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## **Efflorescence of Relationships in Christ – Theological Fundament and Resonating Prospect**

### **Abstract**

The aim of the paper is to examine the potency contained in the mystery of Christ as Alpha and Omega of human history. The issue will be viewed through the prism of *accidental encounters*, etc. that is, those which in our earthly life have no visible importance or continuation. It is striking that our life largely consists of such contacts: thousands of people passing by every day seem to be accidental, “non-productive” and not important. *Broken relationships* belong to the same set as well. Thus, the real question is whether they have any deeper meaning or not. I will try to argue, by reference to spiritual theology, that life in Christ brings a real answer to this question. The apparently accidental encounters become, subsequently, *relationships flourishing* in Christ, on the basis that He is the one spiritual principle of all believers and the Head of the Mystical Body of the Church. In Him, our particular present encounters are purified and come into perfection to the state when they will appear as true and everlasting relationships. A man who is overlooked now turns out to be a real co-author of my eternal happiness. Although this sense will fully be realised in heaven, it can now be experienced by hope and the contemplation of the neighbour in God.

### **Keywords**

Christ, man, encounter, relationship, principle, mutual penetration in love, Mystical Body of Christ, contemplation

## 1. Introduction—Problem of Accidental Encounters and Broken Relationships

The starting point of this consideration may be a daily observation of interpersonal encounters. It is a striking phenomenon that a vast majority of them are contacts with no continuation. It regularly happens that people pass by one another on the streets, at marketplaces, in shops. Sometimes such contacts leave behind some ephemeral impression, but do not result in something permanent. It is worth noting that they are non-productive for an economic prospect. We waste much time on small facts which are not capitalised and do not support our business, despite claiming a butterfly effect. Here, they are proposed to be named *encounters* as not turning into *relationships*.

Making every contact a true relationship seems to be impossible, allowing for a scale of daily encounters, amounts of residents and population density. A man, even if he is fully aware of the worth of interpersonal life, remains a contingent being. In his present condition, he is unable to treat each encounter as a relationship. Only a limited number of persons could be entered into his horizon of closest bonds. Thus, the term *encounter* is supplemented by the adjective *accidental*. The truth that immensity of facts is accidental or beyond the mainstream of life points out that a man cannot embrace and permeate the whole reality he lives in.

In some respect, accidental encounters have something in common with *broken relationships*. It concerns those bonds which, having taken a form of an authentic relationship, were, for some reason, terminated. Numerous cases of acquaintanceship or even friendship could serve as examples. On the one hand, they really influenced a person, while encounters did not; but on the other hand, they all have no actual continuity. Generally speaking, true relationships are distinguished by the traits of permanency and actual interpersonal “content”.

The weakness in accidental encounters and broken relationships is deepened by a post-modern tendency to atomise a man from the society and to build up an individualistic sphere of comfort and career.<sup>1</sup> The post-modern (or even post post-modern) time is characterised by a crisis of deep relationships which

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<sup>1</sup> Z. Sareło, *Postmodernistyczny styl myślenia i życia*, in: Z. Sareło (ed.), *Postmodernizm—wyzwanie dla chrześcijaństwa*, Poznań 1955, wyd. Pallotinum, pp. 9–27; P. Góralczyk, *Życie na próbę*, in: Z. Sareło (ed.), *Postmodernizm—wyzwanie dla chrześcijaństwa*, Poznań 1995, wyd. Pallotinum, pp. 52–59; A. Vasiliauskaite (sr. Gabriele OSB), S. Blinstrubis,

imply full personal involvement. A significant criterion for such a relationship, namely potency to friendship or to sacrifice life for the sake of the other, is often deteriorated. Focused upon himself, a man does not recognise and trust the relational truth of his life. His environment consists of fluxional bonds with partners at work and home. It is reflected in speech when the words “wife” or “husband” are replaced by the word “partner”. Relativization of truth and concepts undermines the meaning of love, though the man did not cease looking for some kind of experiencing love, but on his own condition. Here, the role of sin, which destroys unity amongst people, should be mentioned.<sup>2</sup>

The question is whether or not accidental encounters or similar cases (for example, broken relationships) develop and could elicit some further meaning. Although not undertaken too often, the question seems to be substantial for understanding the full meaning of social life. The response will be expressed in terms of spiritual theology by reference to the Bible, the Magisterium of the Church and to meaningful authors from the Doctors of the Church to Thomas Merton. The presentation will be followed by the comparison with some context of contemporary humanistic science (Rosa’s theory of resonance) in order to indicate a field of possible inspirations and collaboration. The conviction that this attempt could contribute to the personalistic thought should be raised.

The responsive explanation culminates in the proposed term *efflorescence of relationships* (and such like) which represents the rich Church tradition in its pursuit of dialogue with contemporary men. It is some fruit of the international conference *Religion and Flourishing Man*<sup>3</sup>, undertaking questions of man’s religious development in the face of contemporary advancement. The term *efflorescence* seems to be a convenient proposal also for its meaning of continuity and dynamic progress which juxtaposes accidentality and limitations of temporal interpersonal experience.

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*The Anthropological Crisis of the XXI Century: The Expression and the Church’s Response to Its Forms in Catholic Schools*, “The Person and the Challenges” 12 (2022) 2, pp. 73–79.

<sup>2</sup> Benedict XVI, *Encyclical Letter Spe Salvi*, 14, [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20071130\\_spe-salvi.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html) (01.05.2023).

<sup>3</sup> International Scientific Conference *Religion and Flourishing Man*, Krakow 10.05.2023, The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, <https://upjp2.edu.pl/konferencje-i-wydarzenia/international-scientific-conference-religion-and-flourishing-man-145.html> (22.05.2023).

## 2. The Answer—The Body of Christ in its Eschatological Efflorescence

The answer is suggested by spiritual theology which reflects the teaching of the Catholic Church. The proper locus is the reality of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, which represents a new quality of interconnections of her members. St. Paul gives an allegorical explanation: “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Cor 12,13)<sup>4</sup>, and reminds that the diversity of members has been intended by Christ for making one body. The figurative dialogue between the members shows their awareness of being newly-connected to one another through Christ. When the eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need you” (1 Cor 12:21), it means that the eye recognises the hand as something different, but simultaneously attached. However, the inter-connection exists on the grounds of the body, otherwise they find no reason to be referred to each other and then saying, “I do not need you”, is possible. Thus, a Christian recognises the neighbour for the sake of Christ, so that the whole perception of the member is rooted in the Head of the Body.

This kind of connection has been strikingly exposed by St. Augustine’s notion of loving a man for the sake of God. He says: “no one ought to love even himself for his own sake, but for the sake of Him who is the true object of enjoyment”. By the same token, the other is loved too: “no other man has a right to be angry if you love him too for God’s sake.”<sup>5</sup> The Church confirms, “we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God.”<sup>6</sup> Then, loving reception of the other is to be actualised not beyond Christ, but through Him. It constitutes the basis for the communication of the saints as it is stated by the Church: “Since all the faithful form one body, the good of each is communicated to the others.”<sup>7</sup> It means too that according to God’s intention, each member of the Church-body gives itself

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<sup>4</sup> All Biblical quotations and references according to *New American Bible Revised Edition* (NABRE), <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2012&version=NABRE> (18.05.2023).

<sup>5</sup> Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.21, <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/12021.htm> (16.04.2023).

<sup>6</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1822, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_\\_\\_P66.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P66.HTM) (16.04.2023).

<sup>7</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 947, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_\\_\\_P66.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P66.HTM) (16.04.2023).

to all others and receives their self-giving. In this state, accidental encounters as well as broken bonds are replaced by true relationships—the one possible case of full interpersonal *givenness*. Just as it is impossible to build a body out of accidental elements, not performing the bodily functions, it is the same with the Church, who cannot as such be composed of members remaining in loose dependency. The heavenly life is the inexhaustible and ever-flowing well-spring of mutual communion.<sup>8</sup>

In his personal life, Thomas Merton betokens this truth. One day in 1958 at the corner of Fourth and Walnut streets in Louisville, he immediately realised that the people were his and he was theirs and even if all people are complete strangers, there is no reason for strangeness among them anymore.<sup>9</sup> He perceives them in the depth of personal identity, far beyond sin, desire or self-knowledge,<sup>10</sup> that is in the heart, as it is taught by the Church.<sup>11</sup> He sees them in the core of their real being that means as they are, as persons, in the eyes of God.<sup>12</sup> Such a kind of perception evokes the patristic idea of *theoria physike*, which signifies reaching to the real essence of each being (*logos*) as good participating in the mystery of the Incarnation. It enables a man to see and to love Christ both in himself and others.<sup>13</sup> This specific perception, being motivated by supernatural empowering, promises some potency of faith and love which will be perfected in a future life.

Rooted in above experience, Merton's apprehension of interpersonal bonds<sup>14</sup> shows the perspective of a new status of men in Christ's love. He pictures the vision of penetration in love:

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<sup>8</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1045, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_\\_\\_P66.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P66.HTM) (16.04.2023).

<sup>9</sup> T. Merton, *Zapiski współwinnego widza*, trans. Z. Ławrynowicz et al. Poznań 1994, wyd. Dom Wydawniczy REBIS, pp. 222–223.

<sup>10</sup> J. Forest, *Tomasza Mertona życie z mądrością. Biografia*, trans. J. Margański, Bydgoszcz 1997, wyd. Wydawnictwo Homini, p. 164.

<sup>11</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2563, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_\\_\\_P66.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P66.HTM) (16.04.2023).

<sup>12</sup> T. Merton, *Zapiski współwinnego widza*, trans. Z. Ławrynowicz et al. Poznań 1994, wyd. Dom Wydawniczy REBIS, pp. 224–225.

<sup>13</sup> T. Merton, *Mistyka chrześcijańska. Trzydzieści spotkań ze słynnym trapistą*, trans. G. Gomola et al., Poznań 2019, wyd. Wydawnictwo W drodze, pp. 116–117.

<sup>14</sup> J. Forest, *Tomasza Mertona życie z mądrością. Biografia*, trans. J. Margański. Bydgoszcz 1997, wyd. Wydawnictwo Homini, p. 165.

“My true personality will be fulfilled in the Mystical Christ in this one way above all, that through me, Christ and His Spirit will be able to love you and all men and God the Father in a way that would be possible in no one else.

Love comes out of God and gathers us to God in order to pour itself back into God through all of us and bring us all back to Him on the tide of His own infinite mercy.”<sup>15</sup>

The first crucial observation is that a human person finds his or her fulfilment just in the Mystical Body of Christ (the Church). Furthermore, its *bodily* unity consists in the fact that each individual is like a unique channel through which God’s love flows. This status is reflected by the motif of pouring love through men. Here, the individuality of a person has been stressed, since one man cannot be replaced by another. Every individual is intended to participate in this stream of love pouring through all people. It means that God’s way of love, the love of the Three Divine Persons, underlies this kind of multi-channelled permeation. However, this love operates not only with separated individuals, but gathers them in unity on the basis of their participation in one and the same love. The movement of love is reported by its function of gathering people and uniting them with God, by virtue of the fact that the same stream goes through all of them. *Nota bene*, “through” supposes that the stream stirs what is most intimate in a human being—the heart or true self.<sup>16</sup> As a result, individuals, still preserving their personal identity, are included in a new situation and are inter-connected not by their own mutual sympathy or similar efforts, but a supernatural principle of love.

Here arises the question of whether men communicate with one another or they are simply God-centred. The mutual communication, which is taught by the Church,<sup>17</sup> is expressed by Merton when saying, “Because God’s love is in me, it can come to you from a different and special direction that would be closed if He did not live in me, and because His love is in you, it can come to me from a quarter from which it would not otherwise come.”<sup>18</sup> Wagner reminds that

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<sup>15</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 67.

<sup>16</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 947, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_\\_\\_P66.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P66.HTM) (16.04.2023).

<sup>18</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 67.

the union in Christ *has to mean*, being with one another among those who form the Body of Christ.<sup>19</sup> Thus, God's love enables a man to be communicated to others in a new way of supernatural love. God's intention lies in opening a new reference of a man to God and others. This is why talking about flowering of relationships is possible.

An interesting clue is derived by Pope St. Leo, the Great. He emphasises the strictness of the unity between Christ (the Head) and people (the Body): "The head cannot be separated from the members, nor the members from the head"<sup>20</sup> It supposes that there is one life of the whole Mystical Body and one's separateness has not been retained anymore. The Pope points out to the biblical formula motivating that new state: "Not in this life, it is true, but only in eternity will God be all in all"<sup>21</sup> The expression "God is all in all", referring to the line 1 Cor 15, 28, where everything is eternally subjected to Christ and Christ to His Father, clearly outlines that relationships of the saints are simply identical to the life of God and therefore they must efflorescence. "All in all," means that my ability to meet (part of my "all") and also yours will be in some sense the same "all" which is Christ's life in us both. "All" also implies that nobody and nothing is excluded from the common life and that accidentality and transiency are not possible anymore; (there is no other "all") since they are *supplanted* by the oneness of life in God. Both, St. Leo and St. Paul predicate that it will be effectuated in heaven, however, in temporality Christ in His Body is already present and working.

### 3. One Principle—Mutual Penetration in Love

Spiritual theology contributes to the issue with the idea of *one principle* and *one love* in the life of saints. The spiritual perfection consists in the fact that Christ becomes one principle of human life. Then, the formula "all in all" is explained by the notion of the one principle. Its first element is that within the perfect union in heaven, a human person along with its contingent nature, is not

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<sup>19</sup> H. Wagner, *Dogmatyka*, trans. J. Zychowicz, Kraków 2007, wyd. Wydawnictwo WAM, p. 490.

<sup>20</sup> Saint Leo the Great, *A sermon 12 on the Passion*, 3,6. <https://universalis.com/20230419/readings.htm> (21.04.2023).

<sup>21</sup> Saint Leo the Great, *A sermon 12 on the Passion*, 3,6. <https://universalis.com/20230419/readings.htm> (21.04.2023).

removed in the ontological sense.<sup>22</sup> Preserving personal uniqueness assures that nobody will be deprived of his or her most personal life along with its relationality. Secondly, it is stated that in moral sense, a man and God become one: “Morally speaking he [a man] is annihilated, because the source and agent and term of all his acts is God.”<sup>23</sup> The truth that this is God, who becomes a principle of human life, replacing there a human person, procures its explanation provided by Garrigou-Lagrange. He stresses that the divine charity aims to make the moral unification of man and God: “It is characteristic of ardent love to transform us morally into the person loved who is like another self, alter ego.”

Furthermore, he portrays a soul who deliberately allows God to be her principle: “[...] holy souls wish Him to reign ever more profoundly in them, to be closer to them than they are to themselves [...]”<sup>24</sup> Then, God becomes the real principle, the source of human acts, so that the whole life is divine. Like a piece of wood does not act anything beyond the fire it is put into, then a man does not perform anything different from God’s life, but all his life consists in sharing the properties of God’s nature.<sup>25</sup> God identifies a life of a creature with His own life, so that it can be described as “God living in God.”<sup>26</sup> There is no human initiative excluded from the unity, but the whole personal life lies in God’s ardent love. A human freedom is indistinguishable from divine, and human love is also identified with God’s love so that they are one.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, God becomes closer to a man than the man was to himself before.

It is not only the individual who participates in this transforming union, but all the saints, on the same basis. It shows how deep and consistent this interconnection in Christ is. Governed by Christ (the Head), each person works with

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 282; R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life. Prelude of Eternal Life*, trans. T. Doyle, Rockford Illinois 1989, wyd. Tan Books And Publishers, vol. II., pp. 531–532.

<sup>23</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 286.

<sup>24</sup> R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life. Prelude of Eternal Life*, trans. T. Doyle, Rockford Illinois 1989, wyd. Tan Books And Publishers, vol. II., pp. 531–532.

<sup>25</sup> R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life. Prelude of Eternal Life*, trans. T. Doyle, Rockford Illinois 1989, wyd. Tan Books And Publishers, vol. II., pp. 530.

<sup>26</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 284.

<sup>27</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 282–283.



His power and therefore recognises the other as Christ does. By virtue of participation a man gains divine power to glorify God through others: “His freedom is found in dependence upon God through another.”<sup>28</sup> Having been planted in the will of God, human attitudes may now blossom into perfect relationships.

Among numerous descriptions of the eternal life, St. Petrus Damiani underlines its substantial aspects:

“Qui scientem cuncta sciunt, quid nescire nequeunt  
Nam et pectoris arcana penetrant alterutrum;  
Unum volunt, unum nolunt, unitas est mentium.

Licet cuique sit diversum pro labore meritum,  
Caritas hoc suum facit, quod amat in altero;  
Proprium sic singulorum commune fit omnium.”<sup>29</sup>

“Those who know the Omniscient cannot not to know anything,  
They mutually penetrate their intentions of heart;  
They want and do not want the same, there is unity of minds.

Though each one gains a different merit for his labour,  
The charity makes his own what he loves in the other;  
And what is of his own becomes common for all.”<sup>30</sup>

The first point is that by participation in God’s knowledge, the saints know everything, including the other’s heart. Even the inmost and intimate reality is perfectly shared, in imitation of God to whose eyes everything is naked and exposed (Heb 4,13). In addition to this, their wills are harmonised, so that they aim at the same goal. In the second stanza, the singular look shows that the proper worth of someone is interchanged with others. By dint of love what has been contributed by the other becomes mine. The uniting power of love does not keep anything as separated, but shared. Because I love you and you love me, all mine is perfectly yours and all yours is totally mine. And because I love everybody and everybody loves me, all mine belongs to them and all theirs belongs to me. Then, it is easy to put in this context a temporal case of an accidental encounter or a broken relationship in order to see how radically it is

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<sup>28</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 265.

<sup>29</sup> Saint Petrus Damiani. *Hymnus de gaudio paradisi*, 13–14, in: Z. Kadłubek, *Rajska radość. Święty Piotr Damiani*, <http://www.mediewistyka.pl/content/view/68/40/> (26.04.2023).

<sup>30</sup> Trans. M. Godawa.

transformed in heaven. A man whom I am passing by or, I do no longer contact anymore, will be lovingly penetrated by me and I will be known by him. Then we will be returned to one another in the way that is impossible on earth.

This perspective allows us to better understand the New Testament's prospect of the full development of a human. In *Paul's Letter to the Ephesians* diversity of Christian ways of life is included in building up the new reality of the Body of Christ (Eph 4,11–12). The point is to share the knowledge of Christ and to gain "mature manhood" which consists in having "the extent of the full stature of Christ" (Eph 4,13). Thus, the "mature manhood" means that as united with Christ and just like Him, a man will fully be recognising the other. When Christ is all in all, there is no reason to keep anything in secret, but reversely everything is an additional way of expressing God's glory and prompting common joy.<sup>31</sup> Some radical purification and transformation is required in order to achieve this state of innocence when everybody may be naked before others (cf. Heb 4,13). It is obvious that this extent of sharing is attributed to eternal life which temporality prepares for. Thus, human spiritual life can be depicted as constant progress finding its fulfilment in a flourishing eternity. Indeed, the term "flourishing" deeply characterises this future status of a man with its new possibilities.

However, it should be added that the flourishing relationships, as steeped in God's infinity, will blossom with no limits. It will be, then, possible that a limited nature will participate in infinite love. It is suggested by the topos of reciprocal desire and saturation. Damiani has it, "Inhiantes semper edunt et edentes inhiant" — "When always desiring they eat and when eating they desire."<sup>32</sup> In the Bible the God's Wisdom analogically says of Herself: "Those who eat of me will hunger still, those who drink of me will thirst for more" (Sir 24, 21). It means that the heavenly saturation grows no end, because the more one has, the more he wants to have. Damiani's use of *participium praesens* combined with "semper" interestingly suggests how strictly both desire and saturation are one experience and therefore there is no saturation (limit) without further desire.

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<sup>31</sup> T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 67.

<sup>32</sup> Saint Petrus Damiani. *Hymnus de gaudio paradisi*, 16, in: Z. Kadłubek, *Rajska radość. Święty Piotr Damiani*, <http://www.mediewistyka.pl/content/view/68/40/> (26.04.2023).

One more testimony is provided by St. Catherine of Siena when she is praising the Holy Trinity: “[...] You, oh eternal Trinity, are a deep Sea, into which the deeper I enter the more I find, and the more I find the more I seek; the soul cannot be satiated in Your abyss, for she continually hungers after You, the eternal Trinity, desiring to see You with light in Your light.”<sup>33</sup>

The experience of God is limitless has been expressed by the figure of the fulfilment triggering a new desire and by the general statement that the infinity of God (“a deep Sea”, “eternal”, “abyss”) produces in a soul continual hunger after God. The union with God consists in never-ending exploration of His infinite nature. The awareness of Whom He is Himself reveals the feature of perpetual growth. And because God is so, the experience will have no termination. It has been suggested by the key words of another translation, used in *The Liturgy of Hours*: “never” (“I can never be satisfied”) and “ever” (“what I receive will ever leave me desiring more”).<sup>34</sup> It can be presumed that they refer to eternal life too. Precisely speaking, this hunger-saturation experience concerns God, but since He is the principle in His saints and since the Head cannot be separated from the Body, the ever-growing experience will be tasted interpersonally. Indeed, in eternity a man more and more intensively explores new dimensions of perfection.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4. Spiritual and Philosophical Suggestions

The idea of eternal relationships, as compared to Rosa’s notion of resonance, shows interesting references. The resonating ethical attitude is postulated as an effective answer to the problem of alienation (and aggression) stemming from acceleration in time.<sup>36</sup> In eternity, a man, as raised above time, is, by the same

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<sup>33</sup> Saint Catherine of Siena, *A Treatise of Obedience* part 11, in: *The Dialogue of the Seraphic Virgin Catherine of Siena*, trans. A. Thorold, London 1907, wyd. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/catherine/dialog.iv.v.xi.html> (22.05.2023).

<sup>34</sup> Saint Catherine of Siena, *On Divine Providence*, 167, <https://universalis.com/20230429/readings.htm> (30.04.2023).

<sup>35</sup> H. Wagner, *Dogmatyka*, trans. J. Zychowicz, Kraków 2007, wyd. Wydawnictwo WAM, p. 489; Cf. Grzegorz z Nyssy, *Życie Mojżesza*, trans. S. Kalinkowski, Kraków 2009, wyd. Wydawnictwo WAM, pp. 5–10.

<sup>36</sup> H. Rosa, *Alienation and Resonance. Two Modes of Experiencing Time?* International Congress on Time 21–23 November 2019, <https://timeworld2019.com/en/> (01.05.2023); Cf. B. Klun, 2022. *Rosov pojem resonance v dialogu s fenomenologijo*, „Bogoslovni vestnik” 82 (2022) 3, 535–546, pp. 536–539.

token, free from alienation which is produced by the disintegration of time levels (everyday, biographical and epochal). In the heavenly reality alienation cannot exist since all belong to all, preserving their own individuality.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the future mutual penetration in love and exchanging personal *givenness* represent an ideal of resonance. The state in which each saint makes other's value his own and gives his own values to be shared by the other, the state which is solely founded on the one principle of Christ's love (God is "all in all"), must be an authentic, living, tender and in perfect resonance. Its essential aspects<sup>38</sup> that are "affection" (being touched by somebody), "e-motion" (moving towards the other) and transformation of self, are effectuated. Also, unpredictability or non-engineerability of resonance meets an analogue in the fact that in the future controlling is replaced by the spontaneous freedom of love. The endless florescence elevates those relationships beyond the level of predictability and planning towards the mystery of life in God.

It should also be admitted that the heavenly interpersonal resonance transcending temporality is, thereby, a specific "mode of being in time", in Rosa's terms. In the Christian view, it still has influence upon temporality. The juxtaposition of temporal and eternal makes room for the notion of hope as a factor forming life in time. The guidance of hope allows us to live properly anticipating future happiness.<sup>39</sup> Just through its hopeful anticipation, the final resonance turns out to be a mode of being in time, so that it can be said that the eschatological interpersonal resonance resonates with temporality. Otherwise, the problem of alienation that is, disintegration of levels of time<sup>40</sup> cannot be ultimately solved. In general, spiritual life is said to be resonance of a man with God<sup>41</sup> which, after the present analysis, embraces interpersonal mutual penetration in love. It can be argued that from this perspective the sociological and philosophical

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<sup>37</sup> B. Klun, *Rosov pojem resonance v dialogu s fenomenologijo*, „Bogoslovni vestnik“ 82 (2022) 3, p. 539.

<sup>38</sup> H. Rosa, *Alienation and Resonance. Two Modes of Experiencing Time?* International Congress on Time 21–23 November 2019, <https://timeworld2019.com/en/> (01.05.2023).

<sup>39</sup> Benedict XVI, *Encyclical Letter Spe Salvi*, 4.10–12, [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20071130\\_spe-salvi.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html) (01.05.2023).

<sup>40</sup> H. Rosa, *Alienation and Resonance. Two Modes of Experiencing Time?* International Congress on Time 21–23 November 2019, <https://timeworld2019.com/en/> (01.05.2023).

<sup>41</sup> I. Platovnjak, T. Svetelj, *Ancient Greek and Christian Understanding of Contemplation in Terms of a Resonant Attitude Towards the World*, „Bogoslovni vestnik“ 82 (2022) 3, p. 624.

proposition of resonance may be perceived as the way to the ideal and that in this field a dialogue between theology and science may be fruitfully conducted.<sup>42</sup>

The notion of anticipating in hope connects the future reality with temporality and sheds light in which temporal experience should be perceived. Our encounters and broken relationships are, subsequently, considered as calling for their efflorescence. Among many indications prompted by this connection, a specific kind of contemplation is worth underlying. The general definition of contemplation: “a simple and loving knowledge of God and His works”<sup>43</sup> shows that God, as its felicitous *object*, is contemplated in unity with His creatures. It means a look at the other for the sake of God and the future perspective of flourishing relationships. Under circumstances of temporality, I recognise you as someone whose life will be penetrated by me and to whom I will be fully dedicated. Despite all failings of our meetings, I just now perceive you as my life in Christ.

It allows me to see the wholeness of your personal being and treat you with respect for the mystery that you are. The fact that your present appearance promises your future revelation, makes me humble and thankful. It prevents me from judging you (cf. Luc 6. 37), as well as from a patchy and harmful perception. Within my attitude, there is room for the hopeful anticipation for the full recognition of you. You are like the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey, of which only first fruit I have and which I am now perhaps afraid of (cf. Num 13, 23–29).

Then I receive you simply as you are, and not for the sake of my business. I ask “Who are you”, not “What could you give to me” and you are in my eyes a person: “Who”, not “what”. In this way, I share the essential meaning of contemplation.<sup>44</sup> It stimulates me to resist temptation to use you as an object of my lust or other sinful desire. If the perspective of our full mutual penetration in Christ emerges in my eyes, it makes me incapable of fostering an opposite way of doing.

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<sup>42</sup> Saint John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio*, 99. 104, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_14091998\\_fides-et-ratio.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html) (06.05.2023).

<sup>43</sup> R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life. Prelude of Eternal Life*, trans. T. Doyle, Rockford Illinois 1989, wyd. Tan Books And Publishers, vol. II., p. 310.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. T. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, New York 1961, wyd. A New Directions Book, 24th printing, p. 13.

The awareness of the fact that grace transforms us, constitutes the basis for overcoming bias and obstacles. In fact, they could speak to my own imperfectness and help me to open up myself to the truth of the Mystical Body of Christ. My question is: what can I do so as to become a full person, ready for sharing the life of mutual penetration of love in Christ. And this is my personal conversion, with which I am to be especially concerned.

The resonance of eternity with temporality makes forgiving easier and more reasonable. Saint Thomas More testifies to it when arguing that, in every case, the love for enemies is a reasonable solution. If after conversion they are in heaven, they live the same life with their bygone victims, like St. Stephen and St. Paul.<sup>45</sup> Otherwise, the persecutor's eternal condemnation is too hard to be additionally maligned by a victim. This kind of reflection is motivated by the light of eternity.<sup>46</sup>

It is clear that the hope is a necessary environment to live as an integrated and still flourishing person. Present incompleteness calls for perfection. However, this contemplation of the other is ushered into something absolutely fundamental. This is the contemplation of God, the source of every living. Therefore, the special meaning is ascribed to this kind of spiritual docility, by which a man is introduced into the infinite mystery of God's life.

Concluding, it can be argued that the problem of accidental encounters and broken relationships gains its solution in the reality of the eternal union of the saints with Christ. The fact that Christ is the only principle of their lives, constitutes a new state in which mutual penetration and interchanging in love takes place. The fact that every contact turns into a perfect and steady relationship can be named "a flourishing relationship". The term "flourishing" especially applies to the infinity of future life. This truth is ushered in the reality of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ and can be found in the Biblical revelation as well as in spiritual writings (Augustine, Damiani, Catherina of Siena, Leo the Great, Merton). In connection with some philosophical fields, the message of flourishing relationships should enliven the experience of hope being a mode

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<sup>45</sup> *The Life of Saint Thomas More c. 1556* by William Roper, pp. 54–55, <https://thomasmorestudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Roper.pdf> (24.05.2023).

<sup>46</sup> M. Godawa, *Joyful Transcendence in Christ. Preparation for Martyrdom in Saint Thomas More's Spiritual Experience*, in: J. Juhant, B. Žalec (eds.), *Understanding Genocide and Suicide*, Zürich 2015, wyd. LIT Verlag, pp. 138–139; Cf. Saint T. More, *A Godly Instruction [on How to Treat Those Who Wrong Us]*, <https://thomasmorestudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/A-Godly-Instruction-Modernized.pdf> (14.05.2023).

of (eternal) life resonating in time. It underlies the specific contemplation of the other as related to God. Then, the perception of the other regarding the future efflorescence (mutual penetration through Christ) shapes moral and spiritual attitudes. The eschatological status arises, thus, as a factor not alienated, but fundamental to live a temporal life.

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