

## Summary

### **The Renaissance of Theology of Beauty in the Light of the Science of Hans Urs von Balthasar.**

The work presents the concept of beauty in the writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar. The main source of this treatise was the Trilogy, Balthasar's life's work, which was the crowning achievement of his theological thought. The first part of the Trilogy is *Glory*. Theological aesthetics or reflection on beauty. Second, *Theodrama*, which refers to action, translates the category of magnificence into the greatness of God's involvement in the world and action in it. The third theology relating to the utterance of this action, beginning its reflection with the truth of the world, transfers the tension between subject and object to the level of truth as a mystery of God himself. This dissertation begins by presenting Balthasar's view of theological aesthetics in contemporary Catholic thought. The need to restore the value of beauty in the triad: *bonum-verum-pulchrum*. Every normal person longs for what transcends him and what is ontically permanent. It is a longing for God, because God is goodness, truth and eternal beauty. These three transcendentals cannot exist in isolation because they complement each other. Balthasar, writing about beauty, bends over the miracle of being. The epiphany of being was the assumption of God. The wonder of being is a constant principle of thought. Being as such and by itself amazes to the end, behaves like a miracle, strange and wonderful. . Biblical Revelation is founded on the source difference between God and man, that is, metaphysics, and shines forth from it. Metaphysics is suitably completed in the history of Revelation. Balthasar proposes a combination of metaphysics and historical events. Historical space must be perceived as an existing real being, and metaphysical space as being - what exists is universal. Jesus enters this historical space at a specific moment as man and Saviour of the world. God reveals Himself in the form of a created world. But it is only in Jesus that he fully reveals himself. Even the creation of the world can be the object of admiration, of the splendor of God the Creator. Creatures are only a preparation to receive the Son of God. In Christ, God bears his witness in a historical form that goes beyond man's expectations. Jesus is called the manifesting God, the icon of God, the form of God's revelation. The whole of His existence within the time that was destined for Him serves the self-manifestation of God. . The whole life of Christ is the revelation of the mystery of the eternal God. To turn the God of glory toward us is astonishing, it is a miracle of his love and goodness. This is the aesthetics of the Incarnation. The most perfect and beautiful image of God is God's Son – Jesus, whom the Father sent to earth out of love for man. The revelation of God in the form of Jesus is an image that we contemplate and imitate. Balthasar presents subjective obviousness and objective obviousness. The first refers to the human person and the personal faith of the Christian, to seeing the image of Jesus with the senses, the second to God and indicates the need for an objective form of Revelation. Christ is the way, the truth and the life for every human being. Balthasar does not present the image of Jesus as an image to be seen, but emphasizes the action of Jesus revealing His figure. The image referring to Revelation in Sacred Scripture is transmitted by the universal Church. The Church looks at this image ever anew and thus acquires a proper awareness of God's measure (*metron tou canonos* (2 Cor 10:13)) in relation to grace and mission. The Church and Sacred Scripture become a reality through the making of Christ present.

Throughout history, the image has been the subject of many theological disputes, which were reflected in Eastern and Western doctrines. The dispute over the paintings was part of the age-old Platonic-Aristotelian philosophical discussion. The reason was also the Old Testament prohibition against creating the image of God. The iconoclastic controversy was not just an aesthetic dispute. It touched the very core of the Christian faith, that is, the understanding of the Incarnation of Christ. The discussion on the icon of the Savior became a discussion on the interpretation of corporeality and human nature assumed in the hypostasis of God. The Catholic Church has referred to this issue in numerous documents, advocating the cult of images and the creativity of man striving for beauty through art. Christianity is not only a religion of words but also of images. Faith comes from hearing: *fides ex auditu* but also from seeing: *fides ex visu*. The Word made flesh is as seen as heard. This thought united earthly aesthetics and God's aesthetics. The concept of beauty has been interpreted in the history of thought in many ways. The characters chosen by Balthasar and their view of beauty and glory are an example of this. These are "theological models," as the author calls them, developed by theologians, philosophers, and writers who have written themselves down as aestheticians of God's greatness. Plato's philosophical critique of beauty becomes an aesthetic conception of transcendentals, which remains valid for Western culture as metaphysics. The Christian-theological critique of Western metaphysics arrives at a theological transcendental aesthetic. Theological aesthetics, going beyond metaphysics, demands a theory of perception (how can one perceive God's free salvific actions in the world?) and a theory of ecstasy (how can man transcend his metaphysical projects towards the project of a God who is completely free?). The contemplation of the image of Jesus is connected with the action of God. Balthasar presents the image as a form and the word as the content that fills this form. The word refers to the Eternal Son. The image is ambiguous. Under this term lies the mystery of Revelation, but also the transformation of man into the likeness of Christ, striving for perfection and the drama of following Christ.

Balthasar's aesthetics are closely connected with theodrama. Its theological aesthetics – the science of the beauty and glory of God is focused on two trends: it is the science of seeing the figure of God revealing Himself, and secondly, it deals with the Incarnation of God's glory and the exaltation of man called to participate in it. The first trend shows the image of Christ and the contemplation of the image and is called static, while the second as dynamic shows the cooperation of God and man and was presented by Balthasar as a drama. These currents complement each other.

Drama is an image of human existence who is searching for the meaning of life. Man's turning away from God who surrounds him with love gives rise to drama. God leaves man free to choose between good and evil. Just as Christ obeyed God, so man must find his freedom in obedience, being subject in imitation of Christ. The drama has a Christological meaning. The whole world is moving towards Christ, finding in him its lost splendor. The encounter between the Christian and the Beauty has consequences in the form of a mission, a mission to be carried out. He who once saw the Beauty of God has been marked. Divine eschatology provides for the continual communication of God the Creator to his creature in the pursuit of perfection and holiness of life. Man is not alone, because God, in his love and goodness, supports and cares for him. He sustains his creation in existence. The path to beauty is sustained by God's grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The *charis* of God is far more gracious, freely given, and transformative than any political-aesthetic man-made world of images might suggest. The association of beauty with love and holiness shows that it is by its nature a delightful perfection,

although its essence remains elusive because, belonging to the transcendental order, it transcends all the categories by which it is expressed. By participating in creation, he possesses the property of exalting himself above it.

Characteristic of Balthasar's thought is the proclamation of the beauty of the cross. Death on the cross becomes a glorification of obedience to God. The juxtaposition of glory and death, the degradation of the God-man and the scandal of the cross reveal in Balthasar's aesthetics the Christian depth of paradoxes. Jesus' teaching becomes understandable only in the perspective of the Cross. On the one hand, the cross contains the glory of God, on the other, Jesus' renunciation of the manifestation of divine dignity. In Christ's death, God opened his heart to men, and it is precisely in this death that it becomes possible to express God's love to the end. It is a love that surpasses all knowledge (Eph 3:19). On the Cross, the Word that is silent expresses itself in all its fullness. It is the fullness of the Father, to whom the Son obeys to the end. Christ renounces his word and manifests the Word of the Father: "the reflection of his glory and the reflection of his being".

The glory was revealed at the Annunciation of Jesus, at his birth, in his baptism, in every miracle, as the work of the Father which he accomplished in the Son, thus manifesting his own glory. The source of this glory was the special union of the Father with the Son. The manifestation of glory was the hour of Jesus' passion and death. The Son, obedient to the Father's will, consciously gave his life for the glory of God's Name. In this way the cross became a true exaltation or exaltation to glory. Just as the whole life of Jesus was directed towards full glory, so the entrance to glory should end the life of every Christian. We do not see Jesus physically, but by faith we see the glory that shone forth in the Savior's death on the cross. Glory, which is love and that transforms everything. Glory is stronger than death. All the events of salvation history, with the event of Christ in the first place, are intended to reveal to a truly free man that there is only one place of definitive fulfillment. Man's destiny is God. God created us for eternity. Hence, our life and our death are only episodes towards eternity. The consciousness of death creates human life, determines a certain way of life. The cross, which marks human power and cruelty, has no power over glory. The cross is an invitation to see the glory of God. It opens man to the beauty of the soul.

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