

Ramón Pascual Muñoz Soler

SEEDS OF THE FUTURE IN HUMANITY

**TOWARDS AN EXPANSIVE AND
PARTICIPATORY INDIVIDUALITY**

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FOREWORD

Life is the privileged exaggeration of a fundamental cosmic tendency.

PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

A close observation of modern humans shows remarkable characteristics in their intimate structure such that make them the agents and the centre of the most transcendent revolution of our time.

The persistence of a traditional image as it superimposes itself by inertia on this incipient but firm human rebirth clouds the inexorable emergence of the phenomenon and weaves a web of conclusions and connections which, as they do not correspond with this still babbling reality, lead to fictions despite the appearance of stability and solidity.

With its persistence the traditional conception splits the vital unity of the human rebecoming, and as its understanding is distorted it confers a false prevalence on what is manifested on creative energy, to come out in a partial defence of objects and of inventions and of scientific and technological progress, forgetting the universal law that generates them with its premonitions, suggestions, revelations and ideas.

It is in this internal side of the phenomenon that Ramón Pascual Muñoz Soler places the subject of his work, and it is in this hidden place that he insightfully locates the forces that expand the horizons of the species and anticipate the course of their coming adventure.

“The cosmic clock,” says Muñoz Soler, “marks a different time.” This time leaves behind the stability of matter, the mechanical concept of life and universe, slow, progressive transformation, separateness and duality, and opens up to the unity and expansion of consciousness, to totality and integrality, in a mutation that goes beyond genres, frontiers and isolations and aims at a free and vigorous participatory plenitude.

Egoence in Muñoz Soler is an individual flowering that ripens to the beat of the universal rhythm. In egoence the self turns over itself, goes inside itself and unfolds itself, gathers itself and goes into itself, while joining simultaneously with the vastness of the cosmic pulse that in the symbiosis shows the dominant notes that indicate the path of the species.

In egoence, cosmos and individual come closer together without coercion or resistance and, over and above demonstrations and reasons, start a discussion full of suggestive pauses, creative silences, redemptive renunciations, allusions and hints, in which the human being

awakens to unknown understandings and discovers new perspectives and meanings.

In egoence, cosmos and individual are inseparable, and there is no formula or word that can describe this sleepless and fluid exchange that is fulfilled in the roots of the spirit, nor a symbol that can express the underlying essential dialogue that grows in possibilities and wealth once it has begun.

Nothing is left intact in the new birth. The cosmic descent impregnates the whole self and as the self is elevated, it remembers forgotten ways, appreciates the appearance of new gifts, revives dormant faculties and frees itself from the burden of dogmas emptied by life.

The self vibrates with sharp intensity and is totally moved in this crossing of the divine with the human, and as it emerges transfigured from the marriage, it participates in a work animated by different creatures, governed by different rules and bathed in lights and colours once ignored, in which the opposition between an anarchic free will and the absorbent empire of a partially conceived fate has died out.

In this adventure of the spirit, silence and solitude precede the convening of the Call, and the chosen individual answers the call in a sacred and mysterious communion of the divine and the human, which dissipates antinomy into the indescribable and redeems from its implacable rigours the destiny that is transformed from a burden that crushes to a support that liberates.

The conscious-volitive act of the re-encounter calls for the convergence of all the energy available, which it channels in an evolutionary direction.

Sex is exalted and contributes with its force to the integral development of the individual and, as Munoz Soler says, “the word will no longer be an energy that carries a meaning, an emotion, a sound or a symbol, but a human energy that is associated with the divine energy of the creative Word and participates in its life current.”

Vision turns on itself and, enlightened within, penetrates with sudden clairvoyant intuition the deceptive surfaces and directly unravels the meanings that formal masks cover.

In egoence the self expands, driven by the memory of old experiences renewed and the entry to new dimensions, but risks leaving the process incomplete and losing the values acquired if it does not consume development and participate wholly and fully in the duties and responsibilities of life.

Participation is part of a process that does not admit inconclusion, in which the divine descent of Grace triggers the sequence of Love, which makes the individual fertilised in their

expansion fertilise the rest of humanity in their participatory expansion.

The adjustment of the self to the mould of life is not done with impunity, however, without a tax of pain and sacrifice.

Immersion in the Matter lessens the ethereal impetus of the Spirit which, aching, adapts to an environment of dense resistance and softened vibrations; because every Incarnation sacrifices the swift, transparent flight of the Spirit to the duty of being consumed in the slow opacity of Matter.

The heart of all true Incarnation, the intimate tropism that inclines the Spirit to dress in Matter, is always animated by the unitive mysticism of Love. As Muñoz Soler says, “The individual discovers the mystical life of their heart, which absorbs the blood charged with their own pain and that of others and transforms it into the fire of Love, expanding it towards humanity in new expressions of life.”

In the incarnation the self that is decidedly consumed survives stably the siege of trials, imbued with a persistent patience that crushes resistance and dominates headstrong material inertias. But when the attacks intensify, obstacles increase and humans feel adrift, abandoned in the solitary labyrinth of their souls, then the warm assistance of faith becomes clear and patent, which in the divine incandescence of his Love carries the wounded creature away from the uncertain night of the trial to shelter it in the protective arms of the Light.

In this dialogue, the conscious-volitive whole retains its purity with its renunciation of the fruit of action, and reverses volitive immanence in making it transcend consciousness and avoid its identification with images and objects.

“The complete cycle of existential becoming,” says Muñoz Soler, “is realized to the rhythm of these two movements, of these heartbeats of the cosmic life which, in its expansion, launches the self to differentiation and, in its withdrawal, absorbs it in a new state of individualized consciousness.” Consciousness and will in certain doses circulate in the egoent dialectic, without falling into contemplative immobility or the diluting dynamism of an exclusive future, and when the cycle resumes the tension of the volitive stage relaxes and recovers in the heart of the cosmic.

The rhythm of this cycle of conquests and surrenders is fulfilled on a temporal background that wanders, turning to memory, which in the egoence is not a passive register that mechanically invents fixations, but vital control that unfreezes memories and completely amortizes time with its prophetic internment in the future.

This creative memory uses forgetting, which egoence equates with renunciation, to detach individuals from the lethal aspect of what is fixed and deliver them to renew themselves in the fresh current of the passing of time.

Renunciation is not here, nor the negation of the middle ages or Buddhist extinction, rather the shedding of the fruits and disconnection of the effects. It is not sterile or passive, it is fertile and creative and an inevitable requisite of all spiritual development.

With consummation one reaches the fruit, with renunciation the human being is exalted and circumvents its identification with what dies as soon as it is begot. The sensitive compensation of aesthetics and the satisfactions of ethics do not exist in the renunciation. It is a supreme self-liberation in the total dynamic of the individual development that liberates as it consumes.

There is no vocation freer than the act of renunciation. In renunciation the individual exchanges what they have for nothing and remains suspended in the elements, sustained only by faith. It is a death in life, an intrepid and courageous leap into the void which, as soon as it is done, liberates the energy that kept vigil in the night of the nothing, that which in its ascent through the deepest strata turns to the individual increasing their spiritual vigour.

Renunciation is a catharsis that expels the existential sedimentation and reverses in a consummative direction the immanence in transcendence, preparing a new act of the law of growth.

In egoence one transits from personality to a participatory and expansive individuation in which by work of the divine mystery of Grace, a human being is transformed and formed vitally in the depths of itself.

In this itinerary the individual abandons their rigid temporal-spatial frame and, liberated, projects themselves to a world of greater and more flexible dimensions. "The image of the human of the future," says Muñoz Soler, "of future humanity, of the society of the future, cannot emerge as a logical consequence of the past and within the same dimension of life but as a consequence of the future itself: of a prophetic vision of science and philosophy."

This egoent metamorphosis is already perceptible in the most varied disciplines, which in their analogical correspondences specify the style of a Different Era in which a New Human orders the fragments of a unique truth giving shape and coherence to the presence of new universes.

Suggestive analogies, temporal-spatial unitary conceptions, set theories, the whole

animating cellular units, the broadening of the subconsciousness, the indivisibility of psychisms, psychosomatics and the global vision of the cosmic, universal and planetary, transfer science and philosophy from a narrow anthropological framework to the open passage of a cosmology without metaphysical-theological compromises.

Seeds of the Future in Humanity by Ramón Pascual Muñoz Soler is an intensely spiritual work, in which with a keen sensitivity and intelligence he detects the presence of a leading human archetype, which although scarce, has already taken root on the Planet and sketches in the creative hours of wakefulness and dream the features of the World that inexorably will come. The New Human has already disembarked and set off to discover the New World.

Teilhard de Chardin, the great cosmologist, heard in his time the firm footsteps of the advance of the Workers of the Earth: “They feel each other, they recognise each other instantly when their lives cross. And they know that tomorrow, when their old representations, their old compartments, their forms are abandoned, the whole world will see and think like them.”

And so it shall be, as thanks to Grace, the redemptive sign of the Divine Spirit has settled on this exhausted Old World.

MARTÍN BRITOS

I

NEW IDEAS AND WORKS

Within the great rhythms of history and the vital process of development of human existence, it has fallen to us to live in a period of fundamental transformations on a global scale.

In the extraordinary technological process and the social, economic and political upheavals that affect great human masses, many believe that they have seen the most outstanding events that characterise this modern era, not realising that we are in the presence of far deeper, integral changes, which are manifested in *all* aspects of human life.

The outer material events that give such a particular appearance to this era of crisis are, in reality, distant and not always well-interpreted consequences of substantial changes whose origin is to be found in the intimacy of the vital and spiritual currents that govern the development of life on the planet and its inhabitants.

It is from the highest summits of thought, not from the plain, that one gains a clear vision of the general trends that inspire a new historical cycle, where truly new ideas and works tend to be confused with some of their less significant consequences or with reactions from the past.

If we analyse in depth the birth of this new era that we are experiencing and the determining factors of its gestation, we will see that what has led to it, more than one discovery or invention or another within the context of the laws hitherto known, is the intuition of new universal laws that have led to technological applications in some cases and to specific expressions of renewal of life in others.

A distinguished group of great humans, who could well call themselves the parents of the science, the technology and the mysticism of our time, have provided new concepts about matter, life and the laws of the universe. The ideas of these extraordinary beings have renewed the most diverse fields of human knowledge and feeling and, ultimately, they have been translated into immense works whose realisation seemed impossible.

The first atomic explosion, which took place in the New Mexico desert on 16 July 1945, objectively revealed to the eyes of the whole world that the supposed stability of matter had been broken and this immense energy potential had been liberated, inaugurating with it the new era of expansion. Although this historic event occurred as an immediate result of a number of notable discoveries in the field of physics, its most remote precedents are to be found in the

advance of the pure sciences and in the philosophy of sciences.

Maxwell, Lorentz, Einstein, Planck and many other initiators of contemporary science were highly intuitive, Promethean men who brought to the earth renewed expressions of divine fire, great modern mysticisms that channel new ideas in the body of humanity. They not only made the current technological era possible, but they taught humanity a new way of thinking. Indeed, what many people don't realise is that to understand modern physics one must not only have enough intelligence for it but also a different mental attitude to what is required for classical physics.

Together with the great masters of the sciences in this era the great messengers of the heart emerge. While the former transcended the known limits of the rational mind and revealed the wonders of a universe barely known to the people of the last century, the latter have transcended the limits of the restricted world in which human feelings usually move and shown the extraordinary possibilities of the heart. Their power of love inspires the generous movements of humanitarian aid, of better relationships among humans and of spiritual perfecting.

All these masters to whom we refer do not belong to a given race, nation, creed, religion or human group. They are truly universal and help others to think, feel and act in universal terms.

However, while these great humans perceive the renewing currents of history in the depths of their minds and their hearts, in all periods of change there are simple souls who have escaped the sophistications and deformations of a cultural cycle that is exhausted and retain in their interior enough freshness, simplicity and breadth of judgement as to adapt quickly to the new cultural expressions of their time. Such people are those who constitute the new generation, the interpreters of the new ideas and feelings and the hope for the future. Nothing on the outside identifies them, they belong to the most diverse social strata, to different races and to different cultural levels, but they have among them an essential affinity that allows them to recognise themselves as members of the same era and are sensitive to the fundamental needs of the humans of the time.

One generation differentiates itself from another in relation to inner time, not customs, ideas, beliefs, social forms or other aspects of outer life. If there is one fundamental thing that we perceive in our world today it is that the cosmic clock marks a different time, and the anguish of the modern human is to have to regulate and harmonise that inner time with the time that governs the universe *today*.

In short, we live in a new world. Until yesterday we merely moved in the field of the stability of matter, of mechanical conceptions of the universe and of life, of slow and progressive changes, of the duality of pairs of opposites and the division and development of separate parts. With the great revolution of the modern era we move in a field of Unitarian and expansive consciousness, of total and integral vision, of liberation of limitations and separateness and of urges for transformation and transcendence.

Today the conventional frameworks of space-time have exploded and humans have a need for a new life, with access to a new dimension of the self.

We must pay attention to these intimate and substantial changes, which indicate the characteristics of new times, if we wish to remain in the line of truly modern humans, not to political changes and mass movements which are given so much import today and which are no more than secondary changes, many belonging to the old world of separateness and the antagonistic struggle for domination.

Although many humans do not clearly realise these fundamental changes that have *already* occurred in the world, they feel nonetheless a more or less imperious need to review concepts, doctrines and forms of life that harmonise their individual life with the reality of the universe in which they live.

II

ATOMIC EXPLOSION AND HUMAN EXPANSION

The explosion of the atom and the liberation of its energy potential is not only an objective material and historic fact, but also constitutes the nascent symbol of a new era that is inaugurated, individually and collectively in humanity, under the sign of expansion, liberation and the sudden transformation of changes of state.

Furthermore, the atomic explosion is the visible result of an analogous expansion that occurred in the intimacy of the minds and hearts of the parents of modern civilization, and that mental expansion, translated into material effects, is what truly inaugurates the new era of expansion.

Until not so long ago we belonged to a world where changes of state occurred at a rate of time determined by the relative stability of matter. In that material framework, our minds functioned within the limits imposed by reason, and the conceptions of the world and of life were inspired by models taken from rational mechanics; human life unfolded in airtight compartments, on the basis of partial interpretations of reality.

Although the world has changed, our inertia still leads us to think with these models in mind and to believe that life is good or bad, short or long, yesterday or today, that we are up or down, to the right or to the left, that we belong to one sector or another, or that to be happy we need such and such a thing, when in reality a full life is simply what it is, with infinite possibilities.

By dividing life up with our ideas and emotions we have ended up losing sight of the sense of unity and totality of life, placing a ring of death between human life and the life of the universe.

Too much rests on things that are not our own, and there are too many unrealised ideals and utopias that give modern humans a sense of insufficiency and existential dissatisfaction, but in their interior the longing remains to realise the totality of their possibilities as humans, by their own means.

Furthermore, it is increasingly evident that many of the difficulties and conflicts that exist in society today are due to a partial approach to human problems.

Only a vision of totality that takes in *all* the aspects of human life, whether material or

spiritual, problems of the rich, the poor, of all races, can satisfy human aspirations to develop at an authentically human level and achieve the fullness of their development.

Nothing can be cast aside in life if one is to have a real vision of it and find real, not utopian, solutions to human problems.

This integration of the individual human into a whole that increasingly attracts them cannot occur through ideologies but through life itself and the expansion of its infinite latent possibilities.

The great mystery that the most conscious humans of our era yearn to unveil is to reach the centre of individual life, the root core of human existence and discover there our true power and identity and our relations with the universe.

Individuals, having suffered the enormous pressures of a historic cycle of predominance of collectives, withdraw into themselves, return to their own centre, displace their energy over the most intimate core of themselves, with the chance of opening the prison of their material reclusion and gaining mental expansion, inner liberation and the right to participate actively in the life of the universe.

I characterise this new state of individual, expansive and participatory consciousness as egoence of the self.

The active manifestation of this egoence is the need to be free.

It is a great shame that this ideal is transformed most of the time into an unattainable utopia or an escape from reality, and when humans believe they have reached the goal of their liberation they find themselves tied again to the chains of slavery.

Those humans who seek their liberation by immersing themselves in matter and becoming materialist achieve an outer and instinctive freedom but tie themselves to the fruit of their desires and their material goods.

Those who seek their liberation through idealism live from their ideal but they often do so at the expense of an avoidance of the burdens of life and of their own responsibilities, remaining imprisoned in the web of their illusions.

True freedom is not an outer freedom, superficial freedom, “freedom of electrons,” but rather a freedom that is inner, deep, “nuclear,” spiritual.

Many feel the need for this inner freedom but deep down they dare not take responsibility

for the whole of their responsibilities to attain it; they have “fear of freedom,” as Fromm might say, and they thus project their longings to a faraway utopia or ideal or preach about outer changes and freedom for others that they cannot realise for themselves.

We must not confuse outer freedom, instinctive freedom, evasions or utopias of absolute freedom with inner freedom or spiritual freedom which rules over slavery, achieved through the knowledge of one’s own limits and obedience with laws of development of individual and social life.

Humans of the atomic era, who have liberated 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. They will thus acquire a true freedom, not ideological but biological, that is, made flesh, as a new state of harmony between individual life and the life of the universe which is the true world of the free human of the future.

III

GREAT CRISES ON A GLOBAL SCALE

To better place the emergence of egoence as an individual value amid the atmosphere of collective values of the past it is necessary to make a brief historical review of the most important events that have occurred in the world in recent decades.

The impact on modern humanity of the renewing ideas referred to in chapter I have led to a play of light and shadow. On the one hand there is a current of new ideas and works, but on the other the pre-existing contradictions in society have been heightened and new contrasts have been generated.

Amid such opposing doctrines and points of view it is not easy for humans in this era to orient themselves appropriately or recognise what is new or old in current civilization, or take a position on the fundamental problems of life that will harmonise their individual conscience with the developments of the modern world.

From a historic point of view, and as very general references for an understanding of this era, we can say that the most important events on a global scale that characterise the era are:

1. The great crisis of ideological systems.
2. The great crises of confrontations of human groups (the two world wars, successive regional wars, revolutions and conflicts in ideology, race, economics, development, etc.)
3. The great technological revolution.
4. The great crisis of the individual in a world in rapid transformation.

1. THE GREAT CRISIS OF IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS. HISTORICAL REVISIONISM.

The most enlightened humans of this era and even some traditional institutions have felt the need to make a profound review of these scientific, philosophical, social and religious systems of the past which, in the rapid process of cultural renewal in the modern era, have proven insufficient to satisfy humans' needs of unity, universality and transcendence.

It is as if humanity finished one historic cycle and made a critical examination of its systems of beliefs and of its institutions, with a desire to leave the spent ways of life at the side

of the road and open up a new dimension of the self.

From the works of Spengler, Berdiaeff, Ortega y Gasset, Toynbee and many other works of critical revision throughout the philosophy of history, to innumerable works that have appeared in this century in critical sociology, critical philosophy, critical economics, politics, art, sciences, etc., and even the Ecumenical Council inaugurated by Pope John XXIII in 1962, these movements follow a revisionism of ideology and doctrine.

The most objective proponents of this revisionism limit themselves to the description of the facts with scientific criteria. This is observed, above all, in the field of sociology and general science: modern society or a scientific system or a philosophical doctrine is dissected, but its authors do not venture to present new doctrines or definitive solutions.

The same does not occur in other fields, where a review of systems, which is more destructive criticism than review, is coupled immediately to another doctrine that is considered the *saviour* but which often has the limitations of the new ideologies or passions that determine it.

Ultimately, both attitudes reveal a disconformity and foster unease in many beings, but they do not guide them. In wanting to destroy the old they make the same mistakes they criticise, albeit differently, and in the end they disappoint their new followers or revive what they sought to combat.

Only a revisionism in line with the future (of the real, not utopian, future) and which contemplates the true needs of material and spiritual development of *all* people, can today have true power of orientation. This prophetic anticipation of the new world comes from science, in its highest expressions, and from some intuitive concepts of brilliant people who are creating the still-incipient image of an anthropology, sociology and cosmology of the future.

2. THE GREAT CRISES OF CONFRONTATIONS OF HUMAN GROUPS

We cannot say that the world wars between 1914 and 1945, or the successive subsequent wars, political revolutions or racial conflicts of the modern era characterise this age alone, because humanity has known deadly and prolonged wars since the beginning of civilization. But the confrontation of human groups on a global scale, the deterioration of racial problems into hatred and genocide, and the refinement of the means of mass destruction no doubt constitute the most powerful destructive elements that the history of humanity has known. This tremendous crisis of coexistence and its constant renewal through large and small conflicts, whether ideological or stemming from economics or development, have revealed the incapacity of those

involved to think and feel in terms of the whole and to understand the meaning that diverse races, peoples and cultures hold in the body of the human community.

The ideal of unity and fraternity among humans has always remained alive on the earth and is constantly expressed as a longing that emerges from the depths of individuals' hearts, but in practice antagonism remains along with some groups' struggle for dominance over others. Is the idea of unity irreconcilable with the idea of variety? If it is, what sense is there in speaking of universality?

Within the duality of human ideas and feelings and the development of partial aspects of individuals and society, the struggle between opposites and the desire to conquer universality through the annihilation of opponents is inevitable: it is the struggle between brothers, Cain and Abel. There has never been a people, race or culture that, having attained a certain level of growth and expansion, has not sought to extend their dominance to the whole known world. However, history has shown that such longings of world domination have been no more but ambitious dreams. All this suggests that unity and universality is something very different to those dreams of global hegemony; rather, perhaps in the recognition of the limits that all global movements have and in the renunciation of that hegemony, the true meaning of universality and of the integration of the parts in the whole can be discovered.

It is necessary to meditate at length on the fact that, despite all the wars and all the persecutions, sometimes carried out with the aim of exterminating whole peoples, there remains in humanity a certain proportion of different races, religions, ideas and cultures, which leads us to understand that such diversity of organs and functions is necessary for the purposes of life of the great organic body of humanity. What would happen in a biological being if one sector or another were extirpated or if one organ absorbed all the others? The harmony of the living being consists precisely of the persistence, proper function and development of each one of its parts. With an analogous idea of totality, races, peoples, and cultures are like organs that produce certain material, mental, emotional and spiritual *substances* that they put into the circulation of the organism of humanity and which contribute to its growth and maturity. Without declaring oneself a supporter of theories that consider society as primary to the individual and equivalent to an animal organism, and using only *analogies*, one can highlight the importance of the different expressive facets of a human *whole* whose greatness is hidden from our eyes, without this justifying any claim of groups or ideologists to become the interpreters of that whole and to want to govern the destiny of the world. One thing is totality and universality (uni-verse: unity in diversity) and another very different thing is totalitarianism. Totalitarianism, under any aspect in which it is presented, is not only contrary to all ethics but to all biology.

That discovery of the mystical body of humanity, as a whole, will invigorate respect in each of its members, and the relationship of fraternity will find a new, deeper, meaning through the participatory consciousness of the individual being in that whole. The same wars, in becoming global and bringing different groups totally unknown to each other into close contact, appear to have revived, through participation in collective suffering, that hidden root of a common origin that the sole ideal of fraternity has not always managed to manifest. Indeed, despite the high price paid for destruction, we increasingly feel more strongly a movement in the world in search of greater understanding among peoples, races and individuals, with a view to attaining greater respect for the differences that characterise them and to attain better human relationships despite these differences.

3. THE GREAT TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION. AUTOMATION. THE CONQUEST OF SPACE.

The first industrial revolution, in the late eighteenth century, was followed by automation and, after the Second World War, the beginning of advanced automation with the creation of major autonomous industrial centres led and controlled by themselves. On a much greater scale than in the mechanisation era of the past century, diverse activities which until recently had been done exclusively by people started to be done equally or more effectively by computers and industrial robots.

Although it is true that many fear the phantom of mass displacement of human labour and subsequent social economic imbalances, there are those who believe that automation constitutes, precisely, one of the most extraordinary prospects for liberation on a collective human scale. Just as

the biological organism has achieved through phylogeny the automation of important functions such as digestion, blood circulation, body temperature, etc., which have come under the control of small autonomous brain centres—biological computers—so too may human society liberate itself from the heavy burden of maintaining elemental processes for its material subsistence and use the free energy for new spiritual conquests. As long as the human organism has to use its energy reserves to consciously maintain its vegetative functions, thought and flights of the spirit will not be possible. Analogously, as beautiful as the ideals of spiritual liberation promised to humanity may be, they will hardly be attained if humans are overwhelmed by the maintenance and regulation of secondary functions.

But one question remains for many automation scholars: what will humans do with their free time? Woodbury says: “Socially, the purpose of automation is the emancipation of millions of people from stultifying heavy labour. Its purpose is not leisure. On the contrary, if free time is

dedicated to a real improvement of the mind and spirit, there is practically no limit for the progress that automation may bring about.”¹

It is striking that the conquest of *space* should have occurred within the same process of development that has brought about the liberation of new energies and the greater liberation of free *time*. The cosmic space and one's own inner world open up to the eyes of the modern human as new fields of experimentation: a new world for a new human. Only a profound passion for the knowledge of the world and of oneself can save humans from boredom or death in the sea of energies that they themselves have liberated. Teilhard de Chardin paints with vigorous brush strokes the image of this promised land that today is already a reality for many people: “We can envisage a world whose constantly increasing ‘leisure’ and heightened interest would find their vital issue in fathoming everything, trying everything, extending everything; a world in which giant telescopes and atom smashers would absorb more money and excite more spontaneous admiration than all the bombs and cannons put together; a world in which, not only for the restricted band of paid research-workers, but also for the man in the street, the day’s ideal would be the wresting of another secret or another force from corpuscles, stars, or organised matter; a world in which, as happens already, one gives one’s life to be and to know, rather than to possess.”²

4. THE GREAT CRISIS OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN A WORLD IN A PROCESS OF RAPID TRANSFORMATION

What repercussions do all these great changes that have taken place and which continue to take place on a global scale have on the inner lives of humans?

The revisionism of ideological systems deemed *old* or *out-of-date* satisfies the intellectual curiosity of a youth that takes pride in rising to the era, scorning the contributions of tradition, but if this revision is maintained at an exclusively descriptive and critical level without offering solutions for renewal, it leads to scepticism towards society and life.

In contrast, if this revision is approached as a movement that destroys old values in opposition to which *saviour* ideas or systems are opposed, individuals cling to these standards with the force of the enthusiasm for the new but they soon feel disillusioned if those systems do not satisfy their own desires.

In turn, the destructive confrontation of antagonistic human groups, wars, revolutions, the

¹ D. O. Woodbury, *Alcances de la automación*, La Isla, Buenos Aires, 1959, p. 301.)

² Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *El fenómeno humano*. Taurus. Madrid 1965, p. 334. (Trans. Bernard Wall.)

persecutions of races and peoples, have led the most fanatical to persevere in their efforts of repression and destruction of those who they consider their enemies and has led many well intentioned people to doubt humanity's real capacity to love, or to believe that the efforts and sacrifices of so many martyrs and great beings, who have shown with the offering of their lives their great love for others, was in vain.

Lastly, the technological revolution, in creating new systems of automated production and increasingly perfect mass organisations, has gradually undermined the individual's trust in certain virtues that were considered important for success in preindustrial society or even in the industrial era, such as craftsmanship, free initiative, free competition and many other individuals skills and values that they still have the illusion of possessing. But large organisations argue with them little by little and the personal relationship can be reduced to the ID tag of a function or performance.

In short, if the ideological systems that formed the basis of a certain conception of the world and of life are suddenly brought into question, if the actions of antagonistic struggle between humans deny the most beautiful ideals about love and fraternity, and if the individual being feels increasingly out of place in the middle of a super-organised society, it is not surprising that many *lose their heads* or suffer, as Ortega³ says, that *vital disorientation* that prevents them, with the old models broken or the *ancien régime* cracking, from re-establishing a new existential balance on the basis of new values in keeping with a new world.

³ José Ortega y Gasset, *El tema de nuestro tiempo*, Revista de Occidente, Madrid, 1956, pp. 31 to 83.

IV

DUALITY AND INTEGRATION

For a cursory understanding of all these crises on a global scale, we must realise that the cycle of what we might call rational civilization is fundamentally based on the principle of a dynamic of pairs of opposites and of development of partial aspects of reality.

All this wonderful civilization that we know has resulted in the knowledge and development of parts in different fields of human activity, but we have lost sight of the whole. Science, philosophy, biology, economics and politics are all under the sign of the duality of the struggle of opposites. The premise of rational philosophy of dividing the whole into its parts in order to facilitate knowledge of those parts, and then reconstructing the whole by adding together said parts, only worked for so-called summative aggregations, that is, groups such as a pile of sand that can be accounted for through the knowledge of each of its elements; but this is not the case for the totalities that have a value of unity and totality by themselves.

In medicine, for example, we sought to understand the functioning of the organism through the study of the organs and isolated functions, but the organism is a biological whole that cannot be understood by the sum of its constituent parts.

In physics we sought to explain the properties of matter through the knowledge of the supposed fundamental elements, atoms. The same thing happened in the other sciences.

The same thing occurs in human society. Races and peoples develop their partial cultures, come into conflict with each other and then attempt to reunite in federations, markets, societies of nations, with a view to attaining unity, but while humans remain in a spirit of separateness this ideal is impossible to attain.

The new era that we have begun is gestated under a new sign, no longer that of duality and analytical development of the parts, of a dialectic that tends towards synthesis without achieving it, but rather the principle of integration that starts with the whole with a view to understanding the parts and which does not exclude duality but includes it in the whole and understands it from the whole.

The cycle of the past civilization developed under the sign of division and separateness; the current cycle under the sign of unity and integrality.

The new state of consciousness that we characterise as one of synthesis and integration has been expressed in many people of science, philosophers and simple souls, giving birth in their

respective fields of influence to currents of renewal inspired by the same spirit of unity and integrality.

I will examine below some of the expressions of this contemporary movement of renewal.

1. DUALITY AND INTEGRALITY IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL FIELD. EXISTENTIAL ANTIMONIES AND THE UNITY OF THE SELF

The philosophies of the past were characterised, in their systematic constructions, by establishing explicitly or implicitly dual and contradictory formulations about humanity, the universe and life.

From these bases postulated by reason it was sought to reach the universal, but this attempt at synthesis was generally only half done.

The history of philosophy shows us innumerable systems with an apparently solid base from which it seemed possible to reach the apex of total understanding of the problems raised and which, in the end, were left like stunted pyramids. This is because the rational model on which they were based had its limits and the conclusions that were obtained did not go beyond the possibilities of their own principles.

The insufficiency of such systems, furthermore, leads reactively to constructions that start out from contrary points of view and lead to conclusions that are also partial.

Either philosophies of the self or philosophies of the non self; of the affirmation or negation of the world and of life.

Either philosophies of essence or philosophies of existence.

Either materialistic or spiritualist philosophies; realism or idealism.

On the basis of these dual philosophies, of contradiction of pairs of opposites, the sciences of nature and of the spirit were founded in the rational era.

The scientific, philosophical, social and even religious ideas formulated on these principles made it possible to attain partial knowledge, but as a distant consequence a series of insurmountable antimonies has been maintained: good and bad; the individual and society; the immanent and the transcendent; the divine and the human.

Although it is true that said duality and partiality was useful for the purposes of

knowledge in a period of development of civilization, at life level today this conceptual dualism becomes an existential dichotomy that generates a permanent struggle.

As early as the first quarter of the twentieth century, Ortega y Gasset made the critical examination of the rationalist philosophy of his time, and found a number of contradictions such as realism-idealism, rationalism- vitalism, culture-life, which appeared incompatible with the *vital feeling* of the new generations: “Neither rationalist absolutism, which keeps reason but annihilates life, nor relativism, which keeps life but dissolves reason, are possibilities. The sensibility of the time beginning now is characterized by the rebellion to this dilemma. We cannot satisfactorily settle on any of its terms.”⁴

Humanity’s transformations in its historical development mean that those proposals of a dual philosophy that satisfied the previous generations are now unsuitable, and the need arises for an integral philosophy, more in keeping with the needs of totality, synthesis and universality that the people of our time feel.

Núñez Regueiro, focusing on philosophical integralism and highlighting the need for a new method that broadens the narrow vision offered by reason, says: “To adopt this attitude of integralism, the classical path of a reason that continues to be the same that the Greeks discovered is insufficient, because in not having progressed, that reason does not seek, according to a certain narrow positivism, to invade the invisible and indemonstrable world. Hence the need for an integral reason or one restored to its true and universal domains that covers all the groups of being, knowing, feeling, thinking and wanting. No relationship must conceal it, as its faculty to perceive connections between things increases with a greater spiritual sharpness, through a deeper and clearer penetration of reality. The light of integral reason shall be capable of perceiving new relationships that we cannot know due to simple, weak, reason.”⁵

Transcending the systematic constructions of rational philosophy and the duality of a realist or idealist metaphysics, modern philosophy through Kierkegaard, Ortega, Heidegger, Max Scheler and Bergson leads to a *philosophy of life* or of the totality of human existence.

The about turn that occurred in the history of philosophy from a Parmenidean ontology of the still, fixed being, to a metaphysics of existence or of life, makes the concepts of Aristotelian logic insufficient to describe this new metaphysical object that is life.

García Morente says: “Life is subject and also object and also it is and it is not; and there

⁴ José Ortega y Gasset, *El tema de nuestro tiempo*, Revista de Occidente, Madrid, 1956, pp. 31 to 83. (Trans. James Cleugh.)

⁵ M. Núñez Regueiro, *Tratado de filosofía general*, El Ateneo, Buenos Aires, 1947, p.93.

is so great a number of variants and diversities in life that no static, still concept, no ahistorical, anti-historical concept shall be capable of reproducing it. This is why flexible concepts are required, historical concepts, concepts that permit variability, non-identity. And these concepts exist in our minds.”⁶

The fundamental problems of philosophy—being, not being, the ego, the world, freedom, determinism, nothing, death, God—instead of being examined from the absolute point of view of the idea of being or not being, are examined in the new philosophical currents from the point of view of the concrete existence of humanity.⁷

Although this new position or starting point fixes some philosophers in an intranscendent humanism, it allows other more open spirits to attain a broad and dynamic concept of the world and of life and a reconciliation of the transcendent and the immanent through new suprarational and trans- vital values.

2. DUALITY AND INTEGRALITY IN THE SCIENTIFIC FIELD. THE STRAIGHT LINE UNIVERSE AND “PARALLEL UNIVERSES.”

Since the late nineteenth century a veritable *crisis of reason* has been felt in the scientific field, not in the sense that reason has been revealed to be futile, but simply insufficient to provide answers to the most serious problems of humanity and the universe that reason itself had raised.

The rational method had borne inestimable fruits in the analytical understanding of the facts, had broken up the whole into its most elemental parts, but had proven incapable of revealing the whole in itself and of finding the meaning that those parts had in the whole.

A new method, supported by intellectual and emotional intuition and with its roots in a finer sensibility that harmonised intellectual and non-intellectual value, integrated itself with the experimental scientific method that had hitherto proven so fruitful in the field of natural sciences.

In theoretical physics, Einstein began an era of renewal in the first years of this century, not precisely through new discoveries that emerged from analysis, but from intuition of the most

⁶ Manuel García Morente, *Lecciones preliminares de filosofía*, Losada, Buenos Aires, 5th edition, 1952, p. 392.

⁷ I will use from hereon the terms *existence*, *existential*, *philosophy of existence*, in their technical sense of philosophy of life or of the totality of human existence, unrelated to so-called existentialist systems.

general laws that govern the totality of the universe. In a speech given at the Society of Physics in Berlin, he said: “The physicist’s highest mission is the investigation of these more general laws to reach, by simple deduction, the image of the world. No logical path leads to these elementary laws: only intuition based on the feeling of experience leads to them. The mental state suitable for such actions resembles that of the devout or of lovers.”⁸

Even in a field such as mathematics, where rational syllogism constitutes the methodological bases of demonstration, intuitive method or reasoning by analogy is indispensable for the discovery of new laws. Deltheil, referring to “The Analogy in Mathematics,” says: “... its importance as an instrument of discovery is immense. The history of mathematics offers numerous examples of major progress made thanks to the discovery of suggestive analogies among facts that hitherto seemed completely independent.”⁹

This new intuitive vision made it possible, on the one hand, to apprehend the unity underlying facts conceived until then as separate and, on the other hand, discover *other universes*, with other laws.

So it is that in physics the unitary concepts of space-time, of *n dimensional* spaces, of curved space and even the possibility of an equation of the unified field emerge.

In geometry, beside Euclid’s classic postulates, Lobachevski and Rieman’s non-Euclidian geometries emerge, as do set theories in mathematics.

All these ideas imply a high degree of generalisation and knowledge of technology is not enough to understand them; rather, knowledge of a new mental instrument that can transcend the classical model of a three- dimensional universe and of absolute space and time.

In biology, the classical theories that interpreted the living being as a sum of cellular elements constituted by complex physicochemical systems subject to a rigid determinism were succeeded by a new concept of biological totality, according to which the laws of mechanics and of physical chemistry are insufficient to explain the process of life.

Von Uexküll, one of the most distinguished representatives of the new biology, says: “Natural science does not possess the elementary conditions necessary for real knowledge of life. An immaterial or supermechanical factor is inaccessible to all the methods of natural sciences.”¹⁰

⁸ A. Einstein, *Cómo veo el mundo*, Cultura, Santiago de Chile, 1935.

⁹ Robert Deltheil, “La analogía en matemáticas,” in: *Las grandes corrientes del pensamiento matemático*, François Le Lionnais, Eudeba, Buenos Aires, 1962, p. 50.

¹⁰ J. B. Uexküll, *Ideas para una concepción biológica del mundo*, Calpe, Madrid, 1922.

The experiences of Hans Driesch, von Uexküll, Carrel and others completely modify the ancient ideas and set new bases for a genuine science of the living, on the principles of totality, finality and structure. According to these concepts, the organism is not constituted by the sum of cells but, as Driesch says, “it is the whole that uses the cells.”¹¹

In psychology, with the works of Freud and his disciples, the new world of the subconscious was incorporated into the psychical field known until then and with it the image that humans have of themselves was broadened. Elsewhere, the ancient elementarist concept of classical psychology was succeeded by the theory of form or *gestalt*, connected to the names of Wertheimer, Köhler, Koffka, Lauretta Bender and Paul Schilder, which interprets psychical phenomena as indivisible totalities and not as the sum of isolated elements, sensations or ideas. Wertheimer says: “Forms are wholes whose behaviour is not determined by the conduct of their individual elements but by the intimate nature of the whole.”¹²

In medicine, Virchow’s classical concepts of cellular pathology and the organicist interpretations of disease have now been replaced with an integral current that, under the names of psychosomatic medicine or medicine of the person, starts from the psychophysical and spiritual whole of the person in the interpretation of the pathology and the clinical state, and not the elementary lesions of cells or organs.

This trend of totality, which we have just reviewed very briefly in the fields of philosophy and science, has taken on greater importance when the vision of totality seeks to cover the planetary, the cosmic, the universal, that is, when science and philosophy are projected from an anthropology to a cosmology.

Many problems of human life, approached until now from an anthropocentric point of view, may only be understood from a cosmogonic point of view.

Teilhard de Chardin is one of the leading representatives of a still incipient cosmology that in freeing itself from its metaphysical and theological commitments of the past seeks to project itself as a real science in the future.

To constitute this future cosmology a new method and a new mental instrument of exploration or of *vision* of the cosmos is necessary that will make it possible to perceive or glimpse this cosmic totality, not in the form of a new rational model of interpretation of the

¹¹ Hans Driesch, *La philosophie de l’organisme*, M. Rivière, Paris, 1921.

¹² David Katz, *Psicología de la forma*, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1945.

world (*Weltanschauung*), but of a deep intuition of the life of the universe.

The image of the future human, or future humanity, of the society of the future, and of the new values of realization of humans in the future, cannot come about as a logical consequence of the past and within the same dimension of life but as a consequence of the future itself: prophetic vision of science and of philosophy.

Today there are two schools of thought in the interpretation of history and of life that differ, above all, in their relationship with a vector of time: one seeks to discover and realize a future on the basis of the past, while the other intuitively the future from its origin in the future itself.

That is, we must now add a new method to the classical methods of rational knowledge by deduction and induction that we can call prophetic and which, duly perfected, could constitute a real *radar* of science and philosophy of the future.

We shall see below, in speaking about the crisis of the individual in the modern world, how these two attitudes of thought are today fully valid in the field of life.

3. DUALITY AND INTEGRALITY IN THE FIELD OF INDIVIDUAL LIFE. VITAL INTEGRATION. THE BIRTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

The development of reason has not only led to a type of thinking that analyses and divides reality but which, in shifting from means to end, has divided life itself and has created a divided human type, *specialising* in some of its vital functions.

The existing antinomies I have referred to are, in reality, expressions of vital antinomies, schism of life, self-destructive contradictions. Hence in this era a deep clamour for integration emerges in many people, a need to rebuild unity within themselves, to return to the sources of life within, because it is felt that in the intimacy of the being there is an unknown germ, a fundamental value, that makes said integration possible. This vital, existential integration is a basic condition of any new possibility of an integralist concept of culture. That is, there can be no integration in sciences, philosophy, sociology, economics, if the people who interpret those cultural forms have not attained a vital integration. In short, where there is vital integration we can hope for an integralist culture.

The human type developed in the partial aspects of intelligence, emotivity and action forms a *personality*, that is, a structure of human values by themselves that masks the real intimacy of the self. In contrast, vital integration leads to the *individual* (undivided, indivisible), whose highest expression I characterize as egoence of the self.

If super-organized society challenges humanity's longings for individuation with pressure from the outside world of the collective over the individual, this challenge is also made from within, from the unconscious collective populated by very powerful archetypical images that remain *tied* to the self until, out of love for freedom, a new individual existence is born. Carl Jung, in addressing individuation, sees the individual as emerging from the collective unconscious as a result of a psychical process, but the psychical aspect is in fact only the immanent mould of a gestation whose other pole is spiritual and transcendent. Jung has the merit of having at least pointed out the path of individuation and the possibility of the personal ego of incorporating itself in the true centre of individual psychism, which he qualifies as *self* or *selfhood*. "Individuation means becoming a single, homogeneous being, and, in so far as 'individuality' embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self. We could therefore translate individuation as 'coming to selfhood' or 'self-realization.'" In referring to the self, he says: "Between selfhood and the ego there is the same relationship as between the Sun and the Earth. The idea of a selfhood is itself a transcendent postulate which, while justifiable psychologically, cannot be demonstrated scientifically."¹³

Although this difference between personality and individual is still rather undefined in the psychology of Jung and although the so-called *Selfhood* (*Selbst*) can be interpreted differently, the idea of a suprapersonal synthesis, of the birth of the individual and their development (individuation) and of a re-encounter of humanity with itself, constitute the bases of a new dynamic psychology of the future.

If an integral civilization is to emerge, it will have to be based on a value of individual, vital and transcendent integration and in no way on attempts at ideological integration, because all the ideologies, by their very nature, are within a dual field, despite their claims to the contrary. Hence the failure of the attempts at universality of many philosophical, social, economic, political and even religious currents, regardless of their good intentions, because since they are ideas-feelings rooted in the dual field in which the life of the personality habitually unfolds, they lead to partial and contradictory results. Only the transcendence of this field will make it possible to glimpse the universal. The universal, in short, cannot emerge from a simple broadening of the common consciousness but from a transcendence of it. Furthermore, the solution of existential antimonies through a resolute synthesis of individual values is something very different from the dialectic struggle between the opposites that characterizes collective movements.

¹³ C. G. Jung, *El yo y el inconsciente*, Época, Santiago de Chile, pp. 183 to 186. (Trans. R.F.C. Hull.)

Today there exists an urge for unity and universality in many people who are smothered by the pairs of opposites of contradictory philosophies and want to find a real solution that they cannot find through the struggle between contrary ideas and feelings of a future-static, as paradoxical as the term may appear, as such a dynamic leads to an exhaustion of energies and an *existential entropy*. This need for unity has already concrete expressions in many beings sincerely interested in thinking, feeling and acting, not out of identification with a given ideology, creed, party, or race, but because of an identification with themselves that gives them a universal projection.

The individual aspect, as a genuine expression of the self, is of great importance at present as the cycle of a civilization that has accentuated the movements of large mass organisations becomes exhausted. But it is important to understand that in no way am I speaking about the individual as that isolated entity, interested only in their own development while doing without the society in which they live (individualism) but rather of the being who, through expansion of their consciousness, participates in *all* the aspects in which human life manifests itself. This is a new concept of the individual that starts to make way even in physical sciences with special reference to subatomic particles, which are no longer considered as isolated but coextensive entities, through their field, with the whole universe. In short, this is a return to the ancient concept of a microcosmos that reflects and manifests in some way the macrocosmos.

From the point of view of egoence of the self, the individual has a value in themselves; they participate in the psychosomatic and social phenomenological flow, but transcend said fields through their own inner freedom. The realisation of this individuality has nothing to do with what is habitually called self-realisation, knowledge of the depths of the psychism or awakening of latent powers, which translate humanist attitudes of development of possibilities through one's own effort and which, ultimately, are more or less subtle forms of self-affirmation and exaltation of personal values, that is, unilateral realisations.

The individual is born and develops when the personality, in becoming aware of its divine fate, enters into an analogous relationship of correspondence with that fate. We return once again to this key point of the process of individuation, to this crossroads in existential becoming, which belongs to the individual destiny of the soul and the deepest intimacy of the self and which has, therefore, a spiritual, not psychological, character.

To glimpse what this birth is, one need not be guided by the psychological literature of the present, which reduces everything to an analysis of complexes or mechanisms of maturity or adaptation to the environment, but rather it is necessary to be guided by traditional symbolism, sacred literature and the experience of those who know the path of inner liberation. Much has

been said and written about this second birth, about this awakening of the consciousness of oneself or to the cosmic consciousness: many consider it the result of patient exercise in the control of the senses, the emotions, thoughts; others of the capacity to love, of action without attachment, or of a given life method, all modalities of an ascetic that can be very good for some and counterproductive for others. But there is something that is more important than the above and which constitutes the essential complement of all ascesis, of all individual effort to conquer liberation, and that is divine correspondence, that mysterious *quid* that in the language of mystical tradition is designated as Grace.

The birth into individuation is a *mystery* that occurs in the intimacy of the self through the conjunction of an ascending human current, which strives to reach the highest levels of development, and a divine current that descends from the highest peaks in search of a substantial tie with that. This current of divine origin, which is passed down by Grace to all those fit to receive it, is a cosmic energy which, like the yeast in the dough, promotes the growth and transmutation of human values.

Arnold Toynbee, who dedicated a whole volume of *A Study of History* to the growth of civilizations, gives special importance to mystics as living germs of this growth, especially those who after having attained the heights of contemplation due to their *withdrawal* from the world, have *returned* to the field of action to share the fruit of their experience with their fellow humans.¹⁴ Teilhard de Chardin, in turn, highlights the potential of spiritual energy expressed in love, in the development of the most elevated forms of universal life and the value of the care and transmission of divine love through humans' active participation: "Under the influence of rare passions like those of Paul, Augustine or Teresa, the theory and practice of total Love have ever since Christ been continually clarified, transmitted and propagated."¹⁵

In short, vital integration occurs in the intimacy of the self through the union of the human with the divine and from this union the individual is born as a new germ in expansion.

4. DUALITY AND INTEGRALITY IN THE SPIRITUAL FIELD. THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE. SPIRITUAL MESSAGES OF THE MODERN ERA.

Although Divinity naturally lies in the depths of the human consciousness, and both the Revelation and the Spiritual Tradition keep the idea of the divine alive on Earth, the development of reason and of humans' power have led them to believe that they are self-sufficient, and a gap has opened up between the human and the divine that is hard to close.

¹⁴ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Estudio de la historia*, Emecé, Buenos Aires, 1961, vol. III, p. 268.

¹⁵ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *La energía humana*, Taurus, Madrid, 1963, p. 171. (Trans. J.M. Cohen)

However, coinciding with the great ideological and existential crises of the modern era, a yearning for spiritual renewal has made itself felt more powerfully among humans, an inner search for the divine and for the personality's reencounter with the essential and transcendent values of life. Even the rise of materialism and its destructive current of traditional values has acted in many souls as a phenomenon of erosion that, in removing the crust from certain ageing forms, has uncovered humans' naturally spiritual foundation. It is, as Simone Weil says, a purifying materialism.¹⁶

In psychology, the image of the conditioned human, whether conditioned by instinct (Freud), society (Adler) or the archetypes of the collective unconscious (Jung), is replaced in the modern psychology of the person by a totality of body, soul and spirit in which the spirit transcends the psychophysical complex and gives humans their true dignity and place.¹⁷ Furthermore, in numerous cultural fields a renewed interest can be felt

in the knowledge of various forms of peoples' artistic, religious and social expression, with an increasing trend to glimpse the background of shared inspiration that drives them rather than the outer, contingent facets that set them apart. In this respect, the Northrop study of the ideologies of East and West on the bases of a philosophy of cultures and a philosophy of science is worthy of mention.¹⁸

The rational interpretation of fundamental spiritual ideas and their structuring through dogmatic forms and philosophical systems, both in the East and in the West, has created such a diversity of doctrines that also in this field the struggle of opposites, formal contradictions, the ideological struggle and *holy war* have characterised for centuries the history of the development of spiritual ideas in the world.

But the return to synthesis has also been felt here, with the hope of finding that *unified field* through which the partial aspects of existing religions and philosophies can be understood.

From the historical point of view, from a first movement of Christian cultural influence in the East through the work of missionaries, since the middle of the nineteenth century there has been a current of influence of spiritual ideas from the East to the West.

The works of Schopenhauer, Max Müller, René Guenon, André Maurois, Mircea Eliade, Albert Schweitzer and others have allowed the educated public in the West to better know the thinking of India and the forms of its spiritual culture.

¹⁶ Simone Weil, *La gravedad y la gracia*, Sudamericana, Buenos Aires, 1953.

¹⁷ Viktor E. Frankl, *El hombre incondicionado*, Plantin, Buenos Aires, p. 153.

¹⁸ F.S.C. Northrop, *El encuentro de Oriente y Occidente*, EDIAPSA, Mexico City, 1948.

In these recent times the diffusion of some aspects of Zen Buddhism have brought awareness of the spiritual background of China.

Furthermore, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, outstanding thinkers, poets, philosophers and mystics from India have taken an interest in the culture and religions of the West, creating through their writings and their works a powerful bridge of understanding between both cultures. This stage in the development of thought in India is associated with the names of Ram Moham Ray (1772-1883), Debendranat Tagore (1817-1905), Kesnab Chandra Sen (1838-1884), Dayanand Sarasvati (1824-1883), Ramakrishna (1834-1886), Vivekananda (1862-1902), Rabindranat Tagore (1861-1914), Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1949), Aurobindo Ghose and others.¹⁹

Apart from this current of ideas, we must also consider the importance of some messengers of the East who have made their presence in the new world known directly, such as Vivekananda, Yogananda, and Krisnamurti.

This whole current towards an integration of spiritual values has shown that the religious roots of humanity lie deep in all cultures and manifest themselves in diverse forms according to the characteristics of the peoples and the stages of their development.

There also arises, with evidence that has always existed, a fundamental relationship of humanity with the divine, but the degree of participatory consciousness of this relationship varies according to the needs of individuals and the times.

After over a century of positivism and materialism, humanity is looking once again towards Divinity, but with a different attitude, no longer through new beliefs, new systems or ideologies, but through the expansion of individual life.

It is in the depths of the individual consciousness that the possibility is sensed today of an analogous synthesis between human and divine values that will permit this individuality a participatory expansion in the life of the universe.

¹⁹ Albert Schweitzer, *El pensamiento de la India*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Buenos Aires, 1952, p. 184.

V

EGOENCE OF THE SELF. DEVELOPMENT OF EXPANSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY INDIVIDUALITY

Within the general perspectives of the universal future and the trends of unity and integrality that I have mentioned as characteristic of the new era of expansion, humans are constituted as the centre of integration and harmony of human and divine values.

The realisation of this harmony, as an individual lived experience, translates into an expansion of consciousness and into a participation in life of *all* humans: egoence of the self.

The image of the individual formed on the basis of a rational and materialist conception, as an independent particle within the universe isolated from the other particles that constitute human society, that is, as a closed entity that sets itself against society and the Cosmos, is an artificial image that does not correspond to reality.

The breaking of the classical models of absolute space and time, and the new vision of the world and life inaugurated by the atomic era, brought about a very different image of the individual: the consciousness of self that humans gained and the glimpse of their unity and integrality led them necessarily to discover their relationships with the Cosmos.

Let us return, then, to the concept of individuality in its etymological sense of unique and indivisible. The true individual—the only one that exists—is one who has consciousness of their unity with themselves and of their relationship with a greater Whole that is the universe. It is not an isolated or closed particle but an expansive, participatory particle.

This particular relationship of the individual with themselves and with the *totality* of life, not as a concept, but as a lived experience of a participatory consciousness, is what defines an egoent individuality or egoence of the self.

Humans' relationship with the universe is not a new concept, of course. Since the remotest antiquity scholars have noted the correspondences of humans with the Cosmos and such correspondences have constituted the fundamental concern of science and philosophy in certain moments of history.

Humans' progress in material values and in the development of their reason has led them to consider themselves as isolated particles disconnected from the universe, which was reduced from a living organism to a mechanical model.

But the ancient question of correspondences, now in a new form, is of interest again, above all now that technology has made the conquest of space possible.

Max Scheler attempts, from a philosophical point of view, to point out the unique position that humans occupy in the Cosmos and the role that the spirit plays in the orientation of powerful forces from inferior centres to the superior values indicated by the consciousness.²⁰

Alexis Carrel was one of the first men of science this century to realise the insufficiency of classical concepts about humanity. In *Man the Unknown* he says: "Among the numerous concepts relating to the human being, some are mere logical constructs of our mind. We do not find in the outer world any being to whom they apply."²¹ In referring to the individual, Carrel makes a deep study of their material, psychical and spiritual relations with the universe: "The individual is obviously a centre of specific activities. [...] He is characterized by being independent of, and dependent on, the cosmic universe. But we do not know how he is bound to other beings, where his spatial and temporal frontiers are. Personality is rightly believed to extend outside the physical continuum. Its limits seem to be situated beyond the surface of the skin. The definiteness of the anatomical contours is partly an illusion." He later adds: "We know the individual's centre, yet ignore where his outer limits are located. These limits, in fact, are hypothetical. Perhaps they do not exist. Each man is bound to those who precede and follow him."²²

In his cosmogonic vision, Teilhard de Chardin assigns to humans "the most significant and most precious portion of the Universe" and concedes to them the *gift of participation* and not only the gift of spectator in the universal future. "An instinctive, sentimental and passive rational acceptance of the cosmic powers," he says, "is followed, in living beings, by the rational gift and the reflexive collaboration of the element of a shared task and ideal."²³

It is this living relationship with the Whole and this participatory- consciousness that I believe characterises the highest expression of individuality.

The discovery of this living relationship of humans with the universe and the harmonic re-encounter of their immanent values with the transcendent and divine root that is concealed behind every manifestation seems to be the fundamental aspiration that beats in the depths of the modern human's individual consciousness. When humans go beyond the social vocation of a

²⁰ Max Scheler, *El puesto del hombre en el cosmos*, Losada, Buenos Aires, 1928.

²¹ Alexis Carrel, *La incógnita del hombre*, J. Gil, Buenos Aires, 1949, p.50.

²² Alexis Carrel, *op. cit.*, pp 235-241.

²³ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *La energía humana*, Taurus, Madrid, 1963, p. 171.

person and, wishing to know their essential vocation, they are asked what is if they want to be, the answer that habitually emerges is the following: *I want to be human*, as if true realisation could be glimpsed today in the plenitude of humanity, much more than the conquest of supernatural powers or eschatological values with which in other times one sort to identify the liberated human.

In place of the superhuman images of *Hero*, *Saint*, *Superman*, as extreme conquests of the power of the will, feeling, knowledge and action, today one can intuit, as an archetype of perfection, the image of simply the *Human*, not in the sense of immanentist humanism but in the sense of a transcendent humanism.

However, how is the divine manifested in the intimacy of the individual consciousness of modern humans? Or in other words: how does God appear in our eyes when our reason has swept away the images that tradition gave us, when we have grown enough in human values as to claim to see and feel by ourselves?

Firstly, we must recognise that modern humans have more religious and spiritual concerns than may appear at first sight; their declarations of atheism or materialism are often a reaction to a type of religiosity that they no longer share, and their materialism tends to be more a posture than a profound reality. Beyond all the reactive formations there tends to be, as Frankl says, an “unconscious religiosity,”²⁴ that is, the hidden feeling of an intimate relationship with the divine, a feeling that may even be repressed in a culture such as ours that extolls the material values of existence. This spiritual concern, whether hidden or manifest, is today like the tide of growing intensity that rises in search of new forms of expression.

How do some of these forms appear in the thinking, feeling and acting of modern humans? Teilhard de Chardin, speaking about the need for a “new Face of God,” says: “Hitherto, a God of cosmos (that is, a creator of the “efficient” type) was apparently all that was needed for our emotional and intellectual satisfaction. Henceforth, (and it is here without any doubt that we should look for the underlying source of the modern religious uneasiness of mind) nothing but a God of cosmogenesis—that is, a creator of the “animating” type—can come up to the full measure of our capacity for worship. We must [...] retain the primordial transcendence of this new *evolutive* God [...] It is, nevertheless, equally important to look more deeply into his immanent character, to appreciate it with wonder and delight.”²⁵ I do not agree entirely with Teilhard’s presentation of Divinity which, like other ideas of his, are overly influenced by an

²⁴ Viktor Frankl, *El dios inconsciente*, Plantín, Buenos Aires, 1955, p. 75.

²⁵ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *La activación de la energía humana*, Taurus, Madrid, 1963, p. 226. (Trans. René Hague.)

evolutionist tendency. But what I can say is that without taking away any of the transcendence of the divine, humans intuit and feel that God is not alien to them but that He takes root in their own immanence, that He is joined to humans, incarnate in their own lives, that He directs and protects their growth and that, if He penetrates the intimacy of their hearts, they shall find Him.

At heart, modern humans refuse new attempts to outline a divine face on the basis of rational speculative knowledge, that is of a new theology, or to seek to reduce it to the conclusions of science, but rather to maintain its character of Mystery, increasingly deepening and admiring the Mystery without seeking to remove the last veil from the eyes of the mind, but desiring to join with that Unknown through real actions and life actions.

In short, in the world today a new expression of mysticism is emerging that, feeding on the one hand off the living current of the spiritual tradition of humanity, and on the other off the historical current of development and progress, seeks to definitively unite in the intimacy of the heart of the individual those two focuses, human and divine, that feel increasingly drawn to each other.

A glimpse of divine Presence in the human consciousness, a thirst for substantial Union between the human and the divine, and a reversal of emerging spiritual values towards the body of humanity by an effective Participation with the development needs of all people would appear to be the incipient features of a mysticism of the modern human who, on realising the unity with themselves and re-establishing the currents of universal life within them, constitute an individual seed of unity and renewal of life in the society of the present and of the future.

Aside from the representations that humans may form of divinity, aside from any speculations they may make with their reason about the existence or non-existence of the divine, there is a concrete fact, of an individual nature, that defines the true position of humans in the cosmos and that is the vital response of the individual to the call to participate in the destiny of the universe of which they are part. A voice that one way or another makes itself heard in the consciousness of every human at a certain time in their existence.

Every day we see more clearly that a response of belief or a sentimental response are not enough as partial human attitudes to the divine call, but rather a *total* response of life participation is necessary, that is, integral attitudes of the mind and of the heart with life. The tragic thing in this divine challenge of all things human is to realise that there are no half measures and that either a living relationship of participation is achieved or there only remains the memory of an ideal. All those disappointed beings who have attempted to search for the divine along diverse paths without finding it and who, at a certain stage in life, burdened with the knowledge acquired, with the powers achieved and with the images aged, become sceptical or

arrogant, do so because ultimately they have taken the wrong path or they have not been able to find the true relationship of participation that would have made them feel fully human.

The development of the egoence of the self through an expansive and participatory individuality requires an inner work that lasts a lifetime. The path, from the dark, passionate chasms of the subconscious, passing through the intricate labyrinth of the rational mind, ascending the mountainsides until reaching their summit, crosses gloomy areas and wonderful landscapes, via stretches full of difficulties, and obstructed at times by barriers that seem insurmountable.

I will deal with some basic aspects of this development of the expansive and participatory individuality in the following chapters.

VI

THE INNER DWELLING

To realise their egoence, the individual must have a dwelling of their own, worthy of their human and divine condition, from which they may contemplate in silence the incessant changes of life.

Human life in modern society tends increasingly towards mobility, variability, continuous excitation and outer activity; social life, work and leisure, are gaining terrain in relation to the intimate life, and public life imposes itself on the private. Increasingly one is more exposed to the *radiation of collective life*, to the cloud of radio and television news, to the torrent of bibliographical references, to the noise of the big cities and, above all, to the impact of the *particles of high destructive potential* generated by egoism, personal ambition, hatred, hunger for power and so many other passions that are released in the play of human relationships.

In other words, if the atomic era has confronted the individual with a type of cosmic radiation unknown in past times, the super-organised society of the present bombards the individual with a type of *psychological radiation* which is just as, if not more, dangerous than the former. What type of defences do we have against this kind of attack? Do humans have any natural immunity against an environment that is becoming physically and psychologically threatening? Are we not facing an unprecedented ecological challenge, that may determine a new biological selection of the most suitable human types or even, as some say, a veritable mutation?

But that is not all. Humans' identification with culture values and the trend towards outer activity has gradually created a type of *homo socialis* who try to adapt to the environment and establish proper relationships on the plane of coexistence, becoming perfect cogs within the social organisation or in a means for social ends: this is the functionary-human, business-human, worker-human, well typified even by their respective job profile diagrams. This is a *human in function* of something outside of themselves, although it may be something as worthy as the state, the company, or the social class. Thus, a new collectivising psychological slavery is formed that leads the self to identify with the ideas and forms of life of the social group to which it belongs and become increasingly alien to itself, that is to *alienate* itself (in the etymological sense of the word: to become alien to oneself.)

In this way society launches at the individual a far deeper challenge than the challenges I have referred to above: it is a death blow deep into what humans believed to be what is most their own: their private lives.

The same sociologists and even physicists who occupy themselves seriously with studying the social consequences of the automation process and the technical apparatus of modern civilization, wonder what individuals will do to defend themselves psychologically from the tumult of sensations produced in this super-organised society, starting of course from the basis that it is not easy to change the outside world.²⁶ In his book *The Naked Society*,²⁷ Vance Packard shows with abundant documentation how the individual is continuously stripped bare by social organisations, whether from their entry into a company, with questionnaires and tests that are not only concerned with detecting professional aptitudes but also aspects of their private life, to identification cards in official or private information services, tax declarations, etc., to such an extent that Packard indicates the need to include the right to privacy among basic human rights.

As humanity covers the earth with its accelerated demographic growth and in parallel to the process of social organisation, the individual is increasingly compromised in the meshes of collective society and has the impression of gradually losing their freedom. While the self remained separated from others by great distances and the lives of certain groups were totally unknown to others, existence developed under a profound feeling of outer freedom, whether real or ideal. But as human particles are compressed as the number increases, due to agglomeration in large cities, with reciprocal interference in their fields through communications, and as class limits become looser and an increasingly deeper interrelation forms between people, outer freedom decreases as the very result of that closeness. This is what happens with molecules of matter, which have greater freedom of movement in the gaseous state, in which the distance between the particles is great, than in the solid state, in which the same particles are compressed.

In the current state of development of the community we are reaching a critical point in the enjoyment of outer freedom, a Dionysian freedom with which we have become enamoured: at this point of inflexion, outer development, whether individual or collective, becomes inner, and the yearning to attain an external freedom transmutes into a search for inner freedom. In other words, everything appears to happen as if the cycle of development outwards had reached its limits and from there, turning back on itself, it began a new cycle of inner development. To the beat of this respiration of the rhythms of history and these collective moments of expansion and retreat, a renewed longing for privacy and inner life can be felt in the individual today.

But one question immediately arises: what kind of privacy are we trying to save in a world

²⁶ F. Erler, A Marchionini, F. Pollock, A. Walther, A. Weber, *La revolución de los robots*. Eudeba, Buenos Aires, 1961, 141.

²⁷ Vance Packard, *La Sociedad desnuda*, Sudamericana, Buenos Aires, 1955.

that pressures the individual from the outside and which even pries into their private life? I do not believe that a selfish privacy can be saved, full of false concealments, nor can a fantasy, illusory inner life, the refuge of weak men who have “fear of freedom,” as Fromm would say,²⁸ but rather the privacy of the soul, which is not a psychological or social value, but an essentially spiritual one.

The awakening of the inner life is part, then, of the process of individual and collective maturity. Such aspects of the private life of the self, hitherto reserved for mystical experience, are beginning to be understood by philosophy and science. Indeed, as one goes deeper into the dynamics of life with a criterion of totality one notices that outer activity and the identification of the self also with outer values cannot constitute existential ends by themselves, because they are aspects of a centrifugal, one- directional psychodynamic that, if they are not balanced by an analogous centripetal force, will necessarily lead to annihilation. The idea of the absurdity of one directional movements began to gain importance when what we could call a *straight line philosophy* came into crisis. Today it is accepted that if there is a force of gravity there has to be anti-gravity; if there is matter there must be antimatter; if there is a particle, an anti- particle.²⁹ And in the same order of ideas, if there is an outer expansion there has to be an inner withdrawal; if there is a life that manifests itself actively in multiple forms of growth, there has to be a centre that does not move and which sustains said activity: without meaning to, we return to the Aristotelian idea of the *prime unmoved and eternal mover*. Despite the advances that these concepts represent, we cannot transfer them simply to human life and speak of an outer life and an inner life as pairs of opposites on the same level of reality, because with this we would only confirm a biological or psychological immanentism. From the point of view of an expansive, participatory individuality, in harmonic unity of its human and divine values, said inner centre is the real dwelling of Divinity in the self, the secret chamber of the heart, and therefore its reality is transcendent and can only be expressed through Silence.

Everything can be explored, examined, interrogated and investigated by the mind, but before the veil of the inner sanctuary the mind falls silent, the search ends, the action is transformed into contemplation and science gives way to mysticism. Silence is a value of integration that makes the union of the human and the divine possible. Silence is the true field of stability of the individual human, which allows them to move in the whirlwind of outer life without being dragged along by it, which makes it possible to coexist with the most diverse forms and expressions of life without identifying with them and which allows them to conserve, in short, their own individuality. It is understood that without Silence it is not possible to speak

²⁸ Erich Fromm, *El miedo a la libertad*, Paidós, Buenos Aires.

²⁹ Maurice Duquesne, *Materia y antimateria*, Cía. Gral Fabril Editora, Buenos Aires, 1963

of real intimacy, nor of individuality, nor of inner freedom.

Humans who are capable of *silencing with the heart*, who do not identify with their own or others' passions, who do not judge others' ideas or actions can join, through silence of love, with their fellow humans and acquire a new spiritual strength that is their own, capable of countering the powerful forces that shake up the material life of the world.

VII

THE THREE GREAT LAWS OF LIFE. THE VOCATION TO BE FREE.

The human personality's experiences habitually occur within the play of two fundamental life laws: the Law of Predestination and the Law of Free Will.

Philosophers and theologians have argued for centuries about the problems of the fate and freedom of humanity, constructing philosophical systems and religious doctrines based on the importance that they attributed to one or other of these supposed pairs of opposites.

Traditional symbology, in turn, has fixed in images, myths, legends and stories the powerful forces and archetypes of fate and freewill and humans' basic attitudes towards them of submission or rebellion.

From a historical point of view, in very general terms, the whole of antiquity was under the rule of an attitude of submission to the dominating figure of fate, with occasional glimpses of Promethean freedom, defeated almost always by the superior power of fate.

With the Renaissance an era began in which humanity had greater confidence in its own strengths and in its capacity for investigation. The individual challenged nature with their intelligence, and a Faustian spirit appeared that culminated in time with Nietzsche's Superman. The animated human of that spirit exalted their free will, defied all the divine powers and was constituted a god on earth: it was the Babelic and Luciferian tendency taken to the extreme.

This impulse of wanting to defeat fate through positive action and hunger for power, which manifested itself with full vigour in western civilization, had its counterpart in a heroism of nonaction that saw its highest expressions in the East and even in some western mystics. According to this philosophy of negative action, if all action generates karma, to free oneself from the fate of action the ideal is non-action; this attitude led hundreds of Jainist monks to not cultivate the earth so as not to be tied to the karma of the destruction of thousands of innocent creatures.

Such rationalist ideas lead to irreducible antinomies on the plane of life, without offering real solutions. And, precisely, all the rational polemics carried out for centuries on the basis of a contradiction between fate and free will have not led to anything but sterile struggles.

In the individual order, humanity's confrontation with its fate and the rebellion against it is typical of a *blind* human type, driven by the force of their instincts and who cannot foresee the consequences of their actions.

In Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex*, the image of Oedipus, condemned by fate to carry out actions he cannot avoid, ultimately gouging out his eyes on becoming aware of his actions, is very fitting to represent the evolutionary state of the driven human and the line of development of what we might call *antagonistic becoming*: humans love, fight, strive and build their work, but this ultimately turns against them.

In *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde paints with vigorous brushstrokes the image that a man driven by desire can come to form of himself, and describes how in recognising the spectre of his own work and wanting to free himself from it a new impulse of self-destruction is generated.³⁰

Nor can the contradictory and destructive results of free will against fate through actions driven by desire be countered through non-action, because the latter ultimately leads to a new tie to fate through indifference and egoism.

The possibility of controlling the results of action arises from an ethical consciousness and from the individual responsibility of choosing, because only in the origin of actions is it possible to control the consequences. I can decide to throw a stone or not, but once I have thrown it I cannot stop it from falling.

Ethics overcomes the rational dilemma posed between action and non- action and determines an ethical conduct. Through freedom of choice, humans are no longer so blind to fate, rather, to a certain extent, they choose it.

But although ethics harmonises free will with fate, it does not always resolve the contradiction between both. It is still the case that the responsible human, who has always obeyed the law, confronts the irony of seeing that *their* work can also become antagonistic, although with ties more subtle than those of the *aesthetic man* (Kierkegaard), they also remain connected to it.

The solution to the antimony of predestination-free will and the freeing of the ties created in an antagonistic future only has real expression through a new state of consciousness-will: no longer merely the consciousness of humans' aesthetic pleasure and their impulse to action, nor the responsible consciousness to the duty of ethical humans, but the consciousness of self of individual humans and their will to be free: egoence of the self.

This consciousness of being arises when the line of personal fate crosses, so to speak, the

³⁰ Oscar Wilde, *El retrato de Dorian Gray*, Sopena, Buenos Aires, 1947.

line of their cosmic fate and the individual acquires for the first time a true consciousness of themselves and participatory responsibility. A new law that governs the fates of humans' liberation is manifested in the depths of the individual consciousness as a *new call*: it is like waking after a long sleep; it is a different call to all the other calls of the world or of life; it is a call coming from the cosmic, from the transcendent, from the divine.

Viktor Frankl highlights the importance of this voice of the consciousness as a transcendent phenomenon and the freedom that humans have to respond or not to this call. He cites in this regard the story of the young Samuel (1 Samuel 3, 2-9) who "sleeps one night in the temple, where the priest Eli also slept and, rising, he addresses Eli to ask him what he wants from him. But the high priest had not called him and he tells him to go back and lie down. This happens again a second and third time, and only then does the high priest or the boy who, on hearing his name called again, gets up and says: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening!"³¹

The response to this vocational (from the Latin "vox", voice) call, is something intimate and individual, and from the moment when a soul can respond: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening!" a similarly intimate promise is established, an alliance, a Vow (=Promise.)

The individual's decision to continue on the path indicated from transcendence gives them a new possibility: to transcend the limits of a personal antagonistic fate and enter into the orbit of a *realising-becoming*. "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening!" Wise words whose meaning and scope must be analysed in depth. Firstly, there is a capacity for silence in order to listen; then the recognition of a spiritual dignity that transcends the condition of animal (Lord-servant) makes a dialogue between the human and divine possible.

In reality the human, a pilgrim on the paths of life, enters on the way of their realising-becoming when their individual will, governed by free will, ceases to oppose the cosmic and divine laws and enters with them into an analogous relationship. It is understood that this change from a will of self-affirmation to an analogous will can only occur if there is first a substantial transformation in the fundamental feelings and attitudes towards existence, that is, a radical change in the heart. That is why the realising becoming does not begin at any of the open doors in the world, of what may be called temples, schools, organisations or paths, but rather it begins in the depths of the individual's heart. The path, that is, the means for updating that vocation of being or vocation of inner liberation, is found in addition, and whoever has a true vocation finds the most suitable path to their own idiosyncrasy and possibilities.

This illumination of the cosmic consciousness in the individual consciousness constitutes

³¹ Viktor Frankl, *El dios inconsciente*, Plantin, Buenos Aires, 1956, p.63.

life's most important critical existential moment. One never knows when that mysterious contact will occur between the line of a personal fate and the line of their destiny of cosmic liberation: it is the supreme instant of love that vibrates in the soul in its due time, it is the awakening of divine love, it is a *sacred instant in the life of a person*.

The psychology of development has progressed a great deal in recent times and the different stages of individual development have been described succinctly, but like all studies of history and biography made from a linear and mechanical perspective, they do not show what could be a study of development based on the self or existence.

If we position ourselves from this latter point of view, we will recognise immediately the importance of that critical incident in life in which there awakens in an individual their own vocation of self, in which for the first time they recognise themselves in depth, when they become aware of their existential value, and when they realise, albeit for an instant, that *they will be what they must be or they will be nothing*.

It is a pity that this individual vocation to *be* is so often confused in the utilitarian society of the present with certain aptitudes or inclinations to *do*, and that the concerns of parents and teachers are directed more at what an individual can achieve in life in terms of performance or effectiveness in doing than in their full realisation of Being.

Vocation, in the highest level of its meaning, has only one meaning: it is the vocation of Being, of fulfilling one's own destiny.

Just as in the development of the personality there is a stage when the personal ego becomes aware of itself and is captivated by its own image, so too in the awakening of the individual life there is an instant when the ego is reflected in the lake of the cosmic consciousness, and recognises its own individuality and its possibilities of liberation.

In the light of this individual consciousness a new attitude to fate emerges. Indeed, on the one hand, this is revealed to humans as what is determined in them, that which they cannot modify, the framework of their organic, psychological and social servitudes, their constitution, their past, their race, their family, but on the other hand a new fate appears to them, projected into the future, and for which they feel suddenly tied to the fate of the free.

In other words, if through their biological and psychical destiny they feel joined to the beings that were, through their spiritual destiny they feel joined to those who will come.

This consciousness of a *double-sided fate* and the need to attain their own unity and integrality render the individual human responsible for the *totality of their fate*.

The attitudes of submission or rebellion against fate can only be possible within the darkness of the existential field where the divided human lives, and they are attitudes that maintain the duality of life. But in the individual's consciousness of Self, the *fate of servitude* is not an enemy to be combated or to subjugate oneself to, but rather a point of support to *ascend*.

Furthermore, it is the *only* point of support that I have to raise myself up, *my* point of support, what has been given to me in my unique existence, as conditioned material, to be able to transcend it. I realise, then, that I cannot deny that point of support of my faith, because it is the only one I have to ascend and I cannot replace it with another.

This understanding of the relative value of the *fate of servitude* against the *fate of liberation*, and the consequent response to take the former as a springboard for attaining transcendence, reconciles humans with their own framework of limitations and makes the synthesis of apparent existential contradictions possible.

Frankl says: "An individual's destiny belongs to him in much the same way as the ground, which fetters him by its gravity, but without which walking would be impossible. We must accept our destiny as we accept the ground on which we stand—a ground which is the springboard for our freedom. Freedom without destiny is impossible; freedom can only be freedom in the face of a destiny, a free stand toward destiny."³²

The instant of recognition of the vocation of being free is like the first love, it leaves a profound mark on the soul. If one does not respond to that call, it remains as an indelible memory, like a longing for *something that one could have been*.

Much of human sadness and feelings of frustration, which psychology tends to interpret lightly as being due to one or another complex or conflict, are merely the result of a lack of fidelity of response to that vocational call to Be.

One must not think that this instant is the same for everyone, nor that it takes on the same dimension or the same clarity in all people in terms of its recognition. Dense are the veils of the great night of life on the earth and, when the time comes to truly value oneself as an individual, the soul may be too dormant or too occupied in its activities and desires to respond appropriately to the vocational call to be free. It thus follows its line of antagonistic becoming, but the longing for liberation is always latent in the intimacy of the human, even through the descendent cycle of its existence.

³² Viktor Frankl, *Psicoanálisis y existencialismo*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Mexico City-Buenos Aires, 1952, p. 101.

VIII

THE METHOD ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL LIFE

The development of expansive and participatory individuality and the conquest of one's inner freedom must necessarily be realised through a life method.

There are those who believe that attempts to methodise life are no more than ways of placing obstacles, limitations and coercions to what should be the spontaneous flow of life, and that all method is, in principle, quite contrary to the freedom that every human desires and, in short, a new form of slavery.

All forms of educational liberalism have their basis in this criteria, and the present liberal generation's defiance of any methodical ordering of conduct emerges as a reaction to those forms that are considered artificial pressures from traditional society.

Sometimes we are alarmed by the extremes to which these reactions lead, especially among young people, and we denounce the young rebels, irascible and antisocial like the fruits of an era of decay, but we do not always have the same zeal to investigate what is going on in the deeper layers of a society that generates such products, or the courage to recognise that many of the methods that have been used to educate the youth are today inadequate.

It is logical to think that if we are witnessing the birth of a new era and the emergence of new expressions of individuality, a crisis of concepts should also arise in the field of educational methodology and it should become necessary to glimpse new suitable methods for the development of said individualities.

Without denying the importance of the cultural tradition of humanity and the fundamental bases of education for life valid in all eras, the new methods cannot emerge in the present as an *evolutionary* consequence of the past, but as a reflection of the needs of the future human. And we must aim at these needs if we are to have any chance of understanding the new generation.

Almost all the educational methods of the past are inspired by a rational philosophy and aim, therefore, for the development of partial aspects of the self: intelligence, practical skills, artistic sensibility, strength and physical dexterity, etc. When the cultivation of all these aspects is *added up* in a single person and an education is provided in it that is intellectual, artistic, sporting, involving social relations and cultural exchange, we claim to have created an *integral* education, but that this synthesis of the totality from the sum of the parts can be criticised in the same way that I criticized the principle of integration in chapter IV.

Furthermore, such methods have been oriented more towards the collective than towards the individual, educating human groups based on a common aim of social order.

But what causes greater suffering and reaction in humans is feeling subjected to a method or law that is alien to them and which inflicts violence on their private conscience.

Lastly, the individual cannot feel happy within a system of laws or rules that order all the actions of their life without taking into account life itself. In modern society humans are educated for culture, for art, for technology, for the family, for the party, for the company, for the state, but the education for the individual to fulfil the plenitude of their potential is neglected: professionals and employees are formed, but not humans.

It is not surprising, then, that methods and laws that are founded on partiality of development, collective orientation, tyrannical obligation, the ordering of life towards secondary ends should appear as insufficient and contradictory in an era of awakening the individual consciousness with a sense of integrality and which, as a reaction to the authoritarian mass methods of the past, there has emerged in the present a current of liberalism that seeks to shake up any method. But one must not confuse the reactions of an era of transition with the most profound feeling of the new humans who point to the future.

Indeed, as their consciousness, self-recognition and relationships with the universe expand, humans feel the need to discover the fundamental laws that rule the life of the cosmos and their own individual lives, to attain liberation through said laws and not against them.

If the method becomes a suitable medium for the development of individual life, it then recovers its true hierarchy as an instrument of liberation and, through human law, the self glimpses its possibilities of harmony with divine Law. The legislators of the future will not be able to ignore this vital function of the method and will have to realise that laws and rules that order conduct must not only be enacted to regulate human relationships in a community, but also so that the individual attains plenitude as a human in that community.

Individual method, then, is not doing what everyone feels like doing, based on a supposed outer freedom, but is rather the most suitable medium for attaining inner freedom. The important thing is being faithful to the method that has been chosen, observing the laws of the community to which one belongs and having the capacity for renunciation.

In the search for the expansion of the individual, diverse methods have emerged in recent times which, one way or another, enable a certain degree of knowledge of oneself, of personal control, and of amplification of the perceptive field, from yoga and Zen originating from the

east to psychoanalysis, mescaline and lysergic acid in the West. These methods have captured the interest of many beings desiring to find a *technique* that will give them the keys to access a higher life.

So much has been said about the extraordinary development of psychic powers through yoga, about the knowledge of the depths of the subconscious through psychoanalysis and about the oceanic visions produced by hallucinogenic drugs, that the human mind, always predisposed to wonder, has believed many times that the individual's expansion and liberation, like other conquests of the will of humans in this technological era, was a matter of technique, without realising that it is a function of life.

There is a fundamental difference between the development of an expansive and participatory individuality, in harmony with its human and divine values, and knowledge of deep levels of psychism and development of psychic powers. Indeed, most techniques oriented in this latter regard are means of *partial* development of one psychological or parapsychological function or another, while true expansive development of the individual is *integral*, covers all of *the being*, and harmonises its immanent and transcendent aspects.

Furthermore, modern humans instinctively reject methods and procedures that are from another age, that belong to other cultures, intended to break down barriers of limitation in another type of person. In our era, the individual method must be according to everyday life, and transcendence is attained not only through an ascetic, but also through a mysticism that is the capacity to transform through love the common life contingent on a bread of spiritual life. Given the characteristics of human life in modern society, the distancing from nature, the divorce from cosmic laws and the individual's needs to find themselves and liberate their own energies in the conquest of their real values, the most suitable ascetic for these times has to be founded on the following basis: a method of life, of mental control and of energy reserve.

1. LIFE METHOD. THE INDIVIDUAL'S HARMONY WITH THE RHYTHMS OF NATURE

In the present technological and utilitarian society, humans generally adopt the life method that is imposed on them by the organisation they belong to, a method that depends on production, social services, knowledge and pleasure, but does not depend on life itself, nor on its development.

Overcrowding in large cities, progressive pollution of the air, permanent emotional tension, inadequate diet and hunger, the prolongation of the working day in some cases and of leisure in others, as well as the hours of night work, alcohol and drugs, have produced such an alienation from nature that in any integral human development plan it is necessary above all to

restore the relationship of physical, energetic and psychological harmony between the individual and the planet they inhabit.

Discovering the value of said relationships through a natural life method makes it possible to break the first shell of physical separateness with the Earth and other beings who inhabit it, re- establishing a telluric correspondence that the artifice of modern life has interrupted.

Furthermore, in these recent times a lot of attention has been given to the study of biological, psychological and cosmic rhythms, which permits a better understanding of the diverse manifestations of human life and of its adaptation to the environment. It is known, for example, that the figures of blood components and renal excretion of electrolytes and steroids vary considerably depending on the time of the day when they are determined, and even the body's response to medication varies according to the moment of the time cycle in which they are administered.³³

The absurdity of modern life of maintaining a permanent emotional and physical tension, with the desire to attain utilitarian results, runs contrary to the method of working in Nature, whose diurnal, nocturnal, seasonal and cosmic rhythms of activity and passivity gently rise and fall with a time that is its own and in agreement with the transcendent ends of life, whose levels of development humans are unaware of.

We boast about the achievements of medicine in benefit to health and the prolongation of human life, the eradication of infectious and parasitic diseases and of advances in surgical technology, but we forget that while some diseases of the past disappear, others appear with the characteristics of *diseases of civilisation* and that a large part of the health that humans enjoy is artificial and maintained at the cost of enormous effort.

Alexis Carrel, a Nobel laureate in medicine and an expert on human biology, masterfully describes this problem of health and illness in *Man the Unknown*. "There are, as we know, two kinds of health, natural, and artificial. Scientific medicine has given to man artificial health and protection against most infectious diseases. It is a marvellous gift. But man is not content with health that is only lack of malady and depends on special diets, chemicals, endocrine products, vitamins, periodical medical examinations, and the expensive attention of hospitals, doctors, and nurses. He wants natural health, which comes from resistance to infectious and degenerative diseases, from equilibrium of the nervous system. He must be constructed so as to live without thinking about his health. Medicine will achieve its greatest triumph when it discovers the

³³ Documenta Geigy, *El ritmo en medicina*, Basel, 1965.

means of rendering the body and the mind naturally immune to diseases, fatigue, and fear. [...] Some individuals are immune to infections and degenerative diseases, and to the decay of senescence. We have to learn their secret.”³⁴

The integral development of humans covers all aspects of the self, and the harmony of the rhythm of their individual life with the life of the universe is a basic condition of that harmony of human and divine values that is sought when we talk about unity and integrality of life.

The lack of this simple and harmonic adaptation between the life of the individual and the life of the cosmos has led to the emergence in modern society of a number of compensatory activities, from sports to hobbies, without counting the excesses of all kinds that some schools or trends have imposed, whether in physical culture, aesthetic refinement, diets, etc.

All the extremisms in terms of life method tend to be short-lived and lead to mental attitudes that are also extremist and fanatical, making health, life harmony and even happiness depend on one diet or another, on certain exercises or others.

The correct distribution of time in accordance with the rhythm of the hours in the day and humans’ material and spiritual needs is vital for a proper life. Perhaps religious communities have attained some knowledge of these rhythms and their value, due to the scrupulous way they respect the times assigned to each task, in such a way that the community comes to move like clockwork.

The individual’s perfect adjustment to biological and cosmic laws and the harmonious distribution of activity and passivity in the cycle of the twenty-four hours of the day constitute the framework of outer stability necessary to cultivate inner life.

If the organisation achieved in the technological era and placed almost exclusively in the service of production and consumer goods were harmonised with humans’ own development needs, perhaps it would constitute, if properly adapted, the Rule of the human who lives in the world and who wants to contribute to the development of the material goods of the community, but not neglect as a result the development of their intimate values and of their own life. For that a new St. Benedict is needed who will put the organisation at the service of the integral development of humans and establish the rules of life in the world with the same wisdom and simplicity as they were given fifteen centuries ago for the monastic communities of the West and which are still in force today.

³⁴ Alexis Carrel, *Man the Unknown*, J. Gil, Buenos Aires, 1949, p. 278.

Two aspects of these ancient rules, adopted by Gandhi in his social reform of India, have particular importance for any attempt at spiritual rebirth in this era of the *homo mechanicus*: manual labour and the simple life.

The great economic and social problems that agitate modern society and that the theorists of the economy, sociology or politics seek to resolve through systems of right or left, would have an easy solution if every human participated individually to some degree with their manual work for the well-being of the community.

The simple life, whose value has been highlighted by mystics of all ages and places, is appreciated by Toynbee as a significant process of social growth. Toynbee carries out an in-depth study of what he calls the *law of progressive simplification* or *etherealization* and after examining this gradual simplification in different aspects of a culture in a cycle of progress: art, linguistics, technology, fashion, he takes the subject to the plane of the individual life and says: "...a process of simplification [...] liberates forces that have been imprisoned in a more material medium and thereby sets them free to work in a more ethereal medium with a greater potency."³⁵

The simple life is a veritable challenge that the individual human can make to an increasingly complicated social current, of *pyramid climbers*, *prestige seekers* and *artifices of waste*, as Vance Packard would say, to conserve, in the simplicity of existence, the fundamental values of life.

2. MIND CONTROL

One of the great difficulties for humans is controlling their thoughts, a difficulty that is aggravated today with the incessant mental activity of modern life.

Psychology has demonstrated that although it is true that the whirlwind of sensations produced by external stimuli is one reason for mental anxiety, more important are the powerful emotional forces of the subconscious whose activity agitates the wave of thoughts in the field of the consciousness. This explains that all those exercises that seek a direct control of the ego over thoughts, the kind of mental concentration exercises that the literature is full of, do not generally give better results, as the psychical tension required for such control generates a subconscious counterforce that opposes the mental vortex that we want to control and the consequence is an exhausting struggle in the field of the mind.

³⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Estudio de la historia*, Emecé, Buenos Aires, 1953, vol. III, p. 201.

Greater practical effectiveness can be had from those exercises that attempt to quieten the mind indirectly.

J. H. Schultz,³⁶ in studying the relationships between muscular tension and mental activity, came to the conclusion that just as psychical tension is often expressed through muscular tension, the relaxing of the muscles indirectly enables an adequate *mental silence*. Schultz's method of concentrative self-relaxation, which begins with the voluntary relaxation of the muscles and continues by spreading this relaxation to the autonomous functions, leaves the practitioner to fairly deep levels of mental stillness and control of thoughts and fantasies.

Retrospective examination, or the retrospectively ordered memory of the events that have occurred during the day or over a greater period of time, appears to be the natural movement of the mind in a state of passivity. Numerous events registered in persons in moments close to death, especially in semi-asphyxiated subjects who have then been able to talk about their experiences, reveal that in those instances, the images of past events parade past the expectant gaze of the moribund person in rapid retrospective succession, reminding them clearly of events from early childhood. When one attempts to perform this exercise actively, with an effort of attention in search of memories, one comes up against great difficulty, as if it were against the current of thoughts; that if the body's muscles are previously relaxed and the mind is placed in a passive state, like the spectator prepared to observe the natural movement of the mind, it is observed that the memories flow retrospectively and that, at most, one must guide them with a minimal effort of attention so as to stay awake and prevent distractions.

Retrospective examination has been known since the most remote antiquity, practised in different forms and subject to diverse interpretations. According to Mircea Eliade, in classical Buddhist texts this exercise is described "which consists of going back, via memory, over the course of days, months and years until reaching the permanence in the matrix [...] burning the karma accumulated in experiences realized and defeating time to submerge oneself in Eternity."³⁷ It is true that the practice of the retrospective examination gradually creates order in the mind, eases the correct evocation of memories and gives agility to thought.

Prayer and meditation, apart from their spiritual value as ascetic-mystical exercises, still the lake of the mind, clarify and order ideas, distinguish what is part of the self from that which is the reflection of other people's opinions and, in short, help to think individually and dispassionately.

³⁶ J. H. Schultz, *El entrenamiento autógeno*, Científico-Médica, Barcelona, 1962. 2nd Spanish edition.

³⁷ Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, inmortalidad y libertad* Leviatán, Buenos Aires, 1957, p. 195.

Modern humans need to attain a *mental silence* that places their instrument of thought within a hierarchy of functions in the totality of the self, preventing reason from being constituted as an autonomous, tyrannical power, the generator of contradictions and, ultimately, the destroyer of that expansive and participatory individuality that ideally one hopes to achieve. The mental instrument must be known to humans through self-control, which is a continuous objective gaze over the flow- ing of their mind, until they know their thoughts, where they come from and what motivates them. Only then may they break the identification between their self and their mental flow, a powerful and enslaving chain that becomes an almost unbreachable barrier in their path of inner lib- eration.

3. RESERVE, TRANSFORMATION AND USE OF HUMAN ENERGY

In this energetic era, in which humans have reached the libera- tion and control of a large part of the energies of nature, it cannot be said that they have the same control over their own endogenous ener- gies, that is, those generated in their own bodies.

In medicine, the materialist conception of humans for a long time prevented due importance being given to the energetic economy, and most disturbances in bodily functions were attributed to structural lesions, with a concept of organic pathology (Morgagni, Virchow.)

Psychophysiological research by Sherrington, Pavlov, Gley, von Bergmann and Cannon show the disturbance of different bodily func- tions by cyclical factors and set the basis of a functional pathology.³⁸³⁹

The concept of a human energy of a quality different to the physical chemical energy known at the time and the demonstration of its activity in the healthy and sick human is due to Freud who, at the beginning of this century, introduced the term *libido*. In his early writing Freud designates with this word “that force that is manifested in the sexual instinct.”⁴⁰

Whatever the subsequent interpretations of the so-called libido theory, it is true that new concepts of sexual energy and of psychical energy opened a new field in the understanding of many phenomena of pathology and human conduct, which began to be considered in dy- namic and energetic terms.

This energetic conception in Teilhard de Chardin attains a much greater breadth, transcending the field of psychochemical, sexual and psychical energies, to enter into the idea of a *cosmic energy* which, as- similated and transformed by humans (*hominized*, in his term) is

³⁸ Lelio Zeno and Emilio Pizarro Crespo, *Clínica psicossomática*. El Ateneo, Buenos Aires, 1945, p. 46.

³⁹ Von Bergmann, *Patología funcional*, Labor, 1940.

⁴⁰ Sigmund Freud, “El psicoanálisis y la teoría de la libido,” in *Obras completas*, Americana, Buenos

manifested in their lives in different ways and qualities. Teilhard de Chardin says: "By the energy of man I here mean the always increasing portion of cosmic energy at present undergoing the recognizable influence of the centres of human activity." He considers this cosmic energy to be manifested in humans in three different ways:

"a) Incorporated energy is that which the slow biological evolution of the earth has gradually accumulated and harmonized in our organism of flesh and nerves: the astonishing 'natural machine' of the human body.

b) Controlled energy is the energy around him which man ingeniously succeeds in dominating with physical power originating from his limbs by means of artificial machines.

c) *Spiritualized* energy, lastly, is localized in the immanent zones of our free activity, and forms the stuff of our intellectual processes, affections and volitions."⁴¹

That is, one part of the cosmic energy in humans is fixed in the maintenance of the organic structures and functions and another part is free or can be freed, remaining at the service of new constructions or new functions.

The individual consciousness of being the depository of cosmic energies and of the possibility of their evolutionary harnessing, gives humans that true hierarchy of cosmic participation and awakens the feeling of a new responsibility and of a new ethics. It is no longer only the case of doing their duty that humans impose on society, but of answering for their own lives, for the cosmic energies that they have received through participation, through the use or abuse they have made of their lives and their energies, through the effort that they have made to attain their liberation or through the steps that they have taken in tying themselves to slavery.

The concept of an energetic economy oriented for the purposes of development is a sign of individual maturity in humans and of consciousness of their possibilities of liberation. Having reached this point the individual realises that liberation shall always be a utopia as long as it remains on the plane of ideas and there is no energy that transforms their ideals into life; they recognise, furthermore, that that energy exists in them in potential form, waiting to be liberated and placed at the service of their inner growth.

The transmutation of energies tied to inferior forms of life (lead), to superior spiritual expressions (gold), has been the basis of all the forms of alchemy of the soul, from the most

⁴¹ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *La energía humana*, Taurus, Madrid, 1963, p. 125.

ancient tantric systems of the East to the diverse nuances of the mystic ascetism of the West. But this reserve of energies and its evolutionary transformation, now to come from the esoteric circle of an exceptional exercise, appears reserved for very few to become the property of all humanity. Indeed, all humans have access to the control of certain forms of their own energy that they habitually waste, especially energies tied to sex, the word and sight.

A. FUNCTIONS OF SEX

FROM A SEXUALITY OF CONSERVATION TO A SEXUALITY OF TRANSFORMATION

Although sex-related issues have been studied extensively today, especially with the works of Freud and his school, sexuality constitutes for many an enigmatic function on which they do not always manage to have a position. It is frequent to find, both among the learned and the laymen, the most contradictory opinions about sex. Furthermore, popular literature, instead of clarifying the problem, often makes it more confusing, especially when it addresses these questions superficially and in general terms.

From a doctrinal standpoint, there are some who consider sexuality as a function intended exclusively for reproduction. According to this theory, sex is at the service of the conservation of the species and any aspect different from this conservatory function, such as pleasure, is in the order of vice or sin.

Faced with this idealist conception the systems that we can call naturalist rise up, according to which sexuality is one of the many needs of the organism and must be treated like other instinctive functions, that is, that any restriction in that field would be anti-natural. According to this naturalist interpretation, sex has a pleasure function as well as a reproductive function.

In practice and from the point of view of an existential issue for humanity, both idealist and naturalist concepts are presented as extreme attitudes that do not contemplate the totality of the individual's needs, which are both natural and spiritual.

According to psychoanalytic theory, sexuality is an energy of particular characteristics whose sources of origin lie in the organism itself. Freud demonstrated that sexual energy can not only be channelled through the genitals, but can also be expressed through other organs. He also introduced the concept of *sexual development*, that is, that sexuality is not an energy that suddenly awakens in puberty but which develops over time, going through a series of stages in the child and the young person until what is known as adult sexuality is reached. For this sexual maturity to occur it is necessary for the ego to renounce infantile objects of desire, and if such an

evolutionary shift in the libido does not happen, serious disturbances occur in the development of the person- ality.

Another very important concept, contributed by medical psy- chology, is *sexual constitution*, that is, that each individual has at birth a sexual characteristic or formula that determines their reactions and be- haviour throughout their lives. This idiosyncrasy of sexuality means that it is very risky to establish laws or norms of sexual behaviour that can be applied to all individuals.

But apart from the characteristics that can be given to sexuality, whether from the point of view of psychobiological development or temperamental constitutional forms, it is possible to establish in hu- mans a typology of sex on the bases of psychospiritual development. It was Ouspensky, from this latter point of view, who first pointed out the fundamental differences that exist between what must be called normal sexuality, infra-sex and super-sex.⁴²

Ouspensky says: “Normal sex [...] is entirely coordinated with other sides of man’s life and with his highest manifestations. It does not stand in their way and does not take energy from them; the energy used in the functioning of normal sex is immediately replaced owing to the richness of the sensations and impressions which are received by the intellect, the consciousness and the feeling.”

“For all categories of infra-sex, the fundamental characteristic is the absence of co- ordination between the idea of sex and the ideas of other normal functions of man. Sex always leads people of infra-sex ei- ther into ‘temptation,’ or ‘sin,’ or crime, or insanity, or debauchery. [...] Many men who in reality do not belong to infra-sex begin to know about sex through men of this class of infrasexuality and immediately react to sex as something dirty. All the classes of crimes of passion belong to in- frasexuality. The difficulty of understanding the nature of infrasex is cre- ated by the continuous beautification and the desire to ennoble and jus- tify all manifestations of violence and degenerate emotions related to sex. Even the most insignificant element of infrasexuality, whether in man or in woman, lowers the relations, feelings and sensations from one to another to an inferior category or even completely destroys every- thing that was positive in them.”

However, some psychological schools claim that it is a mistake to seek to reduce this type of infrasexuality to certain infantile com- plexes, traumas or fixations. This is something much deeper, something that is at the root of the constitution and of ethical deviations.

⁴² Pyotr Ouspensky, *Un nuevo modelo del universo*, Sol, Mexico City, 1950, CH. XII, “Sexo y evolución.”

The recognition of this infra-sex behind the appearances of a beautiful form or cultural refinement will surely constitute one of the greatest concerns in the immediate future for forming happy couples and for avoiding consequently that degenerative characters are passed on in the offspring.

Much progress has been made to date in the knowledge of the dynamic of sexuality and sexual behaviour, but everything regarding sex orientation and education is still poor and often contradictory. It is particularly striking, for example, that such a complete treatise on sexology as the Kinsey Record,⁴³ which dedicates two voluminous tomes to exhaustively analysing sexual conduct in men and women, with statistical references of all kinds, does not dedicate a single page to sex education. In Freud's 1930 work, *Civilization and its Discontents*, the founder of psychoanalysis indicated that the conflicts that civilised people suffer because of their sex derive exclusively from a repressive culture that deforms the natural instinct from the first years of life.⁴⁴

Furthermore, the psychosocial research work carried out in primitive cultures, such as the work of Margaret Mead in Samoa, seemed to confirm those points of view,⁴⁵ as the facts of observation show that in peoples where there is no repression the so called crisis of puberty, considered a device of modern civilization, does not occur in young people.

Both Freud's conclusions regarding what he calls *malcontents in civilization*, and Margaret Mead's observations in Samoa, do not stand up to in-depth criticism as they do not take into account the development of the human types they refer to, and they make premature generalisations.

If sexual repression leads to pathological symptoms, if it is considered the cause of a good part of the nervousness of modern humans and if in non-repressive cultures people seem happier, it would appear to be that the solution to these problems would lie in sexual liberalism. We know the social experience, made in past centuries, of a sexually repressive culture and I do not deny its unfavourable consequences. But we also know the experience provided to us today by a non-repressive culture, where humans' anxiety and nervousness have not diminished despite greater sexual liberation and where problems related to sex have varied perhaps in the form but persist as a root of individual and collective conflicts.

⁴³ Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male and Sexual Behavior in the Woman*, Saunders, 1948.

⁴⁴ Sigmund Freud, "El malestar en la cultura," in *Obras Completas*, Americana, Buenos Aires, 1943. t. XIX, p.74.

⁴⁵ Margaret Mead, *Adolescencia y cultura en Samoa*, April, Buenos Aires, 1945, p. 153.

Even Freud, despite having highlighted the importance of sexual pleasure and the direct channelling of sexual energies, also pointed out the transcendence in humans that the so-called *cultural derivations of the instinct* or *deviations of the libido towards higher purposes* can have: sublimation or transmutation. “Precisely the components of sexual instinct are characterized by this capacity of sublimation, of changing their sexual purpose for another more distant one of greater social value. We probably owe the highest civilizing successes to the contributions of energies attained from this mode for our mental functions.”⁴⁶

In short, apart from the reproductive (conservative) and pleasure functions, we must recognise in sexuality an *evolutionary* function that is at the service of the superior development of humanity, not only to attain a certain degree of socialisation but also spiritual transformation.

There is nothing to discuss about the natural functions that sex has, no wish to resolve the problems derived from sexuality by amputating or stopping any of those functions, but to aim for the development of *new* functions of sexuality. The new function of sex that the future human could develop is that of favouring their own inner development: endogenous mental growth and generation.

To reach the present evolutionary state of sex it has been necessary for the most animalising and primitive desires to be renounced. But this now raises the question of whether it is possible to continue evolution through a conscious and active participation of the individual, whether through the renunciation of a part of the pleasure sexuality they could attain a state of supra-sex. Freud himself said that “The plasticity of sexual components, which is expressed in their ability to sublimate, may constitute a great temptation to pursue, through a progressive sublimation, increasingly greater civilizing effects.”⁴⁷ But Freud, overly influenced by the mentality of his era, did not appear to have a great deal of trust in the power of this sublimation and did not see the cosmic and evolutionary transcendence of these new functions of sexuality.

Humans—and in this there is a fundamental difference with animals—cannot avoid, in the consummation of their natural sexual desires, the gaze of the transcendent conscience that demands of them, according to the level of development, a greater or lesser degree of sublimation of their sexual energies.

In other words, the authentically human conflict in the sexual field is that which is raised

⁴⁶ Sigmund Freud, “Una teoría sexual y otros ensayos”, in: *Obras Completas*, Americana, Buenos Aires, 1943, t. II, p. 200.

⁴⁷ Sigmund Freud, “Psicología de la vida erótica,” in: *Obras completas*, Americana, Buenos Aires, 1943, t. XIII, p. 42-44.

in the intimacy of the self between the feeling of the sacred and of the profane, between the pressure of natural desires and intimate longings for purity and transcendence.

The need for purity arises from something intrinsic and spiritual in humans and cannot be explained, merely, from the point of view of a feeling of guilt or of the influence of a puritanical environment. If primitive man does not feel such a need and the young people of some indigenous tribes do not experience the mental conflicts of our civilised adolescence, which Spranger⁴⁸ has described so well, it is because they have not attained sufficient development so as to become sensitive to the values of the spirit.

Every normal individual, at a certain stage in their psychospiritual development, has some demand of purity and chastity of themselves. Many young people feel spontaneously the need to be chaste but, as chastity is devalued in the current environment, they believe that they are misfits or neurotic and, in wanting to be like the majority, merely suffer more.

In India the practise of chastity is still conserved in some sectors of society. On his travels in India, Lanza del Vasto observed that: "Many young people dedicated to their studies remain virgins until the age of twenty-five. Others, in order to remain whole for charity work, make a vow of chastity for life. Married couples who do so by common agreement and live under the same roof as brother and sister [...] among the Indians that I have met, I have never witnessed an indecent scene or an obscene joke."⁴⁹ Gandhi, the champion of non-violence, imposed the practice of chastity for his closest disciples. He said: "An unrestrained man has no hope of self-realization. I confess that it can be difficult to prove the need for restraint to an atheist or to a materialist. But he who knows the difference between the transitory nature of the flesh and the eternal nature of the spirit knows, instinctively, that self-realization is impossible between discipline and without restraint. The body can be a field of free play for passion or a temple of self-realization. If it is the latter, there is no place there for debauchery. The needs of the spirit must vanquish the flesh at all times."⁵⁰

But chastity inspired by religious feeling and valued often as a virtue opposed to the natural functions of sex, with all the implications of guilt and punishment, must be incorporated into the normal dynamic of the modern human as the new evolutionary function of sexuality. This type of restriction of sexuality has nothing to do with repression based on fear; it is rather a voluntary offering of energies that the mature human places at the service of their nascent

⁴⁸ Eduardo Spranger, *Psicología de la edad juvenil*, Revista de Occidente Argentina, Buenos Aires, 1948, 3rd ed, p. 132.

⁴⁹ Lanza del Vasto, *Peregrinación a las fuentes*, Sur, Buenos Aires, 1954, pp 62-63.

⁵⁰ Mahatma Gandhi, *Principios básicos de gandhismo*, p. 111.

individuality to favour their development and achieve a harmony of human and divine values that will allow them to feel fully human.

Although it is true that this transmutation of sexual energies in search of a supra-sex only occurs, at the beginning, after a certain struggle with instinctive drives, once the threshold of inertia of a sexuality that tends towards automatic release is overcome, the non-vital excess is incorporated into the general dynamic of the individual without any greater effort and enters into the service of the superior functions of the intellect, sensibility and action. If these superior functions are activated through a rich and full life of renunciation, out of need for feeding and from their own level they *pump* free sexual energy themselves and transmutation occurs silently like so many other processes in the biological metabolism.

It is the wealth of the superior life, then, and not the struggle tooth and nail with the inferior nature which, in short, channels the sexual energy towards new fields of the spiritual development in humans.

When we speak of sexual transmutation, it is understood that this process is realised on the basis of a change in the scale of values of the self, but we do not yet know what repercussions this could have in the strictly physiological field. We do not know the physiology of the human whose sexual energies are in a transmutative dynamic, although all signs suggest that profound changes in psychoenergetic levels have to have a material counterpart in the organism. It is likely that new chemical substances, new stimuli will be produced in the internal secretion glands, in the mechanisms of natural immunity and in the functions of the nervous system. With one of these signs, gathered empirically by the observation of some men and women who have given their lives to a superior ideal, the physiology of the future will again raise, in the experimental field, the alchemists' old problems about the transmutation of elements (in this case in the biological field) and the mystery of the rejuvenation and prolongation of life.

B. NEW FUNCTIONS OF THE WORD. FROM THE WORD TO THE WORD.

Verbal language, a specifically human attribute, is not only an expressive function of thought and emotions, but of the whole being.

Torrents of ideas and feelings are channelled through words in a centrifugal flow which in many humans takes on the character of autonomous impulsive function, that is, mental and emotional activity is expressed automatically in verbal forms, without any control.

This wonderful expressive activity of oral language, although it is the foundation of

communication between humans, can be transformed into actions of attrition or destruction when the word is unfit or unwholesome.

When a biological function goes beyond the limits for which it was intended it becomes distorted, and instead of being at the service of the whole of the organism, it turns against it. We know of the deviations of many functions through unsuitable use or abuse and the corresponding pathology. But in the terrain of language we can ask ourselves: what are the normal limits of the word? What energetic quantum is necessary to sustain the function of communication of ideas and the expression of feelings of a life of normal relations? Everything that exceeds that physiological limit is, undoubtedly, an abuse of the function and a misuse of energies that could be used for other functions.

We know very well what abuses humans have committed today with their words: a futile dialectics, that seeks to resolve with words what must be done with actions or an emotive nature that is worn away in verbal expression when it could animate the circuits of creative activity.

When humans become aware of the natural limits of their functions, they begin to respect these limits. They do this with sexuality, with the word and with the other functions of life: it is not that they deny their nature, but rather that they respect the limits that are their own, and do not go any further because they are aware that *further* is what a religious person would call sin and humans, conscious of their future possibilities, consider the field reserved for the conquest of new supra-personal values, which they must realise with the energy that they usually waste.

The control of the word within the necessary limits for the clear expression of ideas and constructive feelings permits a reserve of energies that can be placed at the service of a new function of language: function of the word, the Word.

In reality, linguistics has studied closely the phonetic, semantic, communicational and symbolic functions of language, but it has said very little about the vocal energy and about the power of the word. The most serious authors who have concerned themselves with going back through the history of language and studying the roots common to different languages have only been astonished at the wisdom enclosed in such roots and at the impossibility of trying to derive them by evolution from animal language or supposed sounds of imitation or onomatopoeia of primitive humans.

As early as *Cratylus*, Plato said that things have a form, a colour, a sound and an essence and that primitive words imitate the essence of things. The erudite philologist and philosopher Max Müller says: How can sound express thought? How did roots become the signs of general

ideas? [...] They are *phonetic types* produced by a power inherent in human nature. They exist, as Plato would say, by nature; though with Plato we should add that, when we say by nature, we mean by the hand of

God. [...] Man, in his primitive and perfect state [...] possessed likewise the faculty of giving more articulate expression to the rational conceptions of his mind.”⁵¹ In turn, Wilbur Marshall Urban considers that “whatever our opinions are on the origin and development of language, it can be accepted as certain that words and articulated language often seem to have departed from the original source of their being.”⁵²

It is to this origin source of the language, not only in function of history but also in function of the self, that the individual must return to discover potentialities of the word that the use and abuse of the language, in the collective process of the development of the races, has left latent as future possibilities.

In reality, what we know today as oral language is only a fragment of the total language, that aspect tied to the rational and emotional development of humans at a certain point in their history. But as humans become whole, re-establishing unity with themselves and with the universe, their language may no longer be merely an expressive medium of *some* partial aspects of their personality, but the expression of their total self, which is at once divine and human. Their word will no longer be merely an energy that expresses a meaning, an emotion, a sound or a symbol, but a human energy that is associated with the divine energy of the creative Word and participates in its life current.

If the energies of the individual human vibrate in a participatory relationship with cosmic energy and if its deepest aspirations are placed at the service of transcendent finality, their word becomes truly alive, it is the source of life for others and human sustenance for divine work on earth.

This living word, this creative Word, cannot emerge from the confusing dialectics that shakes the human mass, nor the sea of sand of empty, hollow and meaningless words in which humans are immersed today, but from the solitude of the individual and their inner silence.

C. NEW FUNCTIONS OF LIFE. FROM OUTER VISION TO INNER VISION.

If we consult any physiology text we will find that the normal function of the eyes is sight.

⁵¹ Max Müller, *La ciencia del lenguaje*, La España Moderna, Madrid, 5th ed.

⁵² Wilbur Marshall Urban, *Lenguaje y realidad*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Mexico City-Buenos Aires, 1952, p. 33

But what we call sight, or vision, is also subject to concepts of use, abuse and development.

Within the senses, the avenues of access to knowledge of the outer world, visual perception occupies in humans the most important place and its functional rank is increasing, in phylogenetic development, at the cost of other sensorial fields which, like the sense of smell, are being relegated to the oldest structures of the brain, sometimes as relics of their one-time greatness.

In modern life, the visual function is taking on increasing importance as a means of knowledge and enjoyment of the world that surrounds us. The whirlwind of visual stimuli is remarkable and eveestudiory day the technology industry invents new media to multiply such stimuli and increase its influence. The average adult and child population spends long hours in front of their televisions, public spectacles, advertising of all kinds, printed books, magazines, etc.

We are undoubtedly witnessing an abuse of the outer vision, just like the abuse of the word and sexuality. But these three functions, sight, word and sex, are not fixed functions, such as digestion or blood circulation, which in their ontogenetic and phylogenetic development may appear to have attained the full extent of their possibilities, or like the sense of smell, which is in clear involution, but on the contrary, these are developing functions, each of which synthesises many other subal- ternate functions of the past and leads to new transformations for the future. A single word, a single look, a single expressive movement of erotica, sums up multiple experiences, mobilises thousands of cerebral and humoral connections, and each one of these forms of expression of the self can, at a given moment, indicate the path of a life and still mark the course of history.

It is not strange, then, that these *young functions* in humans, like the buds of new shoots in plants, are overloaded with energy and that this overabundance leads to abuse. Humans undoubtedly have in the respective centres of these functions greater energy than is strictly necessary to see, to say what is necessary or for reproduction and sexual enjoyment within what we might call the physiological limits.

Regarding visual perception, the abuse of the function is to the detriment of other aspects of possible development, such as *inner vision* or *vision of the whole*.

Inner vision, known by the mystics and by all those who have attained a real knowledge of themselves, cannot be replaced by the knowledge that emerges from a psychological analysis of the personal- ity, no matter how *deep* the layers explored are. This is a new function, a veritable *inner view*, that transcends the restricted field of outer vision and has access to a new dimension

of the self.

This inner vision is a vision in depth, it is what Leonardo da Vinci called *saper vedere*, what philosophers qualify as intuition (=vision-con-templation) in the sense of clear and immediate knowledge of reality and can rightly be called *clairvoyance*, not in the parapsychological sense of the term but in its etymological meaning of *clarity of percep-tion*.

When we speak of intuition and clairvoyance, either we take for granted that these are innate qualities or we consider that these are extraordinary faculties that are acquired with long and complicated exercises. An abundant literature of yoga texts has spread among the educated public of the west this century the techniques used in some oriental schools to awaken clairvoyance and other superior powers of the mind. Parapsychology, in turn, has studied with scientific criteria so-called extrasensory perception and diverse modalities—visual, ordinary, kinaesthetic, etc.—with which it is manifested.

But inner vision has nothing to do with all this. Firstly, it is not an isolated function that can be developed with a technique, but rather it is the result of the development in depth of life itself. Furthermore, just as outer vision is only possible in a light environment, inner vision requires the existence of an inner light, hence in the language of mystical tradition it is also called enlightenment. The inner light is the new atmosphere in which the expansive and participatory individuality moves and it emerges like a spark when humans make contact with the divine.

The reserve of energies in the visual field, the renunciation of futile stimulations from the outside world and the habit of directing the gaze towards one's own self through meditation, are gradually developing a capacity for inner vision and for vision in depth which, described as an extraordinary phenomenon in the great mystics or great clairvoyants, begins to be accessible as a normal function of the individual in expansion who claims with urgency the necessary instrument to see with clarity themselves and the world that surrounds them.

IX

WORK AND HELP FOR HUMANITY. PARTICIPATION

The vocation of Being must be expressed in individual work that gives life a plenitude of sense.

As the individual expands and becomes aware of their possibilities and of their own destiny, the need emerges to capture, in concrete reality, their longings for inner liberation: from the intimate silence fecund action springs, the expansive consciousness is reversed in a participatory will and life becomes full and integral. Without this transit from idea to action, from consciousness to will, from expansion to participation, the initiated movements of life stop half way and the fruit of total experience cannot be picked, which is knowledge-enjoyment-suffering all at once.

A life cycle that does not reach full development is like an incomplete combustion in the field of existence and the residue from this *unburned carbon of the whole* is what accumulates over time and constitutes the sum of dissatisfactions, frustrations, ignorance, naivety and so many other things that are the mark of immaturity and a lack of existential plenitude.

Today humans are trained to understand and even to feel, at least within certain limits, the great problems of human life, but when said ideas-feelings must be put into action, sometimes insuperable difficulties appear and tend to be fixed in an idealist attitude to life.

It is not that the will and the impulse to action don't exist; on the contrary, there is a considerable development of a type of personal will of self-affirmation, moved by possessive desire and hunger for power, that has led humans to conquer the outer world and to believe themselves masters of it. The measure of power and scope of the will depend on the affects that determine it; or rather, the measure of the will depends on the quality of the feeling that is generated in the heart. Even the etymology of the Spanish word for will, *voluntad* (derived from the Latin *volūtas* and from the verb *velle* or *volere*) means to want. But there are many ways of wanting.

In the personal human, this wanting is the force of love of their emotional and passionate centres that move a will that is often impulsive and possessive. Many beings would like to leave this field of limited and selfish actions and, when they sense the needs of others, would like to commit themselves to a disinterested action for the good of humanity. But most humans are too concerned about their own desires for well-being and material security, and generally their more beautiful ideals and their purer feelings of effective love for their fellow humans dis-

appear very quickly, like smoke, in the passing of time. These are only ideas, as if superior feelings did not yet have enough strength to move the will. Actions of *help for humanity* made at intermediate levels of development tend to have the character of compensatory actions, that is, deep down, they fill the existential void, frustration, solitude or the need to justify oneself, which does not take away from the value of these actions.

Only when the real transformation of feelings occurs in the heart and an altruistic love emerges capable of sacrifice does a new superior centre take command of the will; the individual no longer works for themselves, exclusively, but rather they place their energies at the service of the development of all humanity: the part joins the whole through participation. This new type of individual will, in contrast to personal will, is a will of service, participatory will or analogous will. At a level of expansive and participatory individuality there is no consciousness of separateness between the ego and humanity, between *my* life and the *life of humanity*, between the *I* who wishes to serve and the *others* whom I help, but rather *I am humanity*. The analogous will is not born from a rational understanding, from a realisation that something must be done for others, that good works must be done, but rather it emerges as a consequence of a new individual value of participation, that is, of *feeling part* of a whole, an integrating part of what we call humanity, of discovering that humanity inside oneself, of feeling other people's problems as if they were our own and of becoming responsible for the *whole* of human life: a feeling of participation generates a participatory action.

The question that habitually arises—*What can I do to help humanity?*—makes no sense in a mature soul, for whom humanity is oneself and one's duties towards humanity do not clash with the duties for oneself. There is no first action and a second action. There is no action over oneself that is opposed to an action over another: every outer action affirms the world of duality and pairs of opposites if it is not an authentic expression of an inner state of participation that unifies the individual problem and feeling with the collective and universal problem and feeling.

Participatory and unitive action also overcomes the old dilemma between action and non-action which, since it was expounded masterfully in the *Bhagavad Gita*, has led to so many views and philosophies. Participation goes further than all duality: it is a simple act, of offering, of commitment, of forgetting oneself; it is a Christic sense of the individual in expansion that makes one feel one's own life and the life of others within the *totality* of human life. This mysticism of participation is far above charitable actions, above philanthropy, above help for the needy, actions that are included as a consequence of participation but do not determine it.

Participation by an individual being is intimate and belongs to the sphere of inner life. It can

be manifested in great or insignificant actions, ostensible or hidden from the eyes of others: the important thing is the fidelity with which each one responds to the call of their destiny because, in short, the inner life of the individual is the foundation of the life of the human community.

In his study of the growth process of civilizations, Toynbee followed Bergson's ideas and highlighted the importance of the inner development of the individual as a factor of a society's progress. "It is thanks to the inner development of the personality that human individuals are capable of doing, in the outer fields of action, those creative acts that determine the growth of human societies."⁵³ Within these creative personalities Toynbee assigns a leading role to the great mystics, especially those who, having reached the highest level of spirituality through their withdrawal from the world, have not hesitated to descend from the high summits to the valley to participate in the life of their fellow humans. "The withdrawal makes it possible for the personality to realize powers within himself which might have remained dormant if he had not been released for the time being from his social toils and trammels [...] the withdrawal is an opportunity, and perhaps a necessary condition, for the anchorite's transfiguration; but a transfiguration in solitude can have no purpose, and perhaps even no meaning, except as a prelude to the return of the transfigured personality into the social milieu out of which he had originally come: a native environment from which the human social animal cannot permanently estrange himself without repudiating his humanity."⁵⁴

But it is not only through the conduct of great creative individuals that help for humanity is carried out, but rather all people, through small, everyday but faithful actions can participate in it; that fidelity and consequence is what generates and maintains the sacred fire in the heart of humans and what constitutes the fertile seed of civilizing action. All those who, being unfaithful to themselves, to the duties of the state, to the obligations contracted with society, seek to help humanity by doing one work or another, no matter what charitable appearances it may have, project onto others their own problems and shall remain alien to the life of the beings whom they wish to help.

Teilhard de Chardin also points out the importance of faithful compliance of human actions as indispensable support for achieving the highest aims of existence: "By virtue of a marvellous mounting force contained in things [...] each reality attained and left behind gives us access to the discovery and pursuit of an ideal of higher spiritual content. Those who spread their sails in the right way to the winds of the earth will always find themselves borne by a current towards the open seas. The more nobly a man

⁵³ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Estudio de la historia*, Emecé, Buenos Aires, 1961, t. III, p. 252.

⁵⁴ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Idem*, p. 268.

wills and acts, the more avid he becomes for great and sublime aims to pursue. He will no longer be content with family, country and the remunerative aspect of his work. He will want wider organisations to create, new paths to blaze, causes to uphold, truths to discover, an ideal to cherish and defend. So, gradually, the worker no longer belongs to himself. Little by little the great breath of the universe has insinuated itself into him through the fissure of his humble but faithful action, has broadened him, raised him up, borne him on.”⁵⁵

In short, if through the expansion of their consciousness the individual being responds to the influence of the divine, through their outer activity they must respond to the totality of the human with a participatory conduct. All dissociation between these two aspects, human and divine, creates humanist or spiritualist utopias, and ultimately translates into the existential frustration of those who, having received at a certain moment the inspiration of a divine ideal in their minds and their hearts, were unable to deposit that treasure in humanity and left it enclosed in a selfish personality, without possibilities of fruit. Although the great works of assistance for humanity are the property of the great beings called to perform them, participatory conduct must form part of the life of all humans, in their circle and in accordance with their possibilities.

⁵⁵ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *El medio divino*, Taurus, Madrid, 1965, 4th ed., p. 60.

X

MATERIAL INTEGRATION OF HUMAN EXISTENCE. SACRIFICE

Despite natural and even spiritual efforts to liberate oneself from the material world and from the enslaving conditions of existence, in all human life there is always a background of incomprehensible difficulties and obstacles against which it is impossible to fight: it is the barrier of the irremediable, of what is always present, with a dark but real presence, like the *shadow of existence*.

The progress of knowledge, the advances of science and the conquest of power, in overcoming many of the limits that were thought to be absolute, have led us to believe that this existential shadow would soon be completely defeated by the efforts of humanity. There are philosophies and ascetic paths founded on a Faustian spirit, of a challenge to all the obstacles of life and of trust in the effort or excess effort of the individual to achieve their liberation.

Other currents have taken the Passionist spirit with more faith, accepting the pain and the difficulties of life with a spirit of resignation and capacity for suffering in the hope of a future liberation through divine grace.

With one or another of these attitudes humans recognise, at a given moment, that pain has not been defeated, that despite it all, it is always present, and that is when they long for the knowledge of the root of pain. In this search, the individual necessarily comes to the consideration of the ultimate purposes of existence and can only raise the problem of their fundamental attitudes to Spirit and Matter. From a phenomenological point of view, the Spirit is presented to us as simplicity, unity, light, the divine medium par excellence, while Matter appears to us as concrete, dark, multiple, variable, mobile, the medium of struggle. Any attempt to locate in any of these extremes the supreme value of existence, as a value by itself, animating the spiritualist or materialist currents, is condemned to failure, as the authentically human phenomenon comes from the incarnation of the Spirit in the Matter.

Some philosophers and mystics have made contemplation, opposed to action, and ecstasy (=coming out of oneself), the fundamental purpose of life. Furthermore, as Toynbee rightly points out, there have been civilizations, such as the Greeks or Egyptians, who suffered the influence of the *great rejection* of their creators to descend from the heights of contemplation to the world of action and this rejection was the seed of their decline.⁵⁶ This all leads us to think that these beings did not reach the end of their spiritual experiences, because if they had they would have understood that in the sacrifice of the return and the immersion in the sea of Matter

⁵⁶ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Estudio de la historia*, Emecé, Buenos Aires, 1953, t. III, p. 274.

lay the supreme conquest of human existence. Analogously, we can assume that in materialist cultures, beings are not consequent with their descent into the matter *to the end* and their materialism is, more than anything, a posture or a pause in the sensitive enjoyment of matter, because if they embraced it in its totality, including its painful aspects, to the end, in that unitive embrace they would have achieved the transcendence of matter.

The conquest of Matter, then, and of its incomprehensible aspects that appear like so many other *mysteries* of life—pain in all its manifestations, physical defects, diseases, misunderstandings between people, continuous changes, blood ties, the burden of the past, the fight for survival, uncertainty about the future, death—does not come about through a negation or evasion or through the force of a will that wishes to tear such suffering out at the root, but in the existential consummation of such material aspects. In other words, the individual cannot achieve plenitude if they do not bind their being with the totality of the background of their existence, if they do not integrate their inner light with the darkness of their own lives until they come to discover and realise the mystery that encloses the *totality* of their lives.

The Passion, in a word, and all the passive aspects of existence— passive in the sense of that which cannot be changed and has to be suffered—constitute the reverse of activities and spiritual enlightenment. It is important to realise that, despite all the conquests that humans can achieve on earth, and even in their spiritual development, there is a moment in life fit for sacrifice and said sacrifice is inevitable and has a value that realises existential consummation through the union of the Spirit with the Matter. When Christ, at the end of his Passion on the Cross, says “It is finished” (John: 19, 30), it does not mean solely a burden that is finished or a mission that is accomplished, but also a material experience taken to its end in the plenitude of the Incarnation. This plenitude of the Incarnation is feared by humans, who evade pain one way or another and die without having really consummated their existence.

In our rationalist and utilitarian civilization, sacrifice tends to be seen as a sign of weakness or capacity for futile suffering, typical of masochistic spirits. Nietzsche, an interpreter of this thinking, went so far as to say that “Christianity has taken the part of all the weak, the low, the botched; it has made an ideal out of *antagonism* to all the self- preservative instincts of sound life.”⁵⁷ Nietzsche forgets that the Faustian spirit that he embodies and the Passionist spirit correspond to two different cycles of civilization and to two attitudes also different to life, and that the true strength of humans, no matter how superior it may be, always emerges from a dark and painful existential background that has to be conquered through the spirit of sacrifice.

⁵⁷ Frederick Nietzsche, “El Anticristo”, in: *Obras completas*, Aguilar, Buenos Aires. (Trans. H.L. Mencken)

Rationalism does not recognise the transformative value of unitive sacrifice and the possibility of realising *vital profound values*. Some of these vital profound values are existential stability, compassion, wisdom, inner serenity.

Many people maintain the *stability* of their existence while their lives follow the curve of a progress, a growth or an activity, but when that curve descends and becomes a decrease, decay, inactivity, loss, they enter into crisis and they can no longer sustain themselves in situations that seem absurd. However, the best lives remain in balance during those dark and incomprehensible points: on the sacrifice of disease, the struggle for life, constant changes, through the union with those variable and destructive aspects they perceive the background of the permanent life.

When the heart participates not only in one's own pain but also in the suffering of all humans, true *compassion* arises in the intimacy of the self: not compassionate sentimentalism, which is a transitory emotional movement to deal with pain, but *unitive* compassion which goes beyond ideas and emotions and feeds off the individual's capacity for sacrifice for all humanity.

The person who felt in themselves the pain of all beings, who participated in their needs, who shared their misery, comes to know the root of suffering, its origin and its purpose. This knowledge through participation is *wisdom*: whoever possesses it can understand others; nothing surprises them and they judge nobody; they can dissipate the shadows of ignorance, help the needy and console the afflicted.

Lastly, the conquest of death, through the unitive sacrifice with all those material aspects that constantly threaten life, gives the individual the most precious value that is *inner serenity*.

XI

THE FEAR BARRIER. VALUE-CONTROL

Mira y López describes fear quite aptly as one of the *Four giants of the soul*,⁵⁸ an eloquent expression that sums up the powerful and at the same time threatening character of the so-called primary or basic reactions of existence, ever present from birth until death, that may be the source of conservation of life or destruction and which humans, in their evolutionary development, tend to control progressively.

For the primitive mentality⁵⁹ the outer world, still barely differentiated from the inner world, is full of dangers and the ego must protect itself from its *magic* through a number of taboo rituals and prohibitions. The development of reason and knowledge of the outside world has gradually removed the veils from its mystery, diminishing its threatening and dangerous power and reducing it to what we call sense of reality. Through this psychological development a veritable *defence organ* has formed that protects the ego from stimuli coming from the outside and allows it to have control over them. Although this is not absolute control, any mature person has some control over the world that surrounds them.

But the same thing does not happen with the inner world and most civilised people feel as threatened and persecuted by the forces coming from the unknown subconscious as primitive humans faced with the magical powers of the outside world.

Freud was one of the first to realise the existence of this *protective device*, which effectively defends the ego from external stimuli but not from internal ones. “For now we will limit ourselves to warning that only against external stimuli and not against instinctive internal impulses there exists a protective device”.⁶⁰ The most extensive study of defence mechanisms⁶¹ allowed psychologists to show that, when faced with threats from subconscious forces, different types of protective mechanisms acted which, in normal life, maintain psychophysical balance. But in special circumstances, whether through a considerable increase of the instincts, or through weakening or lack of development of said defence mechanisms, or because of external situations which in turn mobilise latent fears in the subconscious, the protective device may prove insufficient for controlling the energy flow coming from within, and in such circumstances, fear prevails, whether with regards to an object (fear) or without any object, fear of the unknown (anxiety).

⁵⁸ Emilio Mira y López, *Cuatro gigantes del alma*, El Ateneo, Buenos Aires.

⁵⁹ L. Levy Bruhl, *Las funciones mentales de las sociedades inferiores*, Lautaro, Buenos Aires, 1947.

⁶⁰ Sigmund Freud, “Inhibición, síntoma y angustia,” in: *Obras completas*, Americana, Buenos Aires, 1943, t. XI, p. 18.

⁶¹ Anna Freud, *El yo y los mecanismos de defensa*, Paidós, Buenos Aires, 1949.

It is curious that in an era such as ours, in which humans have controlled a large part of the outside world through their knowledge and in which a cult of personal self-affirmation has been formed, the *fear disease* constantly paralyses the most gifted beings, those who have demonstrated the greatest capacity for facing difficult life problems and who in diverse circumstances have given proof of their bravery and capacity for resistance. Gebser, referring to the peculiar situation of the human in this new era that he calls the *aperspective* era, says: "The greatest danger threatening us, our greatest misery, does not come from outside, does not come from the East, or from the West, but rather it comes from our own inner fear, from our personal insecurity."⁶² In turn, Teilhard de Chardin also speaks about an increase in existential fear in the modern era which he explains as a result of the consciousness that the man-individual acquires from the smallness of his own ego and from the immensity of the universe in which it is sustained. "Due to a contrast as dramatic as it is psychologically inevitable, the man-individual has never had a more vivid and reasoned impression of being out of his depth in the world than in the precise moment when he thought he had emerged definitively in the depth of himself."⁶³

The fact is that humans, I repeat, have developed aptitudes and skills to address exterior situations and have even formed protective organs and suitable organs of control. But as situations of insecurity in the modern world increase, up to a limit that was completely unheard of in the stable society of the past, internal fears and securities are mobilised that had hitherto remained latent. This awakening to situations of profound insecurity finds the human with an insufficient psychical protection device; torrents of raw psychical energy penetrate the field of the consciousness and the modern demons of panic, anxiety, depression and so many other forms of neurosis or psychosis appear due to a *lack of inner protection*. What can be done under such circumstances?

The organism, through its phylogenetic evolution, found the way to create new defences when it felt threatened by bacteria and viruses, developing natural immunity mechanisms, or succumbing when there was not enough time to form such defences. At present the same thing is happening with the powerful forces of the inner world: either humans succumb to the imbalance or they decide to face said forces and try to control them through new mental values.

Modern psychology has made considerable advances in the understanding of the situations that threaten humans from within, and the knowledge of their dynamics has made a certain control possible. Indeed, the knowledge of hidden dangers removes the *magic* from them, it makes it possible to reincorporate to the consciousness the energy retained by

⁶² Jean Gebser, Ernst Naegeli, Arthur March and others, *La nueva vision del mundo*, Sudamericana, Buenos Aires.

⁶³ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *La activación de la energía*, Taurus, Madrid, 1965, p. 162.

unconscious complexes and, in removing the strength from such *demons*, it reduces them to meek lambs. But in the interpretation of the phenomena of anxiety the pathological aspect has been stressed, without properly evaluating the prospective and evolutionary meaning of their emergence.

The focus of modern humans' anxiety from the point of view of their existence, even those decidedly pathological aspects, if they are included in the existential whole, allow the individual to face the unknown forces coming from within and engage with them *in fierce and unequal battle* in a bid to control them. This is not about the heroic act of defeating the *Giant of Fear* by putting up a show of bravery that is often more apparent than real, but rather generating certain attitudes and intimate values that might control it: this is what we might call value-control.

To develop this value-control, regardless of the understanding that can be attained about the dangers that threaten the ego, it is necessary to consider some very simple rules of conduct, known by the wise of all ages, but forgotten and often distorted in the rationalist and self-sufficient civilization of our times.

Firstly, there is a basic existential attitude that defines the possibilities of attaining or not control of one's life immersed in a sea of insecurities and dangers. If this basic attitude affirms itself exclusively in transitory values, whether material, emotional or intellectual, and in the security that said values provide to humans, one must include the ever- threatening presence of fear of losing such stable points. Only when the centre of gravity of human life shifts from transitory values to the transcendent and permanent values of existence is it possible to face up to existential insecurities and fear with a new attitude. This does not mean that, from the side of psychological immanence, the individual may not continue to feel fear, especially under difficult external or internal circumstances, but there is a possibility of controlling it and avoiding those catastrophic falls that humans tend to have when they base their lives on ephemeral values.

Crowning this basic attitude of transcendence, if I said that the possibilities of developing existential value-control are based on the pillars of faith, prudence, hope, temperance and strength, I would surely run the risk of being accused of overly virtuous in a time when such terms are substituted by self-sufficiency, understanding of motivations and free expression of desires. Without entering into controversies about the moral value of one or another of these attitudes I will examine from the psychological and phenomenological point of view the effects that certain forms of conduct have on the functioning of the defence devices that humans have to maintain their balance.

1. SIMPLICITY-COMPLEXITY

Experience shows that the growing complexity of life's problems, the multiplication of worries and exaggerated forecasts for the future mobilise a psychical burden that leads to anxiety. On the contrary, the simplicity of life, the trust of the individual open to the divine, faith in Providence and the security that the future is in the hands of the person who lives in harmony with the laws of the universe, are attitudes that permit the correct functioning of the psychobiological defence mechanisms.

Modern humans live in a continuous state of defence, always thinking about the bad things that might happen; their lives take place in a state of prevention, with a latent fear about possible future ills; in this sense modern humans are not very different from primitive ones, who lived alert to unknown dangers, trying to conjure them. Modern humans above all fear the future, and what they do not know, the forces they cannot control: illness, changes, other people's opinions and attitudes, chance, accidents, death. Furthermore, the struggle for life, competition, the triumph of the most daring makes many people distrustful of everything and everyone, and to protect themselves from that threatening world they live cautiously, taking safety measures; but that attitude of permanent defence is a source of continuous tension and anxiety and becomes contrary to the expansion and development of life. The person who is not capable of trusting in the wisdom of the laws that regulate human destiny and lives locked up in their castle, adding a new fence every day to ensure protection, dies of fear without having discovered the root of their own security.

The individual must learn that the evil that they see in others and the dangers that threaten their existence, are no more than the projection of their own evil, of their egoism, of their incapacity to give themselves. In life not only are there threatening and destructive powers but also protective powers: but modern humans do not see them, do not believe in them; they only believe in the demons that they have fabricated themselves.

Abandoning all those worries and fears and living with simplicity in the present moment, without thinking about future evils, generates in the interior of the self a new force of defence that will sustain them materially and spiritually when the time comes.

2. WISDOM-BOASTFULNESS

Everyday observation brings us examples of daring people in business, in love, in the fight for power, who reached the highest peaks of personal realisation and appear invincible but who, once they pass a certain limit of audacity, come crashing down to the ground stricken with fear and imbalance. What has happened? They have crossed the threshold of what is

prudent and, having passed that limit, value and security transmute into a contrary value that leads to crisis.

Sometimes prudence is confused with hesitation; it is not a question of missing life opportunities due to indecision, but every individual must learn to know the extent of their own strengths and not to venture beyond what they can do: the wisdom of prudence comes from knowing the limits of one's personal valour.

3. TEMPERANCE-WASTEFULNESS

The use of energy, especially taken to the limits of wastefulness, produces a lack of vigour to face up properly to the great existential crises. People who believe themselves apparently strong but are worn down chronically due to a lack of control over their desires, have a *weak inner defence* that gives easily into the impact of imbalances that better-tempered people (wise analogy of the language) can better withstand.

Temperance is not only a virtue but also the natural result of an energy reserve that is essential for the good functioning of control mechanisms. But modern humans, who worship energy waste, have no idea of the biological importance of temperance. In modern society artificial and superfluous needs multiply incessantly; needs for consumption and material well-being, for the satisfaction of which the individual gradually consumes their own life. They confuse the needs of development of the human person, for which very few things are required, with the needs of appropriation, which demand having many things. The individual begins to worship the things they believe necessary, they see them grow and multiply around them and think that with them they are gradually growing and progressing too, when in reality the only thing they do is put into those things the best of their lives, the best of their endeavours; then they have to look after those things, *insure them*, replace them when they wear out, preserve them from natural or inflationary devaluation, for which it is necessary to acquire other things of greater value and so on, believing that someday they will have that longed-for security; but in the meantime they have neglected their own lives. The energies that they had available for the development of the self have been invested in the conquest of power; they have gained in property, but they have lost in inner strength.

4. RENUNCIATION-POSSESSION

The conquest and possession of power are often considered fundamental conditions of security, but it is a security that is founded on the latent fear of losing it. So it is that the powerful of the earth (the rich men of the Gospel) are those who, deep down, are most fearful. This does not mean that one need not resist to overcome, that one need not bring into play the

totality of possibilities to conquer the fruit of a victory, but in reaching that extreme point of valour, one has to be able to renounce the fruit to remain with the essence of the experience earned and abandon the possession of that which has been won. It is the renunciation of power and not the possession of it that gives true strength: people of renunciation are the truly strong.

Through all these psychological and biological considerations of simplicity, prudence, temperance and strength, and from the information supplied by the pathology in those cases of imbalance due to a predominance of opposing values, it is possible now to restore a true science of human conduct and revalue certain attitudes of a constructive nature which, intuited in the past as virtues, can be retaken in the present as laws of emotional stability and balance of the individual.

XII

EXPANSIVE LOVE. DUALITY AND UNITY IN THE HEART. THE HIERARCHY OF VALUES IN LOVE

Despite the great amount that has been said and written about love and despite the most sublime expressions given by the example of great beings, it always depends on the human, as an unknown element in their individual life, whether they will be capable of truly loving.

Hundreds of books have been written about the art of loving and many others about the psychology of amorous behaviour, but as much as we know and understand about love, in every human heart there remains the big question: if when faced with the specific experiences that each individual must undergo in *their* life, will *they* be capable of realising the love that they conceived one day as an ideal of their existence. Anyone can conceive of the ideal of true love, but only a few realise it.

If one wishes to understand human behaviour in depth, there is a point of capital importance to take into account, and it is that love is not of the same quality in all people. Although love is essentially unique, it manifests itself in different ways, it expresses itself in different feelings and it is realised through a hierarchy of values. Dante in the *Divine Comedy* and Plato in the *Symposium* showed, with the language of poetry and dialogue, all the forms and expressions of love, from the most instinctive and passionate to the most sublime and divine.

In other words, one thing is the *mechanics of love*, on which contemporary psychology has focused excessively, and quite another thing is *love* itself and the *capacity for loving* one way or another. These different ways of loving cannot be reduced to psychological motivations that one seeks to find at any cost and no doubt exist when human actions are analysed rationally, but which do not explain their intrinsic value.

The most foolish acts have been committed and continue to be committed in the name of love, because everyone sets out from the belief that they know how to love. When we speak of love, before analysing the reasons that determine it as an act, one has to ask: *what kind of love are we talking about?* Apart from circumstantial factors that influence amorous conduct, love moves through different attitudes of the heart and different values in the order of feeling: there are instinctive loves, specifically human loves and divine loves.

Instinctive loves are all those expressions of love focused on the subject itself, which tend towards the conservation of the individual and of the species and the self-satisfaction of all desires. The principle of conservation and the principle of pleasure are the laws that rule

supreme in the world of instinctive loves.

There are beings who do not get past these primary forms of love, who are incapable of experiencing another person's pleasure and who, if they enter into a relationship with another person, tend to reduce it to the condition of *thing*, that is, a suitable medium for the satisfaction of their own pleasure, their own comfort, and their own security. At present, most of the great problems that humans have with themselves and with their peers arise from inferior forms of love, some already exceeded by the general evolution of humanity; from these loves beings relate to each other in possessive and contradictory relationships that ultimately lead them to antagonism and destruction. The history of current love is inseparably tied to the history of suffering and death. The psychology of complexes has reduced many of these problems to inadequate fixations of the libido or to childhood regressions, and has assumed that said fixations constitute the great obstacles to the full expression of love. But one would have to ask, as Frankl does, what is the first thing in this dynamic of love: that is, is amorous energy tied primarily, for evolutionary reasons, to inferior psychical structures and does this prevent the development of a mature love, or is it the other way round, that the individual is incapable of loving any other way, has a low quality of love and scarce amorous drive and this means that, as at low tide, the primitive layers of the subconscious are left uncovered? "A reef that appears at low tide is certainly not the cause of low tide; it is rather the low tide that causes the reef to appear."⁶⁴

The loves that can rightly call themselves human are those that are lived mutually with a feeling of correspondence and of *personal* relation, although they may still be charged with instinctive components. Human love becomes attractive, understanding, compassionate and responsive; it can include just a couple, a family or a whole people; the beings who love each other can attain the most sublime sacrifices.

But human love, even in its highest expressions, has its limits. Just as science indicates the limits of a space that was believed infinite and philosophy approaches the knowledge of the limits of reason, so too are we becoming increasingly conscious of the limits of human love. Humans' capacity for loving has been greatly idealised, but in reality each one loves in their own way, and that which believes itself a representative of the most elevated forms of love tends to commit the greatest iniquities. Despite the declarations of universality that are everywhere, human love has a limited field of action; to a greater or lesser degree it is possessive, it maintains the duality between lover and loved and demands correspondence; lastly, it does not have the power to love those it considers its enemies.

⁶⁴ Viktor Frankl, *La idea psicológica del hombre*, Rialp, Madrid, 1965, p. 23.

When the individual consciousness expands towards the transcendent, and the human and the divine join together in a single expression of life, the self begins to participate in a love hitherto unknown, in divine love. Divine love, real love—Love, simply—has no limitations; it does not differentiate between one person and another, between a chosen people and another that is not chosen. It is unitive and expansive; there is no duality between a subject who loves and another who is loved; one loves to love, one gives to give without expecting reward.

This Love is not the child of the earth, it does not develop through *evolution* of the known forms of human love, it is a Child of the Spirit, it is a divine fire that comes from on high, it is like a cosmic ray that, in striking a human particle, generates a new expansive force.

A current of this divine love is manifested intensely in this era, translating into profound changes in the feeling of many individuals of the new generation: a lack of plenitude with the limited forms of love that keep peoples and races divided, an urge for ecumenism and participation in the totality of human problems, are the first symptoms of a fundamental renovation that is anticipated in the feelings and which will lay the bases of a unitive and expansive love for the humanity of the future.

Beyond concerns over discoveries in the cosmic space, beyond the longings to uncover the enigma of the laws of the universe, the humans of our era feel the need to discover the mystery locked in their own hearts. However, is it possible to favour in any way the awakening of divine love in the human heart? Is it possible to transform current, limited and possessive feelings and make them universal and expansive? Can humans transform their love or is it Love that transforms humans? This all leads us to think that phylogenetically, up to the level of development reached collectively by humanity and, ontogenetically, by what is determined by the genetic potential of each individual as they are born, these stages of love are realised automatically, leaping from a lower level to another higher level through the intrinsic force of life, in the same way that the stages of biological morphogenesis occur. But beyond what is determined, in the *areas to cultivate* within the human heart, the simple biological impulse is no longer enough, nor is the simple effort of humans to conquer the highest ethical and spiritual values, but rather what is necessary is the presence of a new energy-life which is divine love itself. In other words, if up to a certain level of its development love can be interpreted as a progressive movement of ascent from below to above, from animal to human (movement from the immanence of life), the superior values of love can only be attained through an influence of above to below, from the divine to the human (movement from transcendence.) But where to find this divine element?

In every era there have undoubtedly been extraordinary beings capable of loving, and the

example of life given by them moves their peers to the most elevated forms of love. Erich Fromm, in his *The Art of Loving*, intuits the importance of the educational and civilising influence of certain people who have the delicate mission of conserving the germs of cultural tradition of an era and of contributing to the development of these in the highest levels of life. These people act out of simple presence. Fromm says: “While we teach knowledge, we are losing that teaching which is the most important one for human development: the teaching which can only be given by the simple presence of a mature, loving person.”⁶⁵

But as wonderful and stimulating as the example of others may be, the individual wants to realise in themselves, in the most profound centre of their heart, the substantial union of the human with the divine. Only through substantial participation with divine love can humans have expressions of expansive love.

Along the external paths, humans realise their experience of love in the company of other people who, like them, seek love in life experiences, in forms, in the example, in contact and reciprocal exchange, in what is given and what is received. But when the individual recognises that love is not a good that one must request from another, that is not a complement that must be sought outside of oneself, but that it is something inherent to one’s own life, they turn their eyes inwards in search of that divine flame that they feel in the very centre of their soul. In the search for love along the inner path they will feel accompanied along a certain stretch; the path made by the footprints of collective experience will fade at one stage and, on reaching the threshold of the secret chamber of the heart, they find themselves alone before the mystery of love and life. There they understand that the paths that lead to the heart are one thing, the example that stimulates, the experiences that bring one closer to it, and quite another thing is the union with love itself; one thing is the ascetic and another the mystical. If the ascetic can be collective, the mystical must necessarily be individual. The union of love is the most individual and secret act. From this substantial and intimate union springs the new love that today's individual humans thirst for.

What law governs that secret union of love? The only thing that gives dignity and hierarchy to humans, the total surrender of oneself. While we give a part of ourselves, of our desires, of our property or our lives, we will only have access to a part of love. But for true love there is either total surrender or there is nothing.

Why do I qualify this supreme union of modern humans as mystical? Can modern humans have any real interest in mysticism? This term, which I use repeatedly in the course of this book, for it is charged with a long history of secondary meanings, has little prestige in the fears that

⁶⁵ Erich Fromm, *El arte de amar*, Paidós, Buenos Aires, 1960, p. 128.

boast of cultivating clear ideas and positions of self-sufficiency. However mysticism, taken in its sense of union between the human and the divine, is the fundamental need of the heart and the root of sustenance of the ideas and works of humans.

Individually, through the mysticism of love, humans achieve the union of their selves with the divinity that lies in the most profound centre of their hearts and discover there the new rhythm of the integrated life, which is harmony of human and divine values. The diverse aspects of individual development—knowledge, action, power, good and evil—come together in love and instead of being constituted as autonomous factors of dissociation of life, find the place and the meaning within the totality of it.

The individual discovers the mystical life of their heart which, absorbing the blood charged with one's own pain and the pain of others and transforming it into the fire of Love, expands it towards humanity in new expressions of life.

Collectively, all the attempts of science, technology, philosophy and religions to construct a better world shall be in vain if in the centre of that world a heart that is capable of love does not beat; if through the unitive mysticism of love it is not possible to give each one of the particular expressions of cultures, peoples, races, their place and their meaning in the totality of the human community.

We will understand, then, that mysticism, far from being an exceptional activity, disconnected from modern life, is the transcendent root of all life that develops in time, whether individual or collective, and is the foundation of unity that humans try to realise through efforts of dominance and antagonistic struggles or through social utopias, without realising that only Love truly unites.

XIII

PERSEVERANCE AS VALUE STABILITY OF EXISTENCE

The possibility of consummating the human experience lies in coming to the end of everything that is begun. The highest ideals are worth nothing if one does not finish what one begins.

The inconclusive, what is left half-done, unkept promises, no matter how many reasons are found to justify them, leave in the soul not only the bitterness of failure, but a residue of unused energy that is the source of material pain. That is, every life cycle that does not reach its end—consummation—has moral, biological and material repercussions in the individual. Perhaps the biology and biochemistry of the future will detect the existence of *metabolites of frustration* or products of a vital incomplete metabolism and their deleterious effects on human life.

The individual is liberated with the consummation of their existence. Furthermore, one cannot speak of an individual without identity with oneself, without a capacity for persevering to the end in one's fundamental attitudes to life and without the possibility of defeating the natural changes imposed by time. If humans cannot maintain a stable value in their lives, something untouchable, something that cannot be destroyed by time or by the changes of the future, one cannot really call oneself an individual: one's ideal of individuality dissolves in the sea of contingency like a salt statue. Individuality is harmony between the permanent and the contingent, hence I consider perseverance one of the key values of realisation of the individual through the conquest of their existential stability.

Religions and traditional ethics have always conserved certain values of stability, both individual and social, recognising above all in the solemn promise a value of higher dignity for humans, and a virtue and a possibility of realisation in the fidelity towards what is promised. But the wave of rationalism and centralism in today's materialist society has cast aside such values of stability and overrated change: with it humans gain in experiences, in multiple experiences, but they lose the possibility of their most important experience as individuals, the attainment of their unity to the end, their existential consummation, their transcendence and their liberation.

Perseverance, then, salvaged from the album of traditional virtues and liberated from its eschatological conditionings, takes on an essential value of individual stability and of *consummatio existentialis* in the changing society of our time. More than a virtue, perseverance is a condition of life itself in its integrality.

Perseverance in the concrete experiences of life is practiced through actions, attitudes and

values of different hierarchy, natural and spiritual, human and divine.

The simplest expression of perseverance is *patience*. With patience one defeats the inertia of matter, part of every living experience, both the inertia tied to the obstacles of the external world and one's own inner inertia. Routine, that word that causes a shiver and which makes so many souls feel the futility of their life related to experiences that seem senseless, when it is seen as a suitable medium for piercing the hard crust of the material life and reaching the end of what one has begun, takes on a value of exceptional importance. All human ideals can be marvellous, all possibilities can be developed, all the paths taken can be good in the conquest of liberation, but concrete life is realised in the field of matter and matter is not defeated with ideas and good intentions but with patient and persistent effort. Furthermore, one must not forget that a wave of resistance corresponds to the drive of individual liberation, not only from the collective conglomerate to which one belongs but, above all, from nature and the inner world itself. The higher the ideas of liberation and the greater the push upwards, the stronger one feels the inertia of the material world and the greater are the obstacles and difficulties found on the path of life. Faced with this barrier, many humans stop, grow old and die. Such difficulties cannot always be defeated by the well-aimed blow from the sword of the strong conquistador; there are tenacious obstacles which persist throughout life, and which only patience, perseverance and routine can defeat, like the drop of water that bores through stone.

But the natural effort of perseverance has its limits; it is easy to fight when one has a goal, when there is a reason, when there is an affect that sustains the will, but all these stimuli can fade away at a certain point in life, when there is still a long stretch to go to reach the end, and the individual suddenly finds themselves immersed in the *dark night of the soul*, in the abyss of disillusionment. This is a critical point in existence, in fact, it is the true trial by fire for the individual: only those who cross that abyss of darkness and remain whole can call themselves individuals (=indivisible units that persist through all change.) When the veils of illusion fall; when life is revealed in its true reality; when the self becomes aware of the fragility of human things, of the variability of their own feelings and their own ideas; when the ideal supports that had been sustaining us disappear; when the truths that we believed infallible until yesterday are shown today to be out of date and aged; when the potency of blossoming love is replaced by its decay, the darkness grows deep and the self can be reconverted into a sceptic at life, agnostic or resentful, projecting onto others, onto the world or fate, the cause of what they consider to be their ills. Many beings end up at this threshold in their lives, the life of their soul, while material existence continues its cycle of descent.

Scepticism is one of the evils of humans in modern society, and is worsening at present due to the current shift from a cycle of predominance of collectives and of ideal values to a

cycle of individual egoence and of real values. At heart, this scepticism translates the dissatisfaction of the self at demands impossible to achieve; the individual asks society, asks others, asks fate for impossible things and feels disappointed when they do not receive them or do not see them realised in the world that surrounds them; they do not realise that at a certain point in their development there are mental values that they must attain and that nobody can give them to them for free; that the truth that is claimed is not something that others can give them but which they themselves must take credit for; that the love they long for is not a crumb to be begged for but a bread of life into which they themselves must transform; that ideals do not sustain life itself until they have made it flesh.

To defeat this point of maximum darkness the natural forces of the being are not enough and a maximum humility is necessary to bring into play the glittering value of fidelity which is the only sustenance in the dark night of the soul. The expansion of the human consciousness towards the divine renews in the individual the transcendent value of *faith* that constitutes an indispensable guide for crossing the valley of contingency and of injustice.

Faith, in essence, is not only an article of belief, but a living relationship between the human and the divine, an existential experience of totality that makes it possible to intuit the meaning of individual life in a greater whole than the life of the universe. The *hope* of fulfilling the fate of the human particle in the divine Whole renews the strength of the pilgrim of the earth and, on glimpsing the peak of their transcendent liberation, the pilgrim makes one last effort to reach the end.

XIV

EXPANSIVE CONSCIOUSNESS AND PARTICIPATORY WILL

Within the polarity of living beings and perhaps also those we call inert there is a receptive pole of sensitivity, and another active pole of motricity. Modern biology, furthermore, considers that this duality is real only for the purposes of analysis of phenomena, given that from the simplest reflex arc to the most elevated organic functions, there is a biological sensitive-motor unity.

When the phenomena of life were studied by psychology, it was very quickly noticed that sensitivity was translated subjectively into phenomena of consciousness, impressions, and motricity into expressions of the living being that manifest themselves in humans in activities of the will. That is, based on biological psychology, consciousness and will were interpreted as psychical phenomena conditioned to the organism and the relationships of this organism with the environment, that is, as epiphenomena.

When the psychobiological consideration moves to a philosophical approach, there is a tendency, at least in some schools, to separate consciousness and will from all conditioning and give them an autonomy as primary phenomena: hence in this field problems are raised such as freedom of consciousness, freedom of action, free will, freedom of choice, etc. Husserl, for example, considers consciousness an archetypical structure, a “universal *a priori* without which no individual ego can be conceived.”

In short, according to the point of view that one has of the study of consciousness and will, either they are reduced to biologically or psychologically conditioned phenomena, or they are exalted as primary phenomena irreducible to all conditioning. Neither of these extreme approaches responds to what in the reality of life appears as consciousness and will, because sometimes they are observed as conditioned phenomena and other times as free, according to certain circumstances and determined conditions. This difficulty is saved with an approach of such phenomena from the point of view of the totality of human existence which is immanent and transcendent at the same time.

Viktor Frankl quite accurately locates the conscience in a key point of the self, where immanence goes hand in hand with transcendence, and returns to it the authentically human hierarchy that a whole determinist, reflexiological and psychologistic current seeks to take from it in the name of an intranscendent phenomenology. Frankl says: “The psychological fact of conscience is but the immanent aspect of a transcendent phenomenon; it is only that piece of the whole phenomenon that seeps into psychological immanence. The conscience is only the immanent side of a transcendent whole which, as such, emerges from the level of psychological

immanence, that is, it transcends this level.”⁶⁶ That is, the conscience is that strip or limit of the personal self that makes it possible to hear voices from both sides: from biopsychosocial immanence and from spiritual transcendence. Depending on the voices that prevail and the acquiescence of the individual ego, thus will be the expressions of conduct.

This fact means that it is impossible to trace a general phenomenology of the conscience and of the will, because the same degree or level of conscience does not exist in all humans, nor therefore the same degree of will. In other words, conscience and will cannot be determined in general, but rather through the individual life. This does not mean that there are no general laws of the conscience and of the will, but rather that both acquire maximum authenticity and power when they are expressed individually. I can hear many voices, from the environment, from my subconscious, but there is *one* voice that is the most authentic of all, that which expresses the highest level of my conscience. And I can respond to many strange motivations, but there is *one* motivation, that which is the expression of myself, which is the most authentic, that which represents my true will and that which determines in reality my own self.

Furthermore, in the self divided by a non-integrated personality, conscience and will can habitually be and are different and often contradictory expressions, that is, the self intuitively one thing in its conscience and responds to another with its will. But in the individual self, integrated in the totality, conscience-will is a single expression of life: the voice of the conscience is expressed in the will, and the will, in turn, through the renunciation of the fruits of action, is resolved in a new state of conscience. Conscience and will are not two antagonistic aspects in the life of the integrated self, but the very rhythm of unified life, that is, the rhythm of the great movements of cosmic life manifested in the individual being.

Modern psychology has preferred to concern itself with studying the servitude of the conscience and analysing the subconscious or social forces that enslave it. Such is the strength that these biological, psychological or social conditionings tend to acquire that many have come to believe that conscience *is* truly a slave and that the ego is a weak instance that floats like a nutshell in a sea of unconsciousness. This may be true for certain human types, but not as a general law of existence, as the conscience of the individual can liberate itself from its oppressors and respond to the voices of its transcendent fate. What is real is that both conscience and will are not values found equally in all humans, but different possibilities of conscience-will, fields of experimentation towards autonomy and unity with the cosmic conscience-will.

The literature on some spiritual experiences has led many to believe that human access to

⁶⁶ Viktor Frankl, *El dios inconsciente*, Plantin, Buenos Aires, 1955, p. 63.

the cosmic conscience is an exceptional occurrence achieved as a result of extraordinary ascetic exercises—ecstasy, *samadhi*—and that access to the divine will is either the result of a great renunciation, incompatible with life in the world (saintliness), or that strange strength of the hero, capable of performing feats impossible to common humans. Although all these stories have some truth, in that they represent peak moments of a cosmic conscience-will manifesting themselves in exceptional people, ultimately they have done a great deal of damage: firstly, because they have made people believe that the conquest of cosmic conscience or the exercise of will power was a question of technique, of adequate exercises by the human in search of extraordinary powers, and secondly, because many well-intentioned beings, seeing that such things are exceptional and reserved for saints and heroes, wash their hands of any effort within their reach in search of such values.

If we set aside any fantastic elements that *samadhi* or exaltation of the Superman may have, and we take simple cognizance of ourselves, preparing to listen to the deep voice of our conscience and respond consequently to it, cosmic conscience and divine will become accessible to us as vital everyday realities. This does not require the development of great powers, but rather attitudes of human-divine correspondence. These attitudes are: submission at the level of the pole of consciousness and individual responsibility at the level of the pole of the will. Frankl reproduces in his book *The Unconscious God* a quote from Maria von Ebner-Eschenbach which translates very well this double attitude of correspondence: “Be the master of your will but the servant of your conscience!”⁶⁷ May we understand this as servant of your *conscience*, not of the objects of said conscience.

One must be able to salvage conscience from its objective identifications. In *La foi philosophique*, Jaspers explains this very well from the philosophical point of view: “Due to its intentional nature, our conscience is necessarily referred to an object. Hence we tend to consider all knowledge as objective knowledge. But when we restrict ourselves at any cost to being subjected to the forms and modalities of objective understanding, we fall into the superstition that consists of fixing any object by establishing it as absolute and believing that we have captured the Self with it, committing the radical ontological error, denounced before by Heidegger, that confuses the entity with the self, inadvertently entifying the self [...] All that is objective, faced with the onslaught (criticism) of faith, becomes an unstable, inconsistent thing, and must be dissolved, evaporated in such a way that, due to the very evanescence of objectivity, the conscience of the Self attains its plenitude and clarity. Thus the search of the self shall always rest on a dialectic in which the moment of negation must be principal.” In simpler

⁶⁷ Viktor Frankl, *El dios inconsciente*, Plantin, Buenos Aires, 1955, p. 60.

terms, for the conscience to conserve the autonomy of a mirror, capable of maintaining its function as a mirror, it is necessary for the images not to remain *fixed* in it, something that most of us do when we adhere to an idea or to any content of conscience and we make it absolute, *veiling the mirror*. Hence the dialectic that Jaspers speaks of and its primordial moment of negation, that is, the capacity to objectify and not to objectify, or the reversible capacity of renunciation, which is not tied to the content of the conscience, and is what makes it possible to maintain the original quality of its function.

There are so many servants of the will, and humans respond so frequently to influences outside of themselves, that many beings do not know the strength of their own will, and what they believe is will is no more than an activity driven by the desires of the subconscious. Strictly speaking, the volitive act, unlike the driven act, is eminently personal and conscious: conscience-will. William Stern defines will in the following terms: “Human will is a force of aspiration, fed from the depths of needs, driven and ordered by the conscious anticipation of the end of the means and whose foundation is begun by means of a personal act [...] For the will to begin, an intimate interior experience of self- activity is required: I am the one who wants. In no other case is the total activity of the personality concentrated in such a clear internal experience such as the beginning of the will: *Volo, ergo, sum*.”⁶⁸

The above definition, which is within the lines of a personalist psychology, although it highlights the autonomy of the initial act of the will and of the total commitment of the person in said act, does not go beyond the imminent aspect of it and is, therefore, insufficient to characterise the will of the individual open to the cosmic conscience and responsible within the human community. The individual will, within the egoence of the self, is essentially autonomous, but in being informed not only from immanence but also from transcendence, it becomes analogous and participatory with divine Will.

Analogous and participatory individual will implies the total commitment of the person through a law that is at once divine and human, that is, a medium suited for the exercise of that will and the development of the individual. Both the anarchist individualism, which makes personal will its only law, and social systems that impose on everyone the same method and law as the all-embracing will of the states, deform the individual, prevent their growth and lead them finally to destruction. Hence the importance of the respect for institutions that society establishes in the free exercise of the will of its members and respect for the rights of the individual to choose that environment or state that is most favourable to the development of all their possibilities: neither the dictatorship of the individual over society nor the dictatorship of

⁶⁸ William Stern, *Psicología general*, Paidós, Buenos Aires, t. II, ps. 218-251.

society over the individual.

The analogous and participatory will, in short, responds inwardly to the Divine law, which gives the self freedom to choose, and outwardly to the human law that gives it the possibility to exercise such freedom: in the rhythm between these two poles the will of the human is consumed; in other words, a will that becomes free through the obedience of human and divine laws.

Aside from psychological and social characterizations, conscience and will must be considered as two expressions of the universal movement, as two cosmic laws that govern the lives of all phenomena and are at the root of their being and of their becoming. Any phenomenon is developed in a cycle that goes from an origin field of being to a becoming that individualises it and from there, by reversion of the process, to a new state of being: the static force of the origin field, which always draws towards the centre, towards the inside, towards the being, is the conscience, and the force that drives it in its becoming and outer manifestation and which gives its individual physiognomy to that being is the will. The drive forwards, towards creation and individual differentiation, fights with the field of the static, with the conscience of the self, which manifests the immobile, the eternal. The complete cycle of the existential becoming is realised in the rhythm of these two movements, of these heartbeats of the cosmic life which, in their expression, launch the being into differentiation and into individual development and, in their withdrawal, absorb it into a new state of individualised consciousness.

The ignorance of these phenomenological rhythms and of the importance of integrality has led, both in the order of the individual life and in the expressions of the cultures of the peoples, to partial interpretations of reality, to wrong conclusions about the fate of humans in the universe and, in short, to deformations of development, whether through deviations towards the field of consciousness or towards the pole of the will.

The tendency to be absorbed in the field of the conscience has led in some cultures, especially in the east, to a feeling of contempt at descending to the arena of action and remaining instead in contemplative and static attitudes; the exaltation of the consciousness in mystical deviationism has led to the doctrines of negation of the world and of life and the idea of the extinction of the ego through the annihilation of its values and dissolution into the absolute.

In contrast, the identification of the self with the current of the will leads it progressively to the descent in the matter, to the multiplication of its experiences, to the reduction of its cosmic vision and to the conquest of an individual power. The prevalence of this current of action, of this drive to the future, especially in western culture, has led to wilfulness, power hunger and the belief in a total identification of the individual self with divine power, without

possibilities of return to the cosmic conscience; ultimately, in this attitude of extreme wilfulness, the annihilation of the individual also occurs, whether as a consequence of social trends that immerse it in an anonymous mass or an individualism that reduces humans to a personal power and which leads them to enclosure and self-destruction.

Faced with these extremes, we understand humans need to position themselves correctly in the conscience-will rhythm and discover the harmony of their individual being with the laws of the universe and of life. The expansion of consciousness must be made real through a dynamic of the will that makes possible the expression of that cosmic consciousness of a limited field of individual life. The will, in turn, is the creative power of the individual that allows it to advance towards an unknown future, renew its potentialities and realise true individuality; but this individual must not become anarchic and, through Ariadne's thread of their original conscience, they must be able to reverse their individual values and return to the maternal breast. This return to the cosmic conscience does not imply a dissolution of the ego in the ocean of the undifferentiated, but rather is the conquest of a new state of consciousness without losing with it the autonomy of their individuality and of their potency distinct from all other potencies. The ego is not dissolved, then, it is not annihilated. Neither in the ocean of the cosmic conscience, nor in the heart of the social mass nor in the chaos of the unconscious, but rather, through the harmonious conscience-will cycle it takes on wisdom, egoence, conscience of its being and of its becoming, harmony of its human and divine values.

XV

THE TIME BARRIER MEMORY AND FORGETTING

Time is a condition inherent to life, and all living beings develop on the earth in the four dimensions of space-time.

Alexis Carrel says: "Each inanimate or living being comprises an inner motion, a succession of states, a rhythm, which is his very own. Such motion is inherent time. [...] Inner time is the expression of the changes of the body and its activities during the course of life [...] Inward time has to be divided into physiological and psychological times. Physiological time is a fixed dimension, consisting of the series of all organic changes undergone by a human being from the beginning of his embryonic life to his death."⁶⁹

All these organic changes are registered deep within the cells and tissues and constitute the *organic memory*. Carrel continues: "The other aspect of inner time is psychological time. Consciousness, under the influence of the stimuli coming from the outside world, records its own motion, the series of its states. Time, according to Bergson, is the very stuff of psychological life." The consciousness of such changes and of the temporal passage of existence occurs in humans through *psycho-logical memory*.

Physiological time is practically irreversible, and although the speed and rate of organic changes vary according to a number of physical, humoral and nervous factors, among other things, life occurs in a gradient of youth-ageing-death, which can be faster for some tissues than for others, but it is impossible to stop this entropic decline or reverse the movement in search of perennial youth or immortality. The method of life and energy reserves can slow down this decline, and there are many people who retain a good electricity in their tissues and excellent vitality in their organs up to a very advanced physical age, but sooner or later the life flow advances more slowly until it stops.

However, if humans have little access to their organic memory and can influence very little their inner physiological time, the same thing does not happen with their psychological *tempo*, as through the psychical memory they have direct access to it, a veritable *window open to time*.

The memory is generally considered a function that is already determined, one that can be good or bad, when in reality it is a field full of possibilities of development and education. The deepest knowledge of the memory and of the factors that disturb its correct integral func-

⁶⁹ Alexis Carrel, *La incógnita del hombre*, J. Gil, Buenos Aires, 1949, pp 137-159.

tioning permits a revaluation of the memory, taking it out of its purely passive role of fixing and recording experiences, to make it a medium of control of inner time.

Habitually, time is experienced passively, the subject lets *them- self live*, time *penetrates their life*, so to speak, and has its effects with- out the human doing anything to modify its course. When they notice that they have grown old and have been left behind the current of life that circulates beside them, it is already too late as they are locked in a prison of aged tissues crystallised in time. This crystallisation in time is seen not only through the forgetting of the past but, above all, through the difficulties of glimpsing the future.

The expansion of individual consciousness and participation in the totality of life awaken a renewed interest in one's own history and in unveiling *all* the events that have been woven through time, just as one intuits that through knowing oneself it is possible to explore the mystery of the universe. And the path for that knowledge is the memory.

To understand memory in depth one firstly has to separate the image of a mechanical apparatus for fixing and reproducing stimuli; alt- hough it is true that the memory has a mechanism, it is not in fact a mechanism but a vital function that is integrated with all the organic and psychical aspects of life.

Taking as a basis the most elemental aspect of the memory, its capacity for fixation, we know that the richness and intensity of that fix- ation depends not only on the organs of the senses, but also the organs of affect, on the greater or lesser interest that one has in the objects of perception and on the general interest in life. When there is a scarce interest in life, the things of the world pass before the ego like shadows and are recorded vaguely in the subconscious, hence the first exercise of the memory is to revive interest in life.

The same thing occurs with the evocative aspect that is under the influence, in many cases, of the powerful repressive forces of the subconscious. In his early writings Freud indicated the importance of the repression of affects in certain acts of *forgetting* which cannot be explained simply by failings in the mechanical function of the memory but due to a subconscious dynamic that makes the content of the conscious- ness that enters into conflict with the superior instances of the psychism succumb to repression. A good part of the memories of childhood are submerged in the subconscious by analogous mechanisms, and the same thing happens with especially significant fragments of adult life.⁷⁰ If we take into account all these factors of interference in the mnemonic function, we realise that from the record of experiences that we possess, only a small part is under our conscious control and that, therefore, we do not have true

⁷⁰ Sigmund Freud, "Psicopatología de la vida cotidiana," in: *Obras completas*, Americana, Buenos Aires, 1943, t. I, pp 1-63.

control over our inner time nor over our inner life. The exercising of the memory tends, above all, to recover its active role and give the maximum of consciousness to psychical events. Exercises of retrospective examination, which I have described elsewhere, or other analogous exercises, such as those indicated by Ignacio de Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises*,⁷¹ in activating memories, illuminate the past, give vigour to the fixation of the facts in the present and make it possible to glimpse the future.

But also the memory, as I said of other organic functions, can be deformed by abuse of function or ignorance of the totality of its possibilities.

The memory cannot become integral and fulfil its true capacity of control over inner time if the function of forgetting is not added to its functions of fixation, recording and evocation of experiences. Furthermore, true memory is *memory-forgetting*, that is, a process that begins in the fixation and ends in forgetting as the totality of the memory passes to a profound subconscious level which, like a deposit, collects all the experiences realised and leaves the mnemonic mechanism and the vital freshness free for new experiences. If this process, or *metabolism of memories* as we might call it, is interrupted halfway, the mechanism of the memory gets stuck with the memories, which are fixed in the memory-life definitively without letting in new impressions.

It is important to realise that, with such fixation of memories, there is also a fixation of the inner time, and the subject's biological and psychical age stops where their memories stop: existential crystallization. Inner time, *psychical time*, is thus marked by this clock of memories and of fixed experiences, like a living clock that has stopped at the precise moment when the renovating current of life is interrupted: this is the true death of many people, which leads the poet to say: *The dead are those whose souls are dead but they live on.*

I use here the concept of *forgetting* with the meaning of active function of detachment or renunciation of previous experiences, in contrast to the passive aspect of a lack of memory with which this term is habitually used. It is important to understand that such *forgetting*, apart from the ethical or spiritual value it may have and which is not the main object of study of this chapter, has a psychological and even physiological value.

It is demonstrated experimentally that memories that have not been properly assimilated by the subconscious (*digested*, if we can use the term), are not simply etched in the memory like parasitical ideas, but rather conserve their energetic potential, and said energies seek the appropriate organic channels to express themselves, disturbing the functions of the organism

⁷¹ Ignacio de Loyola, *Obras completas*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid, 1947.

and constituting factors of pathology. We do not yet know what final results this paralysing of the psychological *tempo* may have on cells and tissues, but all signs suggest that the crystallisation of ideas and feelings results in a correlative ageing of the organism and the crystallisation of life.

XVI

PERMANENT LIFE. RENUNCIATION.

Human expansion, integration of the individual in the totality of the life of the universe, harmony of human and divine values, individual participation in the cosmic conscience-will, sense of unity and integrality of existence... Are these new ideals of the new era? New individual values? Or new words, which say a lot and at the same time don't say anything?

All these ideas of unity, integrality, expansion, totality, participation and inner freedom that I have developed from different points of view in the above chapters do not in fact make any sense for anyone who is not prepared to experience them in their own life.

The modern human, enriched in the long history of their development by material, emotional, intellectual and moral experiences, approaches with consciousness the limits of their human possibilities and wants to transcend them. From the threshold of their finite existence they intuit the wonderful world of the divine and want to penetrate it. The masters of the new era have prepared the physical and spiritual space that makes human expansion possible, and the individual balances on the edge between two worlds.

According to the Gospel (Mark 10:17-23),⁷² a rich young man in this same situation approached Jesus and, kneeling before him, asked him: “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honour your father and mother.” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were amazed at his words.”

If humans aspire to everything, they have to *give* everything. The doctrine of renunciation is at the heart of all religious systems, both eastern and western, and it is the foundation of the spiritual tradition of humanity.

“Not by wealth, nor by progeny, but only by renunciation is immortality attained,” say the Vedas.

Among the Christian mystics, San Juan de la Cruz sums up in eloquent verses the

⁷² *Sagrada Biblia*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, La Editorial Católica, Madrid, 1965, p. 1212.

doctrine of renunciation:

“To reach satisfaction in all, desire satisfaction in nothing.
To come to possess all, desire the possession of nothing.
To arrive at being all,
desire to be nothing.”⁷³

Despite the greatness of these teachings, and perhaps because of it, the mysticism of renunciation has not always been well understood and, although it is true that it has given magnificent examples of heroic lives dedicated to renunciation, it has not been an easily assimilable value, even by people who have felt called to a spiritual life. Renunciation is generally considered a supreme value, for great souls, for those capable of leaving it all, for those who offer their life to the service of God and humanity, that is, for saints and heroes. But most people who, intuit the spiritual values and wish to follow the Teacher in search of divine union, proceed like the rich young man in the Gospel; they fear and they stay away. Furthermore, Jesus’s own disciples were *amazed*.

The misinterpretation of renunciation in western Christian currents, especially in mediaeval times, led to a negation of human values. This extreme doctrine of negation, confusing renunciation with negation of the world and life, also arose in the east in response to the spiritual teachings from the Vedanta and the Buddhist doctrine of extinction.

But I believe that the Gospel is quite clear on this matter: it speaks about a rich young man, that is, one who has reached a first stage of development in human values. To postulate the renunciation as a doctrine of generalising and universalising negation, without taking into account the development stage, has led to all the extremes, and above all it has maintained in even the most faithful souls a hidden feeling of distrust towards a religious doctrine that, with the promise of salvation in heaven, placed as a condition the mutilation of human values. Hence perhaps the reaction of a humanism that challenges religions with the evidence of what humans can do through their own efforts to gain their own liberation and well-being on earth. Neither this immanentist humanism, nor the radical negation of the world and of life, ultimately fulfil humans desires for liberation and their need to harmonise their human and divine values. Modern mysticism tends to integrate renunciation with the totality of the development of human life. Teilhard de Chardin describes this dynamic of development-renunciation totality as follows: “In the general rhythm of Christian life, development and renunciation, attachment and detachment, are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they harmonise like breathing in and out in the movement of our lungs. They are two phases of the soul's breath, or two components of the impulse by which the Christian life uses things as a springboard from which to mount

⁷³ San Juan de la Cruz, *Vida y obras*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, La Editorial Católica, Madrid 1946, p. 565.

beyond them. That is the general solution. In the detail of particular cases, the sequence of these two phases and the combinations of these two components are subject to an infinite number of subtle variations. Their exact blending calls for a spiritual tact which is the strength and virtue proper to the masters of the inner life.”⁷⁴

It is important to realise that renunciation is an individual response of totality, one that compromises the totality of existence, that plays the *whole* by the Whole and, precisely because of this nature of integrality, is today the focus of interest not only for mysticism but also for philosophy and for science.

From a philosophical point of view, within the science of human conduct and evaluation of the actions of humans, we must ask what the most perfect action is, what action best reveals the human in their condition of integrated individual, conscious of themselves and responsible before God and humanity.

According to the conception of humans and of their ultimate purpose, philosophies have ordered conduct according to different hierarchies of values: “pleasure (hedonism of Aristippus, Epicurus), the useful (Hegel and the sociologists), humanity (Augusto Comte), progress (Spencer), sympathy (Scottish school), piety (Schopenhauer), the production of the superman (Nietzsche), etc. Such philosophies imply that man’s ultimate end is a created thing, while there are others who, on the basis that man’s ultimate end is man himself (philosophies of immanence), posit an ethics of virtue (Stoicism, Spinoza) or of duty (Kant) as ultimate values or categorical imperatives of conduct that by themselves are sufficient.”⁷⁵

It is logical to suppose that for a conception of humans rooted in the spiritual, that is, whose end is not exhausted in itself nor in a relation of the ego with things or with society, both ethics of exclusively social scope and ethics of immanence are insufficient when it is a question of indicating values that aim for the achievement of harmony between the human and divine and which a spiritual ethics must emerge for this conception of transcendent totality and finality.

We must note here that from the point of view of the axiological hierarchy, spiritual values constitute a different category to aesthetic and ethical values. And this difference of category is of great importance not only from a theoretical point of view but also from a practical one as it clearly places very different attitudes and ways of life.

⁷⁴ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *El medio divino*, Taurus, Madrid, 1965, 4th ed., p. 98.

⁷⁵ Jacques Maritain, *Introducción a la filosofía*, Club de Lectores, Buenos Aires, 1952, 10th ed., p. 234.

Some contemporary psychological currents that have emphasised the motivations of human conduct very strongly have devalued such hierarchies and have replaced the axiological aspect with a psychological one, making knowledge of motivations the principle aim of a science of conduct. This criterion has led to a relativism in the judgement of actions and to a considerable lowering of individual responsibility. In other words, if a criminal's conduct can be understood, and no more than understood, through his hatred of his father and his infantile complexes, we will not be far from thinking, as Viktor Frankel says, that "tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner." On the contrary, the theories of values founded in regional categories of aesthetic, ethical and religious values, permits a more profound understanding of human conduct and, at the same time, a valuation of this that makes it possible to found a practical normative that gives the basis for an aesthetic education, a moral education and a spiritual education.

From an ontological point of view, the aesthetic value implies an object, a sensibility and an enjoyment; the ethical value implies a duty, a norm and a conduct in keeping with these, while the spiritual value is sustained by itself and is rooted in an intuition of the divine in the soul and in the necessity of union of the human with the divine, without compensations of any other nature, nor of a sensitive (aesthetic) type, nor even the satisfaction of duty done (ethics.) The renunciation is found at the peak of this scale of values as a key value of perfection and reversibility of all the other values: within a dynamic of development-renunciation totality, it is the fundamental link in spiritual liberation.

Renunciation, from the point of view that I have considered here, does not take anything from humans, does not take anything from their development, but rather completes them, that is, it perfects the human act in giving it transcendence. Hence renunciation is a peak value, but it is not unique. It is a spiritual value superior to aesthetic and ethical values, but it is not contrary to these values, as aesthetic and ethical values can be perfected and transcended by renunciation. Without renunciation, the whole construction built on human values becomes a tower of Babel, and even embellished by the most elevated ethics, such as that which is capable of saying before moral duties: *all this I have kept since my youth*, lacks transcendence, lacks the possibility of transcendent reversion, and the human who has accumulated such values (rich) is imprisoned by them, hence the exclamation: "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

Apart from the characteristic of perfecting actions, I must still indicate two very important aspects of the act of renunciation: its freedom and its individuality. Renunciation is the free action par excellence. There is no freer action than renunciation, as nobody can be obliged to renounce what they do not want. Furthermore, if duty is part of ethical values, in the field of spiritual values that cannot be an imperative of *what must be done* nor a general formula for everyone or a rule. That is, although the ethical law can be given for everyone (collective),

renunciation has to be necessarily individual and, at most, there may be an orientation of the longings of renunciation that arise in the intimacy of the individual, to channel them but not to determine them. The degree of renunciation of each soul and of what each one is prepared to renounce to attain their own inner freedom is an *individual quantum* fixed by the vocation of each being. And here a final question is raised: what can humans renounce? Only *what they have*, their possessions.

Apart from considerations of renunciation from the fields of mysticism and philosophy, there arises today the possibility of a science of renunciation. This science cannot be founded on *a priori* theoretical bases, but rather it arises from humans' experience of renunciation. This still incipient science ventures the possibility of a new state of integral and expansive life beyond the barrier of death.

Let us examine first the renunciation from the point of view of the life experience of the person renouncing, and let us try to understand the reason for their fear of it, of their *amazement*, according to the word in the Gospel.

All values, whether aesthetic, ethical and even spiritual, embellish life and reaffirm it, one way or another, but renunciation, at any level and degree, is the *total* offering of a human value and its immediate consequence is the void and death. Through renunciation the self truly dies. If I have a desire and I renounce it, I am left with *nothing*. If I

have attained a good and I renounce its possession, I am left with *nothing*. If I feel I am the master of my life, of my prospects, of my time and I renounce, I am left with *nothing*... I die in life. From the point of view of the psychobiological immanence of my self, renunciation strips me of what I have; or rather, it makes me feel said stripping, the void of all loss, and it makes me experience a profound feeling hitherto unknown which I identify with death. But behind that death I find an expansion of my conscience and the transformation of my energies. I realise that the energy that was tied to my desires, to my property and to my life, has been released, a veritable explosion of the vital nucleus that retained it has occurred; a form disappears and a quantum of vital energy is released that is transformed into spiritual energy producing an expansion of life. That is, from the point of view of immanence there is a death, from the side of transcendence there is a resurrection, a change of state of conscience and a vital transformation. I recognise, then, that renunciation is life, that the only thing I have lost is the sense of possession of life, but not life itself which has become fuller, that death leads to permanent life and that the *dark night of the soul* or *mystical death* that many mystics have described, is a reality within a process of vital and existential transformation.

This explains how renunciation, understood from a single point of view, from the side of

immanence, appears as death, and that this unilateral vision has led to all the movements of negation of the world and of life. But in considering renunciation within the dynamic of a biopsychospiritual totality, which manifests itself in an immanent and contingent phenomenology on the one hand and in permanent life on the other, said renunciation appears as a perfect reversible action that releases maximum energy and which, precisely because it *burns* the totality of the energy connected to a life form, makes it possible to transcend the limits and inertia of that life form.

With renunciation understood from this point of view of totality, a new meaning for the word renunciation imposes itself: it can no longer be identified solely as a privation or negation but as a generalising, inclusive attitude of the dual aspects of affirmation-negation, death-Life, with the dynamic of a realising becoming.

Through the subjective experience we can see that there is a closed life, made of experiences accumulated overtime, with an energy tied to fixed forms and which ends necessarily in the paralysis of inner *tempo* and in death, and an expansive life, of a different dynamic, of a reversible character that transcends death. The former is a stable life, of accumulation; the latter is an expansive life, of continuous transformation. Some facts of experimental biology make it possible to understand the reason for these different rhythms. From the classic experiments by Carrel with cells cultivated from a chicken embryo, we know that if we take the precaution of eliminating from means of cultivation the cells' metabolic waste products, the life of the cells is maintained permanently and it can practically be said that they are immortal. That is, what stops life is the fruits of life itself. Would it not be possible to do similar experiments on human life? Do humans not have access to the source of permanent life?

Such experiments are perfectly possible through the renunciation of the possessive aspects of life. What are these possessive aspects?

Saint John of the Cross lists them quite clearly in the verses I cited above (loc. cit, n. 72): desires (pleasures), goods (possessions) and partial identifications of life which, translated into scientific language, we could say: forms or products of life that are tied to life itself. Science and mysticism confronting the same problem of possession from different points of view but aiming for the same result: liberation.

The sense of possession of the goods of life and life itself is what closes the life cycle over itself and leads to death. Hence, when the individual believes they have *made it*, due to the definitive conquest of a good or a value and they have spent their whole life in achieving it, their victory is at the same time their death if said fruit is incorporated possessively to the self. What in other chapters I have called *existential con-summation*, as a human effort of *reaching the end*,

must be completed and exalted by the renunciation of the fruit attained, so that the life and existential cycle is not only completed but is also transcended and becomes reversible. Through renunciation, then, the cycle of common life is connected with a higher cycle of super-life. If elsewhere I said that time forms the weft of life, now I must say that that weft is formed, in total life, by time and renunciation.

We will better understand now why renunciation must not be considered in any way a negation of life, nor an exclusively spiritual virtue, nor an exceptional experience reserved for the great mystics, but simply the law that governs the liberation of all forms of life and which, therefore, must be accessible and practicable by all those who have awoken to the consciousness of being free humans.

The images of the Hero and of the Saint, which in different periods of human culture sought to represent the archetype of the perfect human, fuse today into an *egoent heroism* of the individual, who feels strong enough to conquer the values that affirm their own development and renounce these values in search of an inner liberation that, in transcending the contingent aspects of life, gives them participation in the Permanent Life.