

---

# 'To recover my gravity' between the Origin and the Originary: Spirituality as The Originating Project of 'Religatio' in The Dynamicity of Communion and Participation

Macario Ofilada Mina  
Academia de la Lengua Española, Manila.  
ORCID: 0009-0001-6406-0438  
tongmacky@yahoo.es

Recibido: 28 marzo 2023 / Aceptado: 30 junio 2023

---

**Abstract:** This essay is a programmatic study with the aim of proposing a new model for the comprehension and development of Spirituality. Using the key notion of 'Religatio', from an Augustinian inspiration, Spirituality is presented as a project in history, parting from the Mystery, which is Origin as well as Originary (or the same Origin at the end and as a goal) after the enriching experience, which is mediation. The result is a vigorous presentation of the essence of Spirituality in its metaphysical pretension,

historical realization, and sacramentological or experiential mediation. All these would open new horizons of comprehension.

**Keywords:** Spirituality, Project, *Religatio*, History, Presence, Mystery, Mystagogy, Archeology, Betweenness, Mediation, Modality, Eschatology, Origin, Originary, Encounter, Gift, Integrity, Life, Existence, Experience, Excess, Ecstasy, Metaphysics, Salvation, Gravity, Sacrament.

## Recuperar mi gravedad' entre el Origen y lo Originario: La espiritualidad como proyecto originario de la "religatio" en la dinamicidad de la comunión y la participación

**Resumen:** Este ensayo es un estudio programático con la finalidad de proponer un nuevo modelo por la comprensión y desarrollo de la espiritualidad. Empleando la noción clave

de 'Religatio', desde una inspiración agustiniana, la espiritualidad se presenta como un proyecto en la historia, partiendo del Misterio, que es origen y originario (o el mismo



origen al final y como meta) tras la experiencia enriquecedora, que es mediación. El resultado es una presentación vigorosa de la esencia de la espiritualidad en su pretensión metafísica, realización histórica y mediación sacramental o experiencial. Todo ello abrirá nuevos horizontes de comprensión.

**Palabras clave:** Espiritualidad, Proyecto, Religio, Historia, Presencia, Misterio, Mistagogía, Arqueología, Estado de entremedio, Mediación, Modalidad, Escatología, Origen, Originario, Encuentro, Don, Integridad, Vida, Existencia, Experiencia, Exceso, Estasis, Metafísica, Salvación, Gravedad, Sacramento.

A la memoria de Bruno Secondin y Raquel Sánchez .

‘Amor meus, pondus meum’

St. Augustine, *Confessiones* 13, 9,10

‘Je pris l’un de mes guerriers, posai un revolver dans sa main droite et, m’efforçant de retrouver la gravité que je mettais dans mes amusements, tirai quelques coups de feu imaginaires. Dieu que j’étais ridicule.

D’où vient que les enfants, eux, sont rarement puérils?

J’avais totalement désappris à jouer et me sentais incapable de pénétrer avec sérieux dans un univers de fiction qui fût le mien.’

A. Jardin, *Le petit sauvage*

Spirituality as a *project* (a historical enterprise, thus a projection to be realized within history) is captured in terms of ‘*Religatio*’, a notion so dear to the Augustinian tradition (given that tradition is that which is permanent in history or *historical* in as much as it is transmitted, shared, passed on in order to relink, to reconnect man with the Absolute of God.<sup>1</sup> ‘*Religatio*’ is effectively executed in Spirituality, inevitably *in medias res* or in the middle or betweenness of things (which is the inevitableness of history). All these things taken together, which constitute the betweenness

---

<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine, *De vera religione*, 39, 72. This essay clearly parts from an Augustinian inspiration without pretending to be an investigation into the thought of the Doctor from Hippo. It can be affirmed that the likes of Augustine who have penetrated into the religious have found the ‘real’ which is the object of Metaphysics, in as much as Metaphysics concerns itself with the real of reality, with reality in as much as it is real, cfr. M. Eliade, *The Sacred and The Profane*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959, 96.

or historicity, form the narrative of history. Such a narrative consists of the unfolding of experience. Spirituality, in its projection as '*Religatio*' unfolds in accompaniment, initiation, leading into the effectively lived Mystery or presence of the Transcendent in the Immanent, of the Absolute (goal of all history) who allows Himself to be experienced as God (the Absolute as goal of Spirituality). This same Absolute comes into history by being experientiable in his integrity (as Absolute Spirit) as sacrament (mediation, by being in between amidst the things), transforming it into a liturgy or celebration of life<sup>2</sup>, which is the effectively (profoundly, not only intimately<sup>3</sup>, which all denote personally or the property of the self, but above all *integratedly*) lived Mystery in all its historical dimensions.<sup>4</sup>

### **Mystery: Waying as Exodus, Transcendence as Excess and Ecstasy. Spiritual Life According to the Presence in Terms of Fulfillment**

Because the Mystery is in history, using Scriptural terms, we can state that Spirituality is a Way, a Waying, an Exodus, a celebration of life. It is not a fixed or established way but an experience, an ongoing celebration. Hence, a Waying. In this light, it is a *Pasch* or a passing over. Passing over means excessiveness, beyondness from one's prison of finitude and culpability. To pass over is being *in medias res* or existence or going beyond it to enter into an adventure, which is Spirituality, toward the Promised Land.<sup>5</sup> The Pasch or Passover, because it is excessiveness, beyondness, ecstasy, seeks to transfigure this existence, this being *in medias res*, this rootedness (because to exist is to be rooted in time and space) into being important, being there for someone, for something, to be alive (because from the root, realization or the actualization of the real as reality, of real as reality in life takes place). The real is above all an act, it is esse, the act

---

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. G. Westphal, 'La présence du Seigneur', in : B. Brotte et al., *La parole dans la liturgie*, Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1970, 145-154.

<sup>3</sup> Acknowledgement is due to the reflections of J. M. Bernal which have given me stimulus to think along these lines and is an excellent point of departure for further studies, 'La celebración litúrgica como experiencia íntima de Dios', in: *Phase* 114 (1979), 473-493.

<sup>4</sup> The erudition and keenness of insights of H. de Lubac on this regard are truly remarkable, cfr. *The Splendor of the Church*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999, 51-83.

<sup>5</sup> Cfr. L. Bouyer, *Le mystère pascal*, Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1957.

of living, which is the act of perfecting oneself. This life is growing, maturing, developing to being there for someone, being someone for the goal: the Absolute, the already perfect act, the real in itself as reality, the reality in itself as real, the act in its supreme instance. All Spiritual Life parts from the unthematized radicality, the inevitable starting point of situatedness, and proceeds to the experience, the mediation of the real as reality of reality as the real in life. The Absolute in life is not just there but is Presence: the act in its realization, for it is the act of bringing forth life. Presence is being present for someone, giving Himself to someone, thematizing Himself in giving meaning. This is, in effect, life according to the Presence: the Absolute made present in history in the Mystery, God who fulfills Himself, perfects His being the Absolute as He is made experientiable as the very Way that man must tread on and accompanies man in the Mystery. To be experientiable is to make the radical situatedness grow, mature, develop from being situated and just found in order to be encounterable, not just findable which is the radicality of existence or being there which abstracted ontologically becomes the idea, the greatest extent of which is the System or reduction of all experience to the realm of ideas. To be experientiable is to be a Way: a Way of mediation, a Way of encounter or growing, maturing, developing from findability into encounter. Because the Way is a Promise that has to be fulfilled. However, this Way is a challenge which consists in being a Waying. It is a Promise to be fulfilled in Waying which means fulfilling in being present in history.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, this being present of the Absolute in integrity as Spirit, its being *in medias res* to call man from existence to life in the Spirit, is already fulfillment. However, this fulfillment must be lived out, undertaken in order to be effectively, permanently, finally fulfilled (attainment of the goal in eschatology) in history.

Presence constitutes the praxis, not in the sense of that which is opposed to theory, but that which is the very execution of Spirituality in the middle of things by being in the middle of things, *in medias res*. Presence is the very mediation of the transcendental Absolute in immanent history which opens up as effectivity in history by being a narrative, by being a developing Way to be travelled. Being in the middle, in between things is the very constitutionality of this execution. Historicity, which is the be-

---

<sup>6</sup> Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, *Sur la pratique de la présence de Dieu*, Second Letter.

tweenness in the mediation of experience (in as much as Experience is the mediation of the real to be reality in realities and of reality in realities to be real), has its realization as history. Spirituality as history has its realization in the Waying toward transcendence (which is the Holiness of the Absolute to which the Spirit as Person is called to be in communion and to be in participation), equated with meaning which has been lost and thus there is a need to reconnect, relink with it. Such reconnecting, relinking (religatio) would bring about the transfiguration of *existence* (or being there perhaps with a tinge of Heideggerianism) into *life* (or being there for someone and being someone).

Spirituality, in view of this, is a way that is wayed by man as he effectively (personally or specifically in his integrity) experiences, i.e., as he effectively participates in history, takes part in its events as the mediation of the Absolute onward to the Absolute, which is the *Origin* (the object of study of Archeology), as well as (and above all) the goal or the *Originary* (the object of study of Eschatology).<sup>7</sup> Archeology and Eschatology converge as the betweenness of Spirituality, in as much as it is Waying or constant constitution of the Way; Spirituality is always being *in medias res* but always moves forward (Eschatology) parting from the Origin (Archeology). Spirituality is being *in medias res* in motion, middleliness among realities in movement. This motion is the movement from mere existence (being there) into life (being there for someone, for something or being important). Spirituality in as much as what is Spiritual is constituted as a Way, that is in constant Waying in the journey, path, way of history, which is the Way of Experience, whose discourse is an Experienciology. This, in turn, is transmitted, made into a tradition, made permanent and vibrant as Mystagogy. Tradition is the Origin that originates. By originating, the Origin services, opens up a path of initiation, communication, accompaniment to itself as the goal or the Originary. That which originates traces the path to itself as the goal, as the Originary to experience its novelty in its being ancient as Origin, in its novelty which is its Beauty expanded in the Charity of everyday living in Communion and Participation.

---

<sup>7</sup> Some of the reflections in a previously published essay of mine have found their way into the present study: 'Creativity, Art, Mystagogy: Logos as and in the End of Waiting from the Origin. Hoping Toward the Originary', in: *Estudio Agustiniano* 57 (2022), 613-649.

### Encounter: Reconciliation Point, Wisdom, Metaphysical Projection

Mystery is the transcendental in history<sup>8</sup>but present within immanent history such that it is the point of encounter<sup>9</sup> of the transcendental and the immanent. It is ambience that opens up as the living out of the dynamics of the transcendent in the immanence of the life of man. Immanence is the conditionality of man in history that allows him to participate in the Holiness of the transcendental Absolute. This participation is called Glory by which Life elevates itself from mere existence. Mystery opens up for man this Participation which is a way of ecstasy, of transcending the vicious circle of existence (of being there) into the freedom of meaning of living (being there for someone and something that transcends oneself and calls for excess, ecstasy), which is being important to someone, which is being loved or meaningful and it with a purpose (which is the effectivity of having reached the Holiness of the Absolute who approaches man in his immanence full of His Glory or key to participation in His transcendence), with a goal that is beyond the vicissitudes of thrownness and absurdity. As the poet writes of this ecstatic other or transcendental one (Absolute) with whom man relates in order to be in integrity: ‘Help me to exist (*existir*)/help yourself to exist/Oh inexistent one (*inexistente*) for whom I exist/Oh sensed one (*presentida*) that senses me/the dreamed one (*soñada*) who dreams me’.<sup>10</sup>

Hence, Spirituality is all about life and not just existence. Spirituality is the transfiguration of the existence (being there of man) characterized by rationality in the betweenness of things into a relationality (being important to someone and someone, not just something, to someone) which is the dynamic specificity of life, inasmuch as life is the response to the call of

---

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. P. Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History. Questions of Interpretation and Method*, rev. ed. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000. Also: K. Waaijman, ‘Spirituality. A Multifaceted Phenomenon. Interdisciplinary Explorations’, in: *Studies in Spirituality* 17 (2007), 1-114.

<sup>9</sup> I acknowledge the powerful influence of the notion of encounter expounded by authors such as E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of Encounter with God*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963; J. Martín Velasco, *El encuentro con Dios*, Madrid: Caparrós Editores, 1995; J. Rof Carballo, *El hombre como encuentro*, Madrid: Ediciones Alfaguara, 1973; X. Pikaza, *Experiencia religiosa y cristianismo*, Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1981.

<sup>10</sup> O, Paz, ‘Piedra de toque’, in: Idem., *Libertad bajo palabra*, 3rd ed., Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995, 134.

integrity. Spirituality is this relationality, given that relationality is to be in between or in mediation as a *Person* (as a living specificity), to be in integrity (*Spirit* is man in the way of integrity) with the Absolute, who is the real that is reality, reality that is real, in the Supreme instance. The Absolute aids man, goes beyond existence (hence, it is inexistent) because it is not reduced to the ontological symbolism of existence or being. The Absolute, because it is real as reality, reality as real in its Supreme Instance, offers a liberating path of specificity and integrity, of being Person and Spirit, like Himself. This path is the purpose of existence in as much as is perceived, sensed, experienced or becomes life and not just an ontological abstraction or reduced to the imperialist ontological symbol of Being, which certain philosophical currents or schools have imposed to bring about an imperialist monistic system that does not take into account life's challenges, with all its joys and sorrows, pleasures and hardships, with all its laughter and tears, with all its vicissitudes in all their concreteness within which, in medias res, a path to integrity (Spirit) and specificity (Person) is opened as a way of Communion (Spiritual Fullness) and Participation (Personal Fullness).

Integrity is a gift, which only a specificity can receive. This capacity to receive of specificity is called property which in turn opens up as capacity to relationality. This opening up to relationship is what we call ownership and the act of relationality is called engagement. Relationality is mediated by the gift, which is the point of encounter of the engagement within the way. Relationality is the call, motive and openness of and celebration of the real, amid the countless voices in existence, in as much as the vocation, the call is reality as real, of the real as reality, amidst things which we usually think of in a collective and monistic way (as Being). Relationality is the notion of engagement that breaks away with the imperialism of ontology and goes back by hearing and responding to the call of Metaphysics, of the real as reality, of reality as the real in the mediation of experience. Concreteness, which is the convergence of integrity and specificity that develops as property, becomes the very possibility of the happening, of the celebration, of the liturgy, which is the work of experience as mediation of the real as reality, of the reality as the real, breaking away from the imperialist tyranny of ontology.<sup>11</sup> *Life* (being there for

---

<sup>11</sup> C. Vagaggini, *Il senso teologico della liturgia*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Rome: Paoline 1965, 623.

someone and someone, not just something, and thus an excess, a going beyond, surpassing all means and the state of being just a means, to a goal with oneself as the goal surpassing oneself in transcendence) is a celebration, a work, a liturgy and not just an event or happening, which is that which characterizes *Existence* (simply being there). Liturgy opens up as the dialogue (word that penetrates because it is shared) of doxology (the Logos of praise which is the discourse of the meeting of Holiness and Glory, of transcendental and immanent, in Communion and Participation) because of the oneness and many in the Communion and Participation brought about by Metaphysics, the path of transcendence within the Mystery, whereas an event only can lead to the dead end of monologue (the monopoly or hoarding of the Logos) of logopathy (sickness of the Logos), proper to ontology which brings about the monism of dictatorships and oppression. Monologue ties down the Logos as a verb, as an action to represent itself and dictate its own representations, in conformity with the abstraction of the verb in terms of Being and its ideal, monolithic, totalizing and totalitarian domain, eliminating all pluralities which are the diffusion of goodness in Charity. A dialogue allows the Logos to be dynamic in many voices, going to concreteness, specificity and contexts which are the conditions for reality to be real, for the real to be reality in the mediation of experience, open to infinity in transcendence in Charity to all in their plurality.

From a Christian viewpoint, Christ is the necessary reconciling point of history, which since the so-called fall (which is not historical but a metaphysical condition highlighting man's finitude and culpability<sup>12</sup>) has been separated into two main currents: the profane and the sacred.<sup>13</sup> In turn, from a metaphysical (directional)-spiritual (integrational and specific) viewpoint, the existential struggle to reconcile profane and the sacred can be viewed as that dynamic tension between being and non-being.<sup>14</sup> Such a ten-

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. P. Ricouer, *Fallible Man*, rev. ed., New York: Fordham University Press, 1986.

<sup>13</sup> This significant insight can be found in: H. U. von Balthasar, *Theologie de l'histoire*, Paris: Éditions du Parole et Silence, 2016, 121. Aside from Von Balthasar, M. Eliade's reflections on the sacred-profane polarity are insightful, especially for the notion wherein the sacred takes a space within the cosmos or within the profane realm, which have somewhat inspired us in our notion of Mystery in these reflections, *The Sacred and The Profane*, 63-64.

<sup>14</sup> My undying gratitude to P. Tillich for this exceptional intuition, 'Existential Analyses and Religious Symbols', in: H. A. Basilius (ed.), *Contemporary Problems of Religion*,

sion is metaphysical, not just ontological, for such a tension commences with the strife between the real and unreal. Such a tension is caused by the penchant to reduce everything to ontology, to the monism of Being instead of opening up to Communion and Participation, of the One and the Many which is doxology. Man, who as St. Ignatius tells us, was created to 'praise, make reverence and serve God, our Lord, and through this to save his soul and other things on the face of the earth were created for man'<sup>15</sup>, because of his finitude and culpability, finds himself existentially distantiated from the Absolute. Existence (being there) is called to transfigure, fulfill, perfect itself into Life (being there for someone). Transfiguration is the developmental task of Spirituality which is Metaphysical in projection and realization in this betweenness of history, in the middle of the beginning and the end or the Origin and the Orinary, as the very fulfillment of Philosophy or Love of Wisdom. Wisdom in itself is the Metaphysical, for it is living with the real in as much as it is reality, with reality in as much as it is real in experience (and not just which is 'being there'). The experientiable in man brings about wisdom or the experiential plenitude of the Communion<sup>16</sup> and Participation in the Absolute amidst the integrity and specificity of the real in as much as it is reality, of reality in as much as it is real. Communion and Participation has as its referential point which is the Absolute in its experientiability or mediation within immanent human history as Mystery or Presence of the Transcendent in the Immanent which opens itself as encounter. This encounter, historically, is salvation.<sup>17</sup> Transfiguration inevitably celebrates itself as '*Religatio*', the developmental projection toward encounter with that which is beyond one's ego, one's finitude and culpability which are the prison of existence. Such a prison is built with wall of the ego, of monism that makes the One the imperialist measure of everything, imposing this measure to everyone. This prison is made up of the repetitive monologue (ontology) of being. Being of beings is the existential and totalitarian

---

Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1956, 38-44. The classic study of A. Thatcher, famed for its thoroughness, has proven quite useful in our comprehension of this notion found in Tillich's thought, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

<sup>15</sup> St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, 23.

<sup>16</sup> For the moment, I will take into consideration the significant contribution of J. D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, London-New York: T&T Clark, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. J. McIntyre, *The Shape of Soteriology*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992; P. Fiddes, *Past Event and Present Salvation*, London: DLT, 1989.

monopoly of the ego that reduces everything to the totality of being there as being of beings. It cannot tolerate the real of reality, the real of reality with its poverty, sufferings, tensions that are infinite voices, who are properties of their owners who are integral. These voices, these interlocking experiences must be lived in in dialogue and not in fusion but in encounter and in journeying forward which is carried out in respect, in Charity, in an unceasing call to Service, for Charity always seeks to perfect itself in Service.

Narratively speaking, this encounter is a history of salvation.<sup>18</sup> Thus Philosophy in as much as it is Spirituality in its origins, develops itself as

---

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964; Idem., *Salvation in History*, New York: Harper & Row, 1967. Indeed, there is the experiential tension between the "already" and the "not yet" in the New Testament such that the balance between life (identified with salvation as and in history) and existence has to be found. This can be attained in Spirituality and its history. Taking the debate between Bultmann and Cullmann, we can highlight the experiential in history over the act of revelation (*offenbarung*) as proposed by Bultmann and, even, Pannenberg. History is the background, the container for the experiential content in its dynamism which unfolds towards the encounter, in which the conceptual (often viewed as theoretical) coincides with the practical in an experiential living out which goes beyond mere acceptance, understanding or *vorverstiindnis*. Cfr. on this regard: R. Bultmann, *History and Eschatology. Gifford Lectures*, Edinburgh: University Press, 1975. Also: J. G. Williams, 'Possibility in Principle. Possibility in Fact: A Criticism of Bultmann's Distinction', in: *Journal of Bible and Religion* 33 (1965), 321-328. Events are mediational events by which the Absolute makes itself experiential as God and thus become the point of mediation for the communion and participation on the part of finite and culpable man in his quest for integrity or to be a spirit in Spirituality. It is not just a question of a series of divine events but Spirituality is itself the event, the experience made up of a sequence of happenings. In fact, it is beyond being an event. It is a celebration, wherein the event goes beyond its ego and becomes festive, i.e., excessive, transcending. We cannot deny that the core essential content of Salvation History goes beyond the empirical historical consideration or knowledge of what a divine event is, even from an epistemological viewpoint. An epistemology of relationality can prove to be crucial in unlocking the kernel toward its eschatological unfolding or development by which Man and God become fully related, with God as the goal, the originary goal in Spirituality. The Christ-event is key to understanding this mediation which we have termed as encounter or point of encounter. I have benefited on this regard especially from the studies of M.R. Playoust, 'Oscar Cullmann and Salvation History', in: *Heythrop Journal* 12 (1971), 29-43; X. Plkaza, *Dios y el tiempo. El pensamiento de Oscar Cullmann*, Madrid: Clies, 2014. Likewise, on the tension of the already and the not yet, cfr. J. Mouroux, *Le mystère du temps. Approche théologique*, Paris: Aubier, 1962. On the question of historicity of salvation, cfr. I. Ellacuría, 'Historicidad de la salvación cristiana', in: I. Ellacuría & J. Sobrino (eds.), *Mysterium liberationis. Con-*

a Spirituality in the fulfillment of existence in Life. Spirituality is the true project of Philosophy in as much as it is the path from the Mystery to Transcendence (Metaphysics). That being so, Spirituality is the Way of Love of Wisdom and is thus 'Religatio'. Spirituality is the journey towards the Absolute which presents itself as a Gift. The Absolute as Gift opens to the receiver, who is man, a projection by being the Origin of this projection and is the goal at the same time thus constituting its own ordinary projection. In the search for meaning from existence, given that the projection is a Giving, (attainment of the Origin as the goal through a process of perfection, growth, development, evolution), Spirituality is the journey toward Salvation. Salvation is the very secret of the Gift in its Givenness which constitutes the very call to excess, to ecstasy, to beyondness *in medias res*. Such movement of the Gift in its very call is the turning to the One, the Absolute.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, in view of this, the History of Philosophy<sup>20</sup> is, in effect, the History of Spirituality, the human search for encounter, i.e., the History of Salvation, the human search for the realization of this encounter.

In the Christian *tradition* (specific experiential context transmitted and shared within history throughout its phrases), Christ alone gives meaning to this encounter. He Himself is this encounter. He gives meaning and directionality to this encounter. He is the '*gravitas*' of which Augustine speaks, the '*gravité*' which Jardin searches for in his narrative, both of which we have cited as the epigraphs of our musings in these pages. The '*gravitas*' or '*gravité*' is something to be recovered. Gravitas is seriousness, the pull, the force of the vocation which springs out of Beauty, which is the call of all reality as real, of all the real as reality to itself, to its Order, to live out this Order in Harmony in Communion and Participation amidst the strife and tension of differences, particularities, contexts. The aforementioned is in conformity with the Christian vision of Spirituality.<sup>21</sup>

---

*ceptos fundamentales de la teología de la liberación*, vol. I, Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 1990, 323-372.

<sup>19</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads* IV, 8, 1; *Ibid.*, VI, 9, 10.

<sup>20</sup> I have found very enriching on this regard the work of E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ: The Christian Experience in the Modern world*, London: SCM, 1980; J. Martín Velasco, *La experiencia cristiana de Dios*, Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 1995; A. González, *Teología de la praxis evangélica. Ensayo de una teología fundamental*,

Christianity means to go back to the Origin, which is the Originary or the Origin at the end of the goal (in the realization that the Gift is the Giver who is the Absolute who constantly gives Himself in History by means of the mediation which is experience in sacramentological terms). Christianity parts from the primordial break, narrated as the fall, which in metaphysical-experiential terms indicates the finitude and culpability of man in relationality with the Absolute who is God, the Supreme Metaphysical. God is not just the Supreme Principle or Absolute. God is the Absolute who is relational, relationable, reachable in His Integrity (Spirit) through the Way, and the way is always what is between the start and the end, called Spirituality, which is not a fixed or static doctrine but is a Waying or constant experiencing in history. This relationality (which presupposes the Integrity, that constitutes Spirit, and Specificity in as much as it is Proper or Personality) is hinged on the gift wherein there is no devolution. However, given the excessiveness, the ecstasy, the generosity of the encounter that happens in the Waying, the gift which is the living out of integrity in man or Spirituality has to be, not returned, but shared, developed, passed on (as tradition). This is how we come to know of Spirituality and study it as a discipline, establish its epistemology or scientific stature. The data that comes from the concrete unfolding of Spirituality in its diverse schools, movements, currents helps us build our historical narrative which gathers its momentum as it discourses on the point of encounter. In other words, Spiritual Tradition, as the Waying of the Spirit in life which is passed on, in its concrete unfolding and deployment in history, forms the narrative elements of our Spiritual History and is part and parcel of the larger historical narrative that we all are building, that we are all cultivating in the present as Culture. Culture, after all, is the cultivation of the point of encounter with a view to permanence in Tradition.

This point of encounter, *in medias res* or within the various elements or things, which is historical for it is experiential, is rooted in the very nature of Spirituality, from the Latin '*spiritualitas*', which expresses the Greek '*pneumatikos*' or living by 'being led by the Spirit' or 'living by the Spirit'

---

Santander: Editorial Sal Terrae, 1999; JI González Faus, *La humanidad nueva. Ensayo de cristología*, Santander: Editorial Sal Terrae, 1984; A. Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition, vol. I: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Westminster: John Knox Press, 1965; B. Forte, 'L'esperienza di Dio in Gesù Cristo', in: *Concilium* 31 (1995), 273-274.

which contrasts with what is carnal.<sup>22</sup> To be carnal, in the Paulinian sense, signifies to be 'fleshy', i.e., to be opposed to the higher things, to seek only to imprison oneself in one's ego, to remain in this shell that goes against excess or transcendence, and to remain mundane. It is, in effect, to be selfish, to be monistic, closed into one's egoistic self and its pleasures and not to be open to encounter which is always an opening up to transcendence, to the other, which is excessiveness<sup>23</sup> against the flesh. To be flesh, egoist is to go against integration.<sup>24</sup> Flesh is reduction of everything to its monistic, one-sided, enclosed desires. Spirit is man in his integrity; it is man called to be in Communion with the Absolute by being the Absolute in Participation, which is not static but is dynamic such that even along the Way, by Waying, man becomes Spirit in Spirituality. The key to integrity, given that Spirituality is the Waying of Integrity, is openness to encounter of the self, to be constituted as such, in relation (by being a Person or by being specific in being proper, by owning oneself always in relation to alterity) to the Other (who is always a transcendental Person in His Integrity as Spirit in relation to our intimate subjectivity). This relationality has at its maximum referent or ultimate instance in the Supreme Other or Transcendental which is the Absolute and God is the Absolute in Person, with whom it is possible to have a Personal (actual, real, specific, proper, owned, even with mediations

---

<sup>22</sup> Special acknowledgement is due to S. Tugwell for these significant insights which have proved to be pivotal in my own reflections, *The Way of Imperfection*, Springfield: Templegate Publishers, 1985, vii. For the Pauline notion behind this thesis of Tugwell, I have taken into great consideration the study of J. Harley, 'Paul's Use of Pneumatikos (Spiritual)' in: [http://www.ttgst.ac.kr/upload/ttgst\\_resources13/20123-141.pdf](http://www.ttgst.ac.kr/upload/ttgst_resources13/20123-141.pdf). Also: R. A. Horsley, 'Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos. Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians' in: *The Harvard Theological Review* 69 (1976), 269-288. For a more comprehensive survey of the notion of Spirituality in the New Testament, cfr. S. Parsons, 'Christian Life in the New Testament' in: E. de Cea (ed.), *Compendium of Spirituality*, Vol. I, New York: Alba House, 1995, 1-15.

<sup>23</sup> For this insight, acknowledgement is due to this eye-opening work on comparative mysticism of S. Breton, *Deux mystiques de l'excès: J.-J. Surin et Maître Eckhart*, Paris, Cerf, 1985.

<sup>24</sup> For the present reflections, the essay of R. Pannikar has proven quite helpful: 'Anima mundi-vita hominis-spiritus Dei: Some Aspects of a Cosmotheandric Spirituality' in: E. Schadel (ed.), *Actualitas omnium actuum. Festschrift für Heinrich Beck zum 60. Geburtstag*, Frankfurt-Bern-New York-Paris: Peter Lang, 1989, 341-370. Also by the same author: 'Aporías en la filosofía comparativa de la religión', in: J. Gómez Caffarena & J. M. Mardones (eds.), *Cuestiones epistemológicas. Materiales para una filosofía de la religión*, vol.1, Barcelona: Anthropos, 1992, 85-115.

but nevertheless, direct) Relationship made effective in Engagement, i.e., in the dynamicity of Communion and Participation.

This living out of encounter, given that encounter is to find oneself in the betweenness, is Spirituality, whose finality is to make this immanent man participate in Communion with the transcendent Absolute. So much so, this man becomes involved in this living out in his integrity and constitutes himself in this living out, in this Waying as Spirit. This is more than just knowledge. It is wisdom: involving the true being<sup>25</sup> which is integrity of man as participant and communicant of the Absolute which is Truth in as much as this same Truth is lived out in history. This living out signifies permanence through desire, the permanence in the permanent discourse of desire, which is prayer (dialogue or doxology with the Absolute who comes as God in experience, *'in medias res'*), that makes man persist in such a pursuit.<sup>26</sup> This drive is the concretion of *'Religatio'* which necessitates not just historical development but phenomenological unfolding so that the unfolding facts may become fully experientiable events in their concretion as moments within the global mediation of experience in their threshing out as particular experiential moments. This drive, as *'Religatio'* in history, is the pursuit of Spirituality in and of its perfection, of its realization which is the coming to full circle of *'Religatio'* in the plenitude of Communion and Participation. This drive goes beyond the distinction between the sacred and profane and history.<sup>27</sup>

In Spirituality, all these divisions blend into the integral realm (for integration is to be in between in constant journeying to completeness). Spirituality is man becoming the integral man in history, i.e., Spirit is involved in the intertwining of life in history<sup>28</sup>. In this intertwining or converging to produce encounter, is found true wisdom, the true metaphysics, the true directionality of human existence (being there) in the process of being human life (being there for a purpose and for someone), or the life in the spirit, life in transcendence within the immanence of human history, in this world (that

---

<sup>25</sup> Plato, *Philebus* 59d. Also: *Republica* 490b, *Ibid.*, 505ab; *Ibid.*, 537d; *Phaedo* 247e; *Ibid.*, 245a; *Timaeus* 52c.

<sup>26</sup> St. Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmo*, 37, 14.

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, 2 vols., Paris : Garnier, 1936.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. M. Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968, 130-155.

which exists or is the house) which man by cultivation of himself as spirit (culture) converts into the home. This conversion into a home necessarily involves 'people's ways of viewing things, the ways in which they try to make sense of the practicalities of Christian living'<sup>29</sup>...In other words, this conversion (which is a transcending movement or an *excessus* in as much as it is turning about or '*conversio*' is a movement of ecstasy or transcending, '*metanoia*' in Greek, or leaving oneself or going out) by turning around, which presupposes integrity, is a Way of Life that has to be constantly realized in a Waying, in a mediating, i.e., in an experiencing, since experience is mediation. '*Conversio*' is the effectivity of the transfiguration in Spirituality. '*Conversio*' or turning around is the constant Waying of the Way of Life, Spirit is life that is peculiar, specific, proper. Spirit is Personal life. Life is proper to Spirit. Animals and plants, though they may have souls or vital principles or life principles, only 'exist' but they are alive in as much as they are part of this world of life of Man which by life, in the metaphysical drive of Spirituality, is constantly being transfigured, celebrated as home.

Man, as being, is in the world. But he does not just exist. He lives. He strives to live for he is Spirit, not just spiritual. Spirit, which goes beyond the symbol of being and into the very real of the reality and the very reality of the real in experience (mediation that makes encounter possible given that experience is being in the happening of the middle but constantly opening up to the celebration, the liturgy which is a call to *excessus*) means dwelling in a home. Life in the Spirit, which is the crux of Spirituality in its quest to be an established knowledge or episteme by offering a metaphysical way (of transcendence) by means of encounter (which is immanent constitution of man as spirit in history)<sup>30</sup>, goes beyond factuality of the house which is the world and enters into the level of creation (of making this house into a home in the continuous pilgrimage that is constant shifting from existence to life with a geography whose only North Star is the Absolute in as much as it is communicable, participable, live-

---

<sup>29</sup> S. Tugwell, *Ways of Imperfection*, viii.

<sup>30</sup> In the present reflections, I take as my starting point some fundamental insights in my previous essay: 'Completely Control His Master: The Epistemological Basis of Spirituality Within Metaphysics as Transcendental Projection' in: *Studium* 62 (2022), 475-497. Also: R. Zas Friz de Col, 'The Future of the Study of Spirituality', in: *Studies in Spirituality* 28 (2018), 5-18.

able), generation of a marked identity, i.e., that of man in his integrity in history in meaningful relationship with the Absolute, the very crux of encounter or the constitution of integrity.<sup>31</sup>

Such constitution necessarily opens itself to a project, captured by the term '*Religatio*' which can be accomplished through the sacramentality of the traces, of the presence in this world.<sup>32</sup> These traces are the concreteness which are drives or modalities.<sup>33</sup> These modalities are the coordinates of the experiential mediation in the betweenness of the Way of Spirituality which is waying in mediation toward Communion and Participation. As such, they define the dynamicity of the *projectionality* of the Project of Spirituality which is '*Religatio*' in the betweenness of history which is a constant call from Existence (being there) to life (being there for someone and something). In effects these modalities are the concrete modes of historical realization, in history which denote a recognition: the acknowledgement of the experiential imperative and necessity to undertake the project, to commit to it, to give oneself wholly (integrally) to this mission, foundational in immanence and sublime in transcendence. This foundationality is always a call, a vocation to sincerity, to honesty with respect to what we can call with Tillich as 'The Ground of Being'<sup>34</sup>, better yet, 'The Ground of Reality (of realities) in as much as it is Real, The Ground of the Real in Reality (in realities)'. Such a grounding can only be achieved in experience, as mediation of the real as reality, of reality as real.

This commitment to the project necessarily involves a recognition of its necessity, with a three-fold moment of a) grasping, b) accepting, c) bearing witness.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Cfr. A. Child, *Making and Knowing in Hobbes, Vico and Dewey*, vol 16, number 13, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953.

<sup>32</sup> E. Levinas, *De Dieu qui vient à l'Idée*, Paris : Vrin, 1982, 107. For the notion of meaning, I have found inspiration in the study of K. Löwith, *Meaning in History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.

<sup>33</sup> In the field of Spirituality, concreteness has been especially emphasized by contemporary authors such as Ch. A. Bernard, *Teologia spirituale*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 2002; F. Ruiz Salvador, *Caminos del espíritu*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed, Madrid: Editorial de Espiritualidad, 1998.

<sup>34</sup> See the thought-provoking exposition of J. A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God*, London: SCM Press, 1963, 45-63.

<sup>35</sup> I have adapted these three notions from P. Ricouer, *The Course of Recognition*, Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 2005, 12.

**Drivenness as Modalities: Concreteness for the Encounter, Concreteness for 'Religatio'. The Movement of Commitment to 'Religatio' from Grasping to Bearing Witness Through Accepting.**

By these drives or modalities of concreteness, the liturgy (experiential life celebration)<sup>36</sup> of the Mystery<sup>37</sup> (that of the living and effective presence of the Transcendent Absolute in the Immanence of man which sacramentally, because it is incarnated and effective in history, calls man to Communion and Participation in every day realities) becomes the concrete realization of 'Religatio'. Such concrete realization is not just an event or happening. It is an originating. As stated, it is a celebration, a public one wherein everyone is called to community and Participation (hence a liturgy). Liturgy is the celebration of man being Spirit, transfiguring ontological facticity in his metaphysical aspiration to the Absolute in terms of Communion and Participation.<sup>38</sup> It is *sacramental* because it involves concrete things, not abstracted monistic essences, but the real in reality, reality in the real as they are plural in the world which become *signs*<sup>39</sup> (as they point out toward the Transcendent in terms of 'religatio') and *symbols* (in as much as they stand in for the transcendent creating a living experiential ambiance)<sup>40</sup> wherein from Mystery (Transcendence in Immanence) there is a move to Mysticism (Immanence in Transcendence) and even to the perfection of Mysticism in Spirituality by means of a Way of the Spirit whose projection is 'Religatio' and whose realization involves a Spiritual Drive. Celebrations go beyond happenings, events because they originate. By originating, celebrations are Service. They do not only

---

<sup>36</sup> Cfr. Several Authors, *Anamnesis*, Vols. I & II, Turin: Marietti, 1974 & 1978; C. Vaggini, *Il senso teologico della liturgia*, 4th ed. Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1965; Y. Congar, 'L'ekklesia ou communaut'e chrétieen, sujet intégral de l'action liturgique, in : Several Authors, *La liturgie après Vatican II*, Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1967, 242-282.

<sup>37</sup> Cfr. above all: E. Ruffini & E. Lodi, 'Mysterium' e 'Sacramentum'. *La sacramentalità negli scritti dei Padri e nei testi liturgici primitivi*, Bologna : EDB, 1987

<sup>38</sup> Inspirational indeed is the pioneering essay of S. Marsili, 'La liturgia primaria esperienza spirituale cristiana', in: T. Goffi & B. Secundin (eds.), *Problemi e prospettive della spiritualità*, Brescia, Queriniana, 1983, 249-276.

<sup>39</sup> P. Ricouer, *From Text to Action*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991, 149-150.

<sup>40</sup> Cfr. L.M. Chauvet, *Symbole et sacrament. Une relecture sacramentelle de l'existence chrétienne*, Paris : Les Éditions du Cerf, 1987.

commemorate but open up toward the goal, which is the Origin rediscovered at the end, as the Originary.

The sacramentality described above indicate the *grasping*, the knowing of the project. It is a knowing that is not characterized by pretensions of domination or capturing but of relating with the Absolute in its transcendence which has become experiential in man's immanent history as the sacramental. Hence, opening up the Mystery, wherein the Liturgy is celebrated experientially as Communion and Participation within the realm of mediation which is the sacramental, wherein the Absolute becomes sacramental, mediated, reachable to man as Mystery which is cause, motive, ambiance of the celebration of life, is a different kind of knowing.<sup>41</sup> It is not a knowing of *being there* but of *being important there* to someone. This is wisdom. It is more than just knowledge as cognition. It is experience. It is mediation. To be important is to be beyond being there, it involves *excessus*, ecstasy: transcendence within immanence, communicant and participant with the Absolute as Mystery. It is not the mere scientific (*scientia*) knowledge of *existence*, but the sapiential (*sapientia*) mediation of *life*. It is a grasping that goes beyond, that is excessive, that is intensified. From this grasping, comes the *acceptance* which is not only intensified but is pushed to execution by being a *drive*, which is the motor of life, of being important not just there but in company, for someone. Company, 'for-ness' signify calling, gifting, toward Communion and Participation.

Such a drive, which is the push, given the primordial call or vocation, toward the fullness of experienciology, becomes concrete in terms of making the event of history a realization of the '*Religatio*' Projection of Spirituality, i.e., making history a Way of the Spirit, in accordance with the modalities of being in the world, as expounded, but being in the immanent world toward the transcendental. This drive, because it is in effect the execution of the acceptance, has three dimensions: a) *relinking* or act in work, b) *rereading* or happening in the word, and c) *rebinding* as invitation to the liturgy.

---

<sup>41</sup> See on this regard the suggestive reflections of J. Daniélou, 'The Sacraments and History of Salvation', in: *Letter and Spirit 2* (2006), 203-215.

### A) Relinking or 'religatio' as act in work

'*Religatio*' denotes an act. It is a work (liturgy), done first and foremost by man, in as much as he aspires to be reconnected to what is transcendental or to what he considers to be the ultimate value in his life. Relinking is the dimension of '*Religatio*' that denotes man's personal involvement. To be personal is to be unique, peculiar, distinct in the will to be by acting. Acting is provoked by curiosity, the desire to know. This desire to know is a search for meaning which is a finite and culpable search. So it is not just a desire to know facts, or to have certain knowledge (episteme) which are constructs but it is a desire to have integral and specific knowledge (wisdom) which is experiential, which means the act of meditation. In light of this, within this immanent history of ours, relinking consists in waiting, in expectation of fulfilment whose opening is a coming, an *advent*. Such a desire to know presupposes a trust in one's capacity to know, hence the expectation that opens itself up as a way, an adventure, a going toward, a seeking which presupposes consent. Expectation is movement within finitude. It is the openness to *excessus*, to ecstasy.

By relinking, by expectation, by working, man opens up the thematization of Spirituality by reading himself and opening himself up to being a spirit in *excessus*, which is by curiosity, which is by desire to know in finding oneself *in medias res*, in the betweenness of the way of history which is the way of experience and its constant openness in *excessus* as a waying toward the Absolute. This relinking reveals that existence is a concatenation whose being there only has sense, meaning, importance in the rediscovery of the Originary, which is the Origin that awaits as the goal. As it awaits, it has had taken the initiative in Fulfilling itself, as the Promise that Comes and that is Faithful all the Way, in the Waying. Reading is going, it is making oneself a '*viator*', an opener of ways, opening up with desire an itinerary to know. Thematization is marking the itinerary into geographies and its coordinates.

This desire to know can only be executed in the act of creating a path, which is the historical concretization of '*excessus*', towards a relinking with the Absolute starting with expectation, waiting which becomes concrete in the curiosity of investigation, as '*istoria*' (history) is, first and foremost, investigation. And this expectation, curiosity initially treats the issue of being

a spirit as a Problem in which man discovers himself, and his quest for meaning, as a Problem, i.e., a *'proballein'* or man is 'put forth', from *pro* 'before' and *ballein* 'to throw' and this throwing creates a trajectory, an itinerary, a way, a path. To be a problem means to put oneself in the fray, in the fighting ring. It means struggle. History as a search for meaning is a struggle. To be a problem is to set out for knowledge, starting with a vision. Vision is the fundamental articulation of 'love of wisdom', of Philosophy.<sup>42</sup> Such a vision starts in solitude. Vision is the curiosity of solitude, enhanced by care of the self and care of the surrounding reality, such that an itinerary is constructed within this surrounding reality, involving oneself (specificity in property) in its quest for development, growth and maturity as Spirit by which the waiting develops, grows and matures as Hope.

Man perfects himself only by work and only by work toward knowledge can he become Spirit. Work is the commitment, the option, the *ascesis* of commitment toward *excessus*, which is a call of grace, from the Origin of the Mystery or *mysticism*. Spirituality, therefore, is the relinking of man in the point of betweenness, in the meeting point, in the point of encounter, given a primordial fault or separation or breach. Work is the ascesis, the effort of man in his immanence toward transcendence. It is man's openness to transcendence by being 'spirit' in specificity, property (owning oneself and one's acts) or 'person'. To be Spirit in the dynamic experiential process called Spirituality is openness to relinking with the absolute. This openness is, above all, a work that starts as investigation (*istoria*) in order to sift through details and opinions (*doxa*) toward a certainty (episteme) of Communion and Participation into meaning. Work is investigation out of curiosity to seek the Absolute and live its truth in order to formulate a *Creed*. Work is to love this liveable truth of the Absolute which is opening to wisdom. Work is love of wisdom, Philosophy. The Creed is one's certain belief (episteme), the ground, the foundation (Philosophy, because it is love of wisdom, is laying down and formulation and presentation of grounds, foundations as models for living reality). The Creed is openness to set firmer foundations, in a constant Waying of laying the foundations immanently by moving toward transcendence in *excessus*. This constant Waying is the execution of the Metaphysical, i.e., the path

---

<sup>42</sup> Plato, *Republica*, II 376 b.

to transcendence in immanence. It is the path of Perfection. Love of wisdom is the openness of such grounds, models to history, to the investigation. Love of wisdom is to take the problematic bull by the horns and to investigate its strength, its weakness in order to find meaning in the work, which is a task (*faena, tarea*), which is a struggle (*lidia*).

Openness is investigation. Investigation is questioning one's situation in the world and the meaning of the same. Questioning itself is the vocation to build links, bridges, ways, itineraries. Investigation always has the finality of relinking with the Truth of the matter. Investigation is encountering the Mystery first of all as a question whose response is not merely knowledge but a process of finding meaning as wisdom, of going beyond being there to being there for someone, eventually being there with someone (in the Absolute sense, in terms of Communion and Participation) with one's whole life in which one constructs an itinerary. *Istoria* is first and foremost inquiry into the Truth of one's situation and set out the path, itinerary, way toward it, not by talking about the way (*meta odos*) but setting the same way as an investigation, as a search for meaning which is search for truth. Such an openness in history, rooted in relationality to the other<sup>43</sup>, is a) *subjective* or on the part of man who establishes himself as the knowing subject, b) *global* in its scope of investigation, c) *systematic* in its execution and development d) *formal* in its reach as transfiguration through relinking by investigation is its means of development e) *linguistic* in its nature because it seeks Communion, which can only realize itself in being communicative and consequently participative; and f) *criteriological* since at the outset all investigation seeks to separate *doxa* or opinion from *episteme* or certain knowledge.

To work is to approach, from the immanence of *in medias res*, the Absolute in its transcendence, to be relinked, to reconnect, to re-establish the relationship, according to the determination of the Absolute, or that which has set in the original sense this determination<sup>44</sup> to be attained in *religatio*

---

<sup>43</sup> I acknowledge the influence of the work of P. Ricoeur on this regard, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. This commentary has proven to be helpful in my attempt to digest and understand this Ricoeurian opus: F. Dosse, *Paul Ricoeur, Michel de Certeau. L'histoire: entre le dire et le faire*, Paris : L'Herne, 2006.

<sup>44</sup> I have benefited on this regard from the work of M. de Certeau, Cf. P. Favre, *Mémorial*, M. de Certeau (ed.), Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960; J.-J. Surin, *Guide spirituel pour la perfection*, M. de Certeau (ed.), Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 1963.

or in the *Originary*, i.e., the *Origin* as the finish line, the goal, the end which presupposes a waying of excess, of ecstasy, of overflowing, Absolute generosity. Relinking consists in the construction of ways, itineraries, traditions to contextualize, home and transmit these traditions as living and permanent ways or itineraries. Such a construction necessarily signifies: a) *willingness* which is translated as a will to adventure, made concrete in listening, receiving, b) *desire* to give oneself and not just to give, c) *discernment* to interiorize the investigation as an exploration of one's depth or capacity of response to the call of the Absolute, since Spirituality is a response to a call, from the betweenness of the Way in its concreteness and contextualization as a path that links the start with the end, and d) *determination* to imply oneself in an integrated manner to this interiorization which is the building of character, that of the Spirit which is man working on the relinking.

Tradition, as stated, is the permanence of the gift with the challenge of not returning, but of giving back or going back to the Origin, but at the end or as the goal (*Originary*) and to go forth and share the gift, because of its sheer excessiveness and overflowingness which is the very root of sacramentality given that sacramentality is excessiveness in ecstasy in taking the initiative for encounter, in initiation, communication, accompaniment in the experience, made historical in Mystery: which is point of encounter in Mystagogy, which is the full realization of Spirituality which in history must be consistently and constantly transmitted as tradition by Mystagogy which is the going back to the Giver in receiving the Gift. This going back consists in transmitting the Gift because of its excessive generosity. This is because the Giver, in the Gift, is ecstasy the overflowing of wisdom in love, calling out to love. Spirituality is love of wisdom. It is love for the gift. Thus, this gift must not be returned. Instead, it must be given, it must be shared: as an option of life (*Ascesis*) rooted in the foundation or Origin which is, at the same time, the goal, end or *Originary* in a continuous exodus or waying (*Spirituality*). All of which part and go toward the gift by giving it in life, in a life of wisdom (of living according to the gift) nourished and nourishing with the Generosity of the Absolute made communicable and participable in Love. This giving of the gift, this continuous work makes the permanence (tradition) effective, hence, truly sacramentological. This Permanent Effectivity is the gist of Mystagogy.

Such a continuous work, an exodus from a primordial fault of separation of man from the Absolute, which is the active dimension of '*Religatio*', signifies the continuity of Mystagogy, with man working on his relinking by accepting the invitation by conscientiously taking part in the process of initiation, communication and accompanying (Mystagogy) in the act of self-giving which is the construction of ways, itineraries, traditions in one's existence to transfigure it into life, life in the Spirit. Only in the Spirit can one truly have life. Life is the primordial act of the spirit which is primarily executed as a quest, as an itinerary, as an adventure. Relinking is the act of transitioning from existence or being there to life or being there for a purpose and for somebody. Relinking is making an exodus, a going out, in faith, searching for the Absolute. Such a search seeks to call out for the Attributes of the Absolute. '*Salí tras ti clamando*', 'I went out calling for you'<sup>45</sup>, as St. John of the Cross writes describing the commencement and forging of the itinerary.

### ***B) Rereading or 'Religatio' as Happening in the Word***

Work, as the execution of an investigation, in itself brings about an event, a happening that must not only be there (exist) but be significant (life). Hence, there is a need for action to make this transfiguration to significance happen. This transfiguration can only be a celebration. Action, by which man out of curiosity, out of his desire to know, opens up into a happening. An Act is a happening that rereads the thematization of man in being Spirit, out of his integral desire to know which is conjoined to his acting by which he takes place as a happening and opens himself experientially as a narrative. With narrative, the solitude of the ego necessarily opens itself up as solidarity, which awaits this coming, this approach such that the care of the curiosity of solitude opens itself up as service. Service is the very root of celebration. In fact, all liturgy, all celebrations are services. Rereading is the service of the act. By rereading, the text becomes

---

<sup>45</sup> St. John of the Cross, *Cántico espiritual* (Poem), 1. For the moment, I have made use of the study of C. Thompson for this insight, *The Poet and the Mystic. A Study of the Cántico Espiritual of San Juan de la Cruz*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. Also: E. Pacho, *Vértice de la poesía y de la mística. El 'Cántico Espiritual' de san Juan de la Cruz*, Burgos: Editorial Monte Carmelo, 1983.

alive. It ceases to just being there or just being a happening or a fact or event in history and becomes executed, i.e., becomes a celebration, becomes a liturgy, a service for others, so that others may benefit in the transmission, passing on (tradition) in its effectivity by Mystagogy. In Mystagogy, man, in his calling to be spirit and person, responds to the initiative of service of the Absolute to man. This response is man's participation in this work, service of the Absolute and marks his own fuller communion with the same Absolute.

All investigation centers on happenings and all investigation is a happening. Knowledge in its foundational fullness, which is a critical problem, is a vision. A vision is the foundation of a happening. However, this vision has to develop into the happening of knowledge which is wisdom. From the investigation, the narrative is derived. And the narrative is about the celebration, the event becoming a liturgy. Narratives are not about facts but how these facts develop. Narratives are not about existence but about lives. These happenings are the opening up of one's thematization and reading of oneself to the reading of the one who comes to give significance to the Exodus with the Covenant. The Exodus is the penetration of man, the immanent questor, into the transcendent by means of an investigation, wherein the thematization opens up man within the itinerary of his creation to become Spirit in order to receive the Coming of the Absolute as God, whose coming is His Act of Serving Mankind, effectively making the rereading, constituting the celebration, the liturgy happen not as a fact but as a celebration; not as a mere factual recitation which is a monologue (enumeration of facts) but a *doxology* (praise of the celebration), opening up more channels for the Logos, by dialogue.

All investigation is carried out by going out. Investigation is necessarily an exodus, an *excessus* or ecstasy from comfort zones of innocence, which characterizes solipsism and egoism. Rereading is opening up of man as spirit in order to receive this Coming of the Absolute as God, in terms of Fulfillment and Fullness of Faithfulness, correspondingly allowing Mysticism which is the Covenant by which the Transcendent Absolute as God enters into the immanence of human history as Mystery, which is cognitively and experientially captured as Revelation. Because it is revelation and living out of the mystical, Mystery is when the 'love of wisdom' matures, develops, grows into the 'wisdom of love' which is the excess of the love of wisdom which is the acceptance of existence into a life-transfiguring process or 'wisdom of love'.

Narratives presuppose knowledge and live it experientially to be wisdom, to be the path that is trodden upon which discovers that in its searching or going, there is a coming. Because of this coming, this searching or going discovers that in its finite initiative of work, asceticism or effort, there is an infinite initiative of grace. Henceforth, the work unleashes the itinerary in terms of freedom. Man's work of relinking is in effect opening up to the coming of the Absolute, by freely letting it enter effectively in the intimacy of one's immanent existence so that it may become life. Such an opening up to the coming, to the advent is commitment. It is commitment to history because history is an advent of narrative that proceeds from the curiosity of the adventure and that becomes a commitment to history. In this commitment, made concrete in Service, one sets himself apart to receive the experiential coming of the Absolute as God, to serve Man as Supreme Spirit in Person, in 'graces and gifts from this Supreme Goodness'.<sup>46</sup> This coming, with all graces and gifts, is that of Justice, i.e., the Justice of God toward His Creatures which configures the bindingness of the covenant in the Word. This justice, which is metaphysical, as it is the fullness of the real in reality, is the affirmation that the coming of God is His means, His transfigurative being *in medias res*. His sacramentological and experiential means of being present as Mystery, which is His Mystagogia, His allowing Himself to be experienced, His Experiencing. Therefore, Metaphysics is Justice, it is Theodicy, the Justice of the Absolute in its Experiential Presence in Person (God) in History as Mystery. This very Presence is the very whatness of the Absolute as God. This Presence is Fulfillment, Faithfulness, for being Personal, specific, whose specific means

---

<sup>46</sup> St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, 20. A 'Pauline' Spiritual Exercise has proven insightful in reading this spiritual classic of the founder of the Jesuits, cfr. J. A. Fitzmeyer, *Spiritual Exercises Based on Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1995. St. Ignatius has been helpful for me in understanding the notion of God as coming in man's approaching and arriving to God in order to serve Him, as stated by the Saint himself in this paragraph of his classic opus. This opens up the notion that God is the one who takes the initiative so that man could approach Him. God is the one who comes. For the notion of the coming of God, I have always found helpful E. Jüngel, *God's Being is in Becoming. The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001. Above all, St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*. The entire opus speaks of man's search and arrival to Spiritual Matrimony, presupposing the initiative of God who in His Faithfulness comes to man, invites Him.

is the coming, the fulfillment of the Promise, especially in the Incarnation: the root of all sacramentology for being the Absolute as God placing Himself in the Service of man and this Service is the very basis of the service of man to God, the Liturgy. This Liturgy commences with the Absolute as Beauty, the Origin of Charity which perfects itself in history as the Good and that must walk this history by being the Truth that guides and provides (in terms measured epistemologically as conformity, correspondence, coherence, usage) in Service so that this Charity may be diffused in the Truth of the same history as Goodness, the Perfection of Beauty in its Originating force toward the Originary which is the Absolute in Beauty that has perfected, fulfilled itself in fullness as the God, Yaweh, who brings about the Good, in his Metaphysical Justice. Beauty is the Principle and the Goal, founded in and fueled by Truth, brought about to Perfection in Goodness so that all that is many, in their thingness by which they are real in reality, reality in real, may be in experience be One in Communion and Participation.

Freedom is the primordial condition of Spirituality and is based on the exercise (work or exercise or ascesis) in terms of rereading wherein man, with a vocation as Spirit, which cannot be separated from the response as Person, and is perfected in the opening up man's existence in terms of life as a rereading of his situation, wherein the constructed itineraries, ways, bridges to be crossed or to be trod upon become effectively openings not just for man's active pursuit of the Absolute but for its coming which is expected in hope. Freedom is only exercised in hope. And from a Christian tradition, this freedom is a rediscovery from the curiosity to know one's destiny, from the primordial fault, which is rooted in one's Origin from God and from the original fall. Thereupon, freedom is the maturity of curiosity, of investigation, of inquiry from nostalgia, nostalgia for the Absolute which comes as God. With freedom, '*istoria*' or history, which commences as an investigation, inquiry out of curiosity wherein man becomes the very problem of knowledge, becomes a narrative, better yet experiential narratives of salvation, because of the coming of the Word which is the happening of revelation or the Absolute, in its coming as God, allows itself to be experienced by man as God, which is the Absolute in Person, in his quest for integrity.

Curiosity is going toward a goal. Curiosity is the assumption of the question with the commitment of building an itinerary. It is seeking. But

hoping, which happens in the narrative of experience in rereading the thematization of man being a Spirit, discovers beyond the domain of the question, by living out the response: that the Absolute is the response for it comes as God, in the paradox and in the parable of the Trinity<sup>47</sup>, that is, God as relationality, such that this Absolute is the one who has the real initiative from the eternity of transcendence and accordingly comes toward in the temporality of immanence within the going of man as Spirit or God in His relational integrity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is the Absolute, who comes to meet man in Person, in the integrity of His Person which are Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit creating an narrative of paradox, a parable that could only open up as doxology or the celebration of the meeting. This integrity of God that comes in Person is Fulfillment, the experiential-historical discourse of Faithfulness.

It can be affirmed that this meeting is the happening, the taking place. It is not just a place, but a taking place which makes possible the fulfillment of hope wherein the Absolute as God is experienced as faithfulness, going beyond or perfecting the faith of the itinerary, of the waiting, of the expectation, of the exodus. Exodus is departure, leaving, going out. It is ecstasy, excessiveness, generosity that the Transcendent Absolute offers to Man as God in an Act of Service within the experiential ambiance of the Mystery, which is the meeting point. Exodus is going away from the stinginess, greed and selfishness of isolation, solipsism which in the present world has become an art form pretending to be a necessary element for the pursuit of aesthetic ideals, in the pursuit of truth but which actually is just a poor excuse to be less human and humane. The result is a confusion of this aesthetic ideal with the truth.<sup>48</sup> Exodus is liberation to meet in order to celebrate.

---

<sup>47</sup> I have found this work to be enriching on this regard, C.Kaliba, *Die Welt as Gleichnis des dreienigen Gottes*, Frankfurt-Berlin-New York-Paris: Peter Lang, 1991. For a succinct foundational study on the Trinity for this notion of the World as the Parable of the Trinity, G. O'Collins, *The Tripersonal God: Understanding and Interpreting the Trinity*, London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999; W. Brunning (ed.), *Trinität. Perspektiven der Theologie*, Freiburg: Herder, 1984; B. Andrade, *Dios en medio de nosotros. Esbozo de una teología trinitaria kerigmática*, Salamanca: Secretariado Trinitario, 1999. For an excellent biblical perspective for our present reflections, cfr. J. Bottéro, 'Le Dieu de la Bible', in :J. Bottéro, M.A. Quakin & J. Moingt, *La plus belle histoire de Dieu*, Paris : Seuil, 1977,13-45 ; M. García Cordero, *Teología de la biblia*, vols. 1-2, Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1970.

<sup>48</sup> T. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, London: Continuum, 1997, 53.

Exodus is going out in faith only to meet, to encounter, to have an experientially celebratory relation, in the freedom of the desert, with the foundation of this Exodus which is the Covenant: the Absolute that comes to man as God, in an Act of Service, so that man can come to God as Spirit. Covenant is the seal of this encounter, which opens up as a celebration in history, a taking place that is fulfilled and thus becomes a Liturgy. The taking place that comes as meeting, as encounter is Fulfillment. It is the discourse of Faithfulness. It is the very liturgy, the very celebration. Since what is celebrated is the fulfillment in history of the Mystery as Covenant. This Covenant opens up an experiential narrative, which is Wisdom, which is the thematic of Spirituality and which Philosophy takes as the foundational discourse. The greatest excessivity of man to become Spirit, which is ecstasy from existence (remaining in existence is metaphysical solipsism, which historically is selfishness), is to be on the side of life by living, which means being in Communion with the Absolute in Person who is God and by being the Absolute in Person, God, by Participation. All these means in history to be human and humane, in finitude and culpability which are stimuli, call, vocation to Exodus, to rise up from the fall and walk by Waying the Way (Spirituality).

With the Covenant, the consent or openness of the encounter becomes a self-giving given that the coming of the Absolute as God is a self-offering which mutually seeks a self-giving, by which the Word of history becomes codified as a word that commits itself to history in the experiential narratives parting from history as investigation, as seeking the adventure out of curiosity for the truth. This time the Covenant, parting from reading and thematization, is developed into a rereading. To celebrate is to give oneself as Gift for others in Permanence, which is the stability of service, which has its historical consolidation in Mystagogy within Spirituality, for Mystagogy is the fulfillment of Spirituality in as much as Mystagogy is the Permanence and Effectivity of the '*Religatio*' project of Spirituality.

Rereading is allowing oneself to be read by God, after undertaking a thematization and reading of one's own situation in the world and search for meaning in it, in one's going to the Absolute and such rereading opens up the going forward of man not as just a waiting or expectation, but as a hoping, making this waiting or expectation into a hoping which finds its meaning in the coming of the Absolute as God. All these lead to the dis-

covery that the Absolute that is searched for is the God that initiates history in which man participates out of curiosity, by investigation or inquiry; that God has the initiative and wishes to come to man in his coming, thus opening the passive dimension of '*Religatio*' which is rereading or wherein man opens himself up, in his quest to be spirit, to be reread by the Absolute who comes as God in passivity. So much so, the Problem which is the object of investigation or inquiry becomes truly the Mystery, the presence of the Transcendent Absolute in the Immanent History of Man as God.

Such a presence is celebratory, it is effective, it is permanent, it is dynamic. It is liturgy. Liturgy is the celebration of Service in its efficiency, permanence, dynamicity: the power to transfigure within history. So much so that, man 'discovers' in hope, springing up from the Nostalgia in which his curiosity, his investigation, his inquiry matures that the Absolute that comes as God directs Himself to his a) *subjective* level on the part of man who establishes himself as the knowing subject, with a b) *global* for this coming of the Absolute as God affects man's living in the world, it is also c) *systematic* such that God comes not in a haphazard way but creating realms of meaning given the global, God changes the d) *formal* dimension because this coming is a transfiguration into man's being in the world from active to passive as this rereading is the opening up of the thematization of the active dimension, God comes to man to reveal Himself and therefore is e) *linguistic* in its nature because it seeks Communion and Communion can only be communicative and correspondingly participative; and f) God's coming is  *criteriological* since the covenant that sprung from the exodus is an effectivity of the faithfulness and should be the basis of discerning and determining the validity and authenticity of the way taken.

This work, which is the concreteness of service, is exercised by means of going becomes an event by which the real profound essence of the itinerary of going is discovered as the Coming of the Absolute. This Coming of the Absolute is the fulfillment of the Absolute as Mystery, as the Presence of the Transcendent in the Immanence of human history by which the Absolute serves mankind as God. Such crossing and act of treading in the act of working or '*Religatio*' as relinking is the event of effectively rereading one's existence as search for meaning, of transforming knowledge, from its opinative stage (*doxa*) to its certain phase (*episteme*) into wisdom, into meaning. However, meaning can only go beyond from being

a vision into truly a way in a covenant, into the happening as covenant and not just in the exodus. The effectivity of this Presence as Mystery (the mystical), given that it is the 'wisdom of love', opens up Morals, an Ethics wherein the path to happiness (*eudaimonia*) or being in good spirit, i.e., the disposition to live the life of the Spirit to the fullest in the fullest of Integrity in specificity, in property, in being Person.<sup>49</sup> Mysticism is the mystical in its dynamism, in its constancy in its coming to history, which is an invitation to take the journey together.

### ***C) Rebinding or 'Religatio' as Invitation to the Liturgy***

Integrity is not a state but a constant historical search for life in the Absolute that seeks to overcome the so-called theoretical or speculative visions by making them into liveable ways or itineraries, not just by practice or praxis but by integrity: the involvement of the whole to be whole in Communion and Participation by means of encounter, by means of fulfillment of the coming, of the approach, of the exodus or way of excessiveness, of ecstasy (not the transitory psychological state but the very metaphysical movement of man toward transcendence). Integrity is the way wherein there is a meeting, an encounter wherein the starting point of history which curiosity or investigation or inquiry that goes or proceeds toward a goal but is approached by the coming of God, who is the Absolute as Spirit *and* Person, which is the fount and source of history as experiential narratives. Upon the fullness of the experiential approach of making Himself experienced or making Himself the mediation, the bridge for Communion and Participation, which is the plenitude of the service,

---

<sup>49</sup> On speaking of the 'limits of my world', L. Wittgenstein, from the viewpoint of language, was in effect speaking of a horizon of meaning and living and even acting, which may go beyond the tautological limits of language. Nevertheless, we must explore whether these limits are a circumference of presence and thus present mystical and ethical dimensions, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 5.6, 6.421, 6.522. All these must be taken within the context of Modern Philosophy, cfr. J. Jartnack, *Wittgenstein and Modern Philosophy*, Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1965; M.K. Munitz, *Contemporary Analytic Philosophy*, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981; A.J. Ayer, *Logical Positivism*, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1978; F. Kerr, *Theology After Wittgenstein*, London: Blackwell, 1986.

the Absolute as Spirit and Person in God is experienced effectively as the Absolute as Spirit *in* Person.

Service during this dynamic process within the dynamism of narratives must integrate itself as a symphony of Communion and Participation such that company perfects itself with companionship, which is the state of Communion and Participation wherein service becomes reciprocal, mutual, shared. This is the full sense of integrity, which is symphonic, which is work, which is liturgy, which is celebration. Indeed, such a full sense demands more than just trust and commitment. It demands a Testament, for the covenant, the word to commit is already binding. For example, in Christianity this seal is the cross, the living Testament. In Judaism, it is the Law or Torah. In Islam, it is the fixed written word or Quran. It is in these binding that the covenant become present in history as traditions or permanence of the Integrity in history toward eschatological fulfillment.

Integrity only makes sense within a realm of freedom guaranteed by the discovery of history as experiential narratives parting from the investigation or inquiry out of curiosity. Freedom is the drive toward fulfillment, parting from knowledge which seeks out the Absolute and is met by the coming of God whose revelation, whose opening up in experientiality to man as Spirit is Wisdom. This coming is a *syncatabasis*, *anthropopatehia*, *condescensio* or going down in generosity, coming down, starting with the Absolute coming to man as Spirit in Person, whose radical effectiveness is the Incarnation, God becoming Man to serve mankind, in Jesus Christ and the sacramental prolongation in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, then permanence of the Divine Service in Mystery.

History is the movement from investigation (from the immanent to transcendent in the Problem of Knowledge) to narrative toward the fulfillment (from the transcendent to immanence in Mystery) which is Eschatological or the fullness of Integrity. In Integrity all the modalities (subjectivity, globality, systematicity, formality, linguisticity, criteriologicity) all converge in fullness of fulfillment in terms of being the journeyer, in terms of the scope of the journey, with regard to the orderliness of the execution and development of the journey in terms of company and that the projection has been executed and developed fully, such that the language has attained its fullness in being that of company from being instructional in the work and imperatively codified in the covenant to

liturgical in terms of Communion and Participation in the celebration, such that the criteria has been met, as there is fullness of fulfillment.

Relinking and Rereading find perfection when the active and passive dimensions meet in the rebinding, which makes the Covenant truly binding, obligatory not just on the part of man who becomes a Spirit but also, and above all because of his Infinity compared to the temporality, finitude and culpability of man, on the part of the Absolute who comes as God, who by His Service binds mankind to Himself in Communion and Participation. What is binding or obligatory is truly and effectively shared, in fullness of Communion and Participation, in view of the economy of the superabundance of the coming to the receiving, in agape wherein the 'excess' or exhaustiveness of the *kénosis* reveals itself as *pléroma* or fullness, wherein the Absolute, who is God as Spirit *and* Person, is experienced as God as Spirit *in* Person.

The rebinding opens itself to the broadening of the notion of Communion and Participation in history in terms of mystagogy, which is the *bearing witness* that necessarily flows from the *acceptance*, which in turn has its *foundation* in the grasping. Communion and Participation indicate that the consenting which grew into the advent of self-giving has not arrived but continues to perfect itself in a journeying together of man becoming a Spirit and the Absolute who comes as God toward the fullness of history in Eschatology. This is made possible because of the seal, the living Testament which is a journey together, a bond that walks the Way. It is a bond that brings together the assembly of men, the ecclesiality of those who walk the Spiritual life.

Journeying together, which presupposes Communion and Participation with the Absolute together with other men in the spiritual quest to become spirits in person (not just spirits and persons), is a constant desire to arrive in the fullest of fulfillment in eschatology. This journeying together is in this immanent history already a fulfillment wherein the mutual self-opening reveals man as Spirit and the Absolute as God in the fullness of mutual relation, wherein the former is Son or Daughter, Beloved, Sister or Brother, Spouse and the latter is Father, Lover, Brother, Spouse. This mutuality of relation is forged from the relationality of Mercy of God to the Human Spirit by which He allows Himself not only to be experienced as Father, Lover, Brother, Spouse but takes the hand of the Human Spirit

as Son, Daughter, Beloved, Sister and they journey together. Wherefore, by journeying together, the mutuality of accepting the invitation of the coming (relinking) by the approaching (rereading) everything becomes binging wherein 'love is wisdom' and 'wisdom is love' and not just 'love of wisdom' or 'wisdom of love'.

The Mystery transfigures its aura of being a question and challenge by being Presence and becomes a journeying together by being Present to Each Other which is the fullness of the circle of Spirituality, which is not a 'journey of the solitary to the solitary'<sup>50</sup> but a reciprocating adventure even from the beginning toward the end in the way in between, though it was apparently the journey started by the individual with the revelation that the Absolute took the initiative from all eternity in coming as God. Man's investigation, searching and going is in reality. This capacity for receiving and God's coming is his overflowing giving (excess, ecstasy) such that by Journeying together there is an economy of sharing wherein this giving and searching overflows into history breaking toward it to an economy or living out in Communion and Participation of giving and receiving creating eschatology.

*Spiritual Economy* is the administration, management of this giving and receiving, this coming and going, this searching and arriving in terms of togetherness, in terms of Communion and Participation. This giving and receiving is total, kenotic, such that this emptying is an overflowing into the infinite, beyond totality because of the Absolute love that comes and capacitates the finite search of man in its culpability.<sup>51</sup> This *kenosis* of the coming of God in search of the man who searches, who investigates opens up Infinity beyond totality, such that a journeying together is opening in which the *kénosis* is not exhausted in the total giving but is intensified by the force of love (*eros*) into an infinity that can only be celebrated liturgically as *agape*, as journeying together, with all others who form the ecclesiality of those who trod the Waying of Spirituality, in Communion and Participation. Mystagogy is the dynamic interaction of this giving and receiving, coming and going, searching and arriving in initiating, accompanying, leading but together, in terms of Communion and Participation,

---

<sup>50</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, VI, 9, 11.

<sup>51</sup> For the notion of 'flow' in Spiritual Life, I find the discussion of W. Johnston quite suggestive: *Letters to Contemplatives*, Makati: St. Paul Publications, 1993, 92-95.

driven by love, a love that is shared, diffused with others in Charity, building up an ecclesiality of Communion and Participation. In such an ecclesiality, Charity, that starts as empathy, is executed, made concrete, contextual in Care of others and with others.

**Remaining in the Mystery: Staying in the Ambiance of Presence from Grasping, Accepting and Bearing Witness as Commitment. The Bindingness of ‘Religatio’ in Exodus**

Correspondingly, we must not remain in the Mystery, in the Mysticism with its ambiance of presence, accompanied by phenomena, by fulfillments. Remaining in the Mystery would be remaining in Tabor. We have to go on, accompanying the Lord, to Jerusalem, to the Passion and continue the journey, to unfold our relationship, to truly become relinked, reread by being rebounded. By going on, we accompany, we celebrate, we unfold, we originate.

At this phase or dimension of ‘*Religatio*’, the Word becomes Binding. Bindingness is the strength, the force, the energy in history of commitment which is the full historical unfolding of the ‘*Religatio*’ Project. A Covenant is forged. Covenants originate bindingness for generations to come. It is the seal of Communion and Participation within History in its bindingness, in its foundationality and openness to the dynamics of history and process, i.e., openness to permanence in the form of Tradition or that which is carried over, handed over, given as a gift in history to be permanent, to stay, to continually enrich. Because of the Covenant, the Mystery becomes a way of *excessus*, even exceeding its sacramentological dimension and entering into the fullness of the *eschaton*, not just the overcoming of mediation but the fullness of mediation, its perfection, the Originary.

The Covenant of the Rereading, which can never be a solitary affair between an individual man and the Absolute (given that the Absolute fulfills Himself and comes as God for all to be in Communion and Participation as spirits in person with Him) remains in the continuous journeying together of the Human Spirit and Divine Spirit or God (as Spirit is the term of Integrity) in a Personal Relationship of Communion and Participation and becomes a Celebration that is seen as the constant point of arrival of the Exodus of the Waiting of Relinking. Journeying together,

given that the Mystery in its sheer *excessus* journeys with man in history to the *eschaton*, dynamically constitutes the concretization of the Invitation to Celebrate the Liturgy or the Common Work, makes the adventure a common work, a liturgy, a celebration of togetherness, of relationality. The common or public work (liturgy) is the journeying together in history the aspiration of arriving together in eschatology. Journeying together is the seal, the binding of relationality which in history is seen as tradition, i.e., in religious tradition, the concreteness of the betweenness of the historical way or context, of which Spirituality is the dynamics of the journeying together, released from the duality of Problem-Mystery, wherein the religious tradition or permanence of the religious in history is just the horizon of comprehending historically the journeying together, already a fulfillment in itself, takes place in history toward the fullness of fulfillment in eschatology.<sup>52</sup> Such a horizon of historical comprehension constantly reaches out as an invitation to the liturgy. The invitation is only possible as an excess, an ecstasy, a reaching out as an Act of Service.

Only relationality, which is the experiential realization of '*Religatio*' in history, is binding bringing together the two poles: the human spirit who is Son or Daughter, Beloved, Brother or Sister and the Divine Spirit who is Father, Lover, Brother. Relationality does not seek to know. It is not an epistemology of domination, of knowing, on concordance or coherence, but it is the epistemology of *agnosis*<sup>53</sup>, of unknowing, of *apophysis* (negative theology) of letting the experience construct its own discourse as experience, as mediation in history that opens up the ambiance of Communion and Participation which is the Mystery, the encounter of transcendence and immanence in relationality which is the sacramental unfolding in historical concreteness which are the modalities of contextual effective experience in meaningful life moments. Eventually *aphosasis*, after exhausting all the affirmative linguistic recourses of analogy which is the stretching of the experiential limits of the effable, matures, develops and grows into an anagogy, a metaphysical directionality in the historical way of Spirituality.

---

<sup>52</sup> Many meaningful insights can be found in this essay: J.K. Ruffing, 'The Praxis of Spirituality. Experiencing God and Responding to the Relationship', in *Studies in Spirituality* 28 (2018), 47-64.

<sup>53</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius, *De Mystica Theologia*, I, 3; Idem., *De Divinis Nominibus*, I, 1, II, 4, VII; 3, IX, 5; Idem., *Epistola*, 1.

An epistemology of dominance is characterized by knowing through the grasp of truth in terms of concordance or correspondence, coherence and pragmatic use. The absoluteness of these uses are all manifestations of ontological monism, wherein all concreteness is reduced to an intellectual construct or to the realm of ideas which we call 'system'. In a system, all reality in its realness, all the realness as reality is adjusted and reduced to ontological terms, to the symbolic abstraction of being of beings, abstracted from the concreteness of differences and pluralities. This brand of epistemology has led an atypical mystic and spiritual master like Simone Weil to affirm that 'when God has become as full of significance as the treasure is for the miser, we have to tell ourselves, insistently that he does not exist. We must experience the fact that we love him, even if he does not exist.'<sup>54</sup> This means that God is not known but experienced. Relationality is going beyond knowledge which is ontological or in terms of being and enters into the metaphysical dynamics of mediation, into the ambiance of Mystery which is experience which is transcendental in its thrust, immanent in its happening, mediationaly opening up the Way which is Spirituality. Thus, Relationality, because it is the Waying of Spirituality, is metaphysical, going beyond ontological categories (categories of existence) through relationality (categorization of life) into an ecstatic realm, uniting the dimensions or phases of past, present and future of history<sup>55</sup>, that is configured experientially in the discourse of the Spirit, in the narrative of the mystery which is Mystagogy: the initiation, communication and accompaniment into the depths of the Mystery which is lived, not just postivistically known, relationally (globally or integrally and specifically) in order to be experiential in its mediation, sacramental (incarnationally effective and historically permanent) in its concretion.

Within the current of relationality, the experience, which has been experientially and discursively unfolded in narratives, speaks only of a unifying bond which shares something in common (Communion) with both Human Spirit and Divine Spirit, already bonding in relational codes as Son, Daughter, Beloved, etc., fulfilling the Work of the Exodus and the Word of the Covenant in a mutual sharing, commitment and relationship

---

<sup>54</sup> S. Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, London-New York: Routledge, 2002, 15.

<sup>55</sup> P. Ricouer, *Time and Narrative*, Vol. III, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, 63.

of continually journeying together in history, breaking toward eschatology. In this breaking of history, Hope grows and is released from its tensions and enters into the Restlessness that Rests alone in the relational God<sup>56</sup> who is Father, Brother, Lover, Savior, Sanctifier. This rest is release from history as an arena of narratives and liberation to be the narrator, together with the Father, Brother, Lover, Savior and Sanctifier. Narratives are methodologically descriptive (phenomenological) and interpretative (hermeneutical). These two dimensions of the method (discourse on the way) must converge into the experiential, such that the experience, the very mediation of the real as reality, of reality as the real, must have its own Logos, its own creative word that seeks to dialogue, to open up in countless voices, with countless shades and modalities in Communion and Participation with the same tone. Experience is the home of the Spirit and in the Logos the Spirit effectively finds this home in history and takes possession of it and lives in it to constitute himself as a Person.

The Liberation, the Eschatological Release from the history of existence, by means (mediation by being *in medias res*) of the *excessus* of life, of the narratives is Mystagogy in its fullness, better yet, in its fulfillment in its fullness: the togetherness (the being the other to each other together) of mutual initiation, communication, accompaniment in the continuing journey which develops discursively in historical terms as a Confession, celebrated as Liturgy, permanent as a Tradition of Communion and Participation. However, it is a Permanence of Pilgrimage, of further journeying. This Permanence takes the historical form of tradition is commitment to further journeying and as Mystagogy is permanently discursive in experientiality as Doxology: as work of praise made public, made communal in Communion and Participation, made liturgical or liturgy in history, as the bearing witness of the historically immanent, breaking into the eschatology of the transcendent within the Mystery, within the experiential ambiance of Communion and Participation wherein the transcendental and immanent meet in effective and permanent encounter.

Work which is a search in '*Religatio*' as Relinking is Philosophical because its directionality is *Theological*, i.e., toward the Absolute in search of

---

<sup>56</sup> St. Augustine, *Confessiones* I, 1.

the God. The *Theological* seeks a Vision of the Absolute as God. The Word that is sealed in the Covenant of '*Religatio*' as Rereading is *Theological* in directionality, i.e., the Absolute comes as God, i.e., it is God who comes and Reveals Himself, opening up a space of coming which is Presence, which is the Mystical, whose effectivity is Mysticism as it is lived out in as the 'good or happy life' (Ethics). This space of coming is covered by fulfilling, by faithfulness by which the Absolute fully reveals, not just cognitively or as unveiling of knowledge but as fully giving itself in transcendence in the mediation of experience to immanent man, Himself as God, as Supreme Spirit and Person. This is His Faithfulness, Fulfillment whose modality (particularity), mediation (encounter in bridging), sacramentologicality (effectivity and permanence) is the coming, the serving of God of Himself toward man, wherein God is truly experienced as Supreme Spirit in Person.

Owing to this, in the Bindingness of '*Religatio*' as Rebinding: the duality of the Theological and Theological is overcome with the journeying together which is the directionality of the Spiritual Wherein Man and the Absolute, Finite and Infinite, Human Spirit and Divine Spirit, in relationality as Son, Daughter, Beloved, Father, Lover, etc. journey together. This does not mean that Spirituality is limited to Rebinding. Spirituality is projected within the betweenness of the historical context in its concreteness, in and as '*Religatio*' in all its three phases, dimensions, moments, involving Theology (or the theologal by which man searches for the Absolute as God), Mysticism (or the theological by which the Absolute comes as God and becomes Present) but it is in Rebinding that the Spiritual in directionality of Spirituality, which is the realization of Mystagogy in relationality, is appreciated, even going beyond the Presence as Mystery by continuing the journey that has been established with this coming and becoming Present, which is Fulfillment of the Absolute, who is Faithful as God. God is the Absolute in His Faithfulness, who allows Himself to be experienced as the Faithful One: *Yaweh* who will be Man in Presence, in His Transcendence as Mystery within man's Immanent History. Faithfulness is fulfillment. It is traveling toward the goal which always originates as it is the Originary, the Origin as the final point of all traveling, working and celebrating. All doxology is an originating pointing toward the continuation, the transmission, the perpetuation by means of Charity, by concretion in Service following the example of God Himself.

### **Continuing the Adventure of 'Religatio': Spirituality as Project. Attempting to Close the Experiential Circle from Between**

To recapitulate and expand further with the aim of opening new horizons of comprehension: Relinking, rereading and rebinding are three moments, phases, dimensions of the same '*Religatio*' projection of Spirituality in its fullness of realization as an experienciology which is the discursivity of mystagogy, not just the mystagogical discourse. The three aforementioned are inseparable, i.e., the three 'happen', better said, 'celebrate' together (happening together as celebration, as liturgy or overcoming of the event of existence with the doxology of life is the effectivity of betweenness as experience or the concreteness of mediation in sacramentality). In effect, the three always open up as a celebration starting with the work (liturgy), which is always public or relational with others and with which every human endeavor or adventure commences.

However, '*Religatio*' is always a perfecting adventure, for it is celebrated in history as it breaks toward eschatology in being *excessus*, as we have tried to demonstrate with our rambling and reiterative prose with iterative purpose (iterative or to construct an iter or path of passage). There are degrees of growth, maturity and development, as the experience, which is the mediation of the real in realities in as much as it is reality and of realities in as much as they are real, is an occasion of growth, maturity and development, i.e., it takes place in these terms, toward perfection, in history toward the breaking of history into eschatology, which is release, liberation in reciprocal, relational and mutual company. This is what characterizes Spirituality in its directionalities as theological, theological and spiritual. Spirituality starts from humility, realizing that man is just dust. Humility is the echo of the epiphany of the Absolute in man.<sup>57</sup>

The Absolute, in as much as it is the real in itself which is present in all reality and the Supreme Reality in as much as it is real constituting the universe of which the world, has for its echo as God the effectively lived and liveable portion: the land. Humility (from 'humus' or land or earth) is the world wherein we could live in Communion with the Absolute and be the Absolute in Participation. Humility is the key to man's metaphys-

---

<sup>57</sup> Cfr. S. Rinaudo, *La liturgia epifania dello Spirito*, Turin-Leumann: LDC, 1980.

icality or aspiration to transcendence in the historical way to the Spirit, for it grounds man in his transcendental vocation to be spirit and person in Communion and Participation with the Absolute. The world is venue of Mystagogy, the experiential living out in terms of teaching of the Mystery in terms of experiential initiation, communication and accompaniment, which all in all form the concrete moments of Mystagogy as service. This venue has a pedagogical value, for it is the point of departure, the Origin of all experiential teaching.<sup>58</sup> The originating epiphany of the Absolute teaches man, in his life journey, to never detach himself from the notion of Origin, from the state of being linked to the humus or land or earth is the Origin. The Origin is not only a place: it is a *topos*, i.e., a spiritual designation, reference, as starting point for all our human labors, giving the same metaphysical directionality. It is permanent, as generations of men enter into their sunset, the Origin remains. Only then can the permanent humus, the land, the earth, the world (which is primarily a house that has to be transfigured in the spiritual life as home) be effectively the point of departure for the metaphysical transfiguration and elevation of man to become Spirit in terms of Communion and Participation.

The adventure continues. Spirituality is an ongoing process. What is ongoing is the state of betweenness, not at the start neither in the end but a going-toward. It starts as Philosophy, seeking to provide a model of reality, a vision from which we could all contemplate (*theoria*), while striving theologically for the Absolute, seeking its attributes. It matures in Mysticism wherein *Theoria* is lived in *Praxis* in the Immanent Presence of the Transcendental Absolute in its theological coming as God, cognitively captured as Revelation, which is established as Mystery. Love is the process of this maturity, which is the driving force of all growth, development, evolution. Then the acme or summit is the spiritual directionality wherein there is a journeying together. This is the fullness of the maturity of Spirituality, which commences as Philosophy then proceeds to be a Theology in Mysticism and whose directionality is Spiritual in the journeying together. In the meantime, as we journey, let us help, sustain, aid one another in Charity which is the very effectivity of Mystagogy.

---

<sup>58</sup> Cfr. R. Bleistein, 'Mystagogie und Religionspädagogik' in: H. Vorgrimler, *Wagnis Theologie. Erfahrungen mit der Theologie Karl Rahners*, Freiburg: Editorial Herder, 1979, 51-60.

Spirituality has been from the very beginning Communion and Participation going to the end as a Waying or the dynamicity of betweenness. But within immanent history these two have to grow, develop, mature and evolve. From the clamoring at the quest or adventure of relinking passing through the calling of rereading which is the calling of the coming of the Absolute as God. And this calling or vocation, which is a historical invitation from the Presence or Mystery, matures into a responding by man which culminates in the journeying together, wherein Man and God unfold the richness of their experiential relationality. This mutual unfolding is a reciprocal Mystagogy, given that Mystagogy is relational. Man and God mutually open up to each other, they mutually initiate, accompany, lead each other into each other and in doing so unleash their relationality in terms of love which are spelled out as Lover, Beloved, Son, Daughter, Father and journey together, open up new avenues of Mystagogy for others as well. Always ecclesial, always relational.

Spirituality is a project. It develops in its projection as '*Religatio*' whose three phases, moments, dimensions we have attempted to expound on by presenting models or perspectives for comprehension without entering into details. In view of this, it is imperative to highlight that the development of the *Spiritual Project* is experienciological, correspondingly, mystagogical.

Spirituality as project of '*Religiatio*' covers from the Origin, growth, maturity, progression (these three are the states of being of betweenness as experiential narrative) until the goal, until the perfection, until the fullness of fulfillment in Communion and Participation which is the very same Origin but is found at the end, after the enriching experience which is enriching mediation which historically characterizes betweenness in its dynamicity. Spirituality has three directionalities: theological, theological and spiritual, all of which are projected and converted into a historical task, in terms of '*Religatio*'.

Experienciology is the development of Spirituality from the itineraries built by Philosophies out of models, perspectives, visions and which are lived through in the ambiance of Mystery which Philosophy as the theological takes by the horns of that elusive unicorn of human adventure as it matures into the theological of Mysticism, which is Ethical or living the good life in the ambiance of the Presence called Mystery, until the fullness of fulfillment of journeying together, breaking into eschatology, breaking

dualisms of the theologal (toward God) and theologically (from God) in a continuing adventure of mediation, of encounter, of bridging.

Spirituality as a project is metaphysical: it is philosophical, mystical and spiritual given that Spirituality, which is projection from betweenness in experience within the sacramentality of Mystery within the same world (the effectively lived and liveable portion of the universe) as it is carved from the universe (or the whole of reality) grows, matures and develops until solitude through solidarity becomes company and becomes a journey together in Service. This journey, which is Metaphysics in itself, parts from the aspiration of immanence and grows, develops and matures into transcendence, reaching the presence of transcendence within immanence.

Indeed, Spirituality is a journey together of the immanent and the transcendent, going beyond history into eschatology, going beyond mere union, which risks monism and monolithic structures and is just togetherness or attachment or adherence in terms of correspondence. Spirituality, which is genuine Metaphysics, aspires toward the transcendent in Communion which is commonality, building a community, sharing everything, except the identity and therefore participating in each other by maintaining, respecting each other's specificity and property. Spirit and Person are fully realized in Communion and Participation, not just mere cognitive or even ontological (monistic) union. This is what metaphysics is all about. It involves Spirits, Persons not just principles, doctrines, abstractions, symbols. Metaphysics commences with laying the foundation of our understanding by models which are itineraries, acknowledging the presence of the transcendent in our immanence. Metaphysics continues by means of journeying in terms of Communion and Participation into the fullness of fulfillment of experience of the real as reality (in realities) and reality (by being realities) as real, in its Supreme instance.

By laying the foundations, Metaphysics realizes itself as direction, by giving the word to experience (experientiology) such that experience becomes a concrete historical Way of the Spirit and Person toward transcendence within immanence, a turn: pointing out a tendency, since the real or all reality (*réalité*), as Bergson affirms, is tendency.<sup>59</sup> Even amidst all stag-

---

<sup>59</sup> H. Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Indianapolis-Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999, 50.

gering, amidst all things or beings (*seienden*), despite the fact that we do not know how everything stands with Being (*Sein*)<sup>60</sup>, or how we stand up to the goal of 'Religatio' for that matter: which is beyond Being in itself, which is the Real in itself as Reality, the Supreme Reality in as much as it is Real, which is the Absolute, who fulfills Himself in history as God in experience, primarily with revelation. Thus, we come to the projection, of how we orient, provide direction, formulate the fundamental tendency to our historical existence to make it grow, evolve, develop, perfect in life. This orientation is 'Religatio'. To orient, given that is an act of service, is to originate. Origination is the modality of metaphysical service. Because of this, 'Religatio' is Metaphysics which opens up, originates as a Way, as a Spirituality in history. Such a Way is Experience, a Path of Mediation. Only as Spirits and Persons, in Integrity and Propriety, in Communion and Participation, with the Absolute who meets us as Spirit in Person (in Three Divine Persons in the Christian Trinity), can we experience, travel this way in order to 'recover our gravity', the gravity of the mediation of Spirit (which is the integrity that bridges for Communion) and the relationality of the Person (which is the specificity that makes one the proprietor of his own life with others in Participation) vis-à-vis the Absolute.

This gravity is shared by all men, in as much as we all have a profound dimension given our rationality which is the root of our calling to be Spirits (vocation to integrity which is responded in Communion) and Persons (vocation to property or ownership in specificity, which is responded in Participation). This gravity is transcendental, takes place in the immanent level, in the point of encounter called the Mystery. It is the pull, the attraction, the Beauty of the Absolute, as Origin is veiled in its vocation or potentiality, that calls to all and to whom we 'owe' Charity in Originating by unveiling itself as the Way to Perfection, by sharing with all men the Way of Communing and Participating in the Absolute. Such a pull can only bridge, can only mediate the real as reality, reality as real. It can only be Experience, in its Waying of Spirituality (the Way of being a Spirit and Person in Integrity and Proper Relationality with the Absolute), in the Directionality of Metaphysics within the immanence of the world of existence, transfiguring it into a home for life, wherein Charity is lived out

---

<sup>60</sup> I have made use of Heideggerian terminology as found in, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2000, 217.

as Hospitality to others. This can only be realized in terms of Goodness, which is the diffusion of Beauty, by means of caring, which is the execution of service, in as much as service is Charity made concrete approaching the unveiling, the nudity, the perfection of Beauty as the Original as it approaches the Absolute who comes as God, who fulfills His Promise of the Absolute as God, who lets Himself be experienced as Yaweh.

After all, the coming of the Absolute as God is His Service, His Charity to all mankind, constituting mankind into an Ecclesiality, an assembly called to Communion and Participation. Service is the historical actualization of Religion. Service is the force of that call, vocation from the Absolute toward man for the latter to undergo the metaphysical path toward Communion and Participation, by experiencing the Absolute who comes, who serves, who fulfills as the God who takes the initiative to meet man in Mystagogy, in the ambiance of the Mystery which opens up as Mystagogy, as the very transcendental waying of the Spirit and Person, in history.