

THE CRUCIFIED VERSUS DIONYSUS From truth in good to truth without good

Donation is the prime beginning. Goodness is its soul, truth the form, within and without the Trinitarian Mystery, as well as outside of it. Goodness is *epekeina tas ousias*, as Plato wrote, beyond anything, or even, *presbeia kai dynamei*, in dignity and power superior to the being and to the essence. Primacy goes to good. But how can one think about it if not in relation to truth, just like the soul to the body and the meaning of the expression? Favoring this path is due to the fact that, apart from truth in good, one may also give truth without or against good. During the 1900's *for the first time, truth against goodness* was theorized and experimented; therefore it seems necessary to take the *proposal of good as the soul of truth* seriously. *This is the path* Kolbe followed, who chose Mary (the good) as a guide to Christ (the truth), rethinking in an original way the Franciscan thesis of the primacy of good.

The report is articulated in two parts, with a pause. If truth against goodness, as theorized by Nietzsche and enacted by Nazism, is the most radical attempt to cancel mercy for the victims of Christianity (paragraph 1), the goodness in truth, proper to the Franciscan school, lived and witnessed by Kolbe, is the most profound and radical answer (par. 3-6). Between the two parts there is a space given over to truth without goodness (technique) which may become allied to truth against goodness canceling Christianity in the long run (par. 2 and 4), or instead allied to goodness in truth, contributing to the rediscovery of the elevating force of Christianity (par. 6 and conclusion).

1. Nietzsche and truth versus good

To appreciate the fruitfulness of the thesis of good as the source of truth, it might be opportune to explain some of Nietzsche's points, according to which truth that counts is the one that in battle measures itself and triumphs, while truth that must be set aside is the one that resolves itself in the service of oneself to the other. According to the German philosopher one is not given only the "moral of dominion" (Dionysus), or the "moral of donation" (Crucified), along two paths: the first, proper to superior men, who do not hesitate when facing any form of violence, the second of "servants" who do not live but love to mortify themselves. Violence is the soul of historical passages, against the daily grayness. Dionysus is the symbol of this. Life, with all its passions, annihilates or destroys whatever blocks the spreading logic. Prolonged reflection on episodes of Dionysus' cycle, resurrected after the violence submitted to him, persuaded Nietzsche of the essential role of culture and originally in those pagan religions, which helped define cultures. During the second half of the fragment, titled *The Will of Power*, he writes: «Dionysus against the "Crucified": this is the antithesis. It is not a difference according to the martyrdom – only this has another meaning. Life itself, its eternal fruitfulness and its eternal return determine suffering, destruction, the need to annihilate. (...) The tragic man also asserts the most severe pain (...). Dionysus broken into pieces is a promise of life: it will be reborn and will bloom once again eternally from destruction». Violence is creative destruction.

How actually cold the truth – or rather the philosophical system – which emerges

from the exaltation of violence can only be fully understood by those realizing that Nietzsche proposed to extinguish mercy for the miserable, dreaming about a society of strong persons, free of the boredom of the ugly. He knows that violence gives rise to history, the pagan one, the Dionysian one that he exalts, and the Christian one of sacrifice, which he refuses. He condemns the Crucifix because it is subject to violence, rather it educates to forgiveness, giving rise to a society of weak and powerless people. He hopes for a society where there is no mercy for the victims, consumed by the triumphant force of life. For this reason and to discredit the feeling of mercy, he leads the defense of the victim to a sort of "resentment" towards aristocratic paganism, and considers as "slave moral" what gives space to the weak. Mercy towards victims is the fruit of "resentment", with dissolution it is destined to disappear. He insists on this theme and to make the conclusion stringent, he brings back violence as a fundamental need of the species, whose defense demands the sacrifice of imbeciles, who badly repeat the richness. If it does not wish to degenerate, the society must rid itself of the human garbage. Nietzsche writes: «The individual was held to be so important by Christianity, placed in such an absolute way, that he could not be sacrificed, yet the species subsists only thanks to human sacrifices... True philanthropy means to sacrifice for the good of the species – this is hard, full of overcoming oneself, because it calls for the sacrifice of man. And this pseudo-humanism called Christianity wishes to reach the point where "no one is sacrificed"». Saying that it is the fruit of resentment and worries more about the individual than the species, Nietzsche tries to cancel Christianity and substitute it with the religion of force. "Mercy towards victims" and Christianity are identifiable, just like paganism and force.

This philosophy quickly became a political project, and in the hands of those with a more efficient power than the simple faculty of philosophy became a cremation oven, where there was the attempt to effectively erase Christianity through the uprooting of the feeling of mercy towards the weak. Erasing this feeling through a project of scientific annihilation of deviates or the undesirable or whoever could possibly ruin the purity of the race, Nazism may be read as a destructive project towards Christianity. It is the dark force of truth against goodness. It only knows the logic of differences, of the ever new and forever of the boss. Nietzsche lives completely in the era of technology. One produces to consume and one consumes to produce.

2. Heidegger and the passage from violence to the true expectancy of the Being

Heidegger criticizes Nietzsche with the proposal of re-dimensioning the space of the will for power, however maintaining in a central and qualifying position the theme of "difference", not on an ontological level, rather on a metaphysical level. Here we are dealing with the "excess" of Being in relation to the entity (*Dasein*), in the sense of what enters the horizon of our being (*Da-sein*) is meant as the prologue of an unwritten yet essential history, that is the history of what exceeds our horizon and, detracting from our categories, makes possible the coming into being of entities. Knowledge concerning the entity, offering and giving itself, which is another thing with respect to the Being, who does not give itself but makes what is given possible, and which is possible to think about but not know. Yet is it possible to allow entities be what they may be and offer themselves, and thus respect them, following or favoring the epiphany? Heidegger's answer is that this does occur if, apart from the entity, one sees the Being and, in the entity given, the return to the shadow of conceptual obscurity of the Being. Whoever, like

Nietzsche, is blocked on things, cannot escape the logic of violence. To control power, one must aim at what is beyond the power.

This is the essential trait or even the novelty in the philosophy of the 1900's: not the entity but its "coming into presence", not the structures of the entity but its happening, in the backdrop of the Being, which remains in complete silence and total obscurity, making room to entities. Classic ontology, careful of lack of variants and thereby static, enters a crisis, under the innovating force of the being as event, or what happens. Isn't it true that the approach of entities is made possible by the fact that these give themselves, coming into the presence, according to joint lesson of Husserl and Heidegger, Sartre and Lévinas? This is the theme of donation, heart of contemporary philosophy. Otherwise how could we become a part of the creatures if they didn't offer themselves? Nature or *physis* (blooming) means coming into the presence of entities, their manifestations, their giving of themselves, not blocking the possible in the name of the impossible.

Even if it might seem to be a paradox, the Franciscan school rises shaking the ideal horizon of time through a perspective that shows how what religious authorities and thinkers believed to be impossible is actually possible. This lesson in creativity remains his qualifying trait. Proposing absolute poverty as renouncing any rights, the Franciscans found themselves opposing those who considered this utopistic. It is impossible to live without rights. Use cannot be separated from the dominion of the thing in use, according to the converging indications of Roman law and the Aristotelian-Thomistic vision, which John XXII would become an authoritative interpreter. But is radical poverty truly impossible? And Francis, who incarnated it, was he not an unequalled interpreter of the Gospel? So then, if the Franciscan chooses absolute poverty, that is renouncing all civil rights, which is the obstacle if not the discussible concept of social life, a naturalistic perspective, whose subject is undermined? Is it not true that the central role does not reside in nature, a number of need, but to the will and thereby to liberty? Certainly, but on the condition that at the source of what is real one places goodness and not truth, a fundamental choice made by the Franciscan school. Therefore, the Franciscan can make what was deemed impossible possible, uproots the Aristotelian naturalism through the primacy of the will and of goodness, just like the juridical concept according to which law regulating social life supposedly is based on divine and inviolable law, in line with the hierarchical Aristotelian-Thomistic perspective. A new vision emerges from all this, whose source is goodness and at the center of the subject, believed to be the possessor of liberty and thereby capable of renouncing any right, confirming his greatness when he humiliates himself, imitating Christ, poor and crucified. And is not renunciation of appropriation, prime root of evil, the truly favorable condition in self-manifestation, without ornaments, in the radical donation to others without asking for anything in exchange? Is it not true that creatures offer themselves inasmuch as freed from chains and objectives, offering themselves, like the flower, without a reason, but with a meaning? And is this not the heart of the phenomenology of the 1900's as a critical reflection on what is offered and appears? Franciscan thinking emerges with this intent and with this direction, which however was lost and which Kolbe was called upon to recuperate.

From this viewpoint, one may also say that the Franciscan is a man of radical "questioning", who with Mary asks: *how is this possible?*, without stopping at the first obstacles, to demonstrate what seemed impossible is actually possible. If radical, the questioning alludes to the fact that we do not know what we are capable of, only what we wish, taken in by a vortex that takes us away from our weak strengths and ourselves. The

discussion proceeds from the possible to the impossible, from the known to the unknown, and is resolved in the unavailable. To the level of its radicality, questioning reveals oneself, and that is to say the 'rogatory' characteristic, almost as if dealing with a 'prayer' made to who can do things beyond any possibilities. Questioning is inhabited by oration, by who wants what he cannot do, becoming (the prayer) through this a sign of power, because it tends to make the impossible possible. *Rogatio* is in the *interrogatio*, in the sense that, asking in a radical way. Finding ourselves in an area without any support, we turn to who can do what he wants. Under a generalized profile, radical interrogation is a sort of human-divine encounter or even represents what is divine in culture, if this last is authentic, thereby, far from being the skeptical matrix, introduces us into the space where all paths are possible, while waiting for our passage.

3. Through the entity giving itself, the truth on the Being

At this point, in the light of Franciscan experience that teaches to make it so what seemed impossible becomes possible, we ask ourselves, apart from the will of power (Nietzsche) and waiting for the Being (Heidegger), if there is not another way that leads the creatures to offer themselves for what they are, without lies and without violence. Briefly, we ask ourselves about giving a perfect phenomenology of good as further confirmation of its primacy to be called upon.

Nietzsche knows that only one person opposes Dionysus for number of violence, and this is Christ, resulting from the opening words in the second part of the fragment quoted above: «Dionysus against the "Crucified": this is the antithesis. The difference is not based on martyrdom – only this has a different meaning». This is the fundamental and at the same time genial passage. The difference between the Christian God and all other gods is not in relationship to martyrdom, because both (Dionysus and Christ) are victims of the homicidal fury of the crowds. Violence belongs to our pre-history, the secret soul and at times declared by the cultural forms that have marked our past. Now, if Dionysus and Christ are thought about in the same sacrificial logic, based on what can one define the opposition of the one to the other? Which and where to place the difference? Provoked by violence, Jesus' Passion condemns violence and therefore what was at the basis of pagan religions, compendium of scapegoat figures, total summation of justifying violence. By condemning violence in all its forms, Jesus' Passion censures the pages of history written by the strong and the victorious. The pages of the oppressed and defeated, written by the strong with the blood of the weak, must be reread, and the Nihilistic outcome, as the epilogue of overwhelming violence, must be unmasked. While marked by the same logic of violence as all the pagan religions, Jesus' martyrdom is a silent and definite condemnation of this overwhelming process, of the pagan order as of any order inspired by violence, whatever form it takes on. The violent face does not belong to the Christian God.

But which is the path so that violence does not arise and if it arises does not spread? The Christian God is the God of love, not of hate, of mercy, not of revenge. And He is this to the point of unmasking all motivations with which history tried to justify violence. Because of this, Girard notes with acumen, «the Christian Passion is not anti-Judaic, as vulgar anti-Semitism seems to believe, it is anti-pagan: it reinterprets religious violence in such a negative way as to make its authors feel guilty of having committed it, even for having accepted it in silence, and from the moment that all of human culture is founded on

this collective violence, the entire human race is declared guilty from the Gospels' point of view. Life itself is accused because it cannot continue organizing itself without this type of violence». The Christian God is not bloodthirsty, rather He denounces violence, which He wishes to cancel through love. Forgiveness implies self-sacrifice in place of another, returned to innocence. Machiavellism has no place here because peace is not only the end to be attained but also the method and the path. The sacrificial mechanisms, which are the mechanisms of violence, no longer are held true. Therefore, no longer Dionysus as prospected by Nietzsche, rather the Crucified, He who is subjected to violence and shows the way to put an end to this horror of transforming persecutors into saviors, subtracting them from the logic of overcoming, under any form and in relationship to any source. Therefore, no longer Nietzsche's Dionysus, but the God of good, which the Franciscan has taken up as the model for his life and in whose name has professed radical poverty.

4. *Truth without goodness and the loss of the subject*

But if it has an essential role in the merciful rather than vindictive God, what role does the theme of goodness have in relation to recuperating the subject in its individuality, with the burden of its daily routine? Is the primacy of goodness (Mary) truly irrelevant to the ends of finding once again... the subject (the son)? To answer this, we must ask ourselves why the West, where the individual has come forth with the burden of solitude, lost the individuality of the individual, soon resolved in the horizon of a universal sign. This is an irrefutable page of truth without goodness or even of goodness resolved in truth, which is something else as opposed to truth as a configuration of goodness, which is tied to the Franciscan tradition. In searching for what remains in the waves of the seasons, the philosopher follows valid ideas, to which he sacrifices everything. For the philosopher truth is what counts, evident to reason, fragmentary or universal, but not here. We are at the history of truth without goodness or truth that resolves goodness in itself.

After the first testimonial form, represented by Socrates, who tried to found virtue and knowledge of truth, the philosopher divorces from life. This separation begins with the primacy of truth over good, and therefore with the resolution of the variable into the permanent, the contingent to the necessary, time into eternity, related as the imperfect to the perfect, as what should be to what is. If the contingent is the shadow of the necessary and the imperfect is in this relation to the perfect, it is obvious that the necessary, the perfect, impose themselves as the sole reason for being, and life, which belongs to the variable, to the contingent, to the temporal, remains at the outskirts. Opposed to this, when any bond weakens between the contingent and the necessary or the imperfect with the perfect, one falls into the logic of the provisional, whose value is resolved in the brevity of the season. This is the logic of the *carpe diem*, without a breath. Therefore, the alternative imposing itself wavered between the universal as necessary and the contingent as provisional. This divorce will end when eternal and time, finite and infinite, necessary and contingent... will be distinct ways of being, each with its own logic, to be respected profoundly, without unions yet indissoluble, one without the other. Then, one will understand that what is contingent is precious not because it is contingent but because it could have not existed, and if it is, its reason for being must be found in the secret of he who, being able to not want it, wanted it. The contingent will be a part of this mystery and therefore kept with the same care one takes with the necessary and the perfect.

Concluding this adventure of truth without goodness, Lévinas asks himself: when

does philosophy recuperate communion with life, making this meaningful? The rather peremptory answer was: philosophy becomes a part of life when it is able to maintain and potentiate the history of the other because another, yet not to the detriment of its universal breath. This implicates the exaltation of the individual in his irreducible alterity. But when this happens? When and if existence is a novum, unforeseeable, undetractable and not coming from a general principle, even if as an exemplification. But when the creatures seem to be an unexpected fact, a place for marvel? When and why wanted by the one who could have not wanted them. Which then is the relationship with this source that wanted them, calling them into being? At the basis of the Franciscan theme of goodness as the soul of truth that it is possible to find the foundation of Lévinas' proposal, which should be insisted upon, because it contributes to overcoming certain confutations of contemporary thinking.

5. *Rediscovering good, the source of truth*

In an attempt to grasp the common trait with modern philosophy, critical of the totalitarian bent that emerged during the 1900's and while denounced was not contrasted by another radical perspective, Lévinas recalls the Platonic thesis of good beyond being, by which he demonstrates the irreducibility of the other to the same and thereby to the conceptualized and neutral being, and the uncapturable basis of creatures. The good beyond the being, Platonism of the human, Platonism of every philosophy. This path seems very fruitful because it confirms, from another angle, how contemporary philosophy tries to clear more knowledgeably that not only is donation the source of the being and the other is unrepeatable and unforeseeable, but that every creature holds an inviolable secret within it, before which research is blocked by transforming into admiration and thanks. This is the theme of Good as the secret soul of truth, which imposes two things: truth, however achieved, does not hold the attention but leads to what lies beyond; and, this beyond, inasmuch as uncapturable because enigmatic, represents the true obstacle on the path of secularization and on the nihilistic bent. Goodness, as the origin of the being and hidden basis of its expressions, achieves a function that is truly strategic because it blocks the intellect from proceeding on the path of radical rationalization of the real. Now, how does this qualifying theme configure itself in the Franciscan tradition?

It is known that Bonaventure qualifies God as "good". Differing from Thomas, he subordinates the being to the "good", in harmony with John's Dionysian tradition, according to which the name that gives the best rendering of what God truly is and has done is "charity". He is essentially donation of self to the other, *ad intra* (Trinitarian Mystery) as well as *ad extra* (incarnation of the Word). Stating the primacy of good and speaking about God-goodness equals canceling indifference to good, believing that the rational motivation is insufficient in explaining the coming into being of the world and our permanence in it. The theme of unending and mysterious love of God imposes itself as the compendium of good and liberty, tied to a single logic, «whether liberty is the liberty of the Good and good is the Good of liberty». We are at the origins of the creative gesture, where man and the world find their reason for being within the gratuity of the gesture. Asking oneself why God created in this manner and not otherwise, this world and not another, Scotus answers: *Deus vult quia vult*, the will is supreme. This means that nothing was imposed on God, therefore what He wanted He wanted because He wanted it, even

while having the choice of not wanting it or wanting it differently. Therefore, the basis of the being is made up of this free gesture that, if leaving any trace in the same creature (“footprint, vestige, image”), flows back and falls back upon God. The creature’s secret – why here and not elsewhere, now and not then, thus and not otherwise – is in God. What more superb exaltation of the Creature, taken away from the opaqueness of his own conscience like manipulation by another! Then, Occam, apart from the undecipherable characteristic, denying the giving of universality or that the essence has a common grounds, accounts for the singular characteristic of the creatures, each one as a unique and unrepeatable even in history, demonstrating that the creatures are not approximate versions of eternal and perfect arch-types. Each rational creature is a masterpiece, and end and never the means, because *ipsum ius subsistens* (Rosmini). Whoever does not transcend the truth of the creature in the direction of divine or ineffable (Wittgenstein) goodness, arresting the concupiscent characteristic of reason, no longer the sole and final meter of the real, offered instead to the esthetic and contemplative fruition, shows that he is extraneous to this philosophy and even not attentive of the implications of the primacy of good and of will. What actually is imposed is the “gratuity”, the true face of goodness. If nothing is imposed upon God, everything that exists may be said to be *volitum Dei* and therefore *valde bonum*, because essentially freely given. The greatness of the world overflows in this gratuity and this, being transcendent to any logic, reveals itself as impenetrable to any rational exploration.

Like God’s choices, even the human ones go back to the freedom of the protagonists, giving account, proceeding from truth towards good. Reason unveils possible scenarios, but the will chooses, giving a true face to what is called into existence. The will transcends, does not deny reason, from which it departs and from which it draws light. First truth then goodness, the soul of truth; first reason and then the will as transcendence of reason. By proposing goodness as the soul of truth, one can feel why and how deeply the will cannot be substituted and history has a meaning, and above all which is the way to maintain it in the turbulence of time. With the passage from truth to good or even, with good in truth, we are not in the field of arbitrariness, with its thousands of versions, but in the ontological space of self-respect and welcoming others. And the sign of the authenticity of good is the gratuity, beyond any calculation, as well as the other’s goodness. Renouncing any rights – this is the original meaning of poverty – the Franciscan appears as the symbol of authenticity, in the sense that self-giving is without any counterpart or any sort of conditioning.

6. Love the protective shadow of God throughout time

Now, how does the translation of good into truth come about? Its grade is proportional to the declination of the term “love”, sign of gratuity and of liberty. This grading goes from the good that resolves the truth (the Immaculate) in itself to the good that with difficulty becomes Truth (Kolbe), thus opening up the path from good to truth. Emphasizing the primacy of good, love being its existential version, we may say that one may love even what is not loveable (think about Francis’ leper), even if there is nothing to love – the world did not exist – so if it comes into being, since it didn’t exist (*ex nihilo sui et subiecti*), the world is an unequivocal sign of this love, of what is possible, without any of the conditions of the logic of being. The radicality of love is evident. It is a sort of

untying from what is in favor of what does not exist, in view of its move to being. Possible and act of love call upon each other. Love contrasts the impossible making it possible. What declination of existence is love capable of activating? That which does not live for itself but for the other self, gratuitously. The verb "to be" is not substantial. The verb "to love" provokes a significant semantic overturn, making the verb to be its auxiliary, better yet its product. Which means that the subject is not the source of love, but love is the source of being. It is not true that the verb "to be" is only capable of semantic modifications in an accidental way. We have idolized it too much, justifying our laziness.

But is it possible to place love at the origins of being? It is possible, under the condition that one does not stop at the fact, but proceed from the fact to the giving, the condition of the fact. At the origin, there is not the *datum* but the *datio* or the "gift" of being. *This* does not deal with what is and what is not, rather it is the giving of being. The gift is not the enclosing but the institutor, therefore what makes it occur or come about. Phenomenology is the heart of philosophy. Therefore it is not the being that proceeds from the gift, which would be the effect, almost a universal antecedent, rather it is the gift that marks the entity, while allowing the passage into being. Love is not an accident, a mere quality of the being, but it is its source. Creatures are not the *effectum causae* but the *volitum Dei*, in their coming into being and in their permanence in being, expression of His generosity. This implicates the decisive passage of the primacy of the intellect to that of the will, making logic emerge from gratuity, conclusive ending point of thought and inspiring source of living.

Well, the Franciscan school lies on this trajectory, in the sense that it disposes reason to listening, in the silence of self, of a voice other than one's own. In the end, this is the sense of his qualifying theses, that is to place truth under the hegira of goodness, as the gratuity or the nothing because, because the intellect does not possess it by impoverishing it, but be prepared to contemplate it with surprise for what blinds and stupefies through excess. Wanted by who could have preferred not to want or want differently from the way wanted, the creatures' return to whom transcending them bears within their secret. Be it God or man, protagonists with different titles but related in liberty, the discussion does not change. At the end of this lengthy exploration, which puts light on many things, the creatures have a mystery, which flows back to who wanted them even if capable of not wanting them or wanting them differently. So then, with Francis: *quid habes quod non accepisti?* Your selfsame liberty, in your unrepeatability, you do not owe to yourself. Only at this point one can understand the philosophic breadth of the consciousness of the total gratuity of existence, thanks to which the truth is brighter and at the same time more enigmatic, and opens to prayer: «give thanks for the fact of existing», «praise all creatures because they are, our sisters», to be welcomed in their nakedness like moments of the hymn to God. Only who knows to thank has understood what is essential, that is to say, being is a gift originally, to be used without domination. Goodness opens the horizon of what is beyond truth and expands into the logic of the gift, just like the logic that transcends any logic, because logic without logic authenticated in the silence of contemplation.

CONCLUSION

Calling upon certain moments of his experience at Auschwitz, Primo Levi tells the

story of Lorenzo, «at the same time long and brief, straightforward and enigmatic... In concrete terms, it comes down to a small thing: an Italian civil worker brought me a piece of bread and the remainder of his meal every day for six months; he gave me a sweater full of mends; wrote a postcard to Italy for me and gave me the answer. For all this, he neither asked for or accepted a reward because he was good and simple, and did not believe in doing good for a reward... Lorenzo was a man; his humanity was pure and uncontaminated, he was outside of this world of negation. Thanks to Lorenzo, I happened to remember that I too am a man». This is rediscovering the gratuity, hard to remain faithful to, but whose treason leads our deepest being to ruin. Goodness is proportional to gratuity. But gratuity is not only the elevated and transparent expression of goodness?

In the vain effort to understand the dark face of evil, man has traced his path towards God, to damn or justify or cancel Him, letting one be guided by truth without goodness or by truth versus goodness. Still prisoner of the logic behind the fall guy and thereby of truth without goodness, man continued to put down God, as the supreme victim, the responsibility for evil. The many Theodiceans confirm this, just like many versions of atheism, ancient and modern. Who believes that God exists despite evil, believes He is responsible for what should not exist but does. And thus, without thinking back on it, exalts evil and detests God, good but impotent, seduced by truth as the rigorous chain of causes and effects. But does evil truly require God? Is not Augustine's answer definitive, where we are the sole ones responsible for evil, while the boss has gone away for a long trip? In the abyss of Auschwitz, where tears turned to ice, he gives a place to God who gets around evil or weakens it, by this offending for a second time the victims of homicidal fury. But is this truly the main path to speak to God? Shouldn't we change level and, on the footsteps of the Franciscan school, look elsewhere, not in the direction of evil but towards good, expressed in mercy towards the victims? This way is so elevated that only God can explain or make it possible. And therefore, is God also present in Auschwitz? Yes, on the condition that He is not made accountable for evil, in which case He would disappear among the poisoned cries of men without dignity. Even calling upon His unexplainable mystery «for who has cried is a miserable argument», because truth without goodness, light in a desert without life.

Well, the question whether without God one is suspended concerns the abyss of evil as well as the invisible flux of good: from whence the light in this abyss of darkness?

Faithful interpreter of Franciscan orientation, Kolbe pointed to Mary, the mother of truth, interpreting goodness with life and gratuity with death. That gesture ennobled the death camp, transforming it into a place of life. He opposed goodness in truth to truth against goodness. In Auschwitz, evil is not unexplainable if God exists; because to justify it man's actions are sufficient; rather it is good that is unexplainable if God does not exist. Kolbe knows no other Theodicean, because his logic is without logic. But is it logical for those on high to worry about those below; or that the more look for the less, the rich sacrifice for the poor, the Creator care about the unreasoning or rebellious creature? This is the logic of donation, which flows in goodness, transparent and genuine if freely given. Is it not the gratuity, as logic without logic, to account for Kolbe's biography, a Franciscan in life and even more so in death? Before any truth, he was the interpreter of goodness in life and in death the witness of mercy for the victims of truth versus goodness.

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