

MAGNIFICAT EQUATION

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There exists for each passerby a theme, a melody that is his/hers and no one else's, who has sought it since birth and before all centuries, *pars, hereditas mea*. How, where to discern it?

– Cristina Campo, “Il flauto e il tappeto”

To emanate an effortless sound is to rise into the music inherent in each human being; our bodies are made by flash and a unique sound. Such experience is not a content of ourselves but the track of an inner composition of ourselves, a uniqueness that has its own components and the principle according to which such configuration emerges is what we actually call “music.” But music is nothing else than a proto-form of thought. An effortless sound reads the already existing and invites a different narrative on creation. The dominant narrative inscribes fatherhood from its origins in a spiritualized form. We know it from the *Book of Genesis* and a powerful process of spiritualization of human versus divine fatherhood that appears in the story of Abraham and Isaac. “And God tempted Abraham and said to him, take Isaac, your only son, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on a mountain that I shall show you.”¹ The way out from a biological reduction of the father-son relation coincides with the birth of faith. *Fear and Trembling* provides us with a cinematic description of that event. Abraham turns away from him for a moment, but when Isaac sees Abraham's face again, it has changed:

[H]is gaze was wild, his whole being was sheer terror. He seized Isaac by the chest, threw him to the ground, and

¹ Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), 10, citing Genesis 2:22.

said, "Stupid boy, do you think I am your father? I am an idolater. Do you think it is God's command? No, it is my desire." Then Isaac trembles and cries out in his anguish: "God in heaven, have mercy on me, if I have no father on earth, then you be my father!" But Abraham said softly "it is better that he believes me a monster than that he should lose his faith."²

And what if we do pose the question of spiritual motherhood? It requires to renarrate the story of the birth of faith from a female perspective. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God."³

This renarration transforms the relation between language, thinking and interiority. In biological punctuation from virginity to sterility, the *Annunciation* indicates thinking as a reversal into listening. The reversal is a womb, a homecoming of human beings as whole. To pose the question of the women within spiritual tradition is to pose the question of the wholeness of humanity, not as a totality based on the conceptual purification of the biological reference, but as an active intellectual and spiritual force that contrasts the historical reflux. But in history spiritual motherhood became too soon a middle term of identification between a woman and a mother. A reduction of the misleading biological relation neutralized the potential of an acoustic female body capable of holding the wholeness of mankind, not as a universalized anthropocentric view, but as differentiated acoustics held together by faith. The spiritual motherhood is all in listening.

Keeping one note what it does to your breath keeping one note what it does to your duty keeping one note what it does to your mortality keeping one note what it does to your responsibility keeping one note what it does to your desire keeping one note what it does to your understanding keeping one note what it does to your pain keeping one note what it does to your devotion keeping one note what it does to your need keeping one note what it does to your concentration keeping one note what it does to your (childhood) memories keeping one note what it does to your isolation keeping one note what it does to your doubt keeping one note what it does

² Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 11.

³ Luke 1:30.

to your decision keeping one note what it does to your attention
keeping one note what it does to your failure keeping one note what
it does your perseverance keeping one note what it does to your
perseverance keeping one note what it does to your perseverance
keeping one note what it does to your anger keeping one note what
it does to your recollection keeping one note what it does to your
trust keeping one note what it does to your endurance keeping one
note what it does to your exhaustion keeping one note what it does
to your reconciliation keeping one note what it does to your
difference keeping one note what it does to your regeneration
keeping one note what it does to your heartbeat keeping that note
what it does to your faith.

“Perhaps we do have a common ear, but voice is the unbearable condition of thinking. It’s a thought, in a manner of speaking, because after all it’s a pain, a tremendous pathos that is cast out in the voice. Man does not tolerate the inner truth. And therefore hers or his is a stutter, this stuttering in this voice, the same one that protrudes and says something that he or she does not tolerate. That’s why she or he doesn’t say it eloquently, saying it like a babble, like a moan. When you listen to a man, a woman, a child is all in her/his voice. We are one ear in the sense that my listening must help the other to listen to her or himself and have a space of tenderness towards this terrible groan, this pity that has just stammered. My listening should help the other person to listen and soften their gaze towards things that are not shit, that are pain. But for him or her these are unbearable. The voice is different, it’s not a *pensiero unico* or processing but voicing the thought of the difficulty one has with oneself, of the unbearable that always has flesh within us, what we think to be and would like to be or what we would like to be, but are not. The voice is really his or her because it is that shrill symphony that she or he succeeds in throwing out of him or herself. And what he or she thinks she or he is, and therefore to think of him or herself this thing that is so tiring: voice is what one thinks of oneself, the most harrowing pains, it’s a voice of tenderness. The other, in order to get to this, must learn to listen to it too and say: it’s pitiful, it’s really tender.”⁴

⁴ Paraphrased from a conversation with Maria Dell’Orto which took place in a monastery in northern Italy, 2012.

