with a sacred commitment of *union* between the human and the divine, between God and humanity.

This essentially spiritual function that I considered as "not of this world," is, however, fundamental for human society and one of its fundamental pillars, invisible but basic. Without the

devoted souls the materialised life would end up covering the earth with a heavy crust and there would be no communication between the divine and the human, the current of spiritual life necessary to fertilise the earth would not circulate, and all superior life would end up disappearing from it. If the living function of devotion, which is the direct sacrifice and holocaust of the individual, is distorted and substituted by the rite, by the ceremony devoid of meaning or the word of the intermediary, lacking the Word, all the spiritual structure of the planet suffers from a “lack” and the social balance breaks in favour of growing materialism.

Of exceptional function and class in the past, devotion is restored today as a specific function of the spiritual person and as the most excellent vocation of the individual. We can say that from the “professional” priesthood, if the term fits, we want to attain an existential priesthood, no longer as an exception circumscribed to a given class or institution but as a revelation of a sacred dimension of the person that begins to be accessible to an increasingly greater number of beings in very different circumstances, states and modes of outer life. Does a possibility exist of a universal priesthood for the future society, that is above the differences of “creeds” and is compatible with the different forms of institutional organisation of modern society? Is the priesthood necessarily a class—one of the four castes—or is it a universal function that is beyond any system of castes? And in this last case, what is the specific element of this function in order to characterise it in its being?

In a word, prior to the possible institutional forms that it can adopt in time, it is a good idea to clarify what the devoted life consists of in general and what functions it plays, to then examine the modalities of such a devoted life in future society. With regards to the former we can find in devotion the following characters: 1. It implies self-sacrifice in homage to God. 2. It connects the devoted self with a meeting of souls. 3. It is confirmed with a vow. 4. It is of a sacred nature. 5. Its meaning is one of redemption. 6. It is renewed by new physiological functions.

1. To devote oneself is to surrender to God with all one’s being, accepting in this surrender the sacrifice of oneself: at this level of supreme “self-love” is the “sacrifice” of oneself made in tribute to God. This surrender implies being “called,” “chosen” or “predestined,” in terms of supernatural vocation of devotion.

2. The “devoted being” is not a being “outside” of the world but a “sacred mode of being in the world” in which the “world” takes the character of the meeting of souls whose lives the devoted being takes on to himself.

3. Devotion is confirmed with a vow, as the utmost expression of individual responsibility to God and humanity. The need for the vow is questioned by most of those who postulate as a basic principle of freedom the “autonomy” of the individual will, and it is even seen as a sign of weakness and as the remains of an authoritarian regime that strives to restrict the absolute right

that humans must have to decide according to the circumstances and to change their attitude if such circumstances so demand it. Not everyone, however, thinks the same way. I am not going to cite opinions of sacred authors, who would be classed as biased, but I will refer to the value that Gandhi gave to vows: “To take vows is not a sign of weakness but one of strength. Someone who says they will do something ‘as far as possible,’ shows a glimpse of their pride or their weakness. They will feign humility, but their attitude is far from humble. I have noted in my own case, as in that of others, that the limitation ‘as far as is possible’ definitively ruins all good intentions. To do something ‘as far as possible’ is to succumb to the first temptation. To say that one would observe the Truth ‘as far as possible’ is meaningless. Just as no negotiator would accept a document in which a person promises to pay a certain sum, on a certain date, ‘as far as possible,” so too God will refuse an IOU signed by someone who observes the truth ‘as far as possible.’ Vows are universal features of human behaviour.”⁵

The vow, as a promise to God, seals the divine character of the devotion and its *transcendent meaning* and establishes a fundamental difference with all those actions, as lofty as they may be, to which humans can devote their lives, but which remain, due to their purpose, within a natural order; when it is said that someone is “devoted” to their business, to their profession, to social service, to the duties of the state, as much as they are “devoted” totally to those things and with a greater responsibility, the expression “devoted” is being used improperly.

4. The devoted life, then, cannot be reduced to a natural order nor to a purely ethical level of existence, but it belongs to a *sacred order* that acquires its plenitude of meaning in universal society.

5. Sense of redemption. The devoted being to some extent takes on the burden of *everyone's* lives, they become receptive to the life of all humanity and the offering, along with their own, at the feet of the Divinity. Even when the circle of activities in which the devoted being moves—I refer to the immediate work in which they do their activity, be it their own family, a charity, study, research, religious contemplation—seems reduced, in each being or task that the devoted soul takes on if all humanity is present... all the children, all the sick, all the needy; the concrete work is a symbol of a love of redemption that wishes to become universal and which participates to some degree in that mysterious function of universal redemption.

6. It is renewed by new physiological functions. Devotion, as active function, is perfected in the physiological order by transmutation of human nature itself. An integral feeling of purity associated with the transmutation of their sexual energies is inherent to this divine function in humans. In all eras and at all times, the devoted being has been, to some degree, a chaste and pure being. Because of its importance, this subject deserves a profound grounding, but I would venture

⁵ Gandhi, M. K., *Principios básicos del gandhismo*, Buenos Aires, 1933, p. 118.

too far from the limits I have set for this work. The interested reader will find in *Seeds of the Future in Humanity* new points of view in this regard.

But before advancing with these questions I must ask a question: does what I call the *devoted life* make any sense in the secularized society of the present and does it offer perspectives of development of the future society? Is it really a universal, necessary function or is it a “necessary evil” required by an unjust, sick society that obliges someone to “sacrifice” themselves for others and carry the “sins” of the world? In other words, in a perfect society, would there be a need for a type of devoted life? It goes without saying that the devoted life, with its different hues and institutional forms, is as old as humanity itself, but will it endure in the future?

XI.2

Don Santiago gave the devoted life a fundamental value and considered it a supreme vocation for humans on earth. He was categorical about this and would not admit confusions or half measures: it was one thing to live devoted to the “world” and quite another thing to “be devoted to God.” To be devoted was to separate oneself from the mundane world of existence, but not with an attitude of negation of the world and of life but out of love and a sense of great responsibility to all the needy of the world. “The devoted being,” he told me, “does not distance themselves from the world because they hate the world but because they love it and they want to participate in the needs of all human beings.” For Don Santiago the utmost expression of devotion was possible in the life of spiritual community. But even within the beings called to the spiritual life, the life of the community was an exception for him. From 1952 he founded in the Americas the first spiritual communities, inspired by a profound mystical sense of devotion, but he constantly repeated that very few were called to leave it all for the love of God and humanity.

This exceptional vocation was not to be interpreted as conditioned to some type of social or religious structure of the past or the present but, quite on the contrary, as an inherent “call” to the human condition itself and its fate. It is hard to understand, but magnificent in its being. The world cannot understand this kind of vocation but it feeds spiritually from it. Speaking in statistical terms we could say that the vocations of renunciation at a level of devotion in community life are not very likely; furthermore, in everyday existence, renunciation is “unlikely” but that does not mean that it is impossible.

Don Santiago used to exemplify this vocational uniqueness with simpler, more engaging stories: “A group of ducklings go into the water. They are all the same, but maybe there is one that is different; perhaps they are all white, but one of them is black. And so it happens with families: of several children, one of them may not have been born to follow the same traditional life as the other siblings; perhaps they all marry, but there is one who was not born to marry; if it is a daughter, when she reaches a certain age the parents wish for her to have a suitor and get

married, but perhaps she has not been born for married life, and if she gets married it is simply to please her parents or follow what is habitual, then she is very unhappy. But society is implacable in its ignorance; it wants to lock everyone in the same mould and if a girl does not marry like others, they brand her an old maid: what ignorance! There are souls that have been born to live in the world and other souls that have been born for God. Each one must respond happily to the private voice of their vocation.”

I found it very hard to understand the meaning of community life as a permanent state; I assimilated it with religious monasticism and with the negation of the world and of life that had led so many beings in the West and East to “withdraw” from the world to lead a monastic life. But when I started to practice community life, albeit temporarily, I was able to clarify a number of erroneous opinions that I had formed about it. Firstly, I realised that it was not possible to comprehend this type of life from the point of view of its institutional organisation, as rule or method, because from this external vision all religious communities have a similar appearance, with variations that depend on historical, political and socioeconomic factors. That the rules of some are stricter than those of others, that Buddhist monks in the past lived off alms, that some medieval Christian monks lived from their labour while others were mendicants... ultimately, these are all external, circumstantial aspects that considerably influence society in its time both positively and negatively, but that is not the fundamental aspect of the “being” of the spiritual community, of its “nature” and its “function.” When I asked Don Santiago what the sense of this type of life was, what it meant and what value it could have for other people who are even unaware of its existence, he answered: “This life is what makes it possible for others to live.” His answer seemed to be as incomprehensible as those “koan” of Zen Buddhism and it gave me the impression that I had asked him one thing and he had answered something else. But I had learned to be silent and his answer, which seemed “untranslatable” to me at the time, is now full of meaning.

But before continuing with this subject it is useful to have a general idea of the various ways in which the devoted life can express itself in future society.

XI. 3

Devotion takes on its utmost dignity through a supreme existential configuration that is the *priesthood*, a central figure of sacred society that in the human order provides a point of contact through similarity for all those who to a certain *extent* feel called to devote their lives. I shall examine, then: 1. The priesthood as sacred order. 2. The different vocational *expressions* and *measures* of this sacred order.

1. *The priesthood as sacred order*

The priesthood is a prototypical figure and a prototypical function of universal society that is expressed historically in civil society as a mode of human existence devoted to God. To understand the priesthood properly and to be able to respond to the questions I raised at the beginning of this chapter about whether this priesthood is exclusive to a traditional society and whether it would endure in future society, whether such a function would end up being totally secularized, as has occurred with so many other functions that had sacred characteristics in their origins, or whether, on the contrary, such a function would be re-established in a new type of sacred order, to answer these questions, I repeat, we have to begin with the analysis of the priestly function itself, regardless of any doctrine or institutional aspect. I will examine the following aspects:

- a) The priestly function itself, as prototype.
- b) The historical and contingent aspects in which said function is manifested in society.
- c) The functioning or exercise of said function as regarding its use or abuse.

In other words, we must learn to recognise the prototypical, eternal function in the purity of its being, the forms that said priesthood can take over time, and be able to recognise those that belong to the past and those that can open up to the future, and the correct or incorrect activity of each function—as such—to recognise when the priesthood fulfils its true function and therefore has meaning, and when it marches towards decay, disease and death, like any biological function that develops on the plane of contingency and that can fulfil or not the purpose for which it was created or established.

Let us see in detail each one of the aspects listed above:

a) As a prototype it is a living universal archetype, that is, an institution of divine origin, of divine law, we could say, and as prototypical function.

b) In its historical aspect it is contingent and belongs to a people, a culture or a race and forms part of their destiny; from the most remote antiquity to the modern day we have witnessed different mutations of the historical priestly order. The general evolutionary line of this historical process appears to be a progressive *interiorisation* of the sacrifice in the human person and an increasingly greater restriction of the intermediaries between the human and the divine: from the primitive ritual priesthood, to the sacramental priesthood, to the priesthood of initiation. In the age of egoence the priesthood returns to its condition of initiation; the individual person must make themselves accessible to the sacred function of the priesthood to participate *directly* in it

without need for intermediaries;⁶ the “function of intermediation” of the priesthood is called to disappear, not the priesthood itself that today takes on a new dimension and a new meaning: to no longer simply act as intermediary of salvation but to give a point of contact by similarity for all those who want to live the devoted life to a certain degree.

An interiorised priesthood would seem to demand: 1) the human body as Temple; 2) its heart as altar to which to transfer the human and divine values and 3) a divine Presence activated permanently by the offering of the devoted soul.

c) As function by itself, the universal priesthood is a “bridge function” between the human and the divine, it is a function that keeps “open” *communication* between the natural order and the supernatural order, between universal sacred society and civil society. And I say “bridge” in the double sense of making possible a current of life descending from the divine to the human and another current ascending from the human to the divine: the first current is of *grace*, the second of *holocaust*. Without this “open” communication the mechanical system of human existence could not function: a time would come when it would stop due to a lack of spiritual impulse of growth or by saturation of the substances of waste. Without the force of inspiration of the Word proceeding from on high there would be no possibility whatsoever of progress or natural evolution, and without a possibility of eliminating the waste from the process of development—“sins” in the traditional language—the vital system would be saturated and would automatically cease to function.

In primitive society—and there is still a great deal that is primitive in ours—the function of holocaust is realised by two main paths: war and redemption through the sacrifice of the divine person. But a time must come when humans learn to realise in themselves, in their own selves, the sacrifice of redemption and holocaust. In biblical times the lamb sacrificed at the altar of the Lord was the scapegoat; then it was the divine person himself, and when John the Baptist sees him he says: “Here is the lamb of God, who removes the sin from the world!” But there comes a time when each one of us must take on, in a certain *measure*, this divine function. There is a subtle distinction in the Christian gospel in the use of two terms that are apparently used indistinctly, but which, in my understanding, have different meanings: I refer to the expressions Son of God and Son of Man. When the gospel speaks of the coming of the end of times it says: “Then people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13, 26.) Will the future human be worthy of participating, to a certain extent, in the strength and majesty of this new prototype?

What we might call the *normal function* of the priesthood, activated in devoted souls, is as follows:

⁶ See note p. 70.

1. Function of “bridge” of *communication* between the human and the divine.

2. Receptive function at the level of divine pole: inspiration and transmission of divine Teaching to guide souls to the union with God.

3. Receptive function at human level: participation, through their personal sacrifice, in human suffering; offering and holocaust of human life that it has taken on, along with its own, at the divine altar.

This sacred function is *distorted*:

1. When the channel that has been provided to be the “bridge” of communication between the human and the divine wants to become more important than the current itself: distortion at person level, omnipotence and deification of the person.

2. When spiritual power is transformed into material power; when instead of distributing the spiritual bread that they receive from on high to help the souls to reach a fuller vision of God, they use it for their own well-being and “development” or put it at the service of key interests of class, parties and antagonistic struggles for dominance.

3. When instead of taking on to themselves the human life that comes to them in search of redemption, they refuse to accept their own sacrifice and seek to substitute it with a meaningless rite of personal holocaust.

2. Different expressions and vocational measures of the devoted life

The central value of the priesthood, which I have tried to characterise as a prototypical function of devoted life, must be able to animate in future society certain originally sacred functions that run the risk of being totally secularised in the mechanical life of current society, thus re-establishing through individual participation in devotion a new sacred order that social institutions require to be able to be transformed and remain at the highest spiritual level possible.

For life in the universe to develop in order it would appear to be necessary for a “quantum” of devoted life to be activated. It is essential that some souls realise this need and participate actively to complete that “quantum.” A deficit in society brings as consequence a life that materialises in lacking divine support; a surplus idealises the absolute aspects of existence in detriment to the material, contingent facets of life. The devoted life is a factor of balance for all beings to be able to fully develop their divine and human aspects.

The disintegration of the atom and the subsequent entry of humanity into the energy field makes it possible to understand, by analogy, that in the heart of the devoted soul it is possible to carry out the reversible process of giving material body to the energetic modality of the divine

spirit or spiritualise a matter that, if it becomes too dense, upsets the balance of human and divine factors of the integral equation of existence.

The devoted life is renewed in the society of our days: 1) in new spiritual communities; 2) in the family; 3) in the social community.

1. *Devotion in the spiritual community.*

To bring us closer to an understanding, albeit superficial, of spiritual communities, we must examine them from different perspectives: a) Spiritual; b) Historical; c) Biological; d) Social.

a) The spiritual community is a meeting of individual souls called vocationally to a life of devotion. The specific mission of its members is to be guardians of the divine “reserves” to feed human life. Due to the degree of vocation that it demands and the continued effort in a practice of renunciation that makes it possible to realise that divine mission with plenitude, it is recognised that it is the most perfect state of devoted life.

b) From the point of view of philosophy of history, following in this respect the general lines of study traced by Toynbee, we must learn to see these communities within the process of cultural influence that the churches exert—in their more generic acceptance of “meeting of souls”—on civilizations. One of the important functions that these religious groups appears to have is to act as “chrysalises” in the eras of decay, guarding in their hearts the most precious seeds of life of a civilisation to return them once again to society like a butterfly once the critical period has passed. The other aspect to consider is the continuity of the existence of spiritual communities over time that appear to emerge as diverse expressions of the same *civitas Dei* that seeks to adapt to the diversity of cultural and psychological modalities of people called to the life of devotion: every era, every people, every culture has had their own type of life of religious community.

In our time the phenomenon is occurring, which hasn’t yet been studied a great deal, of the emergence of diverse *new* communities, animated by a new faith in the spiritual values of humans, who have become aware of the danger of extinction of these values in the materialised society and attempt by all means to reconstruct the city of God within a place of intimacy. Despite their good intentions, most of these attempts end in disappointment because they lack the fundamental roots of spiritual order that have given life to traditional communities. But the important matter is not the success or failure of these attempts but the fact in itself as existential “response,” especially in our era which—as Toynbee rightly notes—“opens” an interregnum of global dimensions, a new “mission field” for the spiritual life where it is possible that the diversity of human temperaments and conditions also finds a diversity of models for the devoted life. As

in every era of gestation of new species, nature is bountiful in its trials: many shoots fail in their attempt but some will reach the end.

c) Let us now approach a biological understanding. Evidently, the spiritual community cannot be understood within the known structures of society, not as a “superstructure” or as “infrastructure” because from these points of view it represents a “gap,” an “empty” space, a kind of “not being.” Psychologists and sociologists tend to interpret that life as a “regressive” type, typical of beings “unadapted” to society who distance themselves from it out of convenience or cowardice, seeking to live from other people’s labour. Even most people who consider themselves religious consider the entry of a member of the family into a religious community as a “loss,” not to mention those “closed” communities in which such loss is considered worse than death. But all this is no more than ignorance, it is to confuse the fruit with the peel, take the habit for the monk and, at most, confuse the abuses and deviations of a function with the function itself.

By its nature, the spiritual community belongs to the “intrastructure” of universal society and is one of the fundamental “organs” of activation and support of civil society inasmuch that it is the invisible and dynamic weft of that society; it is a “gap” *in* the material structure of society, but today, precisely, physics is showing us the immense potential of the “gaps” in matter (Dirac’s “anti-matter”), biology is showing us that *all* the functions of life, the activity of the brain, the muscles, the heart would be impossible in the body without catalytic “activation”—one might almost say by mere presence—of diminutive, concealed microscopic portions of proteins called “ferments” or *enzymes*, and medical pathology, with the help of the laboratory, is discovering that the inadequate or deficient synthesis of these enzymes leads to major disturbances in the human organism. When Christ says to his disciplines that they are the “ferment” in the dough he does not use a purely symbolic expression but translates into the language of the symbol a reality at once spiritual and biological: society, the human mass, needs a “ferment,” “yeast” or “enzyme” that by simple presence—“catalytic” action—realises the activation of its metabolic cycles towards the highest purpose: that moves the muscles, the brain and the heart of said society towards the divine—“enzymatic” function of the devoted human.

Perhaps all this that I say here seems a fantasy to many or, at most, science fiction, but the science of the future—at least, I suspect—will not take long to show that spiritual life, taken to the highest level of devotion, is not only an “idea” or a “feeling” but also translates into a “force” and a “substance”; that the devoted being does not only realise an ideal function but also a *biological* one; that what we call “redemption” in religious language is not only a symbol but a living energy; that what we call “society” and “world” cannot grow and develop without an “infrastructure” which is the heart and soul of said society, that said soul and said heart belong to an invisible universal body, and that the devoted beings—whatever their religion and their ideology—are “members” of that mystical body that animates and gives meaning to human

society. How could I not now understand those words of Don Santiago that the life of the spiritual community—as devoted community—is what makes it possible for other humans *to live*! It is understood not in the purely biological sense, but above all the spiritual sense.

The spiritual community is like a living flame, sustained only by the offering and renunciation of its members. All those who say that the men or women who “withdraw” from the world to live in community are lazy or misfits do not know what they are saying and have never had a direct experience in this field. The devoted human has a capacity for “production” one hundred times greater than any common worker because all their energies converge in a transcendent purpose; it may be that in some cultures and under certain circumstances some monastic communities inspired by principles of negation of the world and of life have moved away from labour and have lived from alms, but it is no less true that the introduction of manual labour to other communities, such as the Benedictines, meant for the society in which they lived a renewal of agriculture and notable general economic progress. Don Santiago revealed to me new types of spiritual communities capable not only of supporting themselves in all their material needs, but of “producing” for the needy: surplus of product of the spiritual human, providential economy, society sense of the community.

d) Let us examine some observations arising from the *sociological* field. It is said that community life, organised in the monastic style since the remotest antiquity, represents a community ideal that it was possible to realise in the past in very small circles of people, but which in modern society said life style has now passed to the great mass and is represented in organisms and institutions of diverse types in which community life is practiced, with laws and rules as or more severe than those set by Saint Benedict for his monks and that, in short, the ascetic of monasticism is the property of organised society. There is some truth in this. No one would disagree that today the life of a modern company, with a high level of organisation, is rather like a monastery; its rules are strict, work is done like clockwork, everything is ordered, there is an unquestionable hierarchy and whoever does not work at the company’s pace is dismissed. Family, entertainment, place of residence, personal tastes or initiatives, everything at a given time can be demanded at the service of the company. And this is the case both in the East and in the West, although with different modalities; whether in companies in the Americas, in Israeli kibbutzim or on a Chinese commune, there is a community life, with one rule, one ascetic and one “mysticism.” But it is precisely in this that we call “mysticism”—with a stress on the inverted commas—that the difference lies; it is likely that there is no more ascetics, today, in a monastery than in a company, but the same does not happen with mysticism; companies and communes are societies exclusively between humans and they lack mysticism—in the proper sense—and are ordered by a particular and concrete purpose. In contrast, the spiritual community belongs to a superior order of societies centred on the divine presence; relationships between its members are oriented here by a mysticism and ordered towards a transcendent purpose. This difference of nature between

what is a civil society and a religious society is what hinders the institutionalisation of this latter type of society, especially when the prevailing social regime is blind to the values of devotion. The difference that I have just pointed out does not mean that in the future there may not appear spiritual communities with very different characteristics to those we have known hitherto, that cannot have the form of company, kibbutzim or communes, but that will depend on whether there are “individuals” animated by a mysticism, capable of giving them spiritual life. Once again, what gives or does not give nature of spiritual community to an organised group of people is not the formal or institutional structure of the organism but the “intrastructure” that animates it, and this intrastructure is inherent to the hearts of people and not to the forms of cultural tradition or institutional mechanics: it is the “monk,” in short, who gives meaning to the “habit,” and not the other way round.

2. The devoted family

Is it possible to found a new type of devoted family as a fundamental pillar for future society? Is there any indication that such a gestation is already occurring? In recent decades the family has experienced fundamental changes that have marched parallel with society's socioeconomic transformations: women's work outside of the home, the early emancipation of children and the pronounced generational difference, both biological and psychosociological, have meant that in a short time the image of the traditional family has blurred, parents and children understand each other increasingly less and a type of family pathology, unknown in the past, has even manifested itself. All this is no more than the impact of the social collective wave on the family institution, and its final results translate into decay. Many have raised their voices to restore the old model and many remedies have been proposed. In my opinion the solution will not come from the path of “repair” but of “creation”: it is the individual of the future, with a new consciousness and responsibility, who must respond to the challenge of “creating” a new family.

Deep psychological and sociological studies exist today about the phenomenon of family disintegration and family pathology, but very little or nothing is said about the “new.”

Although I said that the call of a life of devotion in the spiritual community is for very few, the same does not occur with regards to the call to life of marriage, which is the path for most men and women. The possibility that this majority will, via the path of devotion in marriage, attain a superior state of life is something of utmost importance for the fate of civilisation. And this possibility is not acquired in hurried courses for couples-to-be, with a few sex education rules given at school, or premature experiences that young people themselves may wish to have to achieve greater maturity: it requires a fundamental education to “be” a man or a woman. I cannot enter here into the deep study of this fascinating subject in which the fate of the race seems to be at stake. I will only say a few words about what I understand by devoted life in the home.

The devoted family is a superior type of human community, ordered by a transcendent end, which is accessed by a *vocational* path. I will reveal here its structure and its functions following the “signals of the path” as points of reference: 1) It comes through a vocational call to devote life *in* marriage. But am I really called to marriage as the most suitable means to fulfil myself and my destiny? Do I respond by *invoking* the divine Presence with the “force of the soul”? In short, it is a genuine call of the self; it does not come about to end solitude, do business or satisfy a desire. 2) It is renewed by the *encounter* with a similar soul. The invocation with the force of the soul makes a “vocational encounter” possible and not merely a “random encounter.” Before a similar soul there is not much to say, explain or justify; everything is said between them, they recognise each other immediately and *know* they were meant for each other. As Lohengrin says to Elsa: “How noble is the nature of our love! Though we never met, we sensed each other.” 3) It is confirmed through an inner *commitment* of fidelity made in the divine Presence that is formalised outwardly, as public testimony, through a commitment of will. 4) It is a *path of union* centred on divine love. It is a path of *liberation*: as it is a path of union founded on freedom it joins together, but it leaves the other full freedom for themselves. It is a path of family *community*, as a suitable means for the development of an individual existence for each of its members and not as a conglomerate of a collective power. 5) It forms a creative, expansive *energy* field at the service of the great universal work; the renunciation of selfish desires of the members of the family community makes them worthy of participating actively, with their own energy, in the needs of all people. The sense of devotion of the living energies, including the sex life—at least in a certain measure—is what gives the seal of devotion: a part of the sexual energy must be transmuted. The ascetic of transformation of the energy through renunciation—through the renunciation of selfish desires and possessions of the members of the family community—means that, little by little, the ties of “blood” become ties of the “spirit.” 6) Its fundamental life is a call of living love, guarded in a sacred place, *temple*, and maintained by a mysticism of the heart. 7) It is a field of transmission of the *human sense* and of the fundamental values that characterise humans in their highest level of ethical development; these features are not transmitted only through animal reproduction or through cultural transmission, but by simple *presence*.

3. *Devotion in the social community*

I said that there is a mysticism in the spiritual community and a music in the family community, but there is also a mysticism of the “solitary” human, understanding by solitary not someone who isolates themselves from society but someone who, while living in the social community and fulfilling their social duties—whatever their sex and marital status—devotes a “particle” of their intimate self to divinity and, because they have surrendered this, earns the right to inner solitude. There is in this person a measure of devotion of their life that they want to preserve, cultivate and enlarge. To “be” a human, everyone must have access to this measure of devotion and renew it somehow. I have previously said that many of the so-called existential

frustrations and disorientations of life in souls is due to the difficulty of putting that individual “particle” of devotion into the orbit of an existence full of meaning. As socialisation advances and the institutional organisation weaves around it a network of increasingly tighter nets, as the great collective machine gradually squeezes the individual, demanding from them self-sacrifice, the need grows more urgent for that individual to find a measure of devotion even within that network because otherwise they run the risk of losing themselves completely. In their solitude they must find a mysticism that allows them to overcome their existential anxiety and reverse the mechanical process of pressure coming from the outside to an inner movement of encounter with themselves in that “particle” of their heart to which they have given a “sacred” character. If they can rest on that particle, on that “stone” of the heart, they are safe, because “from there” they can find themselves again with human society without losing their individuality or their self. Furthermore, they can not only discover the meaning of their existence, but the *mission* of their life. How much good can humanity do for a man and a woman who have a single “particle” of devoted love in their heart!

This sense of participation in the social community through its genuine value of the human “self” will take on more importance every day in the future society. From utilitarian professionalism, pressing most of the times at present for market demands, we will pass to the vocational expression of the person as right of the “self.”

The sacred and transcendent value of individual existence can be channelled through diverse forms and goals. Some can do so through art, others do it through love and there are those who do it through the dispassionate search for the truth. It can be found in practice in a life devoted to the service of humanity that suffers. Such expressions can take on aspects of outer greatness or remain hidden in the intimacy of the human heart. This spirit of devotion, associated to the multiple capacities and virtues of the individual, is the new phenomenon of the future society that will gradually substitute the current economic incentive and the search for prestige and power.

In short, devotion is a supernatural vocation of surrendering to God with all the self, accepting in that surrender the sacrifice of oneself.

It is a sacred function in that the person renews in themselves the mystery of the transmutation of energy, making the divine human and the human divine. It is a foundation of universal society and indispensable function to maintain balance between the spiritual and material aspects of life.

As a “sacred mode of being in the world,” it implies a vocational call to devotion and an individual response that is confirmed with a vow. The devoted self takes on, in some measure, the lives of all humans and the offering of their heart to the divinity participating in the mysterious function of universal redemption. Devotion acquires its maximum dignity through the priesthood,

which aside from the institutional, historical and doctrinal aspect, is a universal function that keeps communication open between the divine and the human.

The devoted life is renewed in today's society: a) in new communities, that guard the divine "reserve" to feed human life; b) in the family, as a superior type of community ordered by a transcendent purpose in whose field the meaning of being human is transmitted and the fundamental values in the ethical and biological order; c) in the social community, in which devotion through art, science, labour, love, service—beyond all professionalism—is the new ferment of the future society that will gradually substitute purely economic and material incentives.

XII

TEMPLE

“SACRED TEMPORAL-SPATIAL” DIMENSION OF EXISTENCE

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's
temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your
midst?

I. Corinthians, 3, 16.

XII. I

What is the world of the spiritual human? What is their authentic temporal-spatial dimension? That is, what space do they move in and how do they live their time?

The spiritual tradition of humanity has always considered the “world” as antagonistic of the spiritual “self,” and the “spiritual life” has been formulated as a form of existence “separate” from the world. However, at present the renewing currents of the churches demand of their priests and faithful a greater commitment to the world; so which one is it? The thing is, the framing of the problem in terms of antagonism between the self and the world is wrong because, as Heidegger rightly says, the fundamental ontological structure of humans is “being in the world,” and concrete beings must always postulate themselves as being in the world. What has to be clarified duly is what kind of world is proper for each being.

Existential philosophy differentiates between three types of world: the “biological” world, the “surrounding” world and the “own” world. This categorization of the modes of being of the world—*qua* world—is useful and implies a positive advance towards the understanding of what we call the world, but it leaves us on the threshold of the way of being of the “own” world of the spiritual human, above all in their modality of egoence. What is the own world of this new human and what are its temporo-spatial dimensions? I will not attempt to characterise this world from the point of view of its “matter,” but only from the existential point of view, although one aspect is closely related to the other. Every mode of being creates a particular type of world, and the egoence of the self, as new mode of being, creates a new world, a new space and a new time. We must learn to recognise this space and move securely in it, perceive the new time and move at its own rhythm.

This new world and its “own” temporo-spatial dimension is located at a point of balance between the so-called “divine world” and the “human world” and makes it possible to establish a completely different and new basis that breaks with the conception of an absolute dualism that

sets these two worlds off as antagonistic, irreconcilable aspects of life. The “spiritual” world to which I refer—although I still use a word charged with secondary meanings that are sometimes very contradictory—is beyond all duality between the inner and outer world, the human world and the divine world.

The world of the spiritual being appears as an “inner” world (and here I use the word inner because I don’t have another with a different meaning to that which is used currently when it is compared to the outer world or when it is identified with the subjective in counterposition to the objective.) I say “inner”: 1) because I feel it in the “heart” of the self and 2) because it is of an inner “nature,” which is a transcendent level of the self beyond the dual modes of the inner and outer in the current meaning of these terms. When I speak of the inner world I must clarify, then, which inner world I am referring to and what nature I am considering: is it the world of intelligence? Of fantasy? Of LSD? Of religious ecstasy? Of artistic contemplation? So many illusions have been woven around this “inner world” and so many egoisms have been concealed, covering them with the illusory mantle of the “sacred”!

The spiritual world is an “inner” world, “sacred” by nature, but totally unknown to many of those who “say” they have an inner life. Let us see if we can characterise it from the positive point of view, that is, not by what it is not, but by what it is. In this regard I must recognise that I would never have been able to describe said space-time by my own means if I had not experienced it in my own life by similarity with the existential field in which Don Santiago moved. So I will describe first some aspects of that experience from which a possibility of conceptual formulation will emerge, something that I will do in the third part of this chapter.

XII. 2

Living with Don Santiago I started to realise that there were *strictly private areas* in his life, though not in the sense that tends to be given habitually to this word in the surrounding world. I went to his house, met his family, he confided in me many aspects of what we would call his private life, but I perceived that there were *areas of his life* which I could not penetrate and which constituted a space of a different weft to that which constituted the habitual space of the everyday surrounding world, of the world of culture or of the world of current emotions in which the life of humans on earth usually takes place. They were like prohibited areas in which *one could not enter, areas of closure*, which he sometimes marked out even with physical markings. This latter aspect was the most shocking to me; the democratic sense of community existence had given me the right to a “public space,” and even in the “private” realm one could cross the space under certain circumstances, but it was absurd that there were areas where one could not enter for anything in the world! And it was absurd, effectively, in the sense that I could not understand it.

Gradually I realised that there are “sacred enclosures” and that such spaces constitute “sacred spaces” that break the homogeneity of the profane space and which are separated from that profane space not precisely by a physical barrier but by an existential barrier. The physical space is only a symbol of a much deeper reality, that surrounds a kind of “gap” in the concrete space of everyday existence. That sacred space, of a different nature to the profane space and with a protective space that in turn constitutes an existential barrier, is what I call “temple” in the existential sense of the term and of which the physical temple of religious space is only the material symbol that somehow represents it or symbolises it.

Traditional symbology offers us numerous examples of this “space” of the temple and its condition of “barrier.” In the vision that Ezekiel has of the new temple it is said: “And behold, there was a wall all around the outside of the house” (Ezekiel, 40,5.) And Lohengrin’s revelation in Wagner’s poem begins with these terms: “In a far-off land, inaccessible to your steps, there is a castle by the name of Montsalvat; a light-filled temple stands within it, more beautiful than anything on earth.”

But I was not satisfied with the intellectual understanding of this lived reality that I was perceiving as “temple.” When I pressed Don Santiago about this new mystery of existence he answered me with a paradox: “You can be beside a mystic, know his life, his customs, converse with him and think you know him, but you will never be able to reach certain areas of his interior.”

XII. 3

The temple is, then, the sacred place of the person. From a sacred outer place it reverts to its previous and fundamental inner sacred dimension; it is the own space of the spiritual person. Only there can the soul hear the voice of the silence and only there can one speak to souls as souls. “Outside” of there, in the profane space, one can speak of anything, even of the most “elevated” or important” things, but all of them will be no more than “idle talk,” “gossip” (in the Heideggerian sense.) It is not the *sacred* conversation, that goes from soul to soul and which can only be realised in the *temple*. Here in the temple is the place where the souls understand each other with few words, “outside” they do not understand each other no matter how much they talk. The temple is the only place where true dialogue can occur between God and humans. It is the pure environment where the soul seeks to encounter Truth, the Path and the Life.

All that is said about communication among humans must be referred immediately to the temporo-spatial context in which said communication seeks to be produced. Communication technologies, human relationships made technology and all those things are the institutionalisation of communication, but true communication—“communion” only occurs in the temple and cannot be institutionalised.

The positivist society of the present, ruled by economic values and power, cannot properly value the extraordinary *function* of the “temple,” as sacred space; even people who say they are religious penetrate their temples without having a clear consciousness of what place they are in.

The Jewish people always preserved, through the diaspora and as a profound sense of the chosen people, the hope of the restoration of the temple, but today, more than a physical restoration, it is necessary to be able to restore in the new human the existential “temple” so that from there—from the heart of their being—they can re-establish in the society of the future the sacred space and time, no longer as something alien to the life of the world but as a genuine sacred dimension that breathes life into and gives new meaning to everyday life.

We can characterise the temple “function” with the following distinguishing notes: 1. It is a sacred temple. 2. it is “inner.” 3. It is a “closed” space that is maintained by a guard. 4. It is a place of testimony. 5. Its temporal dimension is sacred.

1. *It is a sacred “place.”* When Jacob wakes from the dream in which he sees the ladder, he says: “Surely the Lord was in this place, and I was not aware of it”; and in fear he adds: “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven” (Genesis 28, 16-17.) The sacred space is determined existentially as such by the *union* of the soul with God; when human life *joins* divine life the “temple” emerges as a sacred place of existence.

2. *It is “inner” space.* The *union* determines the character of the intimate and of “inner,” which is a quality of a completely different order to the inner as something counterposed to the external. This union determines a field of spiritual stability and only in relation to said field of union is it possible to recognise an “outside” of the “temple.” When I say that spiritual life is for the soul to belong in its interior, I mean remaining “united”: the character of “inner,” then, does not imply a selfish refuge within oneself and separate from the life of others or uninterested in the problems of the world but rather implies a state of “union” with the own self, of union with the divine, and of permanence in the “home.”

3. *It is a “closed” space that is maintained by a guard.* The husband in the Song of Songs says: “My sister, my spouse, you are an enclosed garden, a fountain sealed up” (*Canticle* 4, 12.) The profane interpretation has not seen in this beautiful passage any more than an erotic aspect, but it has a profound mystical meaning; it expresses the perfect intimacy of the self and the space that guards the fountain of life.

It is important to highlight that the “temple” is a superior mode of existence that is maintained in its self by a *guard*—a guard of the living flame which is the foundation of its being—and that if this guard function fails the temple is destroyed. One cannot allow anything

into its sacred space without the danger of contaminating it with the way of being of the profane world which ends up making it disappear.

The *guard* function of the temple, reserved in antiquity for the vestals of the fire and other functionaries responsible for the same, is reconstructed at present as a specifically spiritual function of the human's own "self." The future human has to develop this new guard function if they truly want to preserve in their "interior" the fundamental values that characterise them as humans. In any spiritual community this guard function is of capital importance because it is what makes it possible to maintain the very existence of the community in its *communion*. It is not the rules or the authority by themselves that maintain the community in its purity but the *guard* of the sacred space in its purity; not that this is privative of religious communities—space of "closure"—but rather it is a universal function. The lack of knowledge of this guard function in the family community has been fatal for its own stability. Where such a guard does not exist, the toxic germs of human passions have penetrated the home that have ended up contaminating the "atmosphere" of the family "temple," bringing disease and ruin. Women have a very high spiritual responsibility in this function of guard and the female egoence must surely attain in the future a dimension of priestess that it once had in another era and which is necessary to restore today so that the "home" is not only a protective fire that provides material support and security to its members but also a "purifying" fire.

4. *It is a place of testimony.* After the Lord orders Moses to build an ark, he tells him: "Then put in the ark the tablets of the covenant law, which I will give you" (Exodus. 25, 16.) Existentially speaking, "temple" is the place of the *testimony* because it is a field of encounter between the human and the divine: there, God gives testimony to the human of his Love and of his Law and humans give testimony of their offering. Only in function of the offering is it possible for the human element to "enter" the "closed" space of the "temple"—the human pole receptive of participation—but this element that "enters" does not contaminate the temple, precisely because it is offered. This is the basis of what we can call "worship."

5. *Its temporal dimension is sacred.* The sacred dimension of the self, as it is manifested in a sacred "space" ("temple"), is also expressed in a sacred "temple" (existential "tempo.") This "tempo" is ordered according to the *life* in the "temple" and is different from profane time.

In general terms we can say that the inner time (as temporal dimension of the self) is ordered, as a way of being in time, in the sense that every concrete being gives to their existence; that is, each person uses, divides, gains or wastes their time (their life) differently and with different meaning. This ordering of time is done in modern society completely arbitrarily, following the impulses of the subject or the imperatives of social customs or laws, but we need to find a foundation of the "use of time" in the very nature of the being to order it to its most proper

and elevated purposes and not simply the “interests” of production, entertainment or other secondary purposes. We must, in short, be able to found an *economy of time* no longer on bases such as “time is money” but on the basis of something more solid, such as “time is life.” Problems such as the consumption of one’s own time or other people’s, wasted time, distribution of time, time used for labour, study, meditation, percentage of time used in each one of these functions are all very important aspects for the life of humans in which I cannot enter into details here, but I give them a place of pre-eminence in the ordering of human life more in harmony with the divine.

All these questions are today completely forgotten if not distorted; even the person who calls himself religious—whose religions have preserved certain religious festivities or times—does not know what to do with that time and devotes such festivities to take holidays, go to the casino or have fun in a profane way. This religious temporal dimension must also be capable of being incorporated into everyday life.

In short, “temple” is the sacred proper space of humans, with a protective space that separates them from the habitual modes of existence; it is the only place where true dialogue can occur between God and humans; it is the pure environment where the soul searches to meet with the Truth, the Path and the Life.

We can characterise the temple “function” with the following distinctive features:

1. It is a *sacred* place, where human life joins divine life.
2. It is *inner* space, in the sense of a state of union with the self.
3. It is a “closed” space that is maintained in its self by a *guard*.
4. It is a place of *testimony*: there God gives testimony to humans of his Love and his Law and humans give testimony of their offering.
5. Life in the temple is ordered by a “sacred type” that is the foundation of a new economy of time.

It is necessary to be able to restore in the new human the “existential temple” to re-establish from there a sacred space and time in the future society that give new meaning to everyday life.

XIII

UNIVERSAL SOCIETY

RADIATION OF A NEW FIELD OF FEELING

FOUNDED ON EGOENCE OF THE SELF

There is no doubt whatsoever that the incitation that our society faces today is no longer technical but moral.

ARNOLD TOYNBEE, *Study of History*.

The arguments made today about the development of modern society and the foreseeable stages for the future are almost all based on technological-scientific, political economy and social philosophy criteria, and although it is true that more and more importance is assigned to the education of the “human element” as a subject of history, humans are almost always considered according to their adaptation to change, the development of their intellectual possibilities, capacity for invention and increase in social wellbeing.

Nobody would disagree that post-industrial society constitutes by itself—as environment—a tremendous historical challenge, just as the industrial revolution was on a minor scale in the last century, but we would be taking the wrong path if, dazzled by technological advances and the growth of organised human power, we made those goods the main purpose of our efforts. Even when the individual discovers a new horizon for their life in the post-industrial society as development “in more” of their material prospects, their vocation of existential meaning is not fulfilled because of it.

I asked Don Santiago what the future society would be like and his answer was simple but loaded with meaning: “The wise and the saints shall be priests, legislators and guides of humanity.” What did he mean by that?

In reality, the scientific-technological race, the organisation of institutions and the mass media, all within a society in permanent change, only constitute the external aspect of the contemporary social process, but precisely in a field launched at such an extraordinary transformative speed regulation becomes necessary that cannot be provided by any superstructure within the same mechanics of the “system” but through an “intrastructure” of a different quality. The development of technological research associated to a power of organisation which, for good or for bad, covers the whole world with its influence, must be regulated and oriented by a field of inner stability that allows the individual to discover the meaning of “themselves” within that great automated organism. Post-industrial society must necessarily be founded on the spiritual society because otherwise it will lead to the total alienation of people; the current of influence generated by scientists and technicians must be balanced by the strength of the “scholars” and the “saints”;

the centres of research, planning and management of the elite industrial, scientific and technological power must be balanced by centres of mystical stability, veritable “intimate” laboratories and computers, where humans can administer with wisdom and sanctity the fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil: without such harmony of values we can have no illusions about the future. Other societies that have reached the summit of power have succumbed to the tyranny of the same force that they had released! Today we run the risk that the pressure exerted by the organised power, the imposition of directions of production and consumption through the mass media and progressive automation will increasingly crush the individual will and end up imposing a dictatorship on the consciousness.

What can the individual do in light of a technical, collective challenge? The answer today is one of moral character. They must respond to the challenge of the technostucture, communications and organised power from their individual conscience open to the divine, from the field of stability of their heart, and with a power that is their own—egoence of the self. They must respond to mass society from themselves with the totality of their “being.”

The spiritual human of the future will not deny technology or the advances of automation that liberate them from “heavy labour,” from the mechanical functions of the hand and of the mind, nor will they refuse to participate with their efforts in the post-industrial society, nor will they refuse to develop to the full all their human possibilities, but they will refuse to be slaves to any structure, progress, system or means that seeks to constitute itself as the purpose of their own existence. They will put their minds and their productive capacity at the service of society, but they will not be slaves to it because at their centre of existential stability, in their inner temple, they will have discovered a more profound meaning of life related to the cosmic conscience and a universal destiny that transcends all the conquests and transitory goods of existence.

The spiritual society, not as institution but as *intrastructure* formed by the subtle, invisible weft of communications among souls, will constitute a field of both stability and activity given that it will *order* the energy of the individual person at the service no longer of secondary interests but according to the great work in universal society. This activation, ordering and meaning of the new society in function of the spiritual society is what constitutes the truly modern social phenomenon that many cannot manage to perceive.

As they develop their egoence, individuals will begin to “not respond” to the collective forces of progress if such forces do not reverse their direction to place themselves at the service of “themselves” and not only of their material, social and cultural needs, but also their spiritual needs. This is why, when we speak today of a new society and of new social structures, we must answer: yes, all that could be very good, but what for?

Of course the new emergent spiritual human must, in turn, respond in a very different way to how they have done until now. So-called “spirituality,” “inner life” and other things like that have sometimes been no more than paralysing concealments of individual and social development. Today a static spirituality cannot be conceived, with its back to progress and the world, but rather an operational and transforming spirituality: a twofold challenge for common humans and leaders. The opening up towards a universal society requires necessarily new leaders. In general terms, the model of leader that has encouraged a structure founded on the partial development of human sectors highly divorced from each other no longer responds to the needs of the new times. The elite that holds power and leadership can no longer be constituted on economic, intellectual or prestige values at the service of privileged groups, but rather on values of egoence that, at the level of leaders of the future society, can only be a *wisdom* and a *sanctity* capable of orienting and channelling the energies of the whole of humanity towards their cosmic fate. No longer the politicians of the right or the left, of the proletariat or of the bourgeoisie—models that are already obsolete—but rather the scholars and the saints shall be the legislators and guides of the peoples, inspiring perhaps a new type of politics. No longer those who appropriate power for the material benefit of the few but rather those who are able to channel the energies of the planet at the service of the integral development of *all* people: leaders of the new energy economy of the universal society.

The leaders of the new generations that cannot interpret the challenge of history in the new times and seek to govern with old partial models, without glimpsing the field of universal community and without paying attention to the new energies that have *already* been released on the planet at the level of human phenomenon for the conquest of a new individual dimension of the person—egoence of the self—shall remain on the margins of the current of ascent and human transformation towards their cosmic fate. The leaders of the future of their respective fields of specialisation (politicians, economists, educators, therapists, legislators, public administrators) must be able to lead and channel three major currents of energy that already “circulate” in the social energetic body of humanity and which, in an egoent way, must find unity of meaning in the individual. These three forces are: 1) the force of human violence as instinctive potential (the passion in humans) 2) the cutting-edge techno-economic-social current with all its implications in the field of atomic energy, 3) the spiritual force of human liberation. To ignore any of these forces or to artificially increase some at the expense of others is to work partially and promote unilateral “growths,” “developments” and “expansions” that will ultimately lead to deformations or social utopias that end up sooner or later in failure or destruction.

But how to identify these currents in modern society? Where are they? Who are their interpreters or carriers? In the past the currents of ideas and emotions were condensed in institutionalised bodies of a certain “purity”: political parties, the churches, the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, the universities, the companies that proudly boasted the name of their owners on

their door, the family. But today everything is mixed up and confused and it is very difficult to know who is who. The fundamental forces of life operate *anonymously*, concealed, covered up, repressed or associated; behind the façades of the great social organisations that used to mean “something” or “someone” anonymous powers are now hidden. They are like bodies “possessed” and one sometimes does not know if God or the devil is “inside.”

To be able to perceive the fundamental currents that I have mentioned it is necessary to detect them in their own field, that is, not in the material field of the socially institutionalised bodies but in the energetic field of society. How is the movement of these forces configured? Apparently in a chaos of destructive antagonism, but the profound visions reveal a marvellous synthesis that anticipates a new birth.

On the *surface* of the social phenomenon we see a sea stirred up by energies, a whirlwind of human forces in which we cannot discover their meaning. Here everything seems contradictory: the individual rebelling against society, and society increasingly imprisoning the individual in the nets of the organisation; the violence of human passions unleashed on earth, and new passions of research and adventure that lead us to the conquest of space. On the one hand a technological structure that gradually absorbs all the mechanical functions of the human, and on the other hand, an individual who feels increasingly out of place in the great anonymous monsters of computers, commercial organisations and automated industry. Nations, groups of countries, areas of influence that have developed their cultures for millennia and which are now face to face in ideological or political struggles that seem interminable and without possibilities of understanding or a definitive solution. And all this that seems chaotic acquires, nonetheless, the *profound* vision, a marvellous sense of future: it is a melting pot of cultures, or forces, of life and experience of human beings who are precisely there, some *beside* others, unable to move, having to live together, whether they like it or not. At least in antiquity peoples, individuals or cultures could have the luxury of “ignoring” each other, of “isolating” themselves, of establishing “distance” between them and even “destroying” each other, but all these things are impossible today because demographic growth, the speed of communications and people’s increasing need for each other as a consequence of specialisation means that it is totally impossible to conceive a security based on isolation. And the adversary’s destruction is also becoming impossible because the power balance has today created a new type of war, both in politics and in economics and even in ideological terms, a war that is impossible to win which—unwittingly—progressively establishes bridges of communication between apparently irreducible human fields. The borders and fronts of combat used to be established between “unknown” enemies—by a high threshold of foreignness or distance—but now they are established between “known” enemies who are getting to know each other more and more. The fronts between blacks and whites, between Arabs and Israelis, between Chinese and Americans, between east and west are no longer fronts of ideal or material frontiers in the style of the Great Wall of China or a Maginot line, but dynamic fronts,

fronts of exchange, fronts of synthesis of cultures and, all the more so—as if that wasn't enough—the phenomenon of the UFO comes to insert a new front of the unknown between the earthly and the non-earthly, thus becoming the last link of a preparatory synthesis towards the universal society of the future. But this is only the visible face of the social phenomenon: in ordering and regulating the dynamics of this synthesis the hand of the Masters of humanity can be glimpsed who operate from the field of stability of the invisible society. They know the path of human transformations, the time of the cycles of history and the laws of the superior life.

This influence of the invisible society of the masters, as an organised leadership of a great work on earth, is perceived the most in two fields where their powerful energy converges: in the society of the “scholars” and in the society of the “saints” who are the two new leadership “classes” of the future society. Both societies are esoteric by nature, they possess a mystery that is their own and they are at the service of the universal work. From these centres multiple rays expand that inform and drive the most diverse fields of knowledge and of human feeling. The radiation of the invisible society from their energy field on the social body of humanity translates indirectly into visible and material effects, but still the individual can directly perceive this creative radiation if through renunciation and purification of the sensibility they enter into similarity with it and are prepared to “listen” to its message. And here we find a new frontier of coexistence between two worlds, between the spiritual society and civil society: they are also “together” and “face to face,” like two levels of existence that seek to communicate with each other. At this frontier humans become aware of their limitations in the sense of the universal, limitations that are as mental as they are emotional, even limits provided by their own human “structure.” Not simply questions of language and culture, nationality, race or skin colour but questions of structure. Before the threshold of universal society the human is detained by the insufficiency of their current structure to “enter” it: they are standing before their brother but they do not recognise him as such; the masters’ voices echo around them and they do not hear them.

Could the new human types be educated to overcome such barriers? Could the forces of human passions, of technology, and human’s hunger of freedom be oriented to make them converge on a single inner focus so that they “open” there, in that focus centred on the heart, the barrier of materialising limitations and release a new current of creative energy? This is the transcendent mission of humans with a vocation for renunciation.

It is possible that new human types will be born who have received genetically the meaning of the universal, but for most people it is a question of discovery and conquest. The universal society I refer to is not conceived as a super-organisation, a community of nations or an objective universal fraternity, but as an existential reality that occurs as a new mode of being in the world. That is, it does not occur through social organisation—although such organisation contributes—but rather it occurs via the path of a “new birth.” Nor does it occur via the path of

conquest of the universe, whether on a planetary level of the cosmic space—as much as this expansion of the frontiers of space also contributes—but rather through the discovery of the universal dimension of human existence. It is, then, the individual who via the path of “birth,” expansion of the consciousness and inner revelation—that is, via the path of “being”—discovers their own true world which is the universe (egoence of the self.) This is the new discovery that is being gestated silently in the intimacy of humans of our time and through their struggles, contradictions, successes and failures. After a long pilgrimage along winding roads of rational experience, after having eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and after having tasted the bitterness of the exile of an existence separate from the original “whole” of their true self, humans return their gaze to the “tree of life” planted “in the middle of the orchard” with an urge to find themselves in universal life. Aside from the frontiers of knowledge and aside from social utopias, humans want to discover their true universal citizenship and the laws of life of that world that is “theirs.” But we do nothing in proclaiming it: we have to live it, experience it.

Let us abandon for an instant the field of intellectual intuition in which we have moved hitherto and let us try to penetrate the universal society using the instrument of our own “sensitivity.” If in the attempt to “understand” from “ourselves” the life of human society in *all* its aspects the soul does away with its preconceived ideas, abandons the cares of its domestic existence, and transfers its existential anxiety to the field of the universe joining its “sensitivity” to the various chords of the feeling that make up the sensitive atmosphere of the world, they discover in their own heart unknown vibrations of love that broaden the possibilities that the humans of our time have to capture, through similarity, the meaning of the historic moment in which they are living. Going towards the “centre” of that world, cutting through the densest and most superficial layers of the human passions, the soul penetrates the core of universal sensitivity, begins to “feel” the love and the pain of the universe in its most intimate and fundamental levels and now has access not only to a cosmovision—in the restricted intellectual sense that this term tends to imply—but a *cosmoaesthesia*, the perception of the beat and the rhythm of a universal life that, despite its potency, remains habitually concealed behind the shell of our heart of stone. With the individual’s sensitivity “open” to its universal dimension, their soul participates today in the extraordinary “expansive” movement that rapidly drives human society “outside” of itself, towards the conquest of its highest positive and material values. This centrifugal movement of expansion that manifests itself in all the orders of social activity appears analogous to the flight of the galaxies in the cosmos. Just as the stars “run” quickly towards some remote point of convergence, the direction of this movement revealed by a shift towards the red of their light captured by the spectroscope, at the level of organised society that is today called “expansion” is a movement of convergence of powers at the vertex of its structure and a progressive massification at its base. If in attempting to register the “tone” of the collective feeling that is tied to this movement of development we had to assign to it a quality and a colour, we would see the shift to

the steely metallic grey that translates the vigour of the effort committed in the conquest of material power associated to the indifference of a disillusioned soul. The concentration of power at the pinnacle of the social structure and the pressure of the State and organised corporations at the base are generating a great surface “tension” and creating mental and energetic contradictions of a magnitude hitherto unknown that can lead to an atomic holocaust or to new “external” social conditions that make the emergence of a universal society possible. The technostucture, the race for the supremacy of global power and the mass media play the role today of a powerful collective force of challenge and natural selection—or rather, “artificial” selection—for the individual, rather akin to what in remote times the changes in the physical environment and the biological struggle for survival of the fittest represented for the selection of the species. Like before, although in an order of different values, in the machine of modern collective pressure—existing both in capitalist societies and communist ones—the individual does not have many alternatives. Either they “adapt” to the system, they “explode” due to rebellion or disease, or they accept the environment as a challenge and defeat it through an “inner” transformation. The new pressure conditions today in organised society—whether psychological, socioeconomic or biological, including the increase in radioactivity in the physical environment to a level impossible to foresee—exceed the national and regional limits to become increasingly universal, constituting powerful physical and mental factors of “selection” and “adaptation” that although they do not determine by themselves fundamental changes in humans, they “prepare” the field for new “intimate” factors to awaken a “spiritual development” without which the play of purely historical and material factors could not lead humanity to its destiny of greatness.

If we let ourselves go on a fictional journal along the waves of collective sensitivity that animates the whole process of material development of modern society and we go to the end of the vertex that drags the waves in their progressive movement, what might we perceive? We would notice that in reaching the end of its outward expansion this movement reverses direction and moves to a new “inner” field whose lines of force converge in the individual’s own heart, bringing in its “withdrawal” the fruit of the experience gained: all the results of science and technology, good and evil, the successes and failures of humanity, all that blood loaded with the collective experience returns in the heart of the self capable of taking it in its breast. The systole of the expansive movement of the social community, Yang, is inverted in a diastole of withdrawal into itself, Yin, in a convergent movement on a “centre” in the heart of the individual. The being recognises in “itself,” through expansion and contraction of “self,” the rhythm of the universe, the beat of universal life and discovers that its heart “is” the heart of the universe. Only then can it say “nothing of what happens in the universe is strange to me,” or, parodying Saint Paul, “It is no longer I who lives but all men live in me”—at least to a certain extent. This “absorbing into oneself” the currents of universal life is only possible through a mysticism of the heart, that is, a specific differentiated inner function of the individual that, privative until now like the mission of

few mystics, will develop progressively in the future human a sense (in the sense of sensibility) of the universal, gaining a virgin land in the human heart, activating totally unknown fields of feeling, “awakening” vibrations of feeling “dormant” until now and renewing a reserve of the heart whose “atomic” strength will be placed at the service of the spiritual development of the future society.

As all this function of “absorbing” is done in “diastole,” that is, in “empty,” namely, in a register of “negative” sensitivity—negative in the sense of belonging to an order of “potential” values of feeling, very different to the “positive” feelings that characterise habitually known emotions—it is a field that is hard to recognise and value because it seems disconnected from any utilitarian value of existence. We are accustomed to the emotions that “yield,” that satisfy, that produce a sensitive result, but there are emotions that “do not yield” and which have, nonetheless, a profound meaning in the balance of the universal powers of feeling and which are the sustenance and regulation of all those others that “yield.”

The overburden that is produced in the heart as it incorporates universal currents of feeling in the movement of “return”—which are the currents of life of all human beings—at first increases even more the individual’s existential anxiety, but as soon as the mystical chain reaction begins in the atoms of the heart, the wave of collective life that this “reactor” receives from the social organism finds in it a transcendent field of “transformation”: the self is no longer “burdened” with other people’s emotions but transforms them and returns them transmuted to the great current of universal society, enriching it.

The transformation of an emotional sensitivity of masses and of a collective power that characterise the current civilization, in a new type of spiritual sensitivity and in a new power inherent to the person, occurs in silence in the heart of the invisible society through “scholars” and “saints.” They radiate, from a new centre, a current of spiritual force that, as it makes an impact on the “chosen” atom of the heart of the individual, triggers a similar reaction of transmutation of feelings that will gradually carry mass society to a change in the appreciation of values.

Some sociologists think that the global power elite handles the strength it has in its hands arbitrarily and that leaders who are at the top are, in reality, the masters of the world; others think that it is the masses who have, ultimately, the capacity to orient the economic and social forces of humanity towards the future. But all this leads us to think that the play of forces, polarised on the surface of society between a vertex and a base, converges in the end at a “centre” where an invisible power of “wisdom” and “sanctity” regulates, plans and orients, above leaders and the masses, the energy available for the fulfilment of universal goals, although the same people

responsible for playing a leading role in great global events are not always conscious of the final destiny of their decisions or their abstentions.

Within the universal conditions created in modern society three advanced fields or paths towards the future have opened up for humanity: 1) As a consequence of the expansive movement, the race of competition for power, and atomic radiation, an enormous surface “tension” that constitutes a new techno-energetic-social environment of adaptation and selection. 2) As a result of scientific and technological progress, an “opening up” towards outer space that many consider the madness of the power elite, a waste of humanity’s economic reserves accumulated with hard work over millennia and now squandered in an adventure that we don’t know where it will lead when there are so many social problems on earth to solve, but that a vision launched to the future appears as the emergence of “a beyond earth,” as the creation of a new extra-terrestrial area and a new environment that gradually outlines the image of a new civilisation beyond the domestic limits of the earth—although this seems a utopia. 3) While the tension of the expansive movement reaches its limits and the vertigo that drags towards the cosmic space grows, there emerges in the “centre” of universal society a movement of growing intimacy and an increase occurs in the mystical temperature in the “inside” of the individual’s heart and a transforming radiation of the new children of humans appears.

Natural—or “artificial”—selection of new human types in the mass subjected to the tremendous pressures of organised power, selection of new human types as a consequence of the space race, and selection of new human types in the intimacy of the heart of society. With this reserve of humans, can there be any doubt that in the reverse of the apparent chaos of the world the seed of a new universal society is not yet assured? While on the surface of social phenomena everything seems confusing and chaotic—as many see it—deep down new people are preparing themselves—perhaps without knowing quite where they are going—and with an ascetic intensity barely equalled in the past: this reserve is a promise for future humanity.

We do not know what the release of the tremendous power accumulated today on the surface of the earth may lead to, nor where social tensions and conflicts may end, but even supposing that the madness of human fate put all that potential into a great holocaust, a great hope can be glimpsed: the path of the space is open and new humans have been born on earth. What will be the dwelling of the new civilisation? Maybe a platform spinning in orbit around the earth? An artificial satellite? Another planet? A new continent emerging from terrestrial disturbances? We cannot predict it, but aside from all fiction there is a real fact: a universal society has already been born, a society that has the universe as its homeland, a society that is beyond the narrow limits of the nationalism and racism of the past, a society that has the vision of a “beyond the earth.” And this cosmic society finds its balance and stability in the infinitesimal point of the heart of a new individual who through egoence has found in himself the meaning of the universal.

But what strange power of the heart would be capable of beating to the rhythm of the movement of universal society? How is it possible that the heart of the individual, in its smallness and insignificance, constitutes the centre of spiritual power and a point of convergence of universal forces? This is a mystery of Love, of divine love awoken in humans, and it is according to that love that I will attempt to characterise egoence from a new point of view. If in previous chapters I indicated it as a new “way of being,” I am now better-placed to reveal it as a new “way of feeling”:

1) It is a way of feeling that is founded on the *divine love* made flame in the heart of the individual in responding by presence to its vocational call: egoence in love. It is a “love in itself,” that expands from itself and contracts into itself; it is not a peripheral emotional force of the subject separated from its essential self but it is the very soul that occurs in love and returns for love for oneself; it is a love that in its expansion can embrace the whole universe and take up in itself, by contraction, all the sorrow and pain of the world.

2) It is feeling *centred on an inner point of convergence* and harmony between the human and the divine. By “inner” I do not refer to a subjective psychological level counterposed to an external, objective world, but rather to a spiritual feeling in its more proper and unique way; at this level the interior is “silence” and only in the silence is true love possible. As feeling is “centred” on a stable and definitive point of convergence in the heart of the individual, this infinitesimal point constitutes the centre of support and stability of the universe, a mirror where all souls can be reflected, at a point where all human problems converge and in a temple where all those problems can be absorbed by love through silence.

3) It is a *participatory* spiritual feeling: my self participates in the expansion and contraction of the universal movements; all the joy of the universe is my pleasure and the pain of all human beings is my bitterness and solitude. By spiritual I do not imply a value in contrast to and separate from the material but rather that it is a feeling that participates with all the problems of human development, not to identify with others but to redeem them.

4) It is a *reversible* feeling; it is not a feeling that is imprisoned in the subject itself or chained to the objects it loves but it is a free feeling, inspired by renunciation. Its reversible rhythm allows it to pass from the active pole to the potential and vice versa, remaining always in itself; that is, it is not a love that goes out of itself—pathology of love—but a love that expands and contracts to the reversible rhythm of universal love.

5) It is an *integral* feeling that participates harmoniously in the male and female aspects of love, modalities that remain still very contradictory due to the accentuated polarity of the sexes.

6) It is an *individual* feeling. It is a force of feeling inherent to the individual being and “independent” of the collective emotional forces that apply pressure to condition it. Only in the measure of that independence can individuals constitute a point of balance within mass society and find the meaning of themselves—as “feeling”—in the sea of collective emotional vibrations in which they live immersed.

7) It is a *radiant* feeling. As it is a force inherent to the “self,” which emerges from the material core of the human heart as it is beaten by divine vibration, it is an emanating and expansive love, it is the “atomic power” of the heart, the new force that can *reconstruct* the individual from “within” “outwards,” both physically and mentally, and the new individual expansive force that will build the future society from intimate values.

This transformation of the collective emotional feeling into a spiritual feeling through the egoence of the heart creates the “radiation” of the new feeling in the universal society, whose rosy colour already tinges the new emotional atmosphere of the planet. This feeling will gradually form the “internal” environment that will give the right climate to the awakening of the new values of an “anti-gravitational” existence and a starting point for the physical and moral “reconstruction” of humans. As a result, the physical reconstruction will have a new type of body with new “universal biological functions,” and the moral reconstruction will allow the emergence of a new ethics with the capacity to grant a unity of meaning to the diverse human creations within the unified field of universal society.

All of humans’ current issues in terms of the possibilities of their futures can be summed up in the dilemma that they are capable of “conceiving” the great ideals of the superior life, proclaiming the need for a society free of frontiers, making beautiful declarations about the universal rights of the individual and fighting intrepidly to build a better world, but *they do not know* how to sustain themselves existentially in this universal dimension. Their science, their art, their technology do not allow them to cross the barrier of death and transcend their existential anxiety; they lack the right “feeling” for it; they have to learn to “walk,” to move in that new field, like astronauts in outer space, but those “first steps” cannot be taken through the medium of intellectual statements or emotional impulses, but through the practice of a new feeling founded on renunciation, through a mysticism of the heart on the path of egoence of the self.