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God the Father,
I don't believe in you anymore



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*To God the Father, for everything and despite everything.
To doctor Aniceto Aramoni, just for everything.*

Introito¹

At birth, Life burns us and we are startled by a strident whispering.

It is the Ineffable; the Darkness; the Mystery... it is the monstrous power of the forces throbbing inside and outside us, the human beings.²

Before we even meet our parents, those impressive, humongous forces have already knock us over.

Formidable forces, as tsunamis of Sun...

Life and the Ineffable transcend and overwhelm us as soon as we bump into them.

They put us at the edge of the infinite abyss.

Thus the childbirth screams, the fear and the trembling, the shuddering and the perturbation which define us...

... thus, most of all, God.

God: the most powerful and influential symbol conceived by human beings.

(Dear reader, don't despair; the beginning of this Introit is the only half-serious part of this book. Lightness defines the rest of it. The chapters, at least most of them, are humorous, I promise...)

Men (like this, in masculine), soon discovered God's potential.

Some of them, the most ambitious, aptly and cunningly took control over Him and endowed Him with their own follies and neurosis.

Since then, He is Yahweh/God the Father³.

Very soon, men started developing male hierarchies (of course) around Yahweh/God the Father.

Soon, his more astute promoters proclaimed themselves exclusive spokespersons between Him and the human beings.

The rest of men and women, we assumed, almost without objections, the role of passive accomplices of this kidnapping of the Ineffable (i.e., God).

With God as their emblem, and under his (supposed) assignment, authoritarian and abusive hierarchs of the Catholic Church impose on us, Catholics, rules for our acting and living.

Their arrogant attitude and the condescending tone of their homilies are annoying and even aberrant in the light of immorality and atavism characterizing them (many of them).

They raise their voice, really loud, to criticize abortion harshly, but one can barely hear them when they should denounce the culture of death, scourge of those already born; that culture that keeps men and women in the dark ages and that, for fear or complicity, remains silent before injustice and violence; the promoter of servility, the trashy ethics, and the moral and intellectual dwarfism.

Having a background of revolutionary and ground-breaking men of science as an asset, it is paradoxical that current representatives of the Catholic Church opt to close their eyes to the signs of the times instead of addressing them (perhaps due to a desperate attempt to avoid a change that could undermine their authority).

Eloquent (and even suspicious) is the lack of interest of these individuals in the face of innovative theological proposals (Kazantzakis, The Theology of Liberation, or The Feminist Theology), while, on the other hand, they waste their enormous power and substantial resources in demonizing homosexual marriages, hampering abortion, or putting forward

anachronistic arguments to keep women out of the high church hierarchies (for example).

Why do we, Catholics, keep accepting the tutelage of those self-proclaimed representatives of God and their proposals?

Why only a small number of believers revolt and propose actively alternatives to moral corruption and the stifling myopia of our Church?

What for we, the Catholic women, keep being members of an organization that treats us with contempt?

Why is it that we don't react in front of their ridiculous and anachronistic slavery of conscience, whose most serious outcome is that it prevents us to see the face of the living God, the present God, of Ineffable?

These questions enclose a mystery greater than the Trinity.

In his time, Freud tried to answer them but, personally (and I hope Freud forgives my audacity) I consider (as many others) his ideas about God and the religion only partially convincing (I'll tell you why a little later).

When I was a little girl, I wanted to be very good.

Catholically good.

I wanted to be a saint.

Catholically saint.

I thought—so they taught me in school—that God had dictated his divine orders to the priests responsible for guiding me, as personally and accurately as Yahweh had dictated Moses the Ten Commandments or the instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle.

They (the priests) communicated to me those instructions very accurately.

When I heard them for the first time (I remember it well), I decided to fulfill them all to become a saint.

Not committing a single sin was my goal for years.

Fussily, every December 31st I used to make myself a firm promise: start my path towards perfection as of the last stroke of midnight.

At twelve o'clock sharp, I said goodbye to sins and imperfections, convinced that soon I would be a saint.

Listen (and this is really awful)...

Not only I would fulfill to the letter all the mandates of God the Father, but I would also avoid walking physically one single centimeter more or less than those necessary, and the same thing would happen with each of my muscles that would move only the necessary...

I would be perfect...

I would be a saint...

Time passed and, as it was to be expected (now I know it, but not at that time), far from becoming a saint and be beatified, my sticking to of Yahweh/God the Father's recommendations to walk through life was killing me.

Then I decided to give Him the cold shoulder and I did so during the next three decades.

When I started what would undoubtedly be the last third of my life (and as a result of a text that I wrote for a meeting at my Institute of Psychoanalysis), I decided to bring Him back to my life and give Him another chance.

I would rethink Him...

I would rethink God in the light of the inevitability of death, of my death...

I would rethink Him based on what I saw and lived while I banned Him from my life; based on what I had learned during that period...

... on my maturing,

... on the revelations of my self-psychoanalysis,
... on the theology assiduously studied.

I would rethink God because, at my almost sixty years, I have not yet found another way to deal with the dazzle and dizziness that the Ineffable causes me, neither the poignancy that the Mystery of life still causes me.

I started to rethink God based on the religious teachings of my childhood, reviewing some biblical chapters, with new eyes and an adult look; Genesis and Exodus among them.

The biblical texts, mainly the canonical Gospels, marked my initial conception of God and the attitude with which I faced life during my early years. It was the optimal material to start the task.

As soon as I started to reread it, other topics emerged, irrelevant to these texts and seemingly unconnected; some anecdotes, memories and readings that provided me additional material for my considerations.

Hence the presence in these pages of Immaculée, the Tutsi woman; of Robert, my nephew who died at the age of 20; of my mother's garden; of Emily Dickinson, the poetess; of my own garden, and of Trapito.

The reflections unveiled here cropped up from my guts.

They did not go through any strainer (as you will see).

I put them in writing (almost) as they came to my consciousness.

In fact, they are just some shy and somewhat disjointed ideas regarding what I called God for many decades.

Some of you will find them foolish, some, vapid; I know.

W. H. Auden wrote:

*Every Christian has to make a transition from the childish
"I still believe", to the adult "I believe again"...*
*In our age, that transition rarely is done without
a hiatus, a pause of incredulity, of loss of faith.*⁴

In my case, the result of this hiatus was not W. H. Auden's *I believe again*, but rather the phrase-title of this book, *God the Father, I don't believe in you anymore*, which expresses, I think, the underlying theme, the conclusion of my reflections.

I dare to publish this book... because if I don't, it might rot inside me and I rot with it...

During its development process, my life began to expand.

Divine water seeped in through the cracks of my doubts when I left behind atavisms, fears and many ballasts dragged for decades.

Fresh light leaked through the cracks that appeared as Yahweh/God the Father vanished and a new vision of the Ineffable broke through.

Now I know it...

Observe without further ado the Catholic Church mandates (or those of any other ecclesial authority of its court) and accept blindly their definition of God, is to act like the caterpillar that, to protect itself from the uncertainties and the harshness of life, produced an impenetrable cocoon, only to realize, when it was about to die, that its cocoon also had prevented it from becoming a butterfly.

If this text cracks at least one single authoritarian religious conscience, if it prevents a (human) Caterpillar to build itself an impassable cocoon, its publication will be justified.

Perhaps Freud was right and God is the reflection of the father.

But God is not only the reflection of the father.

His longing, the longing of God, (often) persists after psychoanalysis patients make peace with their father and get rid of the Oedipus.

The analysts we witness that every day at the office.

God is there; he is still there when the treatment ends.

But his face has been transformed.

It has changed radically.

It has nothing to do with the traditional God the Father, it doesn't even look like him anymore.

Now he is the Ineffable, the Great Mystery, Nothingness, Death...

If I keep calling him God, it is because, for primitive reasons, as Kazantzakis⁵ says, that name by itself has the ability of moving deeply our hearts and this emotion is essential to touch the universe's terrifying essence that is beyond logic and shakes us profoundly since our birth inevitably.⁶

Mexico City, 2011

Chapter 1

God's punishment for not being able to be alone⁷

Love is our punishment for not being able to be alone...

Margarita Yourcenar

Love is our punishment for not being able to be alone...

When she says that, Margarita Yourcenar refers to human beings. Men, women...

What she doesn't say (perhaps because she doesn't know it), is that we inherited that loving punishment from God, as we inherited from Him (although there are some who deny it due to self-interest) all our vices and virtues when He decided to create us in His own image (according to the Bible and other religious traditions).

And let me an aside... what a headache must have had God when he realized the mess that he had made due to its bright idea of making us like gods...

But, before brooding on the divine headache, by way of premise, some comments on the *yourcenarian* loneliness, but from God's perspective.

God was alone since forever, from the whole eternity.

He was the absolute Lord of Nothingness.

There was nobody who could question Him.

Nor there was someone who could point out his flaws.

Some of us, (mostly women, I dare to think), used to be questioned for everything and to be submitted to others' will, we might think that God's state was an idyllic state...

But not God. He didn't see it that way.

Remember that God had never been questioned. Plainly put, there was no one to call Him to account...

His authority, devoid of object, should bother him a lot.

And with good reason...

Because, what's the point in not being questioned when there's no one to question you?

What's stimulant and fun; what really makes you vibrate and feel powerful is to assert your authority on someone, and the more *someones* you have under you, the better you feel.

Imposition is the most primitive way of self-assertion. And, although we should already know it better, it's still the most common way... given that God set us the example.

As I was saying, despite his omnipotence and his immortality, God felt sad for not being able to command anyone. Therefore, after thinking about that issue for a while, he made up his mind: the best way to correct the problem was to create a man. A man who would question him and, in doing so, would give him (Him, God), the possibility of imposing himself.

To cut a long story short, a man would give God the faculty of exerting his authority.

God's experience of loneliness must have been terrifying.

If it wasn't so, why He projected it in Adam, his first creature, at the first opportunity?

*It is not sound for man to be alone*⁸, God said to himself as soon as he saw Adam, staggering, trying to stand on his two legs, with the mud still wet dripping through his body...

It is not sound for man to be alone, God said to himself, although Adam hadn't yet said a single word, and we don't even know if he would have like to remain alone to enjoy his uniqueness...

But God had grown fond of his power and instead of asking Adam his opinion on this delicate matter, He put him to sleep deeply.

And, while Adam was sleeping, He fashioned him a partner from one of his ribs He removed without his consent.

Can you imagine Adam's anger when he woke up, he saw that terrible scar in his side and, in addition, he realized that he was united for life to the woman who had caused him that wound?

Now... once they were there, man and woman, Adam and Eve, they liked each other very much.

Lying down, naked as they were, one alongside each other, both good-looking, they began to deal with their resentments (the one of rib to start with), while they stared at each other in their innocence.

Then (and how could it be otherwise if, besides being his creatures, they were extremely handsome?)... God fell in love with of Adam and Eve.

He fell in love with his creatures, and He had no other choice but to love them, and through them, all their offspring (that is, us).

As it would be seen by the missteps of his relationship with his creatures, love was God's punishment for not to being able to stay alone... as would say Yourcenar.

And what a way of loving us, his creatures, since then...

And what sort of complaints He has received from us as a result, and the troubles his love has caused Him...

Because although God gave us a lavish universe, humans we do have complaints, and what sort of complaints!

And that we do voice Him all our complaints, most certainly we do!

A couple of examples...

A complaint has to do with psychoanalysts and Freud was its spokesperson:

Stars are marvelous,
said the initiator of psychoanalysis;
but regarding the conscience,
*God did a very bad job.*⁹

Saramago's complaint is still more irreverent...

Almost at the end of *Cain*, one of his last novels, and once his protagonist (that is, Cain fictionalized) kindly killed Noah and his companions of the Ark, the Portuguese author refers the following dialogue:

—*Cain*, God tells the son of Adam and Eve when He discovers the newly committed fratricide, *you're the evil, infamous murderer of your own brother...*

—*Not as evil and infamous as you*, answers Cain. *Remember the children of Sodom*¹⁰.

And, from then on, the bickering between God and his thinking creatures has had no rest:

—*Remember the Inquisition*, we reproach Him...

—*Remember Auschwitz*, He ripostes...

—*You tolerated that...*

—*And the slavery? Am I also guilty of that?*

—*Remember your priests' sins: their complicity with dictators, the pederasty...*

—*And what can you say about my greatest champions: Gandhi, mother Theresa and Meister Eckhart? And since we are in these matters, why don't you mention the atrocious mutilations in Sierra Leone, the Rwanda Holocaust and those children tore to pieces by*

mines...?

—And you, how you forget the havoc caused by your earthquakes and your floods? Or how you treated your friend Job and the sacrifice you demanded Abraham?

—And you, why do you say nothing about your infidelities, your betrayals, your battered women and children, the poverty belts? And, haven't you in my favor the sunrises, the shooting stars and the jacarandas?

And so, to infinity, God and men not being able to reach an agreement on the distribution of faults...

How can we think on God?

To think on God without his atrocities is insane.

To think on Him without his splendors is unfair.

God is atrocities and splendors.

His story is similar to our history...

Even more...

God's history is man's history.

Man cannot be conceived without God, and God cannot be envisioned without man.

We need each other.

Men need God to be fully human, to leave behind the perverse narcissism; to find, together with Him, harmony, solidarity, generosity and love.

God needs us to exist.

God seeks us always.

He never stops doing so...

That's why He continues prevailing...

He looked for Adam to reproach him for having eaten the apple.

He looked for Cain to confront him with the murder of his brother.

He looked for me, Amparo, and I responded to Him with a book in his honor.

(We, humans, only look for Him when things get ghastly, as when death shows up...)

That's why He keeps prevailing...

Sometimes, God leaves us alone for a while to go in search of new faces and disclose himself from other perspectives.

He likes to play hide and seek.

He assumes as many identities and forms as there are in the universe. He's a chameleon.

God can be a storm...

... a burning bush,

... a golden calf,

... a bearded old man,

... a child in a manger.

God can also be one, many, and also a triune.

He can be Immanent or Transcendent.

God is refuge and repudiation,

... judge unfair and wise at the same time.

God's ethics is extremely flexible.

God is irrational. He is cruel.

He chooses a people as he pleases, and he destroys another one for that same reason.

And if you turn your back on Him, He joins forces with your enemies.

Plants, animals, and men are the rungs to climb along God's ladder.¹¹

Our God is a jealous God.

He is also a narcissistic God (just count the buildings He has requested being built in his honor!).

God is the juice of lemon. He hides in a closed wardrobe (my friend Gonzalo told me).

He is among the oppressed and He is also with the oppressors.

God is communication (that's why He gets angry with Moses when he hits the rock, instead of talking to it so that it springs water).

God dresses in silk and also with rags.

He has fun fighting with the men and...

... sometimes he abuses his friends (remember the unfortunate Job).

God is a hybrid of biological mother and celestial father.

To ingratiate us with Him, men renounce their sexuality and forget their families.

God is peace and is war.

He is the opium of people.

Nietzsche lived to kill God.

Saramago lived to make fun of Him.

Job and Elijah endured Him.

Sartre denied his existence.

Unamuno challenged Him.

Moses could see his face.

Some Mystics claim to have found Him.

Mother Teresa doubted his existence.

Al Qaeda kills his enemies.

Mexicans we prefer his mother.

God doesn't die, even if He is declared dead.

He always resurrects. Sometimes it takes him only three days.

What does all of this mean?

It means that if we want to discover God, we must be on the lookout, pay attention to each of his movements.

God is not omnipotent or almighty. God is continuous creation, action and freedom.¹²

Because God is action. Ongoing action...

He is a verb, not a substantive (as says Aniceto Aramoni, the psychoanalyst).¹³

God is not love but to love.

Better still, God is loving...

A gerund (not an infinitive).

The infinitive is vague, abstract, static, just committed.

The gerund is current. It is today. It is this second.

But it is also yesterday and tomorrow.

This "gerundial" form of God appears in the Exodus, in the episode of the burning bush.

After being confronted by God (as a burning bush), Moses asks Him his name, remember?¹⁴

In the Hebrew version of the text, God's answer is: *I will be who I will be, this is my name forever*.¹⁵

Nonetheless, in the Western version of King James, God answer to Moses is: *I am who I am*.¹⁶

One letter more or one letter less (depending on the text) and the difference becomes abysmal: the *I am* of King James version alludes to a static, immutable divinity, while the *I*

will be of the Hebrew version makes reference to a divinity with projection towards the future, with dynamic force, options and contingency plans liable to be adapted to a changing world: ours...

And, what if God was not beginning, but end?

My God...

I, Amparo, am faithful to Earth.

My God is immanent.

He is here (but also in the beyond).

Sometimes, when his behavior embarrasses me, I pretend not to believe in Him.

But I only pretend, because I can't understand myself without God (as He cannot understand Himself without me).

My God and I we talk disrespectfully.

If I am not eternal, what's the point?

I can't think of me without thinking myself eternal (with Freud's forgiveness).

I want immortality, I demand it.

My God answers me promising me immortality in exchange for leave behind narcissism, forget myself and collaborate with Him, incessantly, in the creation of a better world.

I accept his proposal. Not by faith, but because I trust him...

Because my God is flexible, because He seeks to relate to me, because He always communicates and his essence is the attention... He's always present at the office when I look after my patients; in my garden when I watch the thrushes; in the smile of my grandchildren; in the memories of my parents and also, when reading an unknown author, I discover an original idea...

Chapter 2

Jealousy of the Creator

One day, after he expelled them from paradise, Yahweh saw Adam and Eve swimming in a lagoon of tepid waters and running relaxed amidst the surrounding prairies, water dripping down their bodies sensuously and... and, for the first time in his eternity, He felt envy.

How could Yahweh not feel envy if the scene revealed a happiness unusual for Him?

His first two creatures had discovered a tree with a slim and packed trunk more than five meters high, small yellow flowers and half dried fruits they ate with delight.

It was Adam's turn to name the new species (because he took turns with Eve in such a funny task).

After thinking about for a while, he decided to give it the gentle name of palm.

Rabbits...

... foxes...

... wolfs...

... hyenas...

... leopards...

... deers...

... porcupines, ibexes, bears, tigers and badgers wandered amicably around them, trying to become friends with those two beautiful and strange beings coming and going from one place to another only on their two legs; that couple of beings who exchanged caresses and melodic sounds of mysterious meaning with ecstatic expressions on their faces.

The scene turned pale any other scene recalled by Yahweh prior to Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden due to their *bad behavior*. An expulsion which was settled (we must emphasize, to know better our Creator) without the right to respond or the possibility of repentance.

When He perceived the erotic glances exchanged in complicity by Adam and Eve whenever her child moved in her womb, Yahweh got irate (inexplicably for him, but not for us who know his problem with sexuality), decided to return to Earth and he immediately undertook the journey wrapped in an aura of anger the long journey couldn't dissipate.

Some history to contextualize the divine reaction...

While Yahweh's creatures greatly enjoyed themselves in a bustling land, He was bored in the immense and insensitive emptiness.

The only incentive of the divine solitudes was the rather malicious belief that Adam and Eve were having a bad time outside of Paradise.

When He realized his mistake, that it wasn't like that (but rather the opposite), the isolation began to weigh on Yahweh.

Nothingness, Yahweh's faithful partner since all eternity, had abandoned Him centuries ago.

She felt betrayed when Yahweh created the Universe.

And with a good reason.

Although Nothingness had hosted Yahweh for free in her bosom since always, suddenly, without even consulting her, He had created her a rival: the Universe.

Without wasting any time, the Universe, who lacked any sympathetic sensitivity toward his predecessor, ousted Nothingness with glittering suns and coquettish stars, purple jacarandas, sluggish caterpillars that become butterflies, together with exciting and mysterious enigmas.

Humiliated by Yahweh's betrayal and the Universe's pride, feeling a tremendous sense of belittlement, Nothingness vanished without trace and left the field open so that the Universe could do his thing during the centuries and centuries to come.

Abandoned by Nothingness and incapable of analyzing the reasons of such abandonment due to his extremely high degree of narcissism, but especially alarmed by Adam and Eve's rejoicing, Yahweh decided to abruptly end his seventh day rest (already extended to several light centuries), fearing that his creatures could also abandon him if He left them alone.

I can't omit commenting you something (somewhat on the sidelines)...

I find it difficult to understand Yahweh's decision to take a break: what does God need a rest for if his nature doesn't know weariness?

Now... to split hairs, it occurs to me that being hyper-identified with his creatures (who He madly begrudged when He saw them complete), Yahweh decided, as many men and women upon reaching adulthood, that the best thing was to get away.

So He announced it (I don't know exactly to whom) without noticing the absurdity of his statement:

I will take a holiday.

I got tired enough creating the Universe.

I need a break.¹⁷

And, stated that way, perhaps Yahweh was right.

He had not only created a Universe, but additionally, something unheard of, He had shared part of his divine essence implanting it in two beings who, from that moment on, felt themselves like gods.

Adam and Eve began to move about without his consent, having fun until they had their fill of a luxuriant animality; an animality that the Creator was unable to decipher since He still didn't share it because, let's remember it, we are in the Old Testament, and God's Incarnation will only occur in the New one.

For the first time, Yahweh realized the scope of his creatures and He experienced a feeling similar to the one we, parents, undergo when our sons and daughters start to surpass us in everything: we feel ousted and obsolete; we become infuriated.

It must have been appalling for Yahweh to recognize the end of his monopoly on everything.

He wasn't indispensable anymore.

Nor he was the only one who invented things.

It was something difficult to digest.

Not only can we, parents, attest it, but also any monopolist who suddenly notices a competitor arising to his height.

Looking at it this way, well yes, Yahweh had to move away awhile to withdraw in his glory and recover his confidence.

Now... as it happens usually to retirees, idleness was less rewarding than expected for the Creator.

He couldn't repress his curiosity (a behavior He also initiated after the creation of man, as before that nothing escaped him and thus curiosity had no reason to be), and in a moment of utmost despair, He made the mistake of taking a look at his creatures to be aware of their adventures.

Then something paradoxical happened (if we consider that He is the Creator and the absolute God of the Universe).

Yahweh felt jealousy.

He felt jealousy because, young as they were, Adam and Eve were in full physical activity boasting, unashamedly, an exuberant vitality and energy (which He, Yahweh, was unable to display because his divine characteristics don't include corporeity).

Conveniently forgetting that He had abandoned to their fate his first human creatures because they had only eat a red fruit (which He already didn't recall why He had prohibit them to eat), Yahweh decided to interfere again in their daily lives, showing up before them, without apologies or explanations (as He usually does), to see if he could somehow amend his mistake.

But as He lacks any sense of time, given that time doesn't pass for him, he took centuries getting to Earth.

By then, He didn't find Adam and his wife, as death had carried them away long ago.

But He surely found some of their descendants.

Adam and Eve's descendants were men and women not quite similar to that first couple of human beings who Yahweh remembered well as they had come out directly of his hands.

Although, how could He forget it?

...Despite having done them personally, He never managed to fully understand them, much less keep them under control.

That fact still infuriated him, despite the centuries already passed.

The men and women He found in his second coming to Earth were even stranger than Adam and Eve, and that fact frightened and angered him even more.

In order to ingratiate himself with this new human breed (if, by any chance, they turn him down due to the treatment He had given their ancestors), Yahweh named it: *My chosen people*.

The Israelites (as history would name these men and women) felt much honored with that distinction and they decided immediately to match it.

The Creator himself told them how to do it: building him a Tabernacle.

Such a reaction is paradoxical, especially in the light of the Tower of Babel, an event that had happened just a few years earlier and that had also involved Yahweh and his first chosen people...

I will end here this chapter (albeit too brief).

The reason of my ungodly act?

I just realized something meaningful for my ruminating about God...

Contrasting the construction of the Tabernacle and the construction of the Tower of Babel is an exceptional way to illustrate the uneven relationship existing between Yahweh and his creatures...

You'll agree with me that this exciting topic deserves its own chapter.

Chapter 3

Yahweh's narcissism

God (who at the beginning asked to be called Yahweh) dubbed his first house with an ostentatious name: Tabernacle.

House was a too modest name for the lavish enclosure that He demanded his chosen people to build for Him, when He decided to return to Earth

God's first house, outcome of his fantasy (that is, the Tabernacle), was a declaration of principles.

Due to his own needs—which I dare to qualify as narcissistic (and when you are done reading this chapter you may agree with me—Yahweh decided to show himself always beyond his creatures.

He also decided to constantly exercise his divine rights, the minor of which was not precisely to demand them (for no reason whatsoever) to carry out, without question, all the eccentricities He might conceive.

If not so, how would they respect Him?

It is valid to suppose (although He will never endorse it) that, with the construction of the Tabernacle, Yahweh sought to keep busy the Israelites, so that the excess of free time would not let them discover the secret of eternal life, just like Adam and Eve had earlier discovered that of good and evil for not having more occupation than that of naming plants and animals.

Because, if his creatures were already immortal, what could He offer them in exchange for their obedience?

The passage of time showed Yahweh that creating Adam and Eve in his own image and likeness (that is, divine) had not been entirely appropriate.

At some point in time He repented: *I should have made them only with mud and never breathe soul into them*, he said to himself.

But it was too late.

The damage (damage for Yahweh, of course) was already unstoppable.

His souled creatures considered themselves his peers and every day they used their freedom with greater aplomb.

He had to beware at all times of not being overtaken by them, and the constant concern that this could occur caused Him atrocious headaches...

I've got it! (He said to himself when he was about to undergo one of those migraines). *Besides being lavish, my Tabernacle must also be impressive.*

Thus my creatures will feel scared and they will come to me in search of shelter.

I am the Almighty and my investiture demands that I be feared.

Yahweh not only ordered Moses (who I will talk about again in another chapter) to frame the Tabernacle with all sorts of filigrees.

Knowledgeable of the enigmatic faculty of secrets to boost human curiosity, He also asked him to incorporate into it sacred spaces where mystery would reign.

Many years after the Tabernacle, and inspired by its majesty (certainly also to strive for recognition and keep aside the divine wrath), men constructed for Yahweh (who by then asked to be called God) buildings much more magnificent than his first house:

Gothic cathedrals (in Chartres, Rouen and other European cities)...

St. Peter's Basilica (in Rome)...

Santa Sofia's (in Istanbul), among hundreds of thousands of structures that would make the Tabernacle pale in comparison.

But Yahweh didn't tell the Israelites about these magnificent temples, nor He told them that He would choose other peoples, because they would have felt very jealous.

But Yahweh did say to his (first) chosen people, and in full detail, how to build his first house, that is, the Tabernacle.

He gave Moses the guidelines personally on a hill covered by a cloud where He made his glory shine in the form of a blazing fire.¹⁸

Never again would Yahweh give instructions personally to anyone for the construction of his houses.

Mostly because it was unnecessary: in the construction of the first one He established the parameters that He required and, who would dare to build Him one that could be less grandiose, knowing his revanchist reaches?

In a few words, just to give you an idea of the Tabernacle magnificence, I'll tell you that it was made of acacia wood (a super fine one), and surrounded by a sophisticated carved fence.

Its interior sported adorned with eleven curtains of the finest cloth, joined together with golden clothespins.

Its roof was covered with a tent made of goat fur, another of red-dyed sheep fur and a third one of badger skin.

I was divided into two sections: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies, separated by veils of blue, purple, and crimson twisted linen, embroidered with extremely exquisite angels.

The Most Holy Place, where Yahweh manifested himself, had the function of safeguarding his testimony: the two stone tablets of the Law, a golden urn holding manna collected at the desert and Aaron's rod that budded miraculously in circumstances I don't recall.

Both sections sported:

... sardonixes...

... topazes...

... carbuncles...

... emeralds...

... zafires...

... diamonds...

... jacinths, agates, amethysts, beryls, onixes and jaspers.

The priests entered these spaces dressed in the robes of their superior rank (as it happens with managers at luxury establishments), woven in gold, blue, purple and crimson; studded with stones.

These demands were cumbersome due to their cost and the work they required, but Yahweh rewarded the priests responsible for carrying them out with distinctions and privileges that they thank him by means of an eternal loyalty oath.

The construction of the Tabernacle didn't happen without incidents...

After severely reprimand the Israelites for having built an altar to Baal while he was attending to Yahweh's affairs, Moses emphatically warned them that he wouldn't tolerate similar behaviors once again.

For now, they had to recharge their batteries and start, at once, to build Yahweh's Tabernacle according to his instructions specified with divine precision; he didn't want delays or mistakes in its construction which could cause him, Moses, problems with the Creator.

The materials should be those specified.

The dimensions: exact.

The colors, the woods, the fabrics, and the precious stones... everything, absolutely everything according to Yahweh's desires.

Nothing was interchangeable...

Can you imagine the reaction of the Israelites when they were notified that they had to find acacia wood, gold and precious stones when they, following Adam and Eve's example, were having good time eating free manna from heaven and exploring at their will the sands of the desert?

Why God didn't build his own home?

Why He put to work night and day his chosen people?

Why He didn't prevent his men and their spouses to pull the hair out when they cut the wood incorrectly, when they didn't use the appropriate material or the exact shade, or when they exceeded by half an inch the proper measurement and they had to start over?

These are cryptic questions, riddles worth of countless hours of reflection of many men of God, some of which still spend their days formulating intricate interpretations which have the merit of putting us to think.

It really worries me to keep calling Yahweh a narcissist...

But I cannot avoid it...

Because, you tell me, how can we explain, unless we resort to narcissism, that someone orders to build for him a huge house, full of gold, decorated with wood and precious stones, if he doesn't feel cold or heat, and he doesn't need to protect himself from the elements?

God's demands for his Tabernacle are the product of a narcissism and a pride unprecedented in history.

For us, his creatures, thrown into a world full of threats and dangerous critters without even asking us for permission, a cave or a shed was enough to settle down and be more or less happy.

That is, we lived hand to mouth with our loincloth and the food of the day.

It never crossed our mind to build ourselves mansions...

But it did cross God's.

Paradoxically—because He is invulnerable and nothing can kill Him—God built himself a Tabernacle proof against germs and profane visits.

He demanded gifts for all occasions, as if his very existence depended on them.

He ordered sacrifices to pay for transgressions as if the blood spilled or the smoke of its burning feed him.

To reassert his power, He demanded prayers to alleviate the faults, besides the confession of all sins they might commit¹⁹.

However (and I am about to carry out an about-face)...

When speaking of God irreverently (activity still considered a capital crime in some countries), when speaking of God without respect, in some ways I detected glimpses of divine generosity.

Wasn't Yahweh, with his requests for the construction of the Tabernacle, trying to show us, humans, how to live surrounded by sacred refinement and dignity?

Would these and other similar sophistications have the purpose of teaching us to look at the world with care and benefit from its fruits beyond the mere survival?

Of course... my questions may well be just persistent religious residues of my childhood years.

At that time I didn't dare to question, not even in my mind, the many idiocies that, with

claims of erudition and sanctity, voiced those who flaunted as divine representatives (i.e. the priests).

Perhaps now I fear to speak of Yahweh without respect and thus I'm thinking of taking a step back...

But doing it wouldn't be free.

There are plenty examples of divine vengeance when we dare to surpass his limits.

One of them is the construction of the Tower of Babel, biblical episode which illustrates the uneven relationship between human beings and their Creator when it is compared with affair of the Tabernacle (as I already told you at the end of the previous chapter).

Years before the construction of the Tabernacle, Yahweh's creatures decided to visit Him at his non-earthly house (that is, in Heaven), and they started to erect a tower to go up there.

It occurred as follows:

Having settled on a plain of Shinar, the Israelites made a technological breakthrough: the manufacture of firebricks.

This led them to set aside the stone created by Yahweh (along with the rest of nature) which until then they had used in their buildings.²⁰

That discovery filled with pride the chosen people, and with good reason: it rivals in ingenuity and utility with the invention of the wheel.

It shouldn't surprise us (knowing the human tendency to seek always the recognition of our parents) that, as young children, the Israelites sought to celebrate their amazing achievement right next to their heavenly father: Yahweh.

As we all know (and the Israelites were not the exception), Yahweh's dwelling is in the heights.

So, if they wanted to visit Him they had to build a very high tower to get there.

Underestimating the difficulties of this ambitious project, and, most of all, despising its effect on Yahweh's narcissism, the Israelites started their endeavor using bricks, of course.

They didn't go too far.

Instead of waiting for the visit of his creatures with enthusiasm...

... instead of feeling happy due to their desire to celebrate their achievements with Him (as any moderately loving parent would feel), Yahweh got red with envy, felt anger and jealousy, and decided to sabotage the project.

To carry out his ghoulish plan, He had a really sinister idea: to confuse their languages.

The language, common up to that time for all Earth inhabitants, allowed them to live in harmony and understanding.

In a trice, by divine will and for divine protection, the blessed language became a damned tool that caused the human separation and many misunderstandings:

Behold that the people is one.

All have one single language.

They have started the ambitious tower and nothing will make them desist now.

Let's go down and confuse their language.

So none will understand the speech of his peer.

*So men will scatter over the face of the whole earth, and will cease to build the tower.*²¹

Such atrocious action is a clear indicator of how threatening Yahweh considered the harmony and creativity of men and women.

It was only the start off, just the onset of his creatures' potential and He was aware of it.

The liberating outlook militated against the fears and insecurities of the Divinity and his reaction was that of someone with his levels of narcissism.

What attracts attention, what really attracts attention, is the reaction of men...

Soon after thwarting successfully the construction of the Tower of Babel, Yahweh decides to return to Earth.

He shows up before the Israelites and, straightaway, as if the issue of the confusion of tongues had never occurred, He names them: *My chosen people*.

The Israelites, forgetting inexplicably the tower affair, perhaps seduced by their nomination, build Yahweh a magnificent Tabernacle (as we saw) to venerate Him morning, afternoon and evening, according to his whims.

Don't you think it's paradoxical?

Don't you think it's even masochistic?

Summing up...

Yahweh gives his creatures the Universe.

And they improve it inventing (besides bricks and other practical utensils): harmony, love, kindness and forgiveness, among many other discoveries absolutely revolutionary.

And, if by any chance you have doubts regarding about the human authorship of these bounties, to clarify them just take a good look at the nature cruelties created by Yahweh without free will: lions, for instance (but I will address more widely this issue in the next chapter).

Faced with the good behavior of his creatures, and to show them his repressive reaches when someone dares to point out his flaws, Yahweh confused their languages causing a dispersal that ruined the tower project.

Isn't it amazing?

Yahweh's creatures we have exploited admirably the divine spark, reaching heights never imagined by the Creator.

Paraphrasing Meister Eckhart: *Not even God can be what I, man or woman, can become.*²²

Could that be what upset Yahweh when the Tower of Babel?

Chapter 4

God is thirsty

*When he (Jesus) asked for water, the soldier gave him to drink vinegar... But his thirst was of love; of souls... The fruit of faith is the understanding of: "I am thirsty..."*²³

*Try to deepen your understanding of these words: "Thirst of God..."*²⁴

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

I fulfill Mother Teresa's assignment and I dive into her words trying to delve into them.

Thirst of God...

I see two paths, two ways of addressing them:

God is thirsty.

Men and women we are thirsty for God.

The meaning of *Thirst for God* can be searched (I think) in its implications, in its scope...

I start the search...

I discover right away the most obvious derivations of the phrase *Thirst of God...*

These require of me (as I will try to show it immediately) a radical change in my (traditional) definition of divinity.

A naive question (but conclusive if you dare to leave behind the metaphors which often only serve to distract us) as a way to start:

How can an omnipotent God be thirsty, even it is thirst for the love of men?

Really, don't you think it's incongruous?

Suddenly, on September 10, 1946, halfway through a trip by train to Darjeeling, Teresa of Calcutta hears two words:

I am thirsty...

It's Jesus who utters them.

The phrase *I am thirsty* alludes to Teresa's feelings, intuitions concerning her constant search for God.

I am thirsty is her expected answer, perhaps since always...

Teresa of Calcutta has an illumination, an *insight* and, after assimilating it (i.e. after mulling over it, interpret it and make it hers) her life changes completely.

From then on, as a task, she will devote herself to quench the thirst of God become man, because it is Jesus, not God the Father, who asks her.

In order that Mother Teresa (as she is known worldwide) can quench the thirst for God, she must abandon the religious order of Loreto, where she has lived for decades fulfilling what, until that moment, she considered the divine will.

To quench the thirst for God become man, she must go out on the streets and take care of the poor in areas ignored by God and by men.

The way of doing it also goes to meet her: she has to found a new order.

The mission of the new order will be a synthesis of her mystical experience:

*Quench the thirst of Jesus Christ on the cross, for Love and the Souls.*²⁵

Teresa transmits to her sisters in Christ their new mission with these words:

Jesus is God: His love, His thirst, are infinite.

Our goal is to quench this infinite thirst for God become man...

*Just like the Angels worship and praise God in the sky and endlessly, so the sisters, using their vows of absolute poverty, chastity, obedience and charity towards the poor, quench endlessly the thirsty God with their love and the love of souls leading to Him.*²⁶

But not only Mother Teresa's life changes after that train trip.

Her experience of God also undergoes a transformation.

God keeps out of her sight and a dark night of many decades starts for her.

Mother Teresa's dark night passes in silence, unnoticed by everyone. She carries on her ministry with the poor as if nothing happened:

From 1949 to 1950 this terrible sense of loss, this darkness, this solitude, this continuous longing for God that causes me a pain in the bottom of my heart.

The darkness is such that I can't see with my mind and with my reasoning.

God's place in my soul is empty.

There's no God in me...

Heaven, souls...

Why those words have no meaning for me?

I help souls go, but where?

What's the why of all this?

Where's the soul in my own being?

God doesn't love me [...]

Since my childhood I've had an immense love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, but all that is gone.

*I don't feel a thing in front of Jesus.*²⁷

Teresa seeks to quench the thirst for God, the God that manifested to her in the train.

But she cannot see that God.

She doesn't feel Him within her either.

She looks for Him desperately and, despite having answered immediately to His call, He doesn't answer hers.

God does not love her (at least that God sought by her).

From then on, *heaven* will be a hollow word for Mother Teresa.

Therefore, her hopeless question: *Where am I driving the souls that I try to save?*

This Mother Teresa moves me...

The Mother Teresa with wishes to believe but unable to do so because her soul doesn't respond.

The one who is faithful to Earth (as Nietzsche).

The one fulfilling the mandates of a non-existent God for her.

The Mother Teresa in the news doesn't move me.

The saint.

The one with a beatific gaze.

The eternally believer.

The immovable.

The orthodox.

The one who gets photographed kissing John Paul II hands.

This conventional Mother Teresa makes me feel uncomfortable, disgusts me.

She is too embedded in the *status quo*...

... too faithful to Catholic orthodoxy...
... too bounded to the high hierarchy whose ethical credentials already lack substance.

I am attracted to a Mother Teresa living bravely her disbelief:

The one who, after hearing a calling, doesn't reflect on following it (even though the one who called her later hides from her).

I'm seduced by the nun who fights against God, as Jacob did...
... the one who chats with Him (even if she doesn't feel Him)...
... the defiant.

I am thirsty...

God is thirsty.
But only his creatures' love can quench his thirst.
What a paradox!
How can a (supposedly) self-sufficient God be thirsty?
What for does a perfect God need Mother Teresa's love, as the one of my parents?

The God inherited from my parents was Almighty.

He was self-contained,
... transcendent,
... authoritarian,
... ethereal.
Such God cannot feel thirst,
... neither hunger or cold;
... much less acknowledge he is vulnerable.
Such God doesn't need Mother Teresa's love, or mine, or anyone else's.
Such God doesn't need anything.
If he needed something it would be a contradiction in terms.

The God found by Mother Teresa on her trip to Darjeeling, or rather the God who found her in those circumstances, is not my ancestors' arrogant God.

It's a God willing to meet you with a new look and when you least expect it.
A God who pulls you out of your comfort and immerses you in the mires of poverty...
Mother Teresa's God is a thirsty God.
A God who puts to test the honesty of your aspirations.
A God in need of the love of his creatures.
A God humble enough to show his lacks.
He's a God become man.
A man become God?
His name is Jesus.
Is his name Teresa?
Can his name be Amparo?
(Then, where is the other God left, the Father, the one who doesn't need anything?)

When I was a child, I was told: God is love.

I lean out on to the world, to the field of religions.
I observe the behavior of the "men of God".
Those who assured me that God was love were wrong.
God, the one I inherited from my parents, the one of those men who call themselves representatives of God, cannot be love.
Such a God doesn't know love.

It's the Inquisition God.
The authoritarian God.
The God of certain abusive high ecclesiastical hierarchies.
The God who condemns you...
... because you ate meat one Lent Friday,
... because you're homosexual or because you had an abortion after enduring a multiple rape.
The God eager to send you to hell because you had sex with someone you loved very much, outside an arranged marriage.
The God always male.
The God standing at the pulpit to chastise you, to intimidate you; to point his finger at you and call you a "sinner".
Such a God is not love.
Such a God cannot be love.
Thus, where is the God of love?
Who is that God?
Who are God?

Men and women voluntarily offering their lives to save others, they are God (or his most faithful reflection).

Men and women locked for decades in one-square-yard rooms researching how to alleviate human pain and eradicate diseases, they are God (or the nearest to Him).

Men and women always taking care of sick and old persons, they are God (or they should be).

Women giving birth, breast-feeding their babies, changing their diapers, watching over them when they have a temperature, taking them to school, preparing their food and put them to bed day after day, they are God.

Men and women who leap naked to rescue victims after an earthquake, a tsunami or an epidemic, they are God.

Men and women who really love each other truth, they are God.

Perhaps the mission of these men and women, human gods, is just to teach us to love Yahweh/God the Father.

Nature created by God is not a loving one.

In God's nature, disguise, manipulation and destruction of enemies for the sake of survival are the daily bread.

If you keep awake at night in the African savannah or the Amazon rainforest *you'll be startled by the huge bewilderment of death howls emanating from the depths of darkness.*²⁸

Here, as they say, the big fish swallows up the little ones, the dog chases the cat, and this last one slaughters the mouse.

The examples of cruelty in nature transcend the commonplaces.

The sparkling and beautiful stars are just huge blazes that will incinerate whoever dares to approach them.

Lionesses are so "tender" that, without the least guilt, they sacrifice their own cubs when their father dies, for the sake of another mate willing to protect them.

The cuckoo that hatches out first pecks at and throws to the ground the other eggs (which were to become its siblings) so that it doesn't have to share his parents with them. And it does it without the least regret.

Even plants (considered harmless, innocent, innocuous) compete with each other when survival is at stake. If necessary, they even get to the total destruction of their opponent.

Among plants, the struggle is for water and nutrients.

But they do whatever is needed to collect light: they need it for photosynthesis because without it they can't grow.

Sunflower (for example), turns its face around as many times as necessary to obtain all the sunlight possible.

In other plants, the fight goes well beyond a mere movement of the head.

To get light, some plants launch the goriest battles and carry out their most vigorous adaptations.

The ramblers destroy any other plant blocking their way to the sunlight. They choke their stems and trunks without moving one single leaf, that is, without blinking.²⁹

(Among human beings, on the other hand, there's a unique, ongoing struggle between the individual and the group selection. We have achieved a balance that required a lot of intelligence and, perhaps, also a lot of love.)³⁰

Nature does not know forgiveness or mercy.

In nature there is no word of honor or redemption.

The God shared by Jews and Christians, the maker of such a nature, cannot be omnipotent.

If He were, He wouldn't need to create a universe or, if He had created it, He would have created it perfect, like Himself.

Our God is weak.

Our God is fragile.

Our God is thirsty.

Our God is a narcissistic in need of the world's love...

He is God the Father...

Now the big question (I already asked the naive question): What for do we, human beings, need to love such a God? What for do I, Amparo, need to love such a God?

I, Amparo, have the need to love a God (albeit fragile) to stop being at the mercy of my narcissism, to work together with Him, shoulder to shoulder, for the sake of a better world.

Stop recognizing a God beyond me would be foolish...

He knows a lot and has a lot to tell me.

I'm thirsty: these apparently simple words are revolutionary when they are voiced by God.

It is so because these humble words uncover us a fragile God, very different from that they sold as children (at least to me).

Mother Teresa sought to quench God's thirst giving Him his creatures to drink: healing to the poorest, the sickest, the dying...

God didn't ask her for prayers.

He didn't ask her for reclusion, fasts, or worship (that's his Angels task).

God asked Mother Teresa for love, because He needs love: He has seen it reflected in his creatures and He envies its strength and its passion.

God lacks muscles, blood and bones.

He is incapable of loving the way men and women do.

God has changed since He required to be called Yahweh.

Back then He asked his *chosen people* for worship.

He asked them to build him tabernacles and to sacrifice victims.

Later, He became more humble and asked to be called God.

Perhaps by dint of observing his creatures, Yahweh learned new forms, new ways of behaving.

God still calls for praises, but now of love.

He doesn't ask for incense or superb enclosures anymore, but rather to look after the poor and the sick.

Mother Teresa lived a dark night for many decades.

God hid from her.

(At least the God she was searching.)

I don't know if she ever came out of her dark night...

If she didn't, perhaps it was due to her inability to replace a traditional concept of God, of not daring to get to the bottom of the words *I am thirsty* and discover the new face.

Perhaps daring to discover God's new face implied for Mother Teresa to abandon the God of her ancestors; abandon the God of the Vatican, the God the Father of John Paul II, the God of power and the Nobel prizes.

But perhaps that was too much, even for the Saint of Calcutta.

If God hid from Mother Teresa, if heaven and Jesus weren't significant words for her anymore, whence did she obtain the strength to be close to the poorest of the poor?

How could she bear so much pain, if God wasn't with her anymore?

How I wish to have asked Teresa these impertinent questions to know her answers!

Chapter 5

God the Father is indeed criticized

I wanted to keep mulling over indefinitely and reflecting irreverently about God in the light of biblical texts and experiences such as that of Mother Teresa.

I had in mind integrating this book with historical experiences of the divinity, with alien anecdotes.

I thought to keep myself away, enjoying my ironic reflections but without sully me.

Merciless, life breaks the pleasant flow of my impersonal writing to bring me back to earth, to recover my senses.

A very dear uncle, my uncle Memo, dies unexpectedly.

His death triggers a memory, an anecdote of my life occurred nearly sixty years ago.

In doing so, it takes me back to the origins of my eternal search for liberation, of my cravings for freedom.

It takes me back to the first accounts of this exercise of religious rebellion.

I had never dared to question Yahweh's behavior in the creation of Adam and Eve, in the construction of the Tabernacle, or in any other episode that had Him as the central character, for that matter.

Come on, such thing had never occurred to me.

My biblical readings rested on two incontrovertible facts (so I thought):

Everything that Yahweh does is perfect.

God the Father must not be criticized.

I never thought to interpret irreverently episodes of the religious faith of my childhood that I followed to the letter and uninterrupted for years.

Now, those interpretations leak out of my computer as endless streamers and that amazes me.

To question (not to say to breach) these two mandates meant to commit a sacrilege, an unpardonable offence.

A very old and tame memory, the memory of a haircut triggered by the death of a very dear uncle (my uncle Guillermo) was enough to start transgressing without guilt both precepts, and to talk to God without shame and on the same level.

The haircut of my memory occurred on my tenth birthday.

From that day, that episode had remained trapped in my subconscious.

I hadn't thought about it again...

That April 30th almost sixty years ago, my now defunct uncle Memo came to visit us, unexpectedly.

I ran to meet him, as I always did.

He was a good-natured man with hazelnut-colored eyes and wavy hair who induced you to closeness.

That day he asked me, with a roguish and mysterious smile, to search into the pocket of his jacket.

I found easily a gold bracelet with my name engraved.

My birthday present!

For the first time I was receiving a fine present and even personalized...

The letters carefully carved on my bracelet disclosed to me an Amparo I didn't know.

The little girl's very long braids who's nanny Eulalia combed as she wanted (that is, me),

had suddenly gave up her place to a pre-adolescent girl deserving a gold bracelet including her name engraved.

At that moment I decided it: this new Amparo, the Amparo of the bracelet, never more would receive orders from anyone.

I also decided to stop accepting anything that didn't convince me...

... much less to let anyone touch my hair without my consent.

I ran to where my parents were.

I showed them my bracelet and asked them, as a birthday gift, that my hair be cut.

(Remember that this happened many years ago—almost seventy—when the parents called the shots even regarding the hair of their children.)

My parents were proud of the heavy hair that came down below my waist.

It was a copper-colored, semi-wavy hair, as it was appropriate for a girl whose life (mine in this case) begins to bloom.

If my hair was cut, my parents couldn't brag anymore about it to their friends, an inevitable ritual in every one of their many gatherings.

On those occasions, I asked my nanny Eulalia to let my hair loose and to brush it a lot so I could show it even more lustrous than usual.

The time come, I used to go down to greet the guests and they always corresponded with praises and signs of admiration before the approval of my parents.

Besides, my hair cut meant to them the impossibility to immortalize it in portraits, as they had done on one occasion when they commissioned Diego Rivera a portrait where two very thick braids drop below my waist.

I also liked my hair, and a lot.

But I couldn't stand anymore that my nanny decided about it.

She used to fix it as she pleased.

Although it was her duty washing it, she only did it whenever she felt like it.

I couldn't touch my hair without suffering her reprimands.

When he was angry with me, Eulalia braided my hair so I looked ridiculous.

When she was even angrier, she added two huge white bows close to my ears that give me a stupid look and caused the teasing of my classmates.

Once, I talk about that situation to my parents.

I don't know if purposely or because they forgot it, but they never reprimanded her.

They never recognized my right to comb my hair, so my nanny continued with her monopoly of deciding on it... until the arrival of the deliverer bracelet.

When I asked my parents to cut my hair, they must have realized that I was determined to end forever Eulalia's rule.

They must have realized it because, surprisingly, they consented; perhaps reluctantly, but they agreed.

At lunch time, my father personally fulfilled his promise. That became my braids cut in a family ritual.

Scissors in hand, my father led me into the garden. Under a seven foot high palm tree (perhaps as that which Adam named in Paradise), in the presence of my mother, my brother, my two sisters and my uncle, he cut my braids.

My mother was in charge of recording that solemn act on film with an 8 millimeters camera (that must still be somewhere).

Nanny Eulalia was not present. Perhaps she realized that her rule over me was coming to an end at that moment.

After my second braid was cut, I started to shake my head and I could feel my hair, very short, moving from one side to the other with absolute freedom.

It took me many years to let my hair grow again; although I tried it several times.

The ghost of slavery prevented me from doing so.

Neither my parents nor my uncle ever knew it: that April 30 was for me the first step towards the conquest of my freedom, towards autonomy.

The latest step took place when my psychoanalysis institute³¹ declared *God's Validity* as the theme of its annual gathering.

On that pretext I wrote my first irreverent narration (the first chapter of this book).

I wrote it non-stop, as if someone were chasing me.

I wrote it almost without thinking, as if I were hiding from myself.

When I read the finished text, I discovered an ironic tone.

I also found out that I had questioned God for the first time in my life.

Soon after, I produced three other texts (*The jealousy of the Creator*, *Yahweh's narcissism* and *God is thirsty*) which you just read as Chapters two, three and four).

I also produced them non-stop...

... following the vain of the first one.

I was in business...

I thought to write under these same guidelines, and non-stop, the rest of the writings aimed at integrating, ideally, a publication (finally materialized in the one today you have in your hands).

But it wasn't so.

My uncle's death pointed to the need for a pause.

It was necessary to rescue, for my collection of memories, the first step towards the conquest of my freedom.

I had to ponder on the level of my perseverance and the stubbornness of my resistances.

Seventy years elapsed before I could reach the greatest, the most radical of all liberations:

... the religious liberation...

... the independence of intermediaries to interact with the divinity...

... the audacity to question God and talk to him on the same level, as myself.

Chapter 6

God abuses his children

I am the mother of a daughter and two sons.

I haven't handled them with gloves at all times, but I hope I never, ever, behaved with them as the Creator has behaved with his offspring.

The way God has treated his children since always is awful.

Still more terrible is (I think) his habit of extending this treatment to the children of his children.

I start with Adam, the first human creature, Yahweh's first son.

Yahweh doesn't bring forth Adam by means of a mother...

This already shows us the tremendous lack of affection that He burdens him with since his arrival to this Earth.

Adam comes to the world being already an adult.

That means that the father of all mankind didn't have childhood either.

Why Yahweh deprived his first-born son of a mother and of his childhood?

This question is still tougher than the previous one: What would God be thinking about when he created Adam from mud to throw him right away to a strange place...?

I can't understand anything, anything of that...

One doesn't need to be a psychoanalyst to know that a boy or a girl without a mother and childhood will become a misfit.

Now, to top it all, if that boy or that girl finds out that his/her father took him/her out of the mud, just imagine...

Seen from the perspective of Eve, the psychological picture isn't less gloomy.

Eve had a man as her "biological mother", something that's not less bewildering, as Adam (her "mother") would be the last man who would give birth.

Thereafter, Eve being the first, women would be the ones to give birth to children...

... and, to top it all, not from a rib (as Adam) but from their uterine cavity...

Notwithstanding all of this, after some time (we don't really know how much) and in an idle display of generosity (well, who could believe in his sincerity after what we have seen?), Yahweh gives Adam and Eve the paradise.

He cautions them (and here's where the truth comes out and things get tricky)...

... He warns them that they can eat all the fruits of Paradise except one forbidden that, if they eat it, they will die.

I don't know about you, but I can't think of a better way of provoking the defiance of some half-wild teens (Adam and Eve where just initiating themselves as humans) than that of forbidding something without any explanation.

As it was to be expected, as soon as she could Eve ate one fruit of the forbidden tree, which curiously went into history as an apple...

Adam also did what was expected: he followed the example of his wife, as he was unable to have initiative.

A trivial incident was enough for Yahweh to throw his two creatures out of the same Paradise which not too long ago He had given them, against any pedagogy, as it is an authoritarian and also very cruel act, not to mention that Yahweh overlook that wise adage stating that *he who*

gives and then takes back will have hell to pay.

He could have forgiven the blunder of his children newly arrived to Earth as any not monstrous parent forgives his young son for breaking a vase or his a teenager for crashing the family car.

But not Yahweh.

Yahweh not only punishes his offspring for their disobedience throwing them out of Paradise, but He also condemns them to work for life or to give birth with pain depending on their sex.

If I were Adam, at that very moment I would have gone to complain to my Creator the authoritarian imposition of the change of roles: the imbalance caused by ceasing to be a mother from one day to the other, to go out to work and maintain the entire family by the sweat of his brow was not a lesser one.

An example of Yahweh's horrendous behavior with his children's children has Moses as its main character, Adam's great-great-great-grandson.

It happened one day that, if it weren't for a burning bush, it could have been like any other day in the life of the future liberator of Israel.

That day, Moses was peacefully looking after his father-in-law's flock of sheep, when suddenly the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in the midst of a bush that, despite being on fire, wasn't consumed.

Yahweh knows very well how to appear on the scene and right away He caught Moses attention. This last one, dying of curiosity, approached the bush unaware of the outcome:

*What an extraordinary phenomenon... Why the bush doesn't burn up?*³² he wondered.

And what a surprise he got when he heard a voice coming out of the flames, telling him: *I am the God of your fathers and I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you bring my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.*³³

Such a divine statement meant a change of roles for Moses, one less hare-brained than the one imposed to Adam by Yahweh, but nonetheless a change not easily assimilated, mostly by someone who, in addition to be a shepherd, turn out to be spineless.

*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt...*³⁴ Moses asks Yahweh with a very faint voice after receiving such an unusual mandate.

This question is very relevant because heads of state do not characterize by their simplicity or easy access.

How Moses, a simple shepherd, would not feel fear of being kicked out if he simply asked to have a talk with Pharaoh himself?

However, this very wise objection was not enough for Yahweh to leave in peace his chosen one: *I am with you and this will be for you the sign that I was who sent you,*³⁵ He told him, expecting to put an end, once and for all, to Moses useless objections.

But Moses, tenacious when he had to shun responsibilities, came out with a new argument: *Look Lord, I have never been a fluent speaker... I am slow of speech and slow of tongue... neither the Israelites, much less Pharaoh, will pay me some attention.*³⁶

It was obvious.

Yahweh's chosen one had no guts...

... nor the desire to become leader, much less the hope of rubbing shoulders with the powerful, traits that speak well of him and makes him an outstanding person.

Perhaps precisely because of those traits of the shepherd, Yahweh did not back out.

He was decided.

There was no turnaround: whatever he might say, Moses would be his representative and the responsible for bringing the Israelites out of Egypt.

Then He ordered him with a firmer voice to go to Pharaoh as many times as necessary and Moses had no other choice but to obey Yahweh.

He stood at the entrance of the pharaonic palace and, no matter the stifling heat, he didn't move from there until Pharaoh, troubled by his disturbing presence, finally agreed to see him.

As it was to be expected, Pharaoh didn't welcome the news that, by orders of Yahweh, the Israelites would go out of Egypt.

His answer was immediate and forceful: *Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice and let Israel go away?*

*I don't know him and I will not let Israel go away*³⁷

After this emphatic refusal, Moses ran to Yahweh and asked Him, distressed: *What should I do now? Pharaoh says he won't let me go.*

Was there any doubt left?

Moses was a man of scant resources...

Concealing his disappointment the best way possible so that his chosen one didn't feel worse, in a fit of sympathy unusual in Him, Yahweh comforted him saying:

Don't worry.

I already knew that the King of Egyptians won't let you go...

But we will force him.

*I will stretch out my hand and ravage Egypt with all kind of extraordinary afflictions so that he will through you out.*³⁸

It's irrelevant to describe in detail here each of the plagues inflicted by Yahweh on Egypt to pressure Pharaoh.

I'm only going to tell you that they were ten, but the first nine, although terrible, didn't yield the expected outcome...

Neither the water of the Nile turned into blood...

Nor the frogs swarming everywhere...

Nor the mosquitoes chasing men and animals all the time...

Nor the horseflies that invaded the rooms of the Egyptians and all the places where they moved...

Nor the ulcers and tumors lacerating their bodies...

Nor the strongest hailstorm occurred in Egypt since the day of its foundation...

Nor the locust-plagued lands...

Nor the skies covered by darkness were able to upset the sovereign's heart.³⁹

Pharaoh, a proud and courageous leader after all, suffered them without blinking.

It wasn't that way with the tenth and final plague, which was, indeed, brutal.

Yahweh's last plague on the Egyptians (as most of you know and I only repeat for those who might not recall it) consisted in killing their first-borns.

A truly macabre plan.

*At midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the slave who's behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more...*⁴⁰

One shivers when imagining the whines of Egypt when discovering all of their first-born dead during the night.

The echo of their mothers' moan of pain makes us shiver.
The centuries gone were unable to silence their moans.
Good Egyptians...
Bad Egyptians...
Beautiful Egyptians...
Not so beautiful...
Baby Egyptians...
Adults...
Workers...
Lazy...
Jailed...
Free...
Intelligent Egyptians...
Gullible Egyptians...

... thousands of Adam and Eve's descendants, children of God and of men, sacrificed for the sake of a *chosen people* (like that, in abstract and in italics) in search, by divine mandate, of a destiny that they even don't know...

According to Yahweh's expectations, after suffering that last plague the Egyptians were over it.

Pharaoh himself asked Moses to leave Egypt together with all the Israelites.

There's no mention at all (as long as I know), and this is indeed surprising, of a divine dejection due to the human suffering caused.

Yahweh doesn't unveil distress when He announces the plagues or after seeing them accomplished...

... but neither anguish nor sorrow.

The Creator's unique consideration is the urgency to get *his* people out of Egypt.

Such a goal, sublime according to Him, justifies any means to achieve it.

The episode of Yahweh's murder of the firstborn Egyptians should suffice to illustrate the Creator's filicide tendencies.

However, I must mention another episode even more awful; a variant of Yahweh's cruelty against his children, which I dare to describe as sadistic...

... the episode where He orders Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Isaac, as you might recall, is the son of Abraham and his wife Sarah.

He was conceived through the working of Yahweh (to Sarah's surprise who thought she was already barren).

Years later, when Isaac is already a teenager and cheers up his parents, Yahweh orders Abraham to sacrifice him; to sacrifice the son of their hopes.

Take your son, Abraham,

Your only son.

The son you love...

Go into the land of Moriah...

*There you'll offer him to me in holocaust on a hill that I will tell you of.*⁴¹

What did Yahweh sought with such a terrible mandate?

Assess Abraham's level of obedience?

Test his divine power?

This passage is one of the most controversial of the Bible...

There are people who interpret it as a sign of the end of human sacrifices.

Facing its atrocity, Kierkegaard opts to abound in Isaac and Abraham's feelings during the walk from their home to Mount Moriah, when the father tells the son that he will sacrifice him (something that doesn't seem to have worried Yahweh):

Isaac was unable to understand Abraham's words when he told him that he had to sacrifice him...

He held to his father's knees and begged him for his young life...

Abraham's gaze was wild and his gesture terrible...

He held Isaac by his neck, threw him to the ground and said:

"Stupid boy. Do you suppose that I am your father? In fact I am an idolater. Do you suppose that I'm fulfilling God's will? No. I want to do what I'm going to do."

Then Isaac trembled and shouted at the sky with terror: "Oh God, have mercy of me. If I don't have a father on Earth, then you be my father."

*... Abraham told himself in a low voice: "God of the heavens, thank you... it is better for him to believe that I am a monster, than losing faith in you."*⁴²

This interpretation does have its surprises: to save Yahweh's reputation, Abraham takes the blame for the crime: he prefers to humble himself before his son rather than let Isaac abjure God.

Humans we go to unsuspected extremes to save the reputation of a Creator who only occasionally treats or speaks well of us, his children.

To tell the truth, I don't remember any.

In the end, as we all know. Abraham doesn't kill his son.

When he is about to stab him, the Angel of the Lord stops his arm and gives him a goat instead.

Instead of decreasing, Yahweh's sadism takes root with this fact: Which was the meaning of this rigmarole?

Although this behavior must not surprise us...

... Yahweh/God the Father gets to the point of sacrificing his own son (Jesus) arguing that He does it to save men.

Chapter 7

That's enough solemnities

The total absence of humor in the Bible is one of the most outstanding facts of universal literature.
A. N. Whitehead⁴³

The Bible is solemn (in the most ancient meaning of the word).

Neither the Old nor the New Testament have sense of humor.

Yahweh (in the Old Testament): warns us, takes revenge and punishes.

Yahweh doesn't laugh.

He never laughs.

God the Father (in the New Testament) doesn't laugh either.

Yahweh warns, takes revenge and sacrifices others' children without further explanations.

God the Father sacrifices his own son for the sake (so He argues) of liberation and redemption of his creatures.

The bedside book of Jews and Christians (i.e. the Bible) is not and cannot be humorous.

Although, how could it be otherwise? What you least expect of a book written by Yahweh/God the Father is to be funny...

(Because, at least for me, humor and jokes are cousins.)

If the book of God were funny, who would believe in its divine origin?

It would lose its aura and its soul...

At least, that's what they told us...

A holy book must be solemn: that's an axiom (i.e., a truth that you don't have to prove).

A sacred book is solemn, everyone knows it.

I'm not the exception (at least I wasn't until a few weeks ago, but I will talk later about this).

And it's not because someone had told me so, to the letter: *Sacred books must be solemn.*

Not at all...

That's something learned by osmosis, just as plants absorb water or humans assimilate dogmatisms: subtly, without realizing it (neither the plants nor us).

That's how I learned that God's things and houses shouldn't be talk about aloud, nor with laughter, lightness or spontaneity.

God's houses and things must be treated with seriousness, genuflections and subjugations.

(Likewise, the seductive perfumes have no place in the celestial environments because these smell like incense and rancid meat.)

In these undertakings only the serious and formal attitude is accepted.

Why?

Just because.

In the reading of the Bible, there's no room for questions or doubts.

There's room, and plenty, to admire the absurdity.

There's also room for genuflections.

But most of all, there's room to play dumb.

In the book written by Yahweh, the *mea culpa* and the many sins have a consistent

context; a serious and formal context...

... an austere context where humorous frills are out of place.

If, at some point, we deem to have discovered them between the lines (the humorous frills, that is), we must overlook them: they are just diabolical hallucinations whose purpose is to distract us from the sacred messages.

And while we are at it, I'll add something else: sacred music, the one that is played in the churches to celebrate turning points of every human life—baptisms, graduations, weddings, or deaths—, that music must also be solemn.

Sacred music (*Requiems* and so forth) can be glorious...

But sacred music can never, never be humorous at times...

Why God never laughs?

Why his houses and his things are adorned with formal protocols, solemn rites and plaintive processions?

Why jokes are banned when they refer to Him?

Why the almost deadly silence of churches?

Why the beatific and grim looks from parishioners always send you to darkness?

These irreverent questions bombarded my conscience the last time I read the Bible (because before that I used to read it in a solemn way, as I was supposed to do it).

Probably these questions were hibernating in my unconscious almost from my birth, waiting for the right time to emerge.

Perhaps they showed their face for the first time when my uncle Memo gave me the gold bracelet with my name engraved in very fine letters...

But, who am I to know it for sure?

The unconscious belongs to Freud and now I don't feel like chatting with him on this thorny issue, because it would take me too long.

I remember very well the moment I realized that God is funny and not boringly solemn as I was told...

It happened with the bluntness of the driver who steps on the brakes of his car at a red light that he doesn't see until the last moment for being distracted by his obsessive thoughts...

It happened when I read the Bible verse: *Let us make man in our image and likeness.*⁴⁴ *Then Yahweh formed man of the dust of the ground; then he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man got breath and life.*⁴⁵

I had read those sentences dozens of times.

Why, all of a sudden, I deemed funny that Yahweh had produced man from mud and at the same time He wanted to make it in his image and likeness?

Until that day I had read those sentences without seeing them.

I used to hear their sounds without trying to generate in my mind images associated with their meaning.

I read them mechanically.

When I forgot the solemnity, behind the phrase *Yahweh formed man of the dust of the ground*, I saw God (literally), in all his majesty, manipulating the mud with the purpose of making his first human creature...

That day I saw the God of the Sistine Chapel, of Michelangelo, the one who reigns, glorious, between the Son and the Holy Spirit, sitting on the floor and handling the mud without knowing yet what to do with it.

I visualized Him as a small child, awkward and helpless, playing with wet earth behind his mother's back because he knew she would reprimand him if she caught him getting the house

dirty...

You have to laugh...

It happened on the sixth day of creation, *on one of those moon-bathed nights lasting thousands of years* (as described by Kazantzakis).⁴⁶ Yahweh makes the decision that would change the world: to create his next and last creature (He had already created many others), with mud (ground) and also similar to Him.

After conceiving this idea (impossible not qualify it as extravagant and somehow macabre, because it is almost like crossbreeding a shooting star with a cat), Yahweh starts to mentally tour areas of his Paradise where He has spread plenty of clay.

He does it just after having conceived his idea, as if He didn't want to take any time to reappraise it.

There's the deserts, He thinks...

There's the shores...

But no.

In those places the soil is rebellious.

Her soil must be humid, easily malleable...

... ready to satisfy his most extravagant desires.

It must be ductile and fruitful enough to conform with it a creature able to shelter the divine essence.

Then, Yahweh recalls the Tigris and the Euphrates, his two favorite rivers.

The soil of their banks is the perfect material, and in a jiffy He is stepping on it.

When He arrives at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates (the region today known as Mesopotamia), Yahweh squats on the floor...

(If He was radiantly dressed, He would roll up his luxurious attires. But there's no way we can check this.)

He runs his fingers over the ground soaked by the water vapor...

Its smoothness stuns him. He had never perceived the fresh feeling of damp mud.

Its smell is generous.

He enjoys its aroma with the naiveté of a child...

In his engrossment, Yahweh takes a large amount of mud that slips through his fingers...

Uneasy, he looks around...

He feels somehow ridiculous...

His word had sufficed to create lions, elephants and rhinoceros now looking at him with the same surprise of a child who discovers his father, absorbed, playing with clay...

What's wrong with our Creator, they whisper among them.

Why doesn't he just bring into being his new creature simply saying "Be", as he did with us?

Yahweh doesn't like those comments (albeit said secretly, He is God and can hear them).

But engrossed as He is in his project, He forgets them soon and starts manipulating the mud once again...

He tries to reproduce well-known figures to get used to the material.

His first works are deformed, anomalous forms.

His lion looks like a zebra.

His tree is a giraffe...

His ant is a caterpillar.

Yahweh laughs at their sight, with good grace.

His guffaw resounds throughout the whole universe...

His non-human creatures think that He has gone mad...

There's mud spread out all over the Paradise after the numerous trials of the Creator, and the new creature doesn't appear yet.

Yahweh is tired.

It's the sixth day of the creation and He hasn't much time left.

He knows the future: the next day is rest-day and He is not willing to miss it.

He restarts his work with determination.

His stubbornness is infinite.

But for him it's called perseverance.

The creature emerged from the mud in the hands of the Creator at almost midnight doesn't satisfy him too much; although its features seem promising.

He is amazed when He sees it walking not on all fours but on two.

His thumb separated from the other fingers puzzles him.

His brain... his brain has an astounding complexity, and He would like to decipher it...

His exhaustion doesn't allow him (and He will regret it later).

He decides to put an end to his great task by naming his mud creature.

He names it Adam, and with one simple blow He instills it with a soul, the divine seed that makes him similar to Him.

As well as the first contact of a child with clay is the beginning of a lengthy love story between both of them, the divine blow infused in the mud will bring about a long story of antagonisms, betrayals, hatred and love between God and his creatures (and a constant uneasiness in these, because they don't belong here nor there).

Another humorous scene from the Bible is that of the famous passage where Esau buys his brother Jacob his birthright with a plateful of lentils.

The swapping of his birthright for a plateful of lentils with his brother Jacob is an episode considered dramatic.

It seems to me rather very comic...

I don't know anyone naive enough to yield significant privileges (like Esau's) in exchange for a plateful of lentils.

Come on, I've never heard a similar barter for a plateful of caviar.

Just imagine the gluttonous Esau begging his brother Jacob to give him his plateful of lentils soup in exchange for his birthright. It's really funny...

Might it be that that day, Rebeca (mother of both) only prepared food for one of her children?

(Although knowing the practices of this woman, it is possible that that day she only cooked for her favorite, that is Jacob, to play a dirty trick on Esau, her another son.)

But there is something even more fun than the unthinkable cession of the birthright on the part of Esau...

Taking advantage of the impulsive act of his brother, Jacob the opportunist comes before his father to ask for his blessing.

He arrives covered with a sheep skin, because he intends to (and he gets it) to impersonate Esau, who had a very hairy body...

No one, not even a blind, would ever confuse a sheep skin with the hairy skin of his own son.

Don't you agree?

Another humorous biblical story is that of the talking jenny of Balaam the peasant (it's the last I'll tell you because this matter is boring even for me).

In circumstances irrelevant to be detailed, Yahweh orders Balaam to leave his village and travel to another land.

Balaam, obedient man of God, gets up very early the next morning, mounts on his jenny and starts the trip.

When he is barely halfway through the journey, Yahweh's anger erupts against him, and He sends his Angel to hinder his trip (a fact extremely arbitrary, considering that Balaam had only complied with the mandate of his Creator).

Inexplicably, Balaam cannot see Yahweh's Angel, but his jenny can.

Seeing him with his sword drawn, the jenny makes a detour to avoid him.

Balaam perceives the change of course and spans his jenny.

That same thing happen twice more. The third, the jenny talks directly to her master:

What I've done to you so that you spank me now? she asks him.

And you even make fun of me? Balaam replied her. *I wish I had a sword at hand; I would have killed you immediately...*

In that very moment, Yahweh opens Balaam's eyes and he can see Yahweh's Angel in the middle of the road, telling him: *I came to block your path, because I dislike this trip.*

*If your donkey hadn't eluded me, I would have killed you at once.*⁴⁷

Yahweh enjoys changing the rules of the game and scaring his creatures.

He has fun performing sly tricks somewhat macabre.

We, human beings, have no other choice but to laugh and to complain to Him when he goes too far...

The lack of sense of humor always goes hand in hand with obedience.

If obedience is privileged (as it happened with Balaam in his time and with Catholics nowadays), the sense of humor disappears.

When we dare to disobey and to look at things from a non-traditional perspective, humor arises, laughter arises. Laughter is the privilege of the human being: it is our monopoly.

Some animals cry: no one laughs.

God doesn't laugh either; He never laughs...

A static and transcendent God, devoid of body or soul, such as our traditional God, doesn't laugh.

It's not part of his nature.

It is difficult to find humor when you celebrate every day a God who's capable of showing his love through the sacrifice of his only son.

A God capable of asking his creatures to sacrifice their relatives.

It's difficult to find laughter when you have many crucifixions and few resurrections.

When it's *mea culpa* and only *mea culpa*...

But when you realize that Yahweh used mud to create man...

... when you discover swaps of platefuls of lentils for birthrights and talking donkeys converted into teachers...

... then you start to laugh.

Amend the flat God is blasphemy... Think of the Bible from the humor starts to produce I fear.

Highlighting God's errors is a blasphemy...

Thinking of the Bible based on humor starts to make me fear.

(I'm even biting my nails, as I used to when I was child.)

Shall fire fall upon my head while I sleep?

Yahweh/God the Father will send me Alzheimer's so I forget my occurrences?
The Creator never backs out.
Neither will I, now that I've discovered Bible and God's humor.
It's a too valuable discovery.
I'm sick and tired of labels and protocols.
I want to laugh without stopping, as I used to be solemn without stopping...
Laugh and sense of humor is God's best kept secret.
I will spend the next and last stage of my life exploring it.

Chapter 8

God's original sin

Envy is God's original sin...

Amparo Espinosa Rugarcía

God has a serious problem with sexuality...

That's why He usually places it among the biggest sins.

God's problem with sexuality

God's problem with sexuality started shortly after having created Adam and has much to do with his original sin (not Adam's but God's).

Because, although it may seem weird to you (and this is another well-kept secret of God)...

... just as men and women we have an original sin (I've never known exactly what it is, though they say it is congenital), God also has his original sin and it's called envy.

God's original sin is not congenital, as ours is, supposedly.

It emerged with the appearance of time, after the creation of man...

... that is, when Yahweh saw Adam evolving in Paradise, He got filled with envy.

Perhaps you may deem weird that God, who had been there since always and knew everything, could envy a newcomer like Adam who also depended completely on Him.

But so it was, due to the proper nature of envy.

When God was alone, He couldn't feel envy.

How could He feel envy, if He was unique and couldn't make any comparisons (which are envy's sustenance)?

When you are unique, narcissism and pride can happen.

When you are unique, you can feel almighty and absolutely perfect.

But there's no room for envy.

But as soon as another person appears (whatever he or she is), envy shows up uninvited.

(And if you don't believe it, just take a look at Melanie Klein who asserts that, from birth, a child feels envy of his/her mother's breasts.)⁴⁸

As soon as there are two or more persons, there's envy.

It's something inevitable, whoever is involved.

It's even more inevitable in the case of a God such as Yahweh who doesn't admit competition and is arrogant above all.

Just after having created the first man, God was invaded by a strange and upsetting feeling.

He had never felt something similar.

In fact, up to that moment God had never felt anything.

All that He had was peace.

He was composed. Unemotional.

He had created waters and his spirit moved upon the face of them all.

He had devised the stars and its glare illuminated his nights.

But even so, while all of these marvels would spawn a huge enjoyment in any mortal moderately sensitive, Yahweh remained unaffected by the beauty of his seas and oceans; by the clatter of his wind gusts and the glare of his suns.

It was until He saw his first human creature inspecting every corner of Paradise with curiosity and seeking contact with every one of its inhabitants, when Yahweh felt something for the first time in all his eternity.

That something was envy.

The climax of such divine envy occurred when He saw Adam and Eve exercise sexuality.

Sexuality was not God's idea.

How could it be, if He lacks a body, its indispensable prerequisite?

Sexuality is a discovery of the first couple of human creatures...

... a discovery they did without any divine intervention.

Adam never asked Yahweh if He agreed or not with sex, nor he asked Him for his consent to practice it.

He simply began to having it.

When Yahweh perceived the sexual pleasure of his creatures, the envy He began to feel when he saw Adam moving with ease around the Paradise and taking possession of its spaces reached unsuspected limits even for him.

And it is understandable that even Yahweh considered unsuspected the levels of envy that sexuality produced in him.

We just have to recall how we all felt when we saw that movie showing the bucolic love between a very young Brooke Shields (Emmeline) and Christopher Atkins (Richard) who, for some reason I don't recall, were stranded on a desert island.⁴⁹

I at least felt a whacky envy of the sexual intimacy achieved by those two teenagers in their island distant from everything (and if you haven't seen it and don't believe me, take a look at it and then talk to me).

It was almost impossible (at least it was for me) avoid feeling envy before the enjoyment of those two young and extremely beautiful creatures.

And despite having, like most humans do, my own erotic love stories to tell.

How much envy would God feel for not having one single sexual love story to brag about, when He saw the infatuation of his inaugural couple (perhaps similar to Brooke Shields and her capsizing companion) and being aware that He would never live something similar?

He must have felt lots, lots of envy.

That divine envy kept increasing at the same pace as his discovery of the overwhelming force of sexual love...

... of its impact on his relation with his creatures...

... of the possibilities for them.

The world gets dynamized with sexual love.

For the sake of sexual love, men and women we cross oceans, we put at risk our life and mental health.

For the sake of sexual life we betray beliefs and nationalities; we stop eating and sleeping.

For the love of a man, women we offer up our reputation...

... we abandon advantageous status...

... we put at risk our salvation and we betray God.

For the love of a woman, a man is capable of killing.

For love, man produces spectacular works such as the Taj Mahal.

The background of all this sex-loving mess, motive of lucid literary works, sublime paintings and cheesy soap operas, goes back to a period following the creation of Adam by God.

There are people—and they make up the majority—who say that sexuality only began

after Eve made her appearance in Paradise.

But this viewpoint is the traditional one and must not stop the flow of our imagination.

We know it only too well: the traditionalists, the recalcitrant Orthodox, are unable to see beyond what they were taught.

In this case, what they learned is about a founding couple having sex for the first time.

Another school of thought, obviously censured by high ecclesiastical hierarchies (and I'm not the one who's going to reveal their identity), advocates a different hypothesis: it proposes that sexuality started with Adam and with Adam alone.

That is, long before the arrival of his partner, the first human creature started enjoying an autistic sexuality.

And for not beating around the bush and I'll call a spade a spade: Adam masturbated.

Yahweh gave him his other faculties, to see or hear, for example, the moment He created him with mud, but not sexuality (or the aptitude to produce oneself immeasurable pleasures).

Adam discovered sexuality soon after being on earth, when he began to explore the world and explore himself.

In fact, sexuality was his first creative act, a first act of freedom.

Imagine Adam's excitement when his body, suddenly and without any previous experience, confronts the heat of summer and the song of birds; the aroma of the vast array of flowers; the ochre, blue and green colors catching his stare.

He must have felt something inexplicable when, overnight, he saw a rose bush bloom...

Indeed, he must have taken care of his roses with equal or more zeal as Saint Exupéry's *Little Prince* took care of his.⁵⁰

Gradually, the changes of season came...

... the gentle rain falling on his shoulders...

... the storm with its lightning and thunders forcing him to seek shelter and awakening his surprise tinged with awe and fear...

... the stifling heat of summer causing him to sweat...

... the cold of winters...

... trees by throwing the foliage upon the arrival of autumn...

... their juicy fruits...

The sensory pleasure of these events triggered off in Adam, as it happens to every toddler when he/she discovers the world, enthusiasm and the desire to do many things:

To run together with animals.

To watch one sunrise after another, intrigued by the change of colors.

And maybe, one day not unlike the rest, Adam casually ran his hand over his body and had a disturbing feeling...

Where this tingle of excitement never before experienced came from? He must have asked himself.

He looks at the sky in search of Yahweh, frightened...

He doesn't see Him...

He seeks another responsible for his shock...

He is alone...

Could his hand have produced such a thrill?

Is his skin coming alive by itself?

Adam feels fear.

Suddenly, he removes his hand from his body.

He runs his hand over his head to get distracted.

His fingers interweave with his tangled, long hair, as tiny lianas.
He puts them in his mouth as if he wanted to taste them...
They lack any taste...
He climbs a tree chasing a monkey...
He comes down immediately...
Nothing distracts him.
Adam is unable to forget the thrill produced by the brush of his hands over his body.
He repeats the movement, closing his eyes as to not be seen.
His nails scratch his pubic hair.
He feels chills...
He keeps moving his fingers with the strange rhythm of the growing pleasure.
Thus, diffidently, almost inadvertently, he discovers sexuality, orgasm...

The truly revolutionary issue of this controversial proposal is the belief that the impetus of Adam's sexual desire was so powerful that it penetrated God's mind and from there it led to the creation of Eve, the second human creature.

When I heard it, I couldn't but laugh a lot.

I deemed ridiculous that Adam could induce Yahweh to create him an Eve imagined from his sexual energy.

I couldn't figure out the logic of such approach.

However, gradually it started making (some) sense in my mind.

The energy produced by the sexual pleasure is powerful.

It's also extremely creative and it wasn't long before it produced an unprecedented image in Adam's mind.

That image intrigues him...

... seduces him...

... frightens him.

*It's bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,*⁵¹ he notices, amazed.

It's basically similar to him, although it's also different.

It will afford my sexuality new possibilities, he infers.

Adam's desire becomes even more powerful and, unintentionally, he drives that image into the psyche of the Creator who, dragged by the strength of the sexuality projected in his mind, produces Adam's object of his desire from one of his ribs.

And this is how, without realizing the implications, Yahweh creates woman.

And this is how the first delivery of history occurs and, at the same time, the birth of the first human couple.

When Yahweh saw Adam and Eve walking around the Paradise, hands in hands, He knew it immediately: the joy fully and equally shared by two human beings (something that He's unable of experiencing) has an overwhelming force.

His creatures linked by the bond of sexual pleasure would soon summon their courage and claim Him the knowledge of good and evil.

Surely, they would ask Him immortality.

They would want to be gods...

... not only similar to Him, but equal to Him.

In an attempt to reverse the effects of the involuntary delivery, Yahweh makes a forceful pronouncement: *From now on, all deliveries will be through the female uterus and not from a male rib.*

This desperate decision makes things worse.

The strength of the loving bond between mothers and children exceeds, by far, the strength of the loving bond between two lovers.

It will reinforce the ties between Yahweh's creatures, relegating Him to an even more distant plane in their affections.

Before proceeding with this half-crazy story, let me make a marginal note.

I don't clearly understand Yahweh's intentions of creating man in his "image and likeness".

If He wanted to make us his equals, it was enough with saying: "I will make man equal to me," don't you think?

I think that Yahweh used ambiguous words so that He could interpret them as He wished.

Perhaps He knew (because He knows everything) that being his equals, human beings would snatch his monopolies.

That's why He didn't dare to use that Word.

Unlike the Creator, Adam acts without fear or restrictions when imagining his partner.

Not only he recognizes her as his par and with some of his essence, but as his equal: *This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.*⁵²

This reflects well on the father of all mankind.

And one wonders (at least I do), why, as time passed, Adam and his descendants changed their attitude toward women?

Could it be due to God's persistent interference into the life of both?

Just after Christianity was inaugurated, Paul, his true creator, was saying:

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

*Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.*⁵³

Or also:

*But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.*⁵⁴

Until the creation of Adam, all initiatives were Yahweh's.

His was the idea of creating the Universe.

His was the idea of populating it with gorgeous beings.

He and only He carried out that project from beginning to end.

As she was conceived in Adam's mind, and not in Yahweh's, Eve broke the pattern and put an end to his monopoly in creativity.

A hard blow to the divine narcissism, undoubtedly.

Since then (may be in revenge), Yahweh devotes himself to mess up Eve's life and that of her female descendants.

To begin with, and resorting to the snake, He lays a trap for Eve and thus causes her first

argument with her man (Adam).

Then He spreads the word that she's the one who caused their departure of the Earthly Paradise; so, just imagine Adam's anger against his wife when he is forced to abandon a land of milk and honey because of her?

He also condemns her to give birth to her children in pain.

Finally, Yahweh subjects her to the will of her man and He holds him responsible of maintaining the family and to earn his food by the sweat of his face, a task that he would surely blame his wife for when returning home exhausted, after hunting animals.

But Yahweh's cruelty against Eve doesn't end there...

Shortly after she gives birth to her first children (Cain and Abel), Yahweh fosters a dispute between the two them, which culminates in the murder of one by the other.

Any mother (me among them) suffers a lot when her children squabble between them. I just can't imagine Eve's suffering when she loses a son at the hands of another son. She didn't know death.

Although she probably sensed it, her first direct contact was through her son Abel...

She would never talk with him again...

Never again she would see him walking among the trees or playing with the waves...

She would never enjoy his offspring.

And if we add that it was Cain, her other son, who caused it...

What's truly inconceivable (because human failures are well known) is Yahweh's viciousness, as it's what fires up the tragedy: by provoking Cain's jealousy telling him his offering lacked the "appropriate" intention, while his brother's had it, He causes him a jealousy with fatal results.

Yahweh's punishment had Eve as addressee.

It may be argued that a father also suffers with the quarrels of his offspring and therefore what happened between Cain and Abel was also a punishment for Adam, not only for Eve.

But at least in my opinion, the suffering of a father due to the quarrels of his children, or to whatever happens to them, never reaches the dimensions of the mother's suffering who, to start with, would never send her son to die on the cross as God the Father did with his.

How can we make sense of this sadistic behavior of divinity if it weren't for his hatred and resentment towards women?

A hatred and resentment possibly due to his envy caused by a sexual enjoyment forever forbidden to Him, and by loving filial links that He is unable to establish.

Chapter 9

The Garden of Eden has no soul

The Earthly Paradise had no soul.
Amparo Espinosa Rugarcia

I ended the text on God and sex.

Then... paralysis; creative paralysis.

I needed some more pages to complete my book, but not even a sentence reached my mind...

Come on, not even the idea of a possible topic.

God was hiding from me.

Was He angry with me because I had unveiled his truths?

Was my paralysis a tactic Yahweh was using to block my intention of denouncing his foolish things?

Was it an obstacle similar to the confusion of languages that He used with the Israelites when they tried to build a tower to reach the sky?

Not at all.

The light (in the most humble sense of the word) came back an very soon...

My intention of writing about God, without limits or restrictions, should not be, after all, as threatening for the Almighty as my narcissism had feared...

My fears turned out to be the usual: unfounded fears...

... my persistent habit of blaming myself for everything.

To be honest, the light came just a few hours after writing the previous chapter...

It was an unmistakably divine signal.

It appeared in the Spanish newspaper *El País* which brightens up my Saturdays with its section *Babelia: New York Botanical Garden presents a replica of Emily Dickinson's garden...*

An exact replica of the very same garden where Emily Dickinson, the most famous North American poet, wrote her outstanding poems was open to the public.

In that well-stocked garden that the New York Botanical Garden was duplicating, she had spent much of her life...

In the name of the Bee (God the Father)...

In the name of the Breeze (God Holy Spirit)...

And in the name of the Butterfly (God the Son Who came from eternity to this world).⁵⁵

There, among flowers and insects, among bugs and changes of season, she got older and struck up a friendship with God...

I had to visit that place.

So I went to New York.

Circumstances conspired to provide my coming together with the poet and her flowers a delicious intimacy.

For some unknown reason, the guide who was supposed to explain us, the visitors, the garden of the poet, didn't come.

To further complicate things, there were no headphones (those that are offered to replace the guides).

We had to make the tour on our own.

I visited Emily Dickinson's garden only led by my intuition, with a freedom beyond any guideline.

I visited it at my pace, letting its murmurs to capture me and trying to perceive the aromas (accompanied by Manuel, the youngest of my children, who, respectful of my pilgrimage, stayed at a tactful distance; while my daughter Amparín and my son Julio look after their respective families in Mexico).

It will be Summer — eventually...

The Lilacs — bending many a year —

Will sway with purple load —

The Bees — will not despise the tune —

Their Forefathers — have hummed —

The Wild Rose — redden in the Bog —

The Aster — on the Hill

Her everlasting fashion — set —

And Covenant Gentians — frill —

Till Summer folds her miracle —

As Women — do — their Gown —

Or Priests — adjust the Symbols —

*When Sacrament — is done —.*⁵⁶

I had just began to go into the paths, listening out to the flow of my emotions and observing the deployment of color, when the memory of the gardens in my life overpowered me...

Because gardens have seduced me since I was a girl...

*Every bird that sings, every bud that blooms, only makes me remember that hidden garden waiting for the hand cultivating it.*⁵⁷

On the other hand, natural sites have never attracted me.

They scare but they don't enchant me.

The natural sites have no soul.

They haven't been touched by the hand of man.

They are the product of God's mind.

When, by chance, someone approaches one of them, it shouts at him, begging him to make it his own, to cultivate it and to provide it a soul.

Some natural sites even expect to be crossed by roads so that they can be closer to men.

The Earthly Paradise had no soul.

How could it have one if it had been the product of a divine monologue, a pure idea?

It lacked the blood and the thrill of human endeavor.

On the other hand, interlaced footprints of man and divinity can be perceived in gardens.

They are the proof of the divine spark in material form.

Flowers must be arranged in a certain way so that they talk to us and tell us their stories.

The rhythms of buds and buttons must match the rhythms of men so that the miracle occurs.

Gardens are a perpetual and fruitful dialogue between God and his creatures; a dialogue that takes place over time and throughout the seasons of the year.

Emily's garden was engendered by the longing for immortality of its creator...

There she discovered eternity watching how its flowers revived every year...

*New feet within my garden go,
New fingers stir the sod;
A troubadour upon the elm
Betrays the solitude.*

*New children play upon the green,
New weary sleep below;
And still the pensive spring returns,
And still the punctual snow!*⁵⁸

My garden is small and I treasure it.

In the evening, I sit down to admire it, without hurry.

Its walls are covered with ivy and daisies dominate the landscape.

I planted tree after tree without thinking that they would grow and now their branches intertwine giving it a forest look.

A peach tree was the first to arrive.

Three of their offspring have yielded fruit.

Then came two jacarandas, a guava, three orange trees and two louquats followed by two sweetgums, a coral tree, three glory bushes and a capulin more than thirty feet high and pruned several times.

My trees are always there when I need company.

I have never figured out why they were conferred the masculine gender if they are so faithful.

The non-human visitors of my garden are a perpetual delight...

Very early in the morning, sparrows, thrushes and hummingbirds come down to get their share of worms and seeds, mostly when the lawn has been recently mowed.

I enjoy looking at them.

I do it with binoculars, and thus they don't notice me.

So I've seen them such the honey of the jacarandas, dance in the puddles and among the branches of the trees.

I've watched them as they peck at the capulin prunes until they eat them completely, leaving only the seeds hanging from the stem.

But I haven't been able to discover if lightning frightens them or where they seek refuge during a downpour.

Once, the birds, with whom now I share the autumn evenings of my life, were about to abandon me.

I bought a huge bird feeder, thinking to please them.

I filled it with birdseed and hung it from the peach tree.

Gradually, the abundance started attracting crows and soon they took possession not only of the bird feeder, but of the whole garden.

Not a sparrow, a hummingbird or a thrush dared to approach.

When I realized that my garden was getting a mournful appearance (due to the blackness of ravens), I took the bird feeder down the tree, only by intuition.

It wasn't too long before its atmosphere recovered its pace and its tranquility.

The sparrows, the thrushes and the hummingbirds resumed their adventures and they haven't gone away since then.

In my parents' house there was also a garden.

While my mother took care of it, it was an enchanted garden.

Afterwards, it lost its soul.

It was two and a half acres in size, and initially it only had grass and a few trees.

I remember with special pleasure the three walnut trees that every August produced the walnuts we used to prepare the *chiles en nogada**; likewise, the two jacaranda trees, straight side by side thirty feet apart, and under which, every Sunday, my mother placed, on very large tables, dishes with rice and green plantains, chicken in all sorts of sauces, among many other dishes that we enjoyed her husband (my father), her daughters (my two sisters and I), her son (my brother) and friends of all of us.

One day, my mother decided to build a magic space at the back end of the garden. It was a several levels subsidence made with volcanic stones covered with creeping Jenny or moneywort, among which poked out multiple and varied flowers.

On Easter Sundays, she used to hide toys and chocolate eggs between the stones. Those days, my two sisters, my brother and I invited our schoolmates and we all compete to get most of the eggs.

Each year, almost one hundred children expected the party several weeks in advance.

Nobody was allowed to approach that volcanic stones magic place until my mother gave the starting signal.

At that moment, we ran as fast as we could to the back of the garden and in no time we polished off the eggs and we filled our paper bags with the surprise chocolates and the egg shells colored and filled with confetti.

One day, my mother must have thought that her garden needed more magical spaces, so she started building raised garden-beds, here and there, that she filled with geraniums, violets, forget-me-nots, pansies, glory bushes, daisies and azaleas.

Her favorite one stretched along the left wall of the house.

It was a pathway of roses, about one hundred feet long, crowned with metallic arches. The slender arches were always filled with those roses called *baby* (that must also be climbing plants, because they covered them completely) and a multitude of roses of different species encircled the columns supporting them.

The hydrangeas (of a blue color very similar that of the jacaranda) were my mother's favorite flowers; I realized that one night.

The noise of a car woke me up.

They were my parents coming back from a dinner.

Shortly after, I heard the entrance door being opened again.

I looked out of the window, surprised to hear that door being opened so late.

It was my mother carrying a canvas which she extended over her hydrangeas...

That day I knew it...

She loved flowers.

During the winter months and before going to sleep, regardless of the late hour or her tiredness, she used to go out to the garden to cover her hydrangeas.

In the mornings, her first activity was to uncover them so that they could enjoy the first warmth and sunrays.

I've never seen such generous hydrangeas...

But all of that is over...

As suddenly as Yahweh throw Adam and Eve out of the Earthly Paradise, and for reasons equally strange, some *landscape architects* throw my mother out of her paradise...

Without further explanation (at least I never knew it), one day they turned up and throw

* Mexican dish consisting basically in hot green peppers stuffed with ground meat and covered with a sauce prepared with cream and walnuts.

her out of her garden.

I don't know which regulation of the *Landscape Architects Handbook* she had failed to comply so that these men, from out of nowhere, decided that for the wellbeing of that garden, they had to take care of it.

My mother, good as gold and as any woman of yesteryear, didn't even attempt to defend her passion.

As she had been educated in the belief that she knew nothing, she told those intruders, the *architects*, that they had to be right because they had studied that "architecture" and she hadn't.

One day, my mother said goodbye to her flowers.

Some night she went out to the garden without being seen by anyone and she said goodbye forever to her hydrangeas, roses, daisies, magnolias... by means of a ritual that she must have performed with her eyes full of tears.

Afterwards, she never spoke again about the matter.

I'm not either a *landscape architect*, but I know that that garden never again had a soul.

It became silent and lifeless (although it received, indeed, a lot of praise from many other *landscape architects*).

*I hide myself within my flower,
That wearing on your breast,
You, unsuspecting, wear me too—
And angels know the rest.*

*I hide myself within my flower,
That, fading from your vase,
You, unsuspecting, feel for me
Almost a loneliness.*⁵⁹

The garden was the place where my mother used to meet God.

She withered when she ceased to take care of it...

Emily Dickinson flourished writing in her garden her most beautiful poems, those relating to an intimate dialogue with her Creator.

In honor of my mother, I work with zeal in my garden, especially now, on the threshold of old age, a stage of life she didn't reach.

My garden has not the same dimensions as that of my mother, but it surely has its passion, a vestige of its atmosphere, and certainly its sacredness...

It's beautiful, but also discreet.

I don't want to provoke God's envy.

Chapter 10

The creepy history of the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church (in whose bosom I was born) has a creepy history.

To start with (we have to start some place), it has had the nerve of naming “holy wars” some atrocious wars.

One example, among hundreds that I could mention, is the battle of Lepanto; a bloody clash of civilizations between Islam and Christianity.

The Christian victory in this battle was exalted by Pope Pius V as a “Victory of God”.⁶⁰

How can the Catholic Church protection of hundreds of sacrilegious criminals, such as the creepy killer of nun Margaret Ann Pahl, be vindicated?⁶¹

Or its complicity which was a determining factor so that many Nazi criminals could escape to South America and thus avoid justice?⁶²

And, what can we say about its active partaking in the Inquisition, with its tortures and institutionalization of sexual and racial abuse?

(Besides its systematic obstruction to the diffusion of science that kept millions of Catholics in a stupefying obscurantism, the Inquisition was the direct antecedent of the totalitarian governments.)⁶³

What can I add to what has already been said about child and sexual abuse on the part of a good number of high prelates of our Church? The incidence of these crimes, as well as their concealment, has appeared in the front pages of newspapers for years.⁶⁴

How can we keep undaunted before its misogyny, violence and racism tinted pronouncements (“neither the Indians nor women have souls”, for example)?

And to conclude... take a trip to the Vatican or be invited to eat by one of the senior Catholic hierarchs so that you can evaluate the anachronistic opulence exhibited by our Church.

How can the Catholic Church call itself “saint”?

Even more, how can there be persons who believe it when it asserts that?

And keep in mind that I haven’t yet mentioned its foundational crime, the confirmation of all these atrocities, because I prefer to address it later...

The history of the Catholic Church competes favorably with the creepy history of mankind.

However (and inexplicably), while (most) world criminals are demonized and punished for their crimes, despite its own crimes the Catholic Church keeps being considered saint by its hundred thousands of followers.

Why the crimes of the Catholic Church do not bring it into the dock?

Why aberrations and harmful social and personal implications of the Catholic precepts are ignored?

Why entire societies tolerate the Catholic Church crimes while they sanction other organizations for those same felonies?

Why it is granted immunity or privileges (as our politicians)?

Why it still doesn’t pay taxes (also as many of our politicians)?

Someone can tell me why and what for a Church with a history like ours has to be saved at all costs?

Instead of being tried as any other institution (and that would be already an improvement), the

Catholic Church should be tried based on higher standards due to its extraordinary ambitions:

It claims to be, nothing more and nothing less, the mystical body of Christ...

It proclaims to be Jesus heir and to have immediate pastoral jurisdiction over each and every Christian...

It ordains priests able to transform bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ...

It dictates mandatory laws under penalty of mortal sin and eternal damnation...

And if that were not enough, it grants itself the authority to forgive or not forgive our sins.⁶⁵

The argument put forward by the Catholic Church followers to explain their insane denial of their Church crimes is that it's a human institution integrated by men and therefore the atrocities occurring within its bosom are logical.

In other words, for them, for those who defend at all costs the Catholic Church, its atrocities, always perpetrated in God's name, are understandable and have a justification: *One has to look "beyond" all these wrongly called atrocities, they explain, to confirm the ultimate holiness of the Catholic Church.*

The *beyond* argument is unacceptable from the start: the end never justifies the means (at least that's how I understand it).

But for the sake of tolerance and, most of all, to understand some of these approaches, we can ask ourselves, what's that "*beyond*" the Catholic Church crimes to which we must refer to pardon it?

The *beyond* of these crimes, the one that is mentioned to substantiate its holiness, is a crime even more horrendous than the above mentioned.

It's a supreme act of violence that became the founding myth of the Catholic Church: The murder of Jesus, God's only son, with the backing of his own Father.

This macabre belief is our Church's fundamental belief.

We relive it every day of the year, without missing a single one, when we celebrate mass and recite the Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty...

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son...

... He suffered under Pontius Pilatus, was crucified, died and was buried...

The Catholic Church has adopted as its core teaching, its most incontrovertible teaching, that it was instituted by God's only son, sent to Earth by his Father to die on the cross...

This is what grants it credibility.

Parishioners give in to such proposal.

All Catholic proposals rest on it.

Taken as is, without neither rationalizations nor hermeneutics, this founding myth of the Catholic Church is truly sinister.

Let's see...

God the Father, the creator of Adam and Eve (then called Yahweh), realizes that his creatures are very, but very bad. To save them from their evil, He sends his only son to Earth to suffer greatly before dying nailed on a cross, a crown of thorns included, between two thieves as if He were the worst of criminals...

It's not the first time that Yahweh recognizes the wickedness of his creatures.

Neither the first time that He resorts to outrageous corrective measures.

It happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed Him.

It happened when He looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and saw his creatures getting

up to their old tricks, once again.

It also happened in the days of Noah.

Many centuries later, as stated in the New Testament, once again God the Father (formerly Yahweh) recognizes the wickedness of his creatures. This time He doesn't choose to mete them out an exemplary punishment, as on previous occasions (perhaps because those punishments hadn't achieved the expected results); instead, He chooses to shed the blood of his only Son to redeem and save them from the eternal punishment.

The underlying message is terrible: We, human beings, are so evil that only the blood of the only Son of the God Creator can redeem us and open us the doors of heaven...

How can it be vindicated that hundreds of thousands of people we celebrate a God capable of sending his only son to the slaughterhouse?

Why we describe Him as loving?

Aren't his acts heinous, heartless?

Don't you deem cruel to speak of our own children as Yahweh speaks of his creatures?

Is it not sadistic to send a son to sacrifice himself in a cross, with a crown of thorns included, in order to redeem sins that he never committed?

In addition, why has God to do something like that if He can solve the issue of our wickedness, easily and without pain?

He could simply say *Fiat!* as He did when He created the world.

There's something in the human mind making it capable of accepting such behavior.

Something very strange takes place when hundreds of thousands of people consider it sublime.

To act in such a way requires, at least, a really warped mind...

Can someone tell me, please!, what kind of mental reflections and gymnastics must I perform to be convinced that an act worthy of Hannibal Lecter (the bloodthirsty star of *Silence of the Lambs*) is indeed commendable and deserves praises?

I can understand the self-sacrifice as long as it is in the interests of others.

I consider commendable someone who gives his life for someone else's in an act of extreme generosity.

But I cannot understand and much less acknowledge a father who orders his son to sacrifice himself for offenses he didn't commit.

I cannot accept it, even if the father in question is God Himself.

Plain and simple, I cannot understand it!

However, and this is really surprising... this fact is an inspiration for the Catholic believers!

This act of divine cruelty usually induces the most compassionate human reactions that man is capable of...

Immaculée Ilibagiza,⁶⁶ Tutsi survivor of the Rwanda Genocide, held out her hand, as a gesture of forgiveness, to the Hutu man who quartered her family.

How could Immaculée act that way?

The answer is simple.

She was able to do so because she is Catholic: If God sacrifices (kills) his only son on a cross for the sake of men, to forgive the man who killed your brother is only one minor gesture...

The Catholic Church history is full of paradoxical conducts such as Immaculée's.

But the topic of the paradoxical behavior deserves a chapter apart.

The paradoxes of the Catholic Church: Immaculée

Stand up, assassin!... Get up, Félicien, and tell Immaculée why did you murdered her mother and quartered her brothers) shouted Semana (the authority responsible for capturing the assassins who terrorized the Tutsis during the Rwandan Genocide).

The man remained crouched, too ashamed to stand up and face me.

His dirty garments hung in shreds...

His skin was yellowish, full of wounds and cracked; his eyes were slit and scabby...

I felt compassion in front of the picture of suffering. Félicien had allowed the devil to enter into his heart, and the devil had ruined his life, as a cancer in his soul...

I felt overwhelmed with mercy towards that man...

I got startled and I let escape an unwitting moan.

Semana looked at me, amazed by my reaction and confused by the tears running down my face...

*Félicien was crying. I could sense his guilt. He looked upward during a single moment, but our eyes met. I reached over towards him; I touched his hands slightly and I told him softly: "I forgive you."*⁶⁷

My heart felt an immediate relief and I saw how the stress on Félicien's shoulders got released before Semana pushed him out the door and into the courtyard...

When Semana came back, he was furious.

"What was that, Immaculée? That was the man who murdered your family. I brought him so that you could interrogate him... so you could spit at him if you wanted so. And you forgave him! How could you do that? Why you forgave him?"

*I answered him with the truth. "Forgiveness is the only thing I have to offer."*⁶⁸

Immaculée forgives her brother's slaughterer, before the bafflement of Semana who had brought him so she could take revenge on him or, at least, she could spit at his face.

She doesn't take revenge or spit at him.

Immaculée forgives.

She shakes hands with the murderer of Damascene, the brother she loved, the light of her life.⁶⁹

She was raised in the bosom of the Catholic Church by Belgian colonizers who, it must be cleared up, decreed the superiority of Tutsis over the Hutus, thus triggering (in good measure) the Rwanda Genocide.

Immaculée always behaves as Jesus did.

So does Damascene before he was killed.

Without attempting to dissuade his murderers, he tells them:

Come on!

What are you waiting for?

Today is my day with God...

*Finish your work and send me to Paradise.*⁷⁰

Those were the last words pronounced by the young Tutsi, just before a young Hutu amputated his arms and another one slit his skull in two with his machete to look at it: he wanted to examine up close the brain of someone who had studied a master's degree.

Immaculée, how can we forget her?

Immaculée, witness of hate against the unlike, the different...

Unlikely survivor of a holocaust that cut off the lives of one million people...

Last link of a long process of disqualifications and absurd theories imposed on Rwanda by its colonizers, in God's name.

Immaculée, the young Rwandan girl and her unforgivable forgiveness because "*it is the only thing I have to offer.*"

Immaculée, immaculate. Also in the name of God; the Catholic God.

Rwanda, land of mists and of the thousand hills.

In Rwanda, the Tutsis and the Hutus lived together for centuries within one of the best organized societies in Africa.

There, nobles, chiefs and assistants, subjects and leaders were harmoniously interlinked.

Rwanda and its well thought-out system of shared obligations.

Gihanga, its first King, heir of the divinity Root of Man.

Naive Rwanda and its blessed isolation...

Rwanda devastated by the Genocide...

It's difficult to define the Hutus and the Tutsis, Rwanda's inhabitants.

Are they races?

Are they ethnic groups?

Are they tribes or simply groups?

The Tutsis and the Hutus are peoples that coexist side by side, speak the same language, obey the same laws, learn the same myths and practice the same religion.

Similar in appearance, the Tutsis are (usually) breeders and the Hutus farmers.

The boundaries separating them are surprisingly elastic...

If a Hutu turns into a cattle breeder, he becomes a Tutsi.

A Tutsi family who stops being breeders to engage in agriculture becomes a Hutu family.

That simple.

That natural.

That is, until Europeans took control of their country.

The Germans came first.

Then (for reasons not relevant to be mentioned) Rwanda was assigned to the Belgians as *Trust Territory*.

According to that Treaty, the Belgians can make in Rwanda (almost) whatever they wish...

And that's what they do when they pass judgment on the value of Rwandans: Tutsis are smart and sophisticated, they say.

They do not fit the African stereotype because they are not Africans, they explain.

They belong to a race of Caucasian origin which migrated to Rwanda many years back, they conclude.

The incredible Cam Thesis tells us how they reach this conclusion.⁷¹

The Tutsis are descendants of the biblical Cam.

Cam was one of Noah's three sons, the one who mocked his father when he saw him drunk.

When Noah heard about of Cam's behavior, he cursed him, causing his skin to become black.

Nonetheless, Cam continued to be white, but a dark-skinned white.

Although his skin was black, he wasn't African but Semitic.

Have you ever heard a more intricate and insane reasoning?

If such arguments suffice to trigger the scorn, the humiliation and even the annihilation of whole races, what future awaits mankind?

If such arguments are endorsed by those who call themselves divine spokesmen, what hope can we have in God?

A Catholic priest, as the majority of the scholars who came to Rwanda, describe the Tutsis as elegant red-haired beauties blessed with a Greek profile of their own, with Semite and even Jewish traits.⁷²

It was worth educating those human beings with so splendid traits because they were destined to reign.

It was worth to turn them into allies.

And that's what the Belgians did, sparking off the resentment of the Hutus, those men and women who the Belgians themselves branded as inferior, dumb, spontaneous, reliable and extraverted; supportive of easy laughter and simple life...

It was a period (not too remote as it was the end of the 19th century) stained by the obsession for the race, and when it was argued, "scientifically", the superiority of some races over others.

Thus was the way to justify colonialism.

Thus used to be emitted decisive judgments on the human value, such as the one that sparked the Rwandan genocide which was the revenge of the Hutus—declared inferior by the Belgians—over the Tutsis, declared superior.

The Rwandan genocide didn't last long, only one hundred days. But those 100 days were enough to eliminate one million Tutsis.

One million children, elders, youngsters and adults.

Good and bad.

Healthy and sick.

Hard-working and idlers...

(Without distinctions, as it happened in Egypt when Yahweh sent his Angel to kill the firstborns without exception.)

Nobody escapes.

If you're a Tutsi, you're a cockroach and we crush you as such.

If you're a Tutsi, you're a snake and we cut you into pieces.

With such arguments, Immaculée's father and mother are quartered by the Hutus.

Rwanda holocaust... months of paranoia and betrayals.

Perhaps the Hutus who now take your life were your friends some time before.

Perhaps they even were your neighbors.

Those with whom you shared food and festivities now betray and denounce you, or they refuse to hide you (as it occurred during the Inquisition)...

Totalitarianism and irrationality always unleash paranoia...

Despite the horrors, Immaculée remains faithful to her God and to her Catholic faith.

She thanks that God for saving her from death and she forgives the assassins of her family.

Why does she do that?

Due to the usual paradoxical reason:

If he/she died, it was the doctor's fault;

If he/she healed, it was Jesus, the Virgin of Guadalupe, God, Yahweh o Saint Anthony of Padua...

Immaculée remained hidden three months, along with a score of young Tutsi women, inside a bathroom of only a few square foot.

One day she requested her benefactor, a pastor brave enough to hide them all, to place a wardrobe in front of the door so that, if the Hutus came to check the house, they didn't discover the bathroom.

At first, her benefactor rejected her suggestion: it could worsen things, because if someone noticed the relocation of the wardrobe, he might suspect something.

But due to Immaculée's insistence, he finally agreed and moved the wardrobe...

The wardrobe relocation turned out to be Immaculée's salvation: the Hutus entered the room several times but they never suspected that a score of people was hidden behind the wardrobe.

But I'm not telling you this anecdote for that reason.

At this time I'm not interested in describing Immaculée and her companions' agony when they heard people approaching the wardrobe and, in no time, one, two, three or dozens of Hutus could quarter them.

I don't even want to imagine (it hurts me too much) what must have been for twenty young women to live in a space of only a few square foot without food, without being able to wash themselves up or to satisfy their most basic human needs.

Not in vain Immaculée ended weighing less than 45 pounds and the same must have happen to the other women.

No.

That's not why I'm telling you the story of the wardrobe.

I'm telling it because it illustrates the paradoxical behavior of the Catholic Immaculée...

Look...

When she recounts the wardrobe episode, Immaculée explains, over and over, that it was not her, but God, who had the idea of moving the wardrobe.

In dreams, she says, God whispered it in her ear...

She is unable to appropriate a good idea; all recognition must be given to the Creator.

She is just the sinner that somehow they told her she was.

So it is with everything...

God always saves us.

God is always good-natured...

Immaculée saved herself?

No.

God saved her: she must be grateful to Him...

The Hutus didn't find her?

Another good work of God...

Every good thing that happens to Immaculée is God's work.

And the bad things?

Who must be blamed for the bad things that happen to her or to the world?

Although Immaculée accredits her salvation to an Almighty God, it's amazing that she doesn't accredit Him also the atrocities committed against hundreds of thousands of other Tutsis.

One million Tutsis died at the hands of the Hutus.

I don't know what percentage of Rwanda's population that is, but surely Immaculée was among the few lucky Tutsis who survived...

Immaculée never reproaches God for his involvement in the holocaust of her country, or at least for not having looked after her parents as He looked after her.

She could have flung in his face the torture of her brother Damascene.
Why didn't He save his life as He saved hers?
For Him that was as easy as suggesting her to move the wardrobe...
None of this Immaculée reproaches her Creator.

Likewise, we, Catholics, don't ask ourselves why God consented that hundreds of children were killed in the Massacre of the Innocents ordered by Herod, in order to save Jesus, or why He chooses as his friends and representatives persons manipulative and arrogant...

Where were God the Father and his Church when the Hutus, feeling themselves racially humiliated, dismembered one million Tutsis, conceited by the ridiculous theories (proposed by members of the Belgian Catholic Church) calling them descendants of Cam (as we already explained)?

Where were they when the Tutsis took revenge in the same way?

Or when, in Sierra Leone, small children were snatched from their mothers' arms and mutilated before their shattered eyes?

Where was God the Father when his representatives burned "witches"; when the missionaries, supposedly arrived to evangelize Haiti, destroyed generous trees without mercy, arguing their perverse influence on the population?

Neither God the Father nor his Church has answered those questions.

That's why many fans, old friends, faithful believers, women and men upright and responsible, today turn their back on them and explore new spiritual paths when the Ineffable calls them.

Chapter 12

God's executioners

God has revealed himself to me several times, even if you do not believe it.

And you'll trust me even less if I also tell you that those events never occurred in a church, during a religious celebration or through his ministers.

God's last contact with my person occurred while I was rereading, once more, Emily Dickinson's poem *In the name of the Bee, the Breeze and the Butterfly*.⁷³

God's motive for approaching me this time was to ask me to deny the rumor of his murder.

At first (I must acknowledge), I considered ridiculous both the rumor and the request; besides, what they had to do with the poem *In the name of the Bee*?

But only at first: as soon as God made himself clear, all the pieces fell into place...

Someone—God didn't tell me his name—told Him that there's a rumor going around that the depravities of certain members of the high hierarchy of his Church have reached the point of killing him to usurp his place.

In other words, it is said that He is dead and, besides, murdered by people of his own retinue.

The argument to validate the (alleged) crime lies in the impossibility of God being still alive because, if He was alive, wouldn't He have brought under control the persons in charge of transubstantiate the bread and wine into his Body and his Blood? Wouldn't He have already relieved them of the so well-paid positions they enjoy with his consent, since millennia?

For me, these questions point at the very essence of our Church's setbacks and they had bothered me for a long time; but the issue of the assassination topped my worst fantasies...

The excesses of some priests have deeply offended the heart of believers, it is true.

These (the believers) put their trust in them (the priests) and, for centuries, they let themselves be blindly guided by their teachings.

However, some priests become so cynical that they commit, openly and without embarrassment, what they usually forbid their sheep:

... pride as a lifestyle,

... unbridled exercise of sexuality,

... eating and drinking excesses,

... unlimited urge to be under the limelight, and...

... all sorts of outrages seasoned with verbal reprimands to their penitents for those same faults.

These inconsistencies have caused deep doubts on their moral authority.

For me it's rather odd that such questioning has only occurred until now, because those priestly behaviors started millennia ago, perhaps at the time we started to attribute God the last name of Father.

As the rumor progressed, and without questioning its authenticity, many faithful Catholics have ceased to go to church.

The priests (most of them), conveniently blind before this massive desertion, keep pronouncing dull sermons destined to maintain in a state of absolute stupidity those who still accept submit themselves to their iron rule, of course, always taking care to do it in the name of a God the Father of their invention (though not in the name of the Bee, as Emily used to do

it) that only convinces very few followers of his divine parentage.

Those who continue to show up in the temples are mostly old men and women, one or another woman downhearted due her husband's infidelities, and some child dragged by his mother.

Nor those who love golden and sumptuous settings where they can celebrate weddings or baptize their offspring dressed with frills have joined the boycott; and even less the accomplices of the "murderers of God" who remain at his Holy Mother's side, unable to get rid of the privileges received due to their bond with her, even at the expense of betraying their consciences.

It's obvious (for who dares to see): the few parishioners attending regularly churches nod off, talk on their cell phones or look at their Blackberry in search for messages, while the priest preaches.

Only a few confess.

Those with existential problems or of any other nature now prefer a psychoanalyst showing interest in their motivations and not a priest who (usually) reproaches them banal behaviors and doesn't make any effort to shed light on their crucial religious doubts.

Worse still (from the viewpoint of the sacral finances) is the decline in the number of those parishioners observant of the tithe mandate (something understandable because who, in his right mind, will hand over alms when he knows they will be used to pay lawsuits stemming from priestly pederasty?).

Putting on one single level God and the Father has allowed the Catholic Church to justify aggressive, violent and misogynist conducts (traditionally linked to the male principle), but utterly incompatible (at least from my viewpoint) with an acting that brags to be divine.

These behaviors are (as we have seen throughout these pages) the daily bread of the biblical Yahweh, of the Yahweh of the Tabernacle, the one responsible for the Egyptian children slaughter; also the God of the Inquisition, of the holy wars and the Cam theories.

That's why I also attributed the absence of God to his death.

I couldn't figure out the divine cohabitation with so much atrocity.

How could a real Creator tolerate such atrocities?

After the last manifestation of God, I know better.

God is not in churches because he no longer wants to be.

He doesn't tolerate to be called Father.

Neither the dull and solemn environment of temples...

He tolerates even less the pretensions of (a good number of) his high hierarchs because they embarrass Him.

He doesn't respect his representatives anymore and he doesn't want to be identified with them.

He doesn't take them into consideration, nor pays attention to them, because for quite a long time they have only being making and saying mischiefs:

their words are void,

they neither move mountains nor shake reefs,

they have no soul.

God doesn't want golden altars, fabulous fabrics or costly precious stones anymore.

He deems absurd that while thousands of his creatures go out there begging for bread and looking for a place where to sleep wrapped with newspapers, a good number of his "representatives" waste time sitting peacefully on malachite or gold thrones, with their hand outstretched to receive the servile kiss of parishioners.

He feels deeply disconsolate (and he almost cried when He told me so) when, after so

much hand kissing, these characters get up and, with all solemnity, go to their sumptuous dining rooms where they eat caviar or ant roe as they please, or to their bedrooms where they sleep in silk sheets.

The so-called God representatives travel in pope-mobiles or Rolls Royce (and even in private planes).

During the trip they drink champagne or tequila (as per their tastes), instead of following the steps of Jesus (the illuminated son of God), who traveled the dusty roads wearing sandals or riding a donkey without any problem.

God fears that these corrupt individuals institute a new Inquisition in a desperate attempt to make their parishioners return to the fold.

Another of his fears is that they organize new Crusades to distract them a bit, as good strategists educated in the style of a God surnamed Father...

God considers his representatives (largely) responsible for the breach of his commandments by their peoples.

That's why He decided to ask me (and many other Catholics) to make known that He's still alive, but that He doesn't show up at churches anymore and neither talks through the high hierarchies.

He wants everyone to know that it wasn't Him who chose the nickname Father, and neither the thirst for power or violence is his.

These behaviors are not part of his repertoire nor of his designs.

He doesn't attend the conclaves of Cardinals anymore because He has decided to promote himself without boasting, sacred ambitions or smoke releases.

Besides, He warns us that if sometimes we think that we discover Him in St. Peter's square, when the Pope blesses the congregation from his balcony of the Vatican, it's just a mirage, a flash in the pan that doesn't have any effect on our hearts.

God's efforts to spread his message have begun to bear fruit.

Many Catholics are daring to break the incestuous ties which, for millennia, kept them linked to the priests.

They are daring to think about God by themselves, convinced that it is viable.

Every day, the number of those who talk 'face-to-face' with God increases.

The majors in Theology have proliferated at universities and anyone can approach the writings of the Church and judge them personally without having to resort to those who, for centuries, monopolized these tasks.

Before the shortage of morally qualified guides, nowadays the Catholics we explore new ways and new areas to find the lost God.

We are in search of a new spirituality.

God has also been learning.

He has learned that the Father surname doesn't favor Him at all (and sorry for the reiteration, but this divine *Insight* is crucial).

He has learned to not identify himself with those who use his name for their own benefit, because sooner or later they will betray him.

Now He is well aware of this: sumptuousness is an open door to narcissism.

Even more important, He is convinced, at last, that his people is also worthwhile and that He doesn't need to delegate his care in priestly elites of dubious honorableness.

As it was to be expected, some high ecclesiastical hierarchies (the holders of the largest prebends, of course) didn't like this situation at all because they envisaged getting away with it once more.

They keep invoking God to recoup the place He allotted them in the Tabernacle's times, but He doesn't whisper in their ears anymore.

Neither He shows up before them wrapped in a cloud, nor asks them to climb to Mount Tabor or to the Paricutin to transmit them his wisdom.

No matter how much they throw in God's face that they have dedicated him their life and they call Him unfair and ungrateful for acting as He does, He doesn't succumb to their insolence (a fact not too surprising because God may be attributed many things, but blame is definitely not one of them).

God feels betrayed, and with good reason.

The gossips about his murder at the hands of (some of) his ministers have been so harsh and the image of his Church has deteriorated so much because of this, that He has even considered several radical options to undo wrongs:

- ... to rebuild his Church...

- ... to skim it...

- ... to hand over its management to the faithful.

In other words, God is thinking, seriously, of abolishing the high ecclesiastical hierarchy and allowing any Catholic (or any of his creatures, in fact) to hold the powers and privileges so far monopolized by the former...

... as well as, obviously, of demanding the definitive elimination of the nickname Father every time someone refers to his person.

Chapter 13

The misogyny of the high hierarchies

Although the recent outrages of the priests toward the believers have caused great stir (pedophiles, for instance), not all imply scandalous behaviors.

Some of them, the more tangled up with customs, are invisible, that is, they are harmless at first glance and their conviction becomes difficult.

A great number has to do with issues related to women and they go unnoticed even to God who has not been able to avoid contracting the misogyny of his representatives (although He is exerting himself to correct this mistake).

If you allow me, a personal experience to illustrate this point.

The protagonists are my nephew Robert and Angeles his mother, my sister.

My nephew Robert...

What can I tell you?

He was coming back from a party with his girlfriend when they were robbed.

He was only eighteen years old...

Next, some phrases I wrote a few years ago about the attitude of God's representatives regarding this death:

In the Church where within a few minutes the mass for my recently deceased nephew Robert will be officiated, I see Angeles, one of my two sisters, the mother of this dead young man, bend over to kiss the hand of the priest who will officiate the mass.

From his arrogance, the priest extends his hand towards her, without even looking at her...

A sense of anger and deep rage assails me.

Amid an indescribable wince, my sister leans her head to demonstrate her total subordination to the prelate...

... when he is the one who should kiss her hand, her face and even her feet!

Isn't that what the believers do before Michelangelo's Pieta at the Vatican?

Haven't we, as a sign of impotence before the pain of a suffering mother (Virgin Mary) due to the dramatic loss of her son (Jesus), men and women, Christians and non-Christians, we have bowed, reverently, for more than five hundred years?

But perhaps the priests (at least some of them) only lean their head and body when it comes to marble.

But before the feminine flesh, bones and blood they turn their head the other side and stretch their arm to receive a kiss of recognition to their noble clerical investiture from the bereaved women.

That gesture went unnoticed for the majority of those present.

A ritual (the priestly hand-kissing) observed for centuries by youngsters, children and elderly of the Catholic community upset every cell of my body.

Seeing God's representatives adopt such coldness attitudes before women aggravated me...

I couldn't stand see God's representatives adopt such coldness attitudes before women...

I felt even more infuriated when I noticed persons looking with indifference at woman newly orphan of a son who was kissing a priest's back of the hand...

Don't they know it? That gesture is humiliating for women.

Are they unaware of its injustice?

We, women, are the ones who take care of churches.

We, women, teach to pray our sons and daughters.

We wash the priest's clothes and prepare their meals.

We are the most reliable of their servants.

We keep alive Jesus' teachings and the Catholic traditions.

We are also the most persevering prayers.

We organize baptisms, first communions and confirmations.

And nevertheless... they refuse us the access to the high hierarchy of the Church...

And yet they demand us to see with resignation a mother who has lost a son kissing the hand of indifferent and arrogant prelates.

For the Catholic Church, women must subordinate themselves to the male criteria. Do you remember?

*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over man, but to be in silence.*⁷⁴

And also:

... the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

*But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn...:thus woman must weareth on her head the sign of her dependency...*⁷⁵

In the Catholic Church, women we are doomed to a perpetual humiliation...

If only it was only that...

The Church has had with women a conduct similar to the one it had with the "infidels" at the time of the Inquisition: not satisfied with condemning us of sexual conducts, as it did with them, it also kept us in the obscurantism for centuries.

Not only it ruled that we don't have a soul, but it also asserted, as the song goes, that we are men's downfall (since Eva) and that (due to that?) our place is at home and only there.

Pretend otherwise was (still is?) almost blasphemous.

Such fateful attitude has pervaded the society and is reinforced even in modern cartoons, as it can be seen in the third film of the *Shrek* series recently released.

After being annoyed by his domestic wife (who, to follow and marry him, leaves behind, nothing more and nothing less than her principedom), Shrek has a dream where she becomes an Amazon (that is, where she is free).

When he awakes from his dream, he realizes that it was a nightmare.

He calms down and kisses his wife.

She feels overjoyed because Shrek, who had been emotionally aloof towards her for months, kisses her again...

What do you think?

But let's go back to the subject of this chapter (and please excuse this digression that my passion forced me to do)...

When the Catholic Church ruled that women we had no soul neither intelligence, it considered us incompetent to venture into the human knowledge and thus, enclosed within four walls, we remained for centuries in the intellectual indigence, ignorant of the global

events.

(Sorry for the commonplace, but these appalling facts are never repeated too many times.)

We got a huge surprise when, upon emerging from the lethargy, we saw the mess and the violence Yahweh/God the Father and their representatives had caused during our absence...

When I heard the first notes of Mozart's *Requiem* marking the start of the requiem mass for my nephew Robert, I asked myself if it was worth to fight for equality between men and women in the Catholic Church or, more exactly, to question the very foundations of Theology and its postulates.

I asked myself whether the Bible should be rewritten under the perspective of an intelligent woman or be discarded entirely.

Do I really want to belong to a church that treats us women with such contempt?

I've always had need of the sacred...

The search for God has been an essential part of my existence since I was a child...

But then, is it necessary to belong to a Church so that we can talk with Him?

Must we belong to an institution headed by the killers (even figuratively) of a God whose surname is not Father, as they surname Him?

Chapter 14

God and Trapito

*God changes his appearance every second.
Blessed is the man who can recognize him in all his disguises.*
Nikos Kazantzakis

God throw Saul down the horse so that he stopped chasing Christians because they were his friends (God's friends, not Saul's).

God didn't throw me down a horse but of my bicycle, using Trapito.

Maybe He thought that I had already written enough irreverent reflections on Him and his representatives.

Although I cannot know it for certain, is not unreasonable to think it: if God's strategy with Saul had had good results (Saul not only ceased to persecute Christians but he joined them), why not apply it with me?

Let me tell you how my fall occurred...

It was actually a harmless fall; it didn't even hurt me:

Now I'm on my bike...

Now I'm lying on the floor, with Trapito next to me...

Now I stand up and I get on my bike again.

I ended my morning cycling routine as if nothing had happened.

The incident, not too serious as you can see, affected deeply my spirit and caused an *impasse* in my musing about God.

I use to walk in the mornings in the garden which I talked you about in previous pages, populated with ghosts and full of life.

I walk on the grass and among the tired branches of the old tree.

Around the trunks of some very tall palms that miss the sea.

Also among the jacarandas that remind me of those family Sundays when we ate rice and plantains under its branches.

Every day I leave my house at six o'clock in the morning, wearing thick trousers and my head covered.

If it's too cold, I also wear gloves and a muffler to cover my mouth.

I roll the bike up to the entrance gate of the paternal house (at only half a block from my own house) and as soon as I enter, I get on it and I start my bicycle rounds around the garden (always twenty).

After the last round, I park my bike and I start to do my rounds on foot (always ten).

At that time, around six in the morning (during fall and even summer time), it is dark.

That's why I always carry my magic flashlight.

Besides lighting my way, my magic flashlight has the virtue of illuminating faces of God and converting my rounds into mystical experiences.

When I go on foot, I hold it with my hand and I aim its beam at the lane to discover those faces among the roots of trees or hidden behind one of their many disguises, as that of a snail.

When I ride on my bike, I place it, turned on, on the handlebar.

In those cases it illuminates faces of God which few people notice.

My flashlight has shown me God making his way through the cracks in the asphalt, dressed as a flower.

It has also shown me God...

... riding on a plane which daybreak mixes up with a star...

... among jacaranda flowers scattered on the floor...

... taking pleasure in the sludge originated after the downpour, perhaps to recall Adam's creation, his first creature...

... on the soft and whitest mushrooms sprouted after the rain and in the many night ghosts.

I've also noticed God...

... slipping down as a light beam through the branches of the trees to become a shadow when it touches the floor...

... hiding behind a moon of an opaque brightness...

... blending in with clouds...

... among the curled, powerful roots of ash trees that look like the arms of the man I love.

Thus, I was riding on my bike and discovering many faces of God that early autumn deliciously cool morning which ended being the morning of my fall.

Trapito was keeping me and my garden company, as he uses to every day since dawn, escorting me in my rounds as close to me as if it were a dog eager to look after me.

But I haven't talked to you about Trapito and you need some backgrounds...

Trapito is a cat.

He came to the garden to scare the squirrels which devour the nuts, the apples and the peaches of the orchard.

During the day, he pursues them without much success, as they continue to do their thing eating the fruits without giving us the time to collect them.

As soon as he perceives me, he curls up beside any of my legs, rubbing against my pants while he purrs non-stop.

Trapito is grey.

It's not because I look at him at night, when, it's well known, all cats are grey, but because he is really grey, which means that he is doubly grey

Because of the fact that he is doubly grey and he easily blends into the night, I was always on the alert for his presence.

I didn't want to ride over him nor being thrown down by him.

I was so worried about my cat (or at least I thought so) that I decided to add two bright headlights to my bike, because my magic flashlight, irreplaceable to uncover faces of God, was not enough to light my way.

Thus, with two extra headlamps any potential incident was eliminated: Trapito would notice my arrival on the bike and I would certainly see him if he came out in front of me.

The day of my fall, being almost seventy years old, I was riding my bike feeling as nimble as any of my (so far) three granddaughters who are between seven and seventeen, or any of my grandchildren (two of them so far and both younger than my granddaughters).

I was riding lively and blithely.

Suddenly: Trapito.

Trapito stood before the front wheel of my bicycle, as if he hadn't seen me arriving; as if my two huge headlights were turned off.

My bike doesn't carry a bell.

It doesn't occur to me to shout at him either.

The doubly grey cat doesn't move.

I avoid him by turning left the handlebar and... and I fall down.
I fall for the first time in all my years of bicycling (which are already a lot).
Nobody sees me.
I don't even have the chance of feeling ashamed or shedding a teardrop to move someone to pity.

I get up.
I climb on my bike again.
My knee hurts, but just a little.

I arrive at my office and get trapped by my Wednesdays' occupations.
At about two o'clock in the afternoon, I decide to go to the orthopedist, just in case.
He asks me for an MRI.
As it is lunch time, I find easily a parking place close to the radiologist's office.
He'll send the results directly to the orthopedist.
I get into my car, unworried.
I attend to my Wednesday patients.
I go back home, limping, but without pain.
I forget to call the orthopedist and ask him about the results of my MRI.

The next day, upon entering the shower stall to take a shower and start the day, I collapse unconscious.

Obviously, I only realize it when I regain consciousness.
I won't bore you with the details of what happened afterwards.
Considering this story purposes, I will only add that my first fall caused the rupture of the tibia's base, and the second one, huge bruises on a shoulder and battered vertebrae.
An operation was necessary.

To give the doctor and his surgical technique their due, I'll add one single phrase: the day after the operation (and it never ceases to amaze me) I was back to my routine, without pain, although feeling pity due to the walking stick, the sling and the collar that I had to use for several days.

During the following month, I carried out my activities unhurriedly and I needed some help to bathe and get dressed.

I had never had (if my memory doesn't fail, as my mother used to say) a similar experience before.

I've always pride myself on being self-sufficient; on moving without help; on not depending on others to do my things.

What was causing my need for help?
To begin with, a terrible blow to my narcissism.
Then, to discover myself vulnerable and mortal.
Now I knew it... I was aware of my vulnerability and my mortality.
How wouldn't I be? Don't we all learn it at birth?
But I had never experienced it before.

There I was, talking irreverently of Yahweh and his representatives when, suddenly, death and the Ineffable show up disguised as a pair of falls.

Uncertainty assails me...

I'm vulnerable.
I'm mortal.

Yahweh/God the Father and (many of) his representatives are a fraud: I discovered that when mulling over God through these pages; I have no doubts anymore...

They are not the answer to the mystery of existence, of my existence...
Then, what?

I had been walking about the garden of my parents' house and I had never imagined the possibility of a fall.

Protected by the loving memories of my parents, I felt almost invulnerable discovering new faces of God every morning.

Then Trapito came in.

He could stand in my way...

So I installed on my bicycle every headlight I found, so I could spot him ahead of time.

I used to ride keeping an eye on him and taking care for us both.

Or at least I thought so...

Now I know it; not back then: cats are dazzled by light and it paralyzes them.

I found it out when I was talking to a friend of mine about my falls, the two extra headlights and my magic flashlight; then she told me.

She said:

You need light, but Trapito doesn't.

He's a cat and he can see at night.

Besides, light dazzles him.

That information hit me in an unusual way.

I felt awkward, ignorant, careless.

Why was it so devastating to discover that cats are dazzled by light?

I had taken care of my cat; I had installed extra headlights; I hadn't ridden over him.

My two falls hadn't been serious...

But that didn't lessen my uneasiness.

Something essential was eluding me.

Would it be related with my rumination about God?

Many days went by before I could discover a hint on where was the thread of the skein I had to untangle.

Attention is the essence of God, says Simone Weil.⁷⁷

This thought always goes with me, especially during my rides through the garden of my parents' house.

That's why I ride attentive, very attentive to what, in the midst of darkness, my magic flashlight may light up.

Penetrating into God's essence while paying attention has been my presumptuous desire since I randomly stumbled upon Simone Weil's sentence.

Thus I've discovered faces of God which contrast with the ostentation and the power of the faces offered to his believers both by his representatives and the so-called sacred books.

But my fall brought to light how limited is my attention...

Paying attention (in Weil's sense) is far more than simply lightening the path with a flashlight.

It's a complex, almost mystical process.

We often think that we are paying attention when in fact we are only projecting ourselves (as I did with my cat).

To confuse the projection with being really attentive can be catastrophic...

... as catastrophic as to only see our reflection (our projection) in our children, in our patients and, most of all, in God.

Sometimes the headlights are excessive, as it happened with Trapito.

Chapter 15

The saviors of God

*God is neither omnipotent, nor implacable, nor incomprehensible.
God is endless creation, action, freedom.*
Nikos Kazantzakis⁷⁸

*God is imperiled.
God cannot be saved unless men we save Him transmuting
into actions and work everything that we are.
If you're a farmer, help the soil to bear its fruit.
God shouts from the heart of each seed.
Set Him free.
Nor you can be saved if you don't set Him free.*
Nikos Kazantzakis⁷⁹

The Catholic Church, with its fundamentalist and anachronistic conception of God, is bogged down.

Nikos Kazantzakis, with his definition of God and his existential proposals, represents a possibility to take it out of the quagmire.

But our Church has to let go of its atavisms and open its doors.

The Catholic Church became stagnated in the Middle Ages.

Many men and women are turning their back on it: they don't believe in its teachings anymore: they consider them obsolete, meaningless.

These deserters have turned their eyes towards meditation and other spiritual practices (mostly of Eastern style) to fulfill their longing for a sense of spiritual belonging that their own religious community, flawed and empty of proposals in accordance with their wishes, doesn't offer them anymore.⁸⁰

Every day more Catholic priests incorporate Buddhist teachings to their sermons and writings.

Aren't these red flags sufficient to convince us, to convince the high Catholic hierarchies, of the need to rethink the Catholic principles in the light of the modern man, of sciences, of neuroscience, of the new visions of the cosmos and the universe, and of innovative proposals such as Kazantzakis'?

The soul of modern man has become larger.

It doesn't fit in the old molds anymore.

The heart of modern man (a lot more and better informed than that of his ancestors) today is filled with new distresses, new glares and new silences.⁸¹

It requires new approaches.

The heart of modern man requires an impetuous language that doesn't reek of antiquity.

Our time is devoid of exemplary individuals and trajectories.

Paradoxically (or perhaps consequently) it is also a time avid for dignity and spiritual search.

Globalization is not only an economic and technological phenomenon.

It is also a religious and spiritual phenomenon which pesters the Western religions.

It can't be denied. In the West, today the Dalai Lama is more popular than Pope Ratzinger.

In contrast to the believers of the middle ages, the believers of the 21st Century don't bring their religious scruples to the confessional.

Now they want to fill their existential vacuum.

They are looking for a new spirituality capable of redeeming them, and they are not searching it in confessionals nor in the benches of Catholic churches, but on meditation pads and in oriental readings.

Today, Kazantzakis has many things to provide the Catholic Church and God himself.

His proposals, stemming from Christianity and tinged with Buddhism, transcend the common religious stereotypes and reassess radically the concept of divinity.

Kazantzakis' mystic waters are fit to find the true God, to rethink our traditional religious teachings and make them to measure and height of the 21st century believers.

The Greek writer reinterprets the earliest Christian Myths (including that of Jesus), restoring their original vitality and making them meaningful for the men and women of modernity.

Kazantzakis' central proposal deals with action.

For him, the productive (or creative) life redeems and deifies us because it assumes the collaboration between man and God to improve the world.

God is both the terrible power and the darkness of the forces pounding inside and outside man...

He is in politics, in daily life, everywhere...

God is imperiled.

But He is not almighty, that we may cross our hands, waiting for certain victory.

God is only saved if we, men, save Him; if we transmute in facts everything we say.

God needs man to get out of matter.

For his part, man only has access to God as of a creative life, productivity.⁸²

Men and women, says Kazantzakis, we only fulfill ourselves humanely through our creative acts.

And he adds: when we fulfill ourselves that way, we also save God.

Hence the sacredness of his proposal.

Hence the sacredness of action.

Some time ago, the Catholic Church used to teach us how to live, knowing that we would obey it.

The serious flaws of its ministers and the lack of evolution of its dogmas and beliefs have caused the erosion of its authority.

Its mandates have only a scarce influence (if any) in our decision-making process.

Kazantzakis suggests us an ideal way of living that makes sense in the current context.

He illustrates it recreating the life of men such as Saint Francis, who is for him:

... a prototype of the militant man who, with his constant and arduous struggle, fulfills the maximum duty of man...

A duty greater than morality...

A duty greater than truth...

A duty even greater than beauty...

That duty is: to transubstantiate (transform) the matter God entrusted us and convert it into spirit.⁸³

Kazantzakis recreates the dogmas of his time immodestly and freely, and he turns upside down the ancient Christian myths.

He conceives God as a fragile being who struggles to set himself free from the matter and reach the light.

He doesn't believe anymore in an almighty God, eager to discover the mistakes committed by his ungrateful creatures and punish them, as Yahweh and God the Father used to do it.⁸⁴

According to Kazantzakis, God is fragile.

God cannot get on alone.

He needs men to survive.

He's neither ruthless nor incomprehensible.

He's only creation, continuous creation.

He's action.

He's freedom.⁸⁵

Kazantzakis ventures a daring definition of God that he conceived after a physical and mental lengthy pilgrimage, and that he uses to support his proposals...

God is not omnipotent...

God is imperiled...

Only the creative achievements of men can save God.

Only if God survives, man survives (the Greek author emphatically reiterates).

We must fight together with God and against Him to save the world.

No other thinker has stated with such greatness the anguish of the human destiny, nor has lived it with a more tragic intensity.

No other thinker has a proposal he could use to attract us to be part of a lineage of human beings of divine stature.

Postmodern men and women—thirsty for a new spirituality, a new conception of divinity and a new way of living—cannot identify themselves but with the Saviors of God.

The Saviors of God are men and women who choose to bravely face the void and to waste away with the presence and the silence of God, of the Ineffable, of the mystery.

Men and women torn apart by the world's injustices and suffering, walking through life without fear or hope, fulfilling their human destiny and tussling with God.

Men and women freed from the hell of their ego, who feel personally the pangs of hunger when a child has nothing to eat and who weep with joy when a man and woman hug and kiss.⁸⁶

The life and actions of the Saviors of God show us the scope of the human being *spiritualizer* effort: what he can do when he decides to reach the unattainable and he tenses his soul to achieve it, as a bow about to break.⁸⁷

Kazantzakis' Saviors of God exemplify how a human being submitted to the worst trials inflicted by his time can keep his strength intact.

For them, the only path worthy of being called human is the one travelled while transforming matter into spirit, tussling with the Unfathomable, acting always in keeping with the signs of the times.

As Samuel did when he tussled with Yahweh: he refused to go where He was sending him, but wings appeared on his feet and thus he had to admit that his fate was inescapable.⁸⁸

Kazantzakis exposes his proposals using the vehement language of a lover of Infinity, of Unfathomable: a man who dares to confess without modesty his *desire to join the invisible*

*through the ideas and the bodies.*⁸⁹

In that poetic, almost mystical, language lies precisely his overwhelming strength and his appeal to those men and women eager for meaning and tired of a worn religious language lacking any future.

His emphasis is on action; always in action:

If you're a farmer, cultivate the land, help it to bear its fruit.

God screams from inside the seed.

Set Him free.

You won't save yourself if you don't free Him first...

If you're a man of letters, fight in the head.

Destroy the old ideas and create new ones.

God is trapped in every idea.

Shake it to set Him free.

*Provide God a roomier idea so He can live in it.*⁹⁰

A stone gets saved if we rescue it from mud and we build a house with it.

*Let's help it to be saved.*⁹¹

We might have given Him any other name: Abyss, Mystery, Absolute Darkness, Absolute Light, Matter, Spirit, Ultimate Hope, Ultimate Despair, Silence, explains Kazantzakis.

But we have named it God because only this name, for primordial reasons, can stir our hearts profoundly. And this deeply felt emotion is indispensable if we are to touch, body with body, the dread essence beyond logic.⁹²

For Kazantzakis, the call of God is always an inhuman, tremendous, extreme call.

It's a call for us to dare to transform flesh and blood into spirit, into works.

To stop being normal; even to be neurotic in order to be who we really are.

A desperate call to transcend the ego and even prosperity in order to reach a spiritually oriented life.

To go further, always further.

To stop being lenient.

It is the call to the spiritual radicalism advocated by Jesus, that has seduced thousands of men and women throughout history.

Jesus, the leading character of *The Last Temptation* (perhaps Kazantzakis most popular book), is a Savior of God who fights as only a madman fights to reach his destiny:

He fights against normality...

He fights to transcend the principle of pleasure...

... to be unhappy, to be even neurotic in order to become himself, to be who he is even though he is compelled to do heinous things in the eyes of others.

That's the way Jesus fights, despite Rabbi Simeon, who, along with some of his friends, strives to "heal" his maladjustment appealing to the lack of sexuality, very much in the Freudian style. *That's what happens to those who don't get married and seek to save the world resorting to a hook or to shameless things. Their sperm reaches their head and affects their brain.*⁹³

Such unorthodox approach is present in Kazantzakis' radical response to the coolness of the current Catholic demands and standards.

No other thinker has stated with such greatness man's anguish to fulfill his real destiny.

No other has lived it with a more tragic intensity.

If only I could not die before proving that I am worthy of transmuting everything I say into

actions, into work!

Because that has been my greatest ambition:

To leave nothing of myself that Death might take away.

*Only a few bones.*⁹⁴

Few writers have done so much for Christianity as Kazantzakis.

Paradoxically, Catholics demonize his ideas and reject his writings, as they did with Scorsese's film *The Last Temptation*, his masterpiece.

Why the Catholic Church doesn't redefine God and his proposals based on visionary proposals as those of Kazantzakis or on the Theologies of Liberation or Feminist?

It's a question for which, at least I, cannot find any other answer than the stubbornness and the stubborn persistence in the dark ages with the aim of preserve prebends.

Final antiphon

I cannot lie to you (indeed, what for?)... the persistent ruminating in the chapters of this book is the outcome of my desire for immortality, my desire to live forever, and I only understand immortality as of God, Kazantzakis's God, the God present (not a necrophiliac God such as God the Father).

So corrupt is that word, and so many are the atrocities committed in his name and the misuse of it by his representatives, that maybe I shouldn't have called Him God but Abyss, Supreme Mystery, the Ineffable, Despair, or Silence.

Or perhaps also the Unknown, the Elusive, what is there and I cannot breach, Immortality...

I called Him God because that name is the only one which still shakes my heart deeply and I cannot get rid of that emotion: I need it to get close, beyond any logic, to the terrifying essence of the universe; to that essence that affected me deeply at birth and has not ceased to affect me since then.⁹⁵

I need God... because the cosmos intrigues me; its secrets seduce and defy me.

One thousand lives are not enough to discover them and I want to believe that someday I will unveil them.

I need Him to reproach Him for the suffering of man and to argue with Him...

... to avoid falling into the most outrageous narcissism or into the most servile and degrading idolatry.

I refuse to accept the eternal disappearance of my mother, my father, my sister, my brother, my nephew and all those people who I loved and I still love; those who I should have loved and I couldn't...

I don't accept that they are gone forever and that I will never see them again...

I want to talk to them, again... there are so many things of their lives, their expectations, their thoughts that I don't know...

Inside of me there's a need for Infinity, for Absolute against all evidence, of all reason...

Everything here remains incomplete, unfinished...

As Unamuno says in *The Tragic Sense of Life*, if there's no life after life, if there's no eternity, if we are not immortal, if we cannot ever know it all, then we are making this to be an injustice...

I appeal to Kierkegaard and like Abraham, his knight of faith,⁹⁶ I expect that the impossible will happen and, against all the logic and all the world's brainwaves, at the end of times I will see the present God, the living God...

For now, I'm satisfied for having unmasked (even to the smallest extent)...

... the usurpers of God...

... those who prostitute his name...

... his murderers...

... all of those who demand of others, under the penalty of eternal damnation, schizophrenic attitudes such as believing in a God accomplice for crimes such as those committed in Rwanda, Sierra Leona, by the Inquisition.

... those who require us to venerate, unquestioningly, that "good and loving" God who was capable of crucifying his son for evil acts he (his son) didn't commit.

I keep a proposal (for now): Attention is the essence of that fragile God who whispers in our ear and who needs us to improve the world because... He definitely cannot alone.

To fulfill without further ado the mandates of the Catholic Church (or of any other similar ecclesial authority), to blindly accept their definition of God... is to act as the caterpillar that, to protect itself from uncertainties and harshness of life, wrapped itself in an impenetrable cocoon, only to realize, when it was about to die, that such cocoon also prevented it from becoming a butterfly.

The Bible was my reference to write this book.

Finally, I borrow a few words from Jeremiah the Prophet and I convey them to you, adorned:

You have seduced me, Yahweh. I am seduced.

You have raped me with love and I am in love.

Before I used to say: I'm not going to think about God,

Never again I will pronounce his name."

Then you appeared like a burning fire in my heart.

You trapped my bones.

The effort to resist you wearied me.

I couldn't stand it.

I gave up.

Then I knew it: my parents' teachings were equivocal.

You can't do it all.

I felt compassion...

I realized that you need me.

I'm part of your gerunds and... here I am.⁹⁷

My rumination is over (at least for the time being).

Let us go in peace.

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