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„What must be the body in order to be a revelation in and through itself? What must be the revelation in order to realize itself as a body?” – these are the essential questions to which Michel Henry gives a complexe answer in *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair*. We shall try to accompany the philosopher’s answer, interpreting the meanings which may be seen on the two slopes of the problem. Firstly, we shall open the phenomenological horizon of the body understood as transcendental birth in the absolute Life or as the phenomenological matter of life which reveals itself as an immanent corporal pulsation, beyond the corporality of the mundane sensible. Secondly, we shall investigate, in the sense of the Christian salvation, the way in which, in order to realize itself as a body, the revelation must be an original appearance without any intentionality, as the Incarnation of the invisible in the living present of the visible.

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What should the body be in order to be a revelation in and by itself?

Distinguishing between the content of a phenomenon and the way it appears, or between what appears and the act of appearance (*phaiesthai*), the phenomenology reveals the subtle relation between the truth and the true thing. In order for the last to be really truth, it must show itself as the most originary phenomenon of truth, as Heidegger sais, the fact of appearing not being limited to making a true content appear in the thing (or the content of truth itself); it designates the pure apparition of an original truth which presents itself as self-revealing, impossible envelop in anything else but what reveals it. Before any apparition – posting itself as necessary condition of it – the fact of appearing also appears in and by itself. Nothing would appear by its own nature, which is of the blind matter, if the fact of appearing would not appear initially itself as a power that is different from the things it makes appear.

That is why, according to M. Henry: “faptul de a apărea care strălucește în orice fenomen e faptul faptului de a apărea și al lui singur”, as a pure originary fact, a donator of any fact of appearance. In this context, how may we know if the revelation of the body is different or identical to the body itself; if in the body what embodies appears as itself in what is embodied and reveals as the very fact of seeming original of the body?

Considering the principle “as much being as apparition” it may be seen, in a first meaning, that the relation that links the appearing content to its apparition starts from the being: in order to appear, things need to be first. To be is, in this case, a pre-established condition of the world, so that things are in the world and may appear in the world only due to this principle. Read in the opposite direction, the principle says that a thing that appears is and is not according to the way it appears. Now the fact of appearing is the very fact of being. But, as M. Henry notices: „faptul de a apărea și faptul de a fi nu stau deloc pe același plan”, as the second is determined by the first without which there would be nothing. The apparition does not establish the being, although a similar power operates in both of them, but this power is that of the fact of appearing. So that the essence of the fact – of – being comes from the essence of – the fact – of appearing (and only due to the apparition of this in the fact of being), from this pre-existence of this self-apparition un-determined by any existence but determining everything that exists. Even if here phenomenology is not put in front of ontology, we are still dealing with two formal concepts, that of apparition and that of being, as the determination of the fact – of – being by the fact – of – appearing remains un-determined in itself, non-interrogated from the *interior* of the apparition itself, in and by what the one coming into being by giving existence.

According to another phenomenologic principle – “to the things themselves” – the “reduced” apparitional essence of the things is not given by the content of the phenomenon in which they show themselves in the world, but by the pure phenomenality of this content, by its fact of appearing. Or, the fact of appearing is so connected to the perception of what is shown that any act of knowledge of the things-phenomena is related to their visibility, or more exactly to the way in which, in order to be known, they present themselves to the sight. Knowledge only knows by bringing its object in the horizon of the visible, the known thing being a seen thing. It is a method by which the thing is gradually brought into light, until the complete clarity of evidence. “To the things themselves” represents here the principle of any intellectual intuition which indicates to the pre-existence of a power of knowledge, to the apriorical condition of a possible experience. But there also is an intelligible that subtracts from a methodic knowledge, thus escaping any attempt of bringing it into light and sight. If such an intelligible exists, meaning that its fact of appearing determines its fact of being itself, it may only appear and be in an understanding situated at the beginning, in a pre-understanding that is the very way opened by its own apparition and being, or a sort of arch-understanding, “still not understood”, into which everything is because it does not stop appearing in front of any light from the outside.

But if we accept, for now, that any apparition manifests itself only as an apparition of the world, that any apparition in the world brings into existence an intelligible object and that, therefore, any apparition into the outside is an arrival in the visibility of the world, than the relation between the apparition and the being, as well as the way leading to the things themselves represent ruining reductions of the apparition to the fact of appearing to the world.

„A revela într-o atare venire în afară, într-o punere la distanță înseamnă a face să se vadă. Posibilitatea vederii stă în această punere la distanță a ceea ce este pus în fața vederii și astfel e văzut de ea”. An ekstatic revelation which does not only assume the coming of something in the outside, as what appears cannot be revealed as it is but in a sight that sees what is given beyond it; what is seen as a “transcendent” of any sight, in the phenomenologic meaning of the world, is not part of the consciousness, but is determined by its functionality, offers itself in the horizon opened by the exteriority of the object. The established distance is that between the act of seeing and the act by which something is visible, the distance defining the very object that is exposed and made visible. The object reveals itself as being what appears in the intentionality that makes it visible: „Această punere la distanță în care se ivește vizibilitatea a tot ceea ce este susceptibil să devină vizibil pentru noi dă măsura faptului de a apărea propriu obiectului. Astfel că a face să se vadă leagă în mod intim faptul-de-a-apărea de faptul-de-a-fi: ceea ce apare este întrucât e văzut ca fiind ceea ce apare. Prealabilul ființei este apariția care dă de văzut, prin urmare lucrarea vederii este criteriul ultim ce trebuie desfășurat, așa cum declară Eugen Fink: „vederea nu se legitimează decât în lucrarea ei (...). Nu se poate trece dincolo de vedere” (*Le problème de la phénoménologie*, în *De la phénoménologie*, Ed. de Minuit, Paris, 1974, pp.212, 225). The access to the being is implied in the intentionality of a consciousness that sees what appears as the object of a transcendent existence.

But how may we see this sight reported to the object it sees on its outside? Or, in other words: “How does the intentionality that reveals any fact reveal to itself?” Either another intentionality is needed to make the intentional act of appearance visible by infinite regression, or there is another way of revelation besides the fact of making visible by intentionality. In the second case, revelation would no longer come from the outside, in the light of the world, and knowledge would be only a sight putting into performance the concept of phenomenality. But wouldn't we end-up, on both ways, in a reduction that is ineluctable? As, on one hand, knowledge would regress with each apparition that would need another operation to see the sight in which something appears; on the other hand, sight cannot see itself, and it would need another sight to see the distance between the first sight and what is seen by it. But both processes return to the same inability – belonging to any theoretical experience – closing knowledge in the limited light of the intelligibility, in the relation between seeing and what is to be seen. In other words, “what is seen may still be seen if sight itself collapses into darkness and nothing remains?”

What is seen is a phenomenon, or – according to Heidegger – “what shows itself in itself, what is manifest” and presents itself in full daylight or may be brought to light (*Ființă și timp*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2003, p.38). The phenomenon that shows itself is the visible in itself, coming into the light as in a horizon of visibility. A horizon that also belongs to the world, in which something not only comes into light and becomes visible, but shows the horizon where the world comes and appears in its own light. What is shown now, beyond the illuminated appearance of any other phenomenon coming from the world, is the very fact of apparition of the world. A fact which, according to M. Henry, has three decisive features. First of all, everything that appears in the world “shows itself in the outside: as exterior, as another, different, thing”, bringing into play the exteriority of the ek-static structure, the primordial otherness and the difference as the setting into distance. Features which give the

fact of appearing of the world a double perspective: on one hand, the horizon opened in the distance of the difference, which is the horizon of the world; on the other, what appears as a phenomenon different from the horizon of the world, but which, by appearing in the world, appears in the far horizon of it. It is a difference between what appears and the horizon where it appears, between what appears and the fact of appearing. The phenomena which can only show themselves in the horizon of the world and in the fact of appearing of the world are phenomena of the world; their horizon of apparition is the very phenomenality of the world. Which means that any such phenomenon – put in the exteriority, otherness and difference of manifestation – becomes distant of its own essence, “driven away from its true place”; become the prey of the existence in the world, it can only be a being of this world. Nevertheless, “the fact of appearing that reveals itself in the difference of the world does not only make different everything that is revealed like this, but it is itself a totally indifferent principle”. An indifference of the shining itself, as everything that comes into the light and illuminates exists in the most neutral way. Even more, “the fact of appearing of the world is not only indifferent to everything that is revealed, but also incapable of giving it existence”. The revelation in the difference of the world puts between the essence of the so-appeared phenomenon and its way of appearing an ontologic distance; by the apparition in the horizon of the world, the phenomenon doesn't exist or only exists in the world's way of being. The fact of appearing is indifferent to everything that appears, so that the existence – what is -, although intimately linked to the apparition it determines, does not possess the power it reveals. It resumes to the fact that it is, without being able to say what it is; what is defining for it is the fact that it appears and does not appear as what it appears; “the revelation reveals, discovers, closes, but does not create”. By the three features (difference, indifference, inability of giving existence), and by another like otherness, exteriority, putting into distance, the primordial aspect of the fact of appearing in relation with the fact of being (and of phenomenology over ontology) is broken. Because the very fact of appearing of the world cannot be put into being: “although it appears effectively in it, what is in the world still does not exist. Even more: it does not exist because it appears in the world”. The world leads to an irreconcilable divorce, to a reciprocal exclusion of the being and of the apparition, because in the world the fact of appearing discovers the existence, but does not create it. So that the inability of the apparition of the sensible world of reporting what appears in it shows the ontological incapacity of this apparition and the paradox of mundane re-realization.

At this moment of the discussion, the problem is split, the interest moving first on the possibility that something appears before the world and outside of it, and then on the way in which this apparition appears. Regarding the first subject, it considers the problem of the originary which comes in itself before any intentionality and independently of it. Before the originary, that before of the basis is an absolute beginning, before the world and therefore outside of it. The originary is beyond any concept and any conceived world. We are not referring to the beginning of a process that leads to the world, but to a permanent condition by which the essence is always possible and available. But not also available to present itself as a condition of possibility of a world, as the original essence will never come in the world, because the existence it makes possible is not a reality that answers about itself, unsubstantial because it is broken from the original aspect of its apparition. Therefore lacking a fundament, meant to disappear at the very moment of its apparition. In the fact of appearing of the world,

only the inverted principle according to which there is as much apparition as disappearance works.

In what concerns the way in which the apparition appears truly, we may only start from the original self-apparition as radical affectivity: this apparition which makes me be and offers itself to me as original essence without which I am nothing. When Descartes establishes as the first principle of philosophy the truth according to which “I think, so I exist”, he puts among the parentheses of doubt the world in which something is given to exist: „din însuși faptul că mă gândeam să mă îndoiesc de adevărul celorlalte lucruri, decurgea în mod evident și sigur că eram” (*Discours de la méthode*, IV). The apparition of the being does not depend here of the apparition of the world’s horizon, but only on the fact of appearing as original of thinking. Free of any mundane determination, thinking is self-affectation: „doar ea nu poate fi desprinsă de mine, *sunt, exist*, în mod cert – adaugă el în *Meditația a doua* – . Dar cât timp ? atât timp cât gândesc” (*Discours de la méthode* suivi des *Méditations*, Union Générale d’Éditions, 10-18, 1975, pp.62, 183). In the meaning of the primordial self-apparition which is mine, the cogito carries in itself an ego as an unmistakable mark of present ipseity in the fact of seeming original: „În așa fel încât – says M. Henry – nu este cu puțință nici o viață care să nu închidă în ea ipseitatea unui ego – nici o *cogitatio* care să nu trebuiască să se spună *cogito*”. Reduced to its own self appearance, which is its own phenomenologic matter separated from the fact of appearing of the world, the human existence is not the soil of this world’s ground, it is no longer something that appears in a matter which „steals” its original essence; it is the apparition itself, the fact of appearing considered in its originarity. As long as the fact of appearing of the world is disqualifying by being put to doubt, the fact of seeing is also deceiving; to see does not mean that something exists, as when I judge the fact seeing, I put it to doubt; but even in the thinking of this fact as a necessary disappearance, what is may appear: I am, I exist. So that “the fact of seeing is responsible of proving its incompetence and in it we must read its failure”. It is as if the sight only sees what contradicts its very capacity of seeing, altering what makes it possible. No other sight may correct false sight, as any sight in which appears the fact of appearing of the world is populated by its own inability of appearing to itself in another way that in the horizon of an exteriority in the night where the world disappears.

The sight must therefore be “given to itself, so that it appears to itself somewhere else than in sight and differently than by it”. It is exactly the sight that appears in the disappearance of the world, the sight that has nothing left to see and no longer makes anything visible. Disqualifying the entire visible universe, which is the one of mundane exteriority, sight no longer sees, but experiences the originary revelation, the self-revelation of absolute Life. The light of the world has faded, with its doubtable truth; what may still appear- in this disappearance – besides the light of a liberated truth, developed in the obscure field of the world, a truth “much higher in origin, called The Truth of Life”? Between the fact of appearing of the world and the fact of appearing of absolute Life there is an essential difference. If the first one is manifested in exteriority, in difference and neutral and impersonal indifference which only define this apparition as an ontologic disappearance and metaphysical unreality (as much inexistence as apparition), in the second the fact of seeing is revealed to itself as an immanent act, in-different and non-intentional of the original self-

affection (as much being as apparition). It is the very „passing of the fact of ek-static seeing into the immanent self-revelation of Life”. Only now, the sight of intentionality no longer absorbs life; life seen intentional may appear and give life, as any singular existence of an original ego is based on an essence of the existence from which it is born and self-revelates in the singular existence by bringing it into being. The only relation left is established by the transcendent Life giving itself in the particular content of what is seen. What is revealed in the self-revelation of Life is Life itself given, illuminating and shining in all that is alive, as the light that makes visible.

And then, if „life is invisible, how would he gain access to it in thinking?” Access to life is no longer possible from outside of it, from the exteriority of the world; if the world offers itself as visibility or is instituted by the sight of the intentionality of what is seen and known, life cannot be seen. Access to life is only possible from life itself, starting with ourselves. And exactly this arrival to ourselves precedes any arrival in the world. But we do not arrive to ourselves as if we would come to ourselves in the world where we appear as ourselves; in the world what appears is our mundane self, fallen from the originary life that generates us; we come to ourselves and are only in the eternal process where absolute Life comes to itself. Only in and by this process „vin cei vii la Viață. Întrucât suntem vii, suntem ființe ale nevăzutului. Nu suntem inteligibili decât în invizibil, plecând de la el”. So it is not the visible body which is always formed of the phenomenologic matter of the world that defines us; it is not the body that appears in the world in order not to be, to vanish in the visibility that sight absorbs till disappearance. If absolute Life self-donates, it reveals itself in a pathetic body, affected to its most obscure zones of life who tries it: „un trup viu, un trup nevăzut, inteligibil în invizibilul vieții și numai plecând de la ea”. The sight of thinking does not see this body it cannot make appear in the visibility of the world’s horizon. It may only be understood by a rational knowledge who sees man as an object. Only an arch-understanding – an intelligibility of a different order – is able to understand before any sight, before the visibility horizon the visible of which may be conceived, before the world’s fact of apparition. This is an arch-understanding that belongs to absolute Life, to the invisible that is understood by its self-revelation in the body. In its self-knowledge, Life comes before thinking and seeing; it comes into itself without thinking and therefore without being. Beyond Descartes declaration of the primordially of the cogito in relation to the being (which remains between the boundaries of pure intelligibility), „nici o gândire nu ne îngăduie să fim vii”, there is no condition of possibility to reveal Absolute Life. In order to come to itself, thinking does not need to see the apparition in the world of what it thinks; it comes to itself without sight, lacking intentionality, comes in its very self-revelation that makes it possible. In the fact of being, the fact of seeing is revealed to itself in the absence of the world and sight, in total mundance eclipse. Therefore, thinking does not illuminate us for any other reason than that it illuminates: „*cogitatio* e o auto-revelare”: I am alive, so I think, so I exist. „Nu gândirea ne dă acces la viață, ci viața îngăduie gândirii să accedă la sine”, and this vital access is an original way of manifestation, the immanent self-revelation of life in its invisible pathos: „Invizibilul precede orice vizibil ce poate fi conceput”; It permits life to see what is to be seen, to see itself as self-trial in the arch-understanding of this establishing unseen which, by giving something to sight, does not show itself but works in the sight of its own shining.

If the fact of ek-statically appearing of the world, in which the sight only sees the visible of the disappearance determines the phenomenological structure of the mundane body, as the object of an intentional representation that thinking can think as its own object, the fact of appearing of originary Life, imposing the primordial aspect of Life over thinking, is the self-revelation of the transcendental subjective body, impossible to objectify in any thinking. It is the original, non-intentional and non-sensible body, the essence of which is invisible life. It is not the felt, seen, touch body, but the body that feels and makes felt, in which the invisible envelops itself in sight and touches in what is touching it: an embodied subject. What appears in and like a body is no longer the fact of appearing out of itself, specific to the apparition of the world and of the object-body, but is the same with the fact of the apparition itself. „O corporalitate originară invizibilă așadar, despuiată de orice caracter mundan”, where life that reveals itself is the very revelation of the illuminating and unseen body that supports our visible body. „Lumea dezvăluie un corp pe care nu-l creează. Viața revelează carnea trupului născând-o drept ceea ce ia naștere în ea”. In the body in which Life creates itself, it may come from itself, as „nu există Viață fără trup, dar nici trup fără Viață”. Therefore, there is no Life without its absolute self-passion in body revelation. Transcendental and still transcendent life, in the metaphysic and theological meaning of the term, as immanent self-revelation of the essence that make the very apparition of a body possible designates the interior possibility of a Self that precedes any corporality and visibility but which, illuminating beyond the phenomenological matter of the world, is an to-be-another of an inexhaustible mystery that marks the difference between the fact of appearing of the world and the fact of appearing of Life. The otherness is not presented here as a random exteriority, like in the case of the appearing of the world, but as a *totally different* something that irrupts in the interior of life as Life that is given to it *ab origine*. „Transcendența desemnează imanența Vieții în fiecare viu”, the proximal that is non-proximal and, within us, comprises us in its infinity. Here protestant theology and catholic theology basically speak the assert the same thing: „Dumnezeu este transcendent în sânul vieții noastre”, says Dietrich Bonhoeffer, as „transcendentalul nu e departe nesfârșit, ci tocmai aproape” (*Widerstand und Ergebung*, 1954, p.255); but, adds Karl Rahner, „Extrem de aproape care este totodată Cel mai îndepărtat” (*Tratat fundamental despre credință*, Galaxia Gutenberg, 2005, p.336). This apparition is not a mundane one, not a coming into the world, but a coming to the Self in a body, in the pure body of its own apparition.

2. What should revelation be to accomplish itself in a body ?

We have seen how in order to become revelation in and by itself, the body must be Life as self-revelation of its transcendental and transcendent essence. What does this revelation that gives itself a body in order to let absolute Life shine in it, mean now? What does, therefore, the paradox according to which „The Word became Body (John, 1,14) mean, as well as the confession that „Jesus Christ came in a body (John 4,2; 2 John 1,7)”? The relation between Word and body appears even more paradoxical as it defines the consistency of the same person, Christ, and, - therefore - is definitory to the relation between God and man. „Se poate face un Dumnezeu om sub forma Cuvântului care Se face trup - se întreabă M. Henry - și aceasta în una și aceeași persoană ? Cum să situăm o existență la încheietura a două

substanțe eterogene ?” Unity is accomplished where the Word turns into body and accomplishes the unity between these substances, and what appears as heterogeneous proves to be reciprocal assumption or co-participation to the same act of apparition. As the coming of God in man *is* the coming of the Word in body, the embodiment by which it reveals itself as already arrived. The body will not only have to be revelation in and by itself, but it will also have to accomplish the self-revelation of God. The body itself is revelation, but revelation is accomplished *as* body; the body is the horizon of trans-visibility of the invisible Word. But this is not a sort of clothing the Word would wear in order to appear, a case in which the body would only be the objective body as the fact of the mundane apparition. In body, the Word would remain unseen, trespassing in a substance that cannot reveal it, but hides it in an insurmountable incognito. The word does not take a body as if it were wearing a coat; it does not *turn* into a body, but comes in the body of its self-revelation, becomes embodied. This self-creation – em-bodiment be-coming – is not related to the form of apparition, to the appearance of any of the representation, but to the reality of the apparition by which the Word makes itself a body and the body is already the Word. Or, the body of the Word cannot be the body made of clay, the visible in which the Word would exteriorize itself in the world; the body of the Word is from the Word itself, a body made of its own light. We witness here another way of revelation, different to the one by which the world becomes visible; what is revealed – even if revealed *in* the world – is an invisible reality of this world, because it is not *from* the world. The arch-understanding of this apparition brings into light a new definition of man: “the definition of an invisible man and at the same time an embodied man – invisible as body”. Isn’t this the face created to man according to “the face of the unseen God? (Col. 1,15), which implies a way of appearing totally different from that of the world? An then, the man should be redefined – according to the arch-understanding of its double nature – not according to the human condition that wears a body in order to come into the world, but according to its condition of body-like face revealed as similitude to the unseen Face of God, to that arch-face that presents itself as a body and illuminates inside sight.

The coming into a body meant to death, made from the clay of the soil, speaks nevertheless of the passing feature of this body and – again – of its human character. On one hand, the body shows itself as an exterior body, its matter being the content of the visible world. But this body-object born in the world is insensible as, unable to touch what touches it, it is, in a way, untouchable, does not suffer any touch that might affect it. The table does not touch the wall, and therefore does not suffer the touch of the hand or the knife that sticks in it, just like a dead body. Where life does not appear, where it does not turn itself into a body, we may only speak of bodies given to the world. There is nothing invisible in them, because they have no interior, being pure exteriority, visibility devouring itself. No living man has such a body, as any man comes into the world with his own life – and comes into life before coming into this world – with a real body that suffers and enjoys, feels hunger or thirst, is touched by what it touches: a sensibly affected body. Such a body reveals itself as suffering or joy, hunger or thirst, as interior flesh animated by the absolute reality it comes from: „un trup suferitor care deține realitatea suferinței lui prin fenomenalizarea sa patetică în viață”. On the other hand, Christ came into a body that He didn’t give life to, but came in the way of being of the body, as this body defined by its suffering. Not a dead and resurrected body, but a body meant to die, suffering the pain of each step towards death; in other words, a human body that

needs to die. The assumption of the human condition is much more than awfully real, in the pains of the body which dies in the world, because if this body would not have been real, truly enduring, Christ wouldn't have suffered anything, and his death on the cross would have been a terrible disillusion. Christ suffers like a man, like any man in his earthly body: „nu înțelegem aceasta – spune Sf. Anselm – potrivit cu măreția naturii care nu poate suferi, ci după neputința firii omenești pe care o purta” (*De ce s-a făcut Dumnezeu om*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 1997, p.83).

What does this death mean and what is the purpose of absolute Life revealed in and as body? If giving your life means the acceptance of death, Jesus gives his spirit (John, 19,30) assuming till the end the human condition. But to accept death means to give yourself life without being yourself life; by offering his own life, Jesus offers something he does not have from himself and already belongs to God: „întrucât era om, afirmă Sf. Anselm, nu avea de la sine, ci de la Tatăl, voința de a trăi după dreptate” (*op.cit.*, p.95). Therefore, the desire to be Life, to be alive in the body of Life, does not come from the human nature, but from his divinity. Death is the chain that links the mystery of the Embodiment to that of the Resurrection, in a reciprocal revelation. If the Embodiment is the assumption by the Word of the human condition (*assumere hominem*), only possible if the human nature is assumed without sin (“the embodiment must be accomplished without the assumption of sin”, *ibid.* p.241), Jesus gives his life “as an offering for sin” and therefore “will extend his life” (Is. 53,10). The descent of the Word into body is accomplished by the self-revelation of Life which enriches human nature; by assuming it, it liberates it; by creating it, it restores it. The only real relation between the instauration and restoration of Life is accomplished by death. And death is the very self-offering of Life; it is not the offering of an exterior gift, but of one that comes from the very being of the offered one. And this ultimately assumes the understanding of the essence of human salvation and of the birth in Absolute Life, like Saint Anselm says it: „acest om trebuie să dețină ceva mai de preț decât tot ceea ce este inferior lui Dumnezeu, ceva pe care să-l ofere lui Dumnezeu din propria voință și nu din datorie (...). Însă acest ceva nu e de găsit nici în afara lui Dumnezeu, nici între cele subordonate lui (...). Prin urmare, în el însuși trebuie găsit (...). Așadar, va oferi fie ceva din sine, fie se va oferi pe sine însuși” (*op.cit.*, p.219). The single priceless thing man may offer is the Life he does not have from himself, this body of Life's self-revelation in which divine nature came from above and human nature is already assumed by Embodiment. Life is not outside of God, as it does not become an exterior fact of the apparition of the world, a mundane existence.

Everything that comes into the world is outside Life and under Life; as long as it stays in pure mundane visibility, the man can only offer his body, but he offers it as an object he no longer needs, that he gives away like in a suicide. He shouldn't offer what he has, but what he is, his most precious life he cannot lose, as „deși creatura nu are nimic de la sine (...), de la sine oferă ceea ce-i aparține” (*ibid.*, p.267). How may be understand the gift by which we offer something we do not have to somebody who already has it?

If „the intelligence of this world is madness in front of God” (1 Cor. 3,13), it is because it attempts to obtain what it did not get, that is the nothingness of *to have* instead of the infinity of *to be*. „An what do you have, that has not been given to you?” (*Cor.* 4,7), what may we have besides what is given to us in order to give at our turn? We have the Word

which, for us, turned into a body, and the body, into light; still, in the very light of *our* body, we have nothing that hasn't been given to us, unless the belief that we *are* „Christ, and Christ, of God” (1 Cor. 3,23) besides the order preexistent to us – of “The one who works in everything, according to His will’s advice” (Efes. 1,11) – towards our restoration in the real way of Life. The paradox is in the fact the Life reveals itself in a body given to death, „căci trebuie ca acest trup stricăcios să se îmbrace în nesticăciune și acest (trup) muritor să se îmbrace în nemurire. Iar când acest (trup) stricăcios se va îmbrăca în nesticăciune și acest (trup) muritor se va îmbrăca în nemurire, atunci va fi cuvântul care este scris: « Moartea a fost înghițită de biruință»” (1 Cor. 15, 53-54).

We must see here that the imperative of conversion to life comprises the body, the earthly (made of clay) face of man, the flesh and blood that cannot inherit by themselves the kingdom of God. The mystery of the Resurrection refers to the wearing of the celestial face, the one who in-spirits the *entire* human being. As “not all of us shall die, but all of us shall change” (1 Cor. 15,51), in other words only those into belief will conquer death, swallowed by the triumph of the new life, but the change awaits all of us in the same measure, the dead and the living, and the dead among the dead who “vor învia nesticatiosi, iar noi ne vom schimba” (15,52). As “all of us shall change” means that *only* all of us together have the power of *total* change. “Not all of us shall die” because only what stays in the past of non-will or in the present of bad-will dies, in the continuous strength of self-adulation. What does not die, as a totality of accomplished life, is the expectance of resurrection from death, a hope that opens itself to the belief in the forgiving nature shown in the person of Christ. Thus, death is already passed-through by the love that gives us back to Life, giving life to the very body of death. Passing “from death to life” (1 John 3,14; John 5,24), the believer has the awareness of the presence of life; life is already present, as “suddenly, in the blink of an eye” (1 Cor. 15,52), everything stays under “an order given towards life” (Rom. 7,10). By bringing Life, Jesus brings revelation; in and by Him, Life reveals itself, as He is himself the “Way, Truth and Life” (John, 14,6).

We now understand that when Saint Anselm says: what desires must exist (*op.cit*, p. 269), he means the life of the One who, by offering it, “extends it”, meaning he saves it in eternity, the will working in the core of the donation according to the freedom of the act of restoring the existence. We have seen the will (“rightful desire”) he has is not of a human nature, but comes from his divinity. “The Son offered himself by own will to his Father”, but “offered Himself according to human nature”; the property of will is that of being pre-given to human nature by divine nature; in the self-offering of Life, the human nature’s will is no different to the one of the divine nature, but what it desires to offer is not what it has from itself, but what is already offered to it, or, more precisely, what is already given in order to be offered. The property of human nature is to be close to divine nature, as “when he became man, in human nature he received from divine nature (...) the faculty of owning as personal what he had”. Thus the offering *according to human nature* is possible because in it the offering *according to divine nature* is active, the establishment of one implying in its own act the restoration of the other. „Pentru aceasta Mă iubește Tatăl, fiindcă Eu îmi pun sufletul, ca iarăși să-l iau. Nimeni nu-l ia de la Mine, ci Eu de la Mine Însumi îl pun. Putere am Eu ca să-l pun și putere am iarăși să-l iau” (Ioan 10, 17-18). Death and the Resurrection are not possible without the event of the Embodiment; Christ reveals itself as absolute Life by becoming a

body, assuming the human nature in self-offering, raising it to the force of divine nature. He gives his Life – puts his soul in the death of this world – taking it back, as a pure body; gives it to himself in order to take it from himself; puts it revealing himself as a force that conquers death, taking over him what belongs to him, the offered and renewed Life. But by giving it to himself, he gives it to the Father who gave him the power to give, just as the man offers what there is, putting his life in the hands of the One who gave it to him and who permanently gives it by calling it to Himself.

A double mystery, in which, as K. Rahner says: „Dumnezeu asumă o natură umană ca pe propria sa natură”, the nature of man embracing completeness and giving away itself so that it would become God; „este orientarea nesfârșită către misterul infinit al plinătății”, care ajunge, atunci când e asumată de Dumnezeu ca realitatea Lui proprie, să tindă mereu „în virtutea esenței sale” (*op.cit.*, p.321). In its orientation towards the divine infinity, human nature is comprised by this omnipresent infinity – always active – which subtracts itself to any exterior illumination. The transcendental apparition of Life – established “before the ages, to our grace” (*1 Cor. 2,7*) is *conversion*, orientation towards God, in the meaning in which it is the Rise of what appears oriented by and towards transcendence. In other words, what establishes and makes possible inside of us the truth of Life is beyond us; we tend towards the cause that made us be as towards our final goal; a similar horizon puts us on our way and calls us into the light that attracts us. The fact that, by embodiment, God becomes something related to the force of the infinity of making itself finite, of coming into finality, as this is the only way the mystery may be understood, the mystery by which: „Acela care este în sine imuabil poate fi, într-un altul, mutabil” (*ibid.*, p.325). Self-donation is offering and ordering at the same time, self-expropriation (*kenosis*) and eternal self-generation (*genesis*); according to Saint Augustin, God *assumit creando* and *assumendo* creat, creation being the self-expropriation and the appropriation of human reality created; „crează realitatea umană în timp ce o asumă ca fiindu-i proprie” (*ibid.*, pp.325-326). A process in which God exits itself as an infinite, that offers itself and receives into itself the gift given to the gifted one which he assumes as his own. That is why, „autoexprimarea imanentă a lui Dumnezeu în plinătatea veșnică este condiția autoexprimării sale în afara Lui, iar aceasta din urmă o revelează tocmai pe cea dintâi” (*ibid.*, p.328). By uttering Himself in Himself, in the Word that becomes a body, God establishes human nature according to this original ontologic *primus*. The self-expression of God in man reveals itself as the self-expropriation of the divinity and the assumption of human nature as own ex-pression (Aus-sage) of His immanent Word. „Posibilitatea de a exista a oamenilor este întemeiată pe posibilitatea mai mare, mai cuprinzătoare și mai radicală a lui Dumnezeu de a se exprima pe sine în Logos-ul care devine creatură” (*ibid.*, p.329). The possibility of human life, of humans to be alive, is established on the possibility of absolute divine Life of revealing itself into the exposed Word in a body. A Word that cannot be taken back, as, once give, in its own self-offering, it re-tracts the entire being, orders it and ex-tracts it from what it is not in order to restore it to Life.

Therefore, the one who dies is the object-body of which God makes a body by breathing life into it, a body that is the phenomenological performance of it. „Trupul, Says St. Irineu de Lyon, e în stare să primească și să conțină puterea lui Dumnezeu”; „Că trupul e în stare să primească Viața se dovedește prin însuși Viața pe care (trupul) o trăiește deja”

(*Contre les hérésies*, Le Cerf, Paris, 1991, pp. 577, 578). The body receives life, giving itself to the Life that makes it alive; it gives life to this Life he had received and in the immanence of which it lives, as in an original side that self-reveals by it an in it. If any body comes from the Word – „All were made through Him and without Him nothing was made of what was made. Into Him was life and life was the light of men” (*John 1,3-4*) – it means that there is a co-naturality relation between the divine essence and the human essence, between the original Creation of Man and the embodiment of the Word.. „Dacă Cuvântul Vieții – says M. Henry – a născut trupul dându-i Viața în afara căreia nu e cu puțință nici un trup, în care rămâne orice trup, e deoarece Cuvântul nu e absent niciodată din creația sa”. The two natures of Jesus Christ are co-essential, as the divine one gave birth to the human one. And the restoration of human nature, after the performance of sin and the receipt of the sinner one, cannot be accomplished without the same creative divine nature intervention; only the fact of appearing of the divine nature gives Life to the fact of being of the human nature. The body forgets nothing, as it is itself the „cyfer” or the inapparent image of divinity that establishes us, the source of an ageless truth, the power of which is permanently offered to us; human nature is born each time the fact of appearing of Life appears that appears in itself restores the original revelation, like „amintirea unui act – according to Maine de Biran – poartă în sine sentimentul puterii de a-l repeta” (*Essai sur les fondements de la psychologie et sur ses rapports avec l'étude de la nature*, Alcan, Paris, 1932, t. VIII, p.605 n.).

„Această restaurare nu e cu puțință decât dacă Însuși Cuvântul S-a întrupat în acest trup devenit păcătos și muritor, în așa fel încât din distrugerea lui să se ivească Cuvântul Însuși și o dată cu El nașterea noastră în El ca îmbrățișare a Vieții absolute”. It is the act of super-abundant love by which we become sons of the One who accepts us as sons; but we may only do this because we have received through the Son the communion with the Father. The Word, born and embodied, is the mediator between man and God, so that – says St. Bonaventura – “eternal si nevazutul sa se face vizibile si a se intrupeze ca sa ne readuca la Tatal” An active mediator in the Embodiment of which the double mystery of the Creation and Resurrection or – in neoplatonic terms – of the procession (*proodos*) and conversion (*anodos*) is reflected: „Este necesar – adds the franciscan Saint – să plasăm un mediator în procesiunea și în reîntoarcerea lucrurilor ; în procesiune mediul trebuie să țină mai mult partea celui care creează, iar în reîntoarcerea lucrurilor, el trebuie să țină mai degrabă partea celui care se întoarce, căci așa cum toate au venit de la Dumnezeu prin Cuvântul lui, tot astfel trebuie ca pentru împlinirea reîntoarcerii, mediatorul între « Dumnezeu și oameni » să nu fie doar Dumnezeu, ci și om, ca să îi reîntoarcă pe oameni la Dumnezeu” (*ibid.*, paragr.23, pp.99-100). A similar arch-understanding passes through the Word and the man in order to unite them into Christ; „această Arhi-înțelegere, says M. Henry, e auto-revelarea Vieții absolute” or of the „Arhi-trupului presupus în orice trup”. And this illuminates a double phenomenological relation of reciprocal interiority: that between absolute Life and Word, on one hand, and that between all the living and Christ, on the other: „Și slava pe care Tu Mi-ai dat-o, le-am dat-o lor ca să fie una, precum Noi una suntem. Eu întru ei și Tu întru Mine, ca ei să fie desăvârșiți întru unime” (*Ioan 17, 22-23*). This is the way in which the Embodiment of Life accomplishes the enduring connection between God and man, the body being the fact of apparition of Life, its self-revelation in a living body.

The fact that revelation gives itself a body and that it has to be the self-revelation of the absolute Life in order to accomplish itself as a body does not subtract the body from the horizon of visibility, but illuminates it establishing it in the original pre-vention of Life in itself, in the arch-understanding of its invisible essence. Human nature is assumed by the divine nature by super-naturalizing it, extending it into the Life that gives it the true basis.. „Ceea ce vine înainte de orice trup e propria sa venire în sine, e întruparea lui”, ceea ce „este mai înainte decât toate și toate prin El sunt așezate” (*Col. 1, 17*) – The Word that gives Life in its original dimension. It is the very transcendental possibility of the fact of being together, in the invisible essence of the two natures (which, together, form a single body) as well as in the relation with the others, in the invisible body of a community. The man is no longer understood in his condition of an individual who appears in the world, in his empiric and contingent individuation, but in his original aspect – of a spiritualized Son – that is irreducible as it is generated by the revelation of identity in the self-donation of absolute Life. The man is en-godded, being created according to the divine appearance, born in the very birth of the body of Life that saves finite life as long as it, by staying in God, remains alive. Similarly, any restoration of human nature is only possible in the Life which, embodying itself into the Word, edifies us from the interior, offering Itself in its original arch-knowledge. „Acolo unde orice viu vine la viață, unde Viața îl dă lui însuși în Arhi-înțelegerea auto-donării ei absolute – în nașterea noastră transcendentală, acolo unde suntem Fii”, our body is already a body, since always. A body generated by the Spirit that shows the man according to God’s Face: „Trupul vostru este templu al Duhului Sfânt care este în voi, pe care-L aveți de la Dumnezeu” (*1 Cor. 6, 19*).