

EXPLORING A THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF HUMAN UNITY AND WHOLENESS IN DIALOGUE WITH NEUROSCIENCES: REVISITING THE VIENNE COUNCIL AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGIES

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ABSTRACT: Neurosciences are contributing to changing our understanding of human nature. Activities previously attributed to a spiritual, immaterial soul are now associated with the brain. This article presents a foundation to develop a theological and anthropological non-reductive monism that could integrate neuroscientific facts and contribute to the debates about the relation of body and soul. An analysis of the Council of Vienne's formula «*simul unitas*» allows its translation as «united as a complete total reality». This revision and a study of contemporary Christian anthropologies inspire some proposed theological concepts of dynamic, soteriological, relational, Christological, and eschatological unity.

KEY WORDS: Council of Vienne; Dualism; Human nature; Monism; Neurosciences; Peter John Olivi; Reductive materialism; Soul; Spirit; Theology of the body.

«Explorando un fundamento teológico de la unidad y la integridad humana en diálogo con las neurociencias: revisando el concilio de vienne y las antropologías cristianas contemporáneas»

RESUMEN: Las neurociencias están contribuyendo a cambiar nuestra comprensión de la naturaleza humana. Actividades que antes se atribuían a un alma espiritual e inmaterial ahora se asocian con el cerebro. Este artículo presenta las bases para desarrollar un monismo teológico y antropológico no reductivo que pueda integrar los hechos neurocientíficos y contribuir a los debates sobre la relación entre el cuerpo y el alma. Un análisis de la fórmula «*simul unitas*» del Concilio de Vienne permite traducirla como «unida como una realidad total y completa». Esta revisión y el estudio de las antropologías cristianas contemporáneas inspiran algunos de los conceptos teológicos propuestos: unidad dinámica, soteriológica, relacional, cristológica y escatológica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Concilio de Vienne; dualismo; naturaleza humana; monismo; neurociencias; Peter John Olivi; materialismo reductivo; alma; espíritu; teología del cuerpo

Neuroscientists make progress in their research by observing human behavior in a controlled environment and using non-invasive techniques with tools such as Electroencephalographs (EEGs), Computer Axial Tomography

(CAT), Magnetic Resonance Impedance (MRI), and Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI)¹. Recent neuroscientific discoveries attribute mental functions to the brain that were previously attributed to an immaterial soul by some philosophical and anthropological viewpoints². Neuroscientists generally agree on these facts regarding cognitive activities.

Conceptual symbolic thinking, including mathematics

Neuroimaging has provided evidence that there is a relation between conceptual knowledge and neural structures³. During conceptual and abstract processing, neural regions associated with sensory or motor functionality are activated⁴.

The processing of numbers involves activation in the prefrontal, intraparietal, and inferior parietal lobes⁵. When learning an arithmetic process, the prefrontal lobe is more activated, and performing arithmetic tasks already known involves greater activation of the inferior parietal lobe⁶. Applying electrical current to the posterior part of the parietal cortex has been found to affect arithmetic calculations positively⁷. In addition, injuries to the intraparietal cortex in the dominant hemisphere cause impairment of numerical calculation⁸.

Studies show that the experience of insight (*eureka*) —the form of cognition related to problem-solving, creativity, and conceptual reorganization— is the consummation of several brain states and neural processing in the right anterior temporal lobe and the right anterior superior-temporal gyrus. Moreover, the posterior (visual) cortex plays a role in preparing our insights⁹.

¹ Michael S. GAZZANIGA, Richard B. IVRY, and George R. MANGUN, *Cognitive Neuroscience: The Biology of the Mind*, 4th ed. (New York: Norton, 2014), 16-18, 644. Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Mind*. (New York: Vintage, 2010,) 16-17. Marc Jeannerod, *Le Cerveau intime*. (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2005), pp. 45-48.

² Nancey MURPHY, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 5, 56. Anna LESHINSKAYA and Alfonzo CARAMAZZA, «For a Cognitive Neuroscience of Concepts: Moving beyond the Grounding Issue», *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 23 (June 2016): 991-1001 at 992, 993, 996, 998-99, <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-015-0870-z>.

³ Anna LESHINSKAYA and Alfonzo CARAMAZZA, «For a Cognitive Neuroscience of Concepts: Moving beyond the Grounding Issue», *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 23 (2016) pp. 991-1001, at 992.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 993, 996, 998-999.

⁵ Stanislas DEHAENE, «Cerebral Bases of Number Processing and Calculation», in *The Cognitive Neurosciences*, ed. M. Gazzaniga, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), pp. 987-998, at 987 and 994. Nicky Hayes, *Tu cerebro y tú. Un manual sencillo de neuropsicología*. (Barcelona: Obelisco, 2019), pp. 216-217.

⁶ HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, p. 217.

⁷ HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, p. 219.

⁸ Stanislas DEHAENE, «Cerebral Bases of Number Processing and Calculation», p. 995.

⁹ John KOUNIOS and Mark BEEMAN, «The Aha! Moment: The Cognitive Neuroscience of Insight», *Current Direction of Psychological Science* 18 (2009), pp. 201-16, at 210, 212.

Researchers using fMRI have identified different cerebral regions activated during creative activities, such as generating and evaluating ideas, brainstorming for creative writing, sharing ideas, and exposure to original ideas¹⁰.

Memory depends on multiple neural systems and brain regions: medial temporal lobe, parietal cortex, prefrontal cortex, and temporal cortex, among others¹¹.

Planning and decision-making processes

In decision-making, the following regions are activated in a network: the frontal lobe, the medial prefrontal cortex, and the ventromedial prefrontal cortex¹².

The frontal lobe has considerable relevance in very complex cognitive processes like planning an action, organization of behavior in a social context, rational decisions, analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of an act, programming of future actions, application of social norms or standards, and thoughts and actions that have meaning and purpose¹³.

Damage in the prefrontal region produces a change in personality in reliable hard workers. After the lesion, they could no longer be reliable in work that required goal-oriented tasks, like financial planning¹⁴.

Moral evaluation and the role of emotions

The ventromedial prefrontal region in the frontal lobe triggers social emotions like sympathy, sadness, embarrassment, guilt, and despair¹⁵. All of them are important for social and ethical behavior.

Prefrontal damage patients disregard social conventions and ethical rules, lack empathy, and are not predisposed to help people¹⁶. This happens even when their intellectual capacities appear intact, and they can solve logical problems and remember social conventions and ethical norms they break¹⁷.

Young patients who suffered some injuries in the frontal lobe lack the emotions of sympathy, sadness, embarrassment, and guilt¹⁸. Moreover, they had severe problems learning social conventions and ethical rules¹⁹. Research

¹⁰ Sureyya YORUK and Mark RUNCO, «The Neuroscience of Divergence Thinking», *Activitas Nervosa Superior* 56 (2014), pp. 1-16.

¹¹ Gazzaniga, IVRY, and MANGUN, *Cognitive Neuroscience*, p. 422.

¹² HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, pp. 242-243.

¹³ HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, 166, 511. JEANNEROD, *Le Cerveau intime*, pp. 144-145, 147-148.

¹⁴ Antonio DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain*, New York: Harvest Book, 2003, p. 140.

¹⁵ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 61.

¹⁶ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 141.

¹⁷ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, pp. 143, 155.

¹⁸ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 61.

¹⁹ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 153.

shows that these feelings are essential to regulating personal life in society and making important decisions that require deliberation, such as choosing a career, getting married, or entering into relationships²⁰.

Electric current applied to specific regions produces a sudden experience of sadness connected to crying and sobbing in a patient with no history of depression and no immediate cause of sorrow²¹. Something analogous happened to a patient who received an electrical brain stimulation in the medial and dorsal prefrontal region (the supplementary motor area, SMA). The patient suddenly roared with laughter without any previous provocation²².

Brain damage in the ventromedial frontal lobe appears to block cooperative behavior in patients²³. Cooperative behaviors correlate to brain regions related to dopamine release and pleasure behavior²⁴.

The activation of the temporal lobe correlates with judgments about one's thoughts and behaviors or inferences about the thoughts and behaviors of others²⁵.

If a lesion occurs in the orbitofrontal cortex, the ability to judge what is right or wrong is lost²⁶. Moral repulsion, involving sociocultural perceptions of what is permissible, activates the same brain regions as physical repulsion²⁷.

Spiritual life and religious practice

Religious or mystical experiences are associated with the temporal cortex, amygdala, hippocampus, limbic system, superior parietal lobes, and temporo-parietal junction²⁸. Recent research shows that prayer experiences increase the activity of prefrontal areas and the right parietal region²⁹. Other experiments have shown that electromagnetic stimulation through the skull on the temporal

²⁰ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, pp. 140, 145, 177.

²¹ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 68.

²² DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, pp. 74-76.

²³ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 151.

²⁴ DAMASIO, *Looking for Spinoza*, p. 151.

²⁵ HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, p. 166.

²⁶ Michael S. GAZZANIGA, *Who's in charge? Free Will and the Science of the Brain*, New York: HarperCollins, 2011, p. 49.

²⁷ HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, p. 230.

²⁸ Michiel VAN ELK and André ALEMAN, «Brain mechanisms in religion and spirituality: An integrative predictive processing framework», *Neuroscience and Behavioral Review* 73 (December 2016): 359-378 at 360, 362-364, 366, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2016.12.031>. David H. ROSMARIN, Caroline C. KAUFMAN, Stephanie FRIREE FORD, Poorvi KESHAVA, Mia DRURY, Sean MINNS, Cheri MARMAROSH, Avijit CHOWDHURY, Matthew D. SACCHET, «The neuroscience of spirituality, religion, and mental health: A systematic review and synthesis», *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 156 (December 2022): 100-113 at 104, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2022.10.003>.

²⁹ VAN ELK and ALEMAN, «Brain mechanisms in religion and spirituality», 366. Francisco Rubia, *La conexión divina. La experiencia mística y la neurobiología*, Barcelona: Booket, 2014, p. 178.

region produces the sensation of a religious or divine presence in the subjects, even in agnostics³⁰. Spirituality (not necessarily church attendance) promotes vigorous cognitive self-control³¹.

Meditation, prayer, or relaxation techniques can help manage anxiety and increase activity in key areas of the brain, including the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, insula, and anterior cingulate cortex³². Engaging in religious or spiritual practices may have neurological effects that decrease the activation of areas associated with negative emotions and depression³³. This may explain the sense of peace, comfort, and unity that many individuals report after participating in such activities or having a religious experience.

Based on these facts, many neuroscientists and philosophers of mind uphold monism, i.e., they consider that the human being is one substance identified with the body³⁴. Many even question the existence of a soul independent of the body. According to Gerald Edelman, «There is no scientific evidence for a free-floating spirit or consciousness outside the body: consciousness is embodied»³⁵.

In the philosophy of mind, monism consists, in fact, of different positions united in the affirmation of a strong unity between the mind and matter. Proponents of material monism —also known as reductive physicalism, reductive materialism, or eliminative materialism— hold that human beings consist merely of material (in the sense of physical, chemical, biological, and neural) elements, processes, properties, and activities that obey the same scientific laws that govern all material realities³⁶. Mental properties and activities are identified as material realities. Proponents of non-reductive monism —also called non-reductive physicalism— state that cerebral structures and components are an evidently necessary basis but insufficient for the emergence of the mental (against reductive material monism)³⁷. For them, psychological

³⁰ RUBIA, *La conexión divina*, pp. 163, 176.

³¹ VAN ELK and ALEMAN, «Brain mechanisms in religion and spirituality», 371. Rosmarin, et al., «The neuroscience of spirituality, religion, and mental health», p. 110.

³² HAYES, *Tu cerebro y tú*, pp. 246-247.

³³ Craig E. TENKE, Jürgen KAYSER, Connie SVOB, Lisa MILLER, Jorge E. ALVARENGA, Karen ABRAHAM, Virginia WARNER, Priya WICKRAMARATNE, Mytna M. WEISSMAN, Gerard E. BRUDER, «Association of posterior EEG alpha with prioritization of religion or spirituality: A replication and extension at 20-year follow-up», *Biological Psychology* 124 (March 2017): 79-86 at 79, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsycho.2017.01.005>. Rosmarin, et al., «The neuroscience of spirituality, religion, and mental health», pp. 103-104.

³⁴ Nancey MURPHY, «Human Nature: Historical, Scientific, and Religious Issues», in *Whatever Happened to the Soul: Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature*, ed. Warren S. Brown, Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1998), p. 1.

³⁵ Gerald M. EDELMAN, *Wider than the Sky* (New York: Penguin, 2004), p. 5.

³⁶ Jaegwon KIM, *Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Westview Press, 2006), pp. 13-14, 30-31. Edward FESER, *Philosophy of Mind: A Beginner's Guide* (Oxford: One World, 2013), p. 51.

³⁷ Gerald M. EDELMAN, *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 34. KIM, *Philosophy of Mind*, p. 105.

properties are real, irreducible, and not identical to material properties³⁸. At the same time, non-reductive monists uphold a strong relationship between mental and material properties³⁹. Antonio Damasio, a well-known neuroscientist, affirms the following:

The truly embodied mind I envision ... does not relinquish its most refined levels of operation, those constituting its soul and spirit. From my perspective, it is just that soul and spirit, with all their dignity and human scale, are now complex and unique states of an organism⁴⁰.

In light of current research in neurosciences and debates in the philosophy of mind, how can we understand anew the relation between matter and spirit, body and soul in the human being? Can Christian theology develop an acceptable non-reductive monism that considers neuroscientific facts and provides specific contributions to present debates? What could be the foundations of such acceptance and development? Some theologians worry that assent to any form of anthropological monism would eliminate the spiritual aspect of the human being⁴¹. Others sustain that a non-reductive monism or dual-aspect monism is compatible with Christian belief⁴².

Several scholars have addressed these questions based on Biblical anthropology's notion of unity. This article will analyze the theological-anthropological concept of human unity and wholeness affirmed in the Council of Vienne to address these questions and concerns. We believe that the Council of Vienne's teaching, interpreted in dialogue with current scientific facts, grounds the possibility of developing a Christian non-reductive monism without losing the human person's spiritual dimension. The first part of the article presents the context that precedes the Council of Vienne. Then it analyzes the Council's teaching of human unity. Subsequently, there is a discussion of five different contemporary theological models of understanding the affirmation of the Vienne Council about human unity and wholeness. This section aims to identify which models could enable the integration of neuroscientific facts in a Christian non-reductive monism. Finally, we propose the concepts of dynamic, soteriological, Christological, and eschatological unity as explicit theological contributions to current anthropological debates related to the problem of human unity.

³⁸ KIM, *Philosophy of Mind*, 13-14, p. 290.

³⁹ KIM, p. 290.

⁴⁰ DAMASIO, *Descartes's Error*, p. 90.

⁴¹ Luis Maria GONZALO and Jose Luis VELAYOS, *Para pensar. Evolucionismo, mente y cerebro, genero, estres* (Navarra: Eunsa, 2010), 81, 145-51. Lluís OVIEDO, «Challenges to Theology», *Pensamiento* 67 (2011): 595-606 at 598, 602. Juan Luis RUIZ DE LA PEÑA, *Las nuevas antropologías. Un reto a la teología* (Santander: Sal Terrae, 1983), pp. 157-73, 220-21.

⁴² Malcolm JEEVES and Warren S. BROWN, *Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion: Illusions, Delusions, and Reality* (West Conshohocken: Templeton Foundation Press, 2009), 130-31. Murphy, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?*, pp. 17, 69, 72, 78.

1. PETER JOHN OLIVI'S CONCEPT OF THE UNION OF SOUL AND BODY

Peter John Olivi (1248-1298) was a Franciscan who developed certain aspects of anthropology that would trigger relevant doctrines in the Council of Vienne.

1.1. *Olivi's Distinction between Intellectual Soul and Body*

Olivi objected to the Aristotelian affirmation that the «intellective soul is the form of the body *per se* and considered as such»⁴³. Olivi's objective was to conceive the union between soul and body distinct from the relationship assigned by Aristotle and Aquinas. Although Olivi argues in favor of substantial unity, his notion of unity is weaker than Aquinas'. He follows the Franciscan tradition, influenced by Augustine, that maintained that the soul is the form of the body and an independent substance⁴⁴. This tradition appears in Olivi's affirmation that the soul is a spiritual reality that could live apart from the body without losing anything⁴⁵. However, according to him, the soul needs the body's senses to fulfill its actions.

Olivi explicitly opposed substantial dualism because all forms tend to exist in matter⁴⁶. To avoid substantial dualism, the Franciscan holds together two affirmations: (a) the soul is the form of the body, and (b) there is substantial unity in the human being⁴⁷. Nevertheless, his emphasis on the autonomy of the soul's intellectual operations and his importance in distinguishing the spiritual from the corporeal weakens the unity of soul and body.

When Olivi uses the formula «the soul is the form of the body», he is not referring to the intellectual soul⁴⁸. For him, the unity between soul and body occurs through the sensitive form, not the rational form⁴⁹. Olivi argues that there is a plurality of souls or parts of souls, i.e., vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual⁵⁰.

⁴³ Peter JOHN OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body. Questions on the Second Book of the Sentences, qu. 51». in *Basic Issues on Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Richard N. Bosley and Martin M. Tweedale, 2nd ed. (New York: Broadview, 2006): 736-754 at 738. Robert Pasnau, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 6 (September 1997): 109-32 at 110-11.

⁴⁴ Juhana TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses: Peter of John Olivi on the Cognitive Functions of the Sensitive Soul* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), p. 22.

⁴⁵ TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, p. 22.

⁴⁶ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», pp. 745-46.

⁴⁷ PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», 112-13. Paloma LLORENTE-MEGÍAS, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo» (PhD diss., Universitat de Barcelona, 2000), pp. 212, 214, <http://hdl.handle.net/10803/369560>.

⁴⁸ PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», pp. 112-13.

⁴⁹ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», 747. TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, 14. Luis LADARIA, «L'homme créé à l'image de Dieu», in *L'homme et son salut*, v.2, *Coll. Histoire des dogmes*, ed. V. GROSSI, L. LADARIA, P. LÉCRIVAIN and B. SESBOÜÉ, (Paris: Desclée, 1995): 89-147 at 137. Pasnau, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», pp. 112-13.

⁵⁰ PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», 112. LADARIA, «L'homme créé à l'image de Dieu», 137. TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, pp. 7-8.

Each part operates with relative autonomy and has its faculties and activities. Intellectual cognition and will are attributed to the intellectual soul and are specific to the human being⁵¹. The intellectual soul is a sublimed spiritual reality that cannot be attributed to bodily matter⁵². Even when Olivi affirms a substantial unity, he still conceives of a distinct ontological status between the intellectual soul and body⁵³.

1.2. *Olivi's Opposition to the Formula, «The Intellectual Soul Is the Form of the Body»*

For Olivi, the body's corporeal matter and power «could not produce a condition sufficient for immediately receiving an intellectual form and especially a free form»⁵⁴. In addition, the intellectual soul cannot be the form of the body because of various consequences that would ensue. One consequence is that having the intellectual soul as the form of the body would imply the presence of some corporeality or some bodily properties in the intellectual soul⁵⁵. Therefore, the soul will become mortal, extended, and without intelligence⁵⁶. For the Franciscan, this previous conclusion is impossible because the intellectual soul is simple, spiritual, without extension, and immortal.

Another consequence is that the body would perform intellectual activities because «every form shares with its matter some function and some power for functioning»⁵⁷. These imply that the body would become free, intellectual, spiritual, and immortal⁵⁸. According to Olivi, these irrational corollaries show that the rational soul cannot share its properties and activities with the body and vice versa⁵⁹. Therefore, the intellect and the will are not immediately united to the body⁶⁰.

⁵¹ TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, p. 8.

⁵² TOIVANEN, p. 30.

⁵³ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», 738. Toivanen, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, 40-41. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», 201n642.

⁵⁴ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», p. 738.

⁵⁵ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», pp. 740, 742, 744, 747, 748, 751. TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, 54. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», pp. 205-06.

⁵⁶ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», pp. 741, 743-45. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», p. 219.

⁵⁷ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», p. 740. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», pp. 215, 217.

⁵⁸ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», pp. 738, 740. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», pp. 215, 217.

⁵⁹ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», p. 740. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», pp. 215, 217.

⁶⁰ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», p. 738. TOIVANEN, *Perception and the Internal Senses*, 56. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», p. 224.

To avoid these consequences, Olivi proposes that the sensitive soul, not the intellectual part, is the form of the human body⁶¹. The unity of the intellectual and sensitive souls is possible because they share spiritual matter, different from corporeal matter⁶². The intellectual soul is the form of spiritual matter that cannot inform corporeal matter⁶³. This contention enables Olivi to sustain the intellectual soul's simplicity and immortality. The sensitive form operates as the mediator because it informs the spiritual and corporeal matter⁶⁴. Consequently, the intellectual part of the soul is indirectly the form of the body through the mediation of the sensitive soul⁶⁵. This mediated relation between the rational soul and the body weakens the unity: the soul's intellect and the body are realities that precede the union⁶⁶. This anthropology avoids reductive material monism but at the cost of threatening, or at least weakening, the substantial unity of the human composition⁶⁷.

Today Olivi's position of an intellectual soul united indirectly with the body, with a high degree of autonomy concerning the organism, has considerable difficulties integrating recent neuroscientific discoveries previously discussed.

Let us focus on the Council of Vienne's contributions to the anthropology of unity.

2. THE COUNCIL OF VIENNE AND THE CONSTITUTION *FIDEI CATHOLICAE*

2.1. *Historical Context of the Council of Vienne*

The Council of Vienne opened in 1311 and ended in 1312 in Vienne, France. It promulgated the decree *Fidei catholicae*. Although there is a debate, most scholars agree that this document condemned certain propositions ascribed to Peter John Olivi, even though his name was not unequivocally said⁶⁸. However,

⁶¹ PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», p. 123.

⁶² LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», pp. 220-22.

⁶³ OLIVI, «Why the human soul cannot be the form of the body», 738. PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», 124. LLORENTE, «La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo», 201n642.

⁶⁴ PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», p. 129.

⁶⁵ PASNAU, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», 125. Joseph Lecler, *Vienne* (Paris: L'Orante, 1975), p. 111.

⁶⁶ LADARIA, «L'homme créé à l'image de Dieu», pp. 138-39.

⁶⁷ LECLER, *Vienne*, p. 112.

⁶⁸ Recently PASNAU, TOIVANEN, BURR, SCHNEIDERS, LLORENTE, and DE BOER affirm that *Fidei catholicae* condemned Olivi's anthropology with respect to the union of body and soul. However, Tonna and Fitzpatrick sustain that Olivi was not the object of the condemnation. Robert PASNAU and Juhana TOIVANEN, «Peter John Olivi», *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, June 4, 2021. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/olivi/>. Pasnau, «Olivi on the Metaphysics of Soul», 113. David BURR, «The persecution of Peter Olivi», *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 66, no. 5, (1976), 80, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022046900040136>. Theodor

it is undeniable that this Council affirmed doctrinal statements relevant to the unity of the human being.

2.2. *Exegesis of Fidei Catholicae*

We must know what the Council sought to condemn and what it sought to propose by understanding the language used and the context that influenced the doctrinal formulation. The constitution *Fidei catholicae* decrees the following:

In adhering firmly to the foundation of the Catholic faith, besides which, as the Apostle testifies «no one can lay any other» [cf. 1 Cor. 3:11], we openly confess (*confitemur*), with holy mother Church, that the only begotten Son of God, eternally subsisting one with the Father in everything in which the Father exists as God, assumed in time in the virginal womb [of Mary], in the unity of his hypostasis and person, the parts of our nature simultaneously united (*partes nostrae naturae simul unitas*), by which he, existing in himself as true God became true man, namely, a human body capable of suffering and an intellectual or rational soul truly informing, truly itself and essentially, [his] very body. . . ⁶⁹.

Furthermore, with the approval of the holy council, we reject (*reprobamus*) as erroneous and contrary to the truth of the Catholic faith any doctrine or opinion that rashly asserts that the substance of the rational and intellectual soul is not truly and of itself the form of the human body or calls it in doubt. In order that the truth of the pure faith may be known to all and the path of error barred, We define (*definientes*) that from now on whoever presumes to assert, defend, or obstinately hold that the rational and intellectual soul is not of itself and essentially the form of the human body is to be censured as a heretic⁷⁰.

Theologians disagree on this decree's level of teaching authority. Some consider it a defined or *de fide* dogma⁷¹. Others categorize it as a solemn

SCHNEIDER, *Die Einheit des Menschen, Die Anthropologische Formel Anima Forma Corporis Im Sogenannten Korrektorienstreit Und Bei Petrus Iohannis Olivi* (Münster: Verlag Aschendorff, 1973), 252. LLORENTE, «*La crítica de Petrus Iohannis Olivi al aristotelismo de su tiempo*», 41, 214n696, 257-58. Sander W. DE BOER, *The science of the soul: The Commentary Tradition on Aristotle's De Anima c. 1260 – c. 1360*, (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013), 157n88. Ivo Tonna, «*La pars intellectiva dell'anima razionale non è la forma del corpo*», *Antonianum* 65 (1990): 277-89 at 288. Antonia FITZPATRICK, «*Bodily Identity in Scholastic Theology*» (PhD diss., University College London, 2013), 271-72, https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1411124/1/FITZPATRICK_730544%20PhD%20Thesis.pdf.

⁶⁹ Heinrich JOSEPH DENZINGER, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Peter Hünermann, trans. Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash, 43rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius, 2012), no. 900.

⁷⁰ DH, no. 902.

⁷¹ Ludwig OTT, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, trans. Patrick Lynch (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1954), 95. Phillip HUGHES, *The Church in Crisis: A History of General Councils 325-1870* (New York: Image Books, 1964), 257. Giacomo CANOBBIO, *Sobre el alma: Más allá de mente y cerebro*, trans. Luis Rubio Moran (Salamanca: Sígueme, 2010), pp. 62-63.

magisterial or definitive teaching without explicitly calling it dogmatic⁷². Still, others consider it an ordinary doctrinal declaration of a council, i.e., not irreformable⁷³.

We consider the formulation «the rational and intellectual soul is of itself and essentially the form of the human body» to be a definitive teaching of the magisterium due to the term *definientes*. However, there are arguments in favor and against considering it a dogmatic affirmation. Arguments favoring the dogmatic character of the formula are found in *Fidei catholicae* when the opposite formula is considered «contrary to the truth of the Catholic faith»⁷⁴. Arguments against its dogmatic character point to «faith» and «heresy» being understood broadly at the Council of Vienne. An example of the general sense of «heresy» is found in the fact that the same Council used the term «heretic» for those who affirm that the practice of usury is not a sin⁷⁵. However, in this example, the meaning of «heresy» is not the denial of a «revealed truth» or a definition of «divine faith» but a formulation that endangered faith⁷⁶.

Considering the historical background (i.e., Olivi's distinction between the intellectual soul and the body and the mediation of the sensitive soul), the decree *Fidei catholicae*, strongly affirmed the immediacy and substantial unity between the intellectual soul and the body, not their dissimilarity. It declared that the Son of God assumes «*partes nostrae naturae simul unitas*». This phrase has many possible translations. The critical element is the Latin term «*simul*». «*Simul*» in English means «together», «jointly», «combining two factors, situations, etc., that are to be considered conjoined», «in one and the same action, process, etc.», «at the same time», «simultaneously», «in a physical or local association with», «in partnership»⁷⁷. Other definitions or uses in medieval

⁷² I. C. BRADY, «Soul, Human: Scholastics», in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., vol. 13 (New York: Thompson-Gale, 2003), pp. 343-345, at 344. P. B. T. BILANIUK, «Soul, Human: Theology», in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., vol. 13 (New York: Thompson-Gale, 2003), pp. 352-53 at 352. LADARIA, «L'homme créé à l'image de Dieu», p. 141. Luis LADARIA, *Introducción a la antropología teológica* (Pamplona, Navarra: Verbo Divino, 1993), p. 84. Stephen YATES, *Between Death and Resurrection: A Critical Response to Recent Catholic Debate Concerning Intermediate State* (New York, Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 4, 167, 171-78.

⁷³ Michael SCHMAUS, *Dogma*, 6 vols., trans. Ann Laeuchli et al. (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1977), vol. 2, *Justification and the Last Things*, 141. Elmer KLINGER, «Soul», in *Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. Karl Rahner, vol. 6. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 138-41 at 140. Francis P. FIORENZA and Johann BAPTIST METZ, «El hombre como unidad de cuerpo y alma», in *Mysterium Salutis: Manual de teología como historia de la salvación*, 6 vols., ed. Johannes Feiner et al., vol. 2, *Dios como principio y fundamento de la historia de la salvación*, trans. Guillermo APARICIO and Angel SAENZ-BADILLOS (Madrid: Cristiandad, 1969), pp. 486-632 at 512. Francis SULLIVAN, *Creative Fidelity: Weighting and Interpreting Documents of the Magisterium* (Paulist Press: New York, 1996), pp. 52-53.

⁷⁴ DH 902.

⁷⁵ DH 906.

⁷⁶ SULLIVAN, *Creative Fidelity*, p. 53.

⁷⁷ «*Simul*» in *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P. G. W. Glare (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), pp. 1765-1766.

Latin are «in all», «in total»⁷⁸, «in company with each other» for two persons or things, «all together», «complete», «jointly», «in conjunction», «at one at the same time»⁷⁹. These meanings imply that «*simul unitas*» emphasizes the union of soul and body. Consequently, «*simul unitas*» could be translated as «together united», «united as a whole», or «united as a complete total reality»⁸⁰. These possible translations, mainly the last two, indicate a strong, immediate, and intimate anthropological union.

We are inclined to the last two possible translations based on the Council's use of the best language of the epoch to stress the unity: «The intellectual soul is itself and essentially the form of the body». Nevertheless, while it utilizes hylomorphic language to highlight unity, it should not be perceived as an endorsement of any specific philosophical or theological explanation or theory⁸¹. This is obvious because the Council has not taken a stance on whether the soul is material or immaterial or exists in multiple or singular forms⁸². Consequently, Vienne does not provide a philosophical-theological explanation of the strong, immediate, and intimate union between the intellectual soul and the body.

2.3. *Interpreting the Council's Doctrine Considering Contemporary Scriptural Hermeneutics*

Current scriptural exegesis will enlighten our understanding of Vienne's teaching. Biblical anthropology fundamentally affirms human unity and wholeness⁸³. The terms translated as the soul (*nepes*) or mind (*leb*) are related to

⁷⁸ J. F. NIERMEYER and C. VAN DE KIEFT, *Medieval Latin Dictionary Niermeyer*, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA, 2002), p. 1268.

⁷⁹ D. R. HOWLETT and R. K. ASHDOWNE, *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, (Oxford: Oxford University, 2012), p. 3092.

⁸⁰ Some translations stress this unity more than others. See for example (1) «the parts of our nature simultaneously united», in Heinrich Joseph DENZINGER, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Peter Hünermann, trans. Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash, (2012), no. 900; (2) «parts of our nature as well as unity» in Heinrich Joseph DENZINGER, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1957), no. 480; (3) «les parties de notre nature unies ensemble», in Joseph LECLER, *Vienne*, 191; (4) «les parties de notre nature qui lui sont en même temps unies», LADARIA, «L'homme créé à l'image de Dieu», 140; and (5) «las partes de nuestra naturaleza juntamente unidas», in Enrique DENZINGER, *El Magisterio de la Iglesia. Manual de los símbolos, definiciones y declaraciones de la Iglesia en materia de fe y costumbres*, trans. Daniel Ruiz Bueno, 31st ed. (Barcelona: Herder 1963), no. 480.

⁸¹ Sander W. DE BOER, «Book Review of José Filipe Silva. *Robert Kilwardby on the Human Soul: Plurality of Forms and Censorship in the Thirteenth Century*. Investigating Medieval Philosophy, 3. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012», *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52, no. 2 (April 2014): pp. 375-76.

⁸² DE BOER, *The science of the soul*, pp. 40-41.

⁸³ LADARIA, *Introducción a la antropología teológica*, pp. 80-81.

physical organs (throat and heart)⁸⁴. Biblical anthropology uses words (*basar*, body and *nepes*, soul) describing aspects or dimensions of the whole human person and not referring to substantial autonomous parts. As Ratzinger affirms: «[Scripture] presupposes the undivided unity of man; for example, Scripture contains no word denoting only the body (separated and distinguished from the soul), while conversely in the vast majority of cases, the word *soul* too means the whole corporeally existing man»⁸⁵. The accent is on human wholeness, not the contrast or differentiation between ontological autonomous realities. Therefore, the definitive teaching of the Council of Vienne must be interpreted according to the biblical sense of anthropological unity that confirms the translation of «*simul unitas*» as «united as a whole», or «united as a complete total reality».

2.4. *Interpreting the Council's Doctrine in the Light of Ongoing Tradition*

The Council of Vienne argues that if the intellectual part of the soul is not immediately united to the body, then the Logos does not fully assume our human nature, which puts the incarnation's integrity in danger⁸⁶. The Council aims to confirm that Christ is fully human.

In addition, Christian theological tradition considers that the Logos' assumption of the whole human nature has a soteriological dimension. Gregory of Nazianzen affirmed: «For what He [the Logos] has not assumed He has not healed, but what is united to His Godhead is also saved»⁸⁷. Considering this soteriological aspect, then the Council of Vienne should be interpreted as affirming that the unity of the human being assumed by the Son of God is essential to human salvation. Therefore, salvation is to be found precisely in our embodied reality. The soul's salvation is neither different nor separated from the salvation of the body.

Moreover, the Magisterium of the Church has recently interpreted Vienne's declaration in the sense of a strong, immediate, and intimate union. *Gaudium et spes* affirms that the human being is a whole, an entire one being (*quidem unus ac totus*) in all dimensions: body and soul, heart and conscience, mind

⁸⁴ Hans W. WOLFF, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 11-15, 44-45. Pontificia Commissione Biblica, *Che cosa è l'uomo?» (Sal 8,5). Un itinerario di antropologia biblica* (September 30th, 2019), §§20-21, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/pcb_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20190930_cosa-e-luomo_it.html.

⁸⁵ Joseph RATZINGER, *Introduction to Christianity*, trans. J. R. Foster (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius, 1990), p. 270.

⁸⁶ LADARIA, «L'homme créé à l'image de Dieu», p. 140.

⁸⁷ Gregory NAZIANZEN, «Letter to Cleodius the Priest against Apollinarius», epistle 101, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Phillip Shaft and Henry Wallace, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), p. 440.

and will⁸⁸. Pope Benedict XVI affirms that the human being «is truly himself when his body and soul are intimately united (*penitus coniunguntur*)»⁸⁹. Finally, Pope Francis affirms that «the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or from nature or from worldly realities, but lived in and with them, in communion with all that surrounds us»⁹⁰. He even declares that «unhealthy dualisms, nonetheless, left a mark on certain Christian thinkers in the course of history and disfigured the Gospel»⁹¹. These recent teachings highlight the profound and intimate unity that forms a single human reality where spiritual life is embodied. Dualism is considered an intellectual error and a distortion of the Gospel.

Vienne's definition, enlightened by current scriptural exegesis and recent interpretation by the Magisterium, affirms a strong, immediate, and intimate unity of the form «united as a whole», or «united as a complete total reality». The Council's teaching does not accept anthropological models that separate the intellectual soul from the body into two split realities or natures. Therefore, there is no human property or activity that is purely spiritual or purely organic. Having a functional interaction of the body and soul is not enough. Explanations that affirm a non-reductive strong, immediate, and intimate unity of the human being can be accepted.

According to these interpretations of Vienne's affirmation, Christian theology can uphold and develop a non-reductive monism. Let us now consider some contemporary theological models that conform to the Council of Vienne's teaching to see their possible contributions to developing a non-reductionist monism that integrates neuroscientific facts.

3. CONTEMPORARY ANTHROPOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDINGS: FIVE MODELS OF HUMAN UNITY AND WHOLENESS

This section presents five contemporary theological models that conform with the Council of Vienne's affirmation of human unity and wholeness. It aims to identify which models could integrate neuroscientific facts in a Christian non-reductive monism. It is inspired by the heuristic method of typology, which presents different models with common features, similarities, and differences

⁸⁸ *Gaudium et Spes* (December 7, 1965), §§3, 14, 41, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

⁸⁹ Pope BENEDICT XVI, *Deus caritas est* (December 25, 2005), §5, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html.

⁹⁰ Pope FRANCIS, *Laudato si* (May 24, 2015), §216, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html (Hereafter cited as *LS*).

⁹¹ *LS*, §98.

among theologians and Christian scholars⁹². These models are neither absolute nor mutually exclusive since theologians and philosophers can hold positions that belong to different types.

3.1. *Model 1: The Ensouled Body or Embodied Soul*

Theologians and philosophers in this model are influenced by Aquinas' hylomorphic anthropology and the formula «composition of body and soul»⁹³. Among them is Bernard Lonergan, who explicitly refers to the composition of body and immortal soul and uses hylomorphic terminology⁹⁴. Lonergan affirms a non-reductive human unity using formulas such as «man is one yet both material and spiritual»⁹⁵ and «incarnate spirit»⁹⁶. Against dualism, he states that the soul is not hidden in the body. «Soul and body are not two things but copinciples in the constitution of a single thing»⁹⁷.

Other contemporary Thomistic scholars reformulate the expression «the soul is the form of the body» as «embodied human soul» or «embodied substantial form»⁹⁸. Some Protestant theologians use the equivalent formulas of «embodied soul» and «ensouled body», e.g., Barth⁹⁹ and Pannenberg¹⁰⁰. Pannenberg understands the Aristotelian-Thomistic formula «soul as the form of the body» as a «personal psychosomatic totality», where the soul is not a partial autonomous principle¹⁰¹.

Donceel, a scholar exponent of this model, develops his anthropology in dialogue with contemporary sciences, particularly embryology. He criticizes some current understandings of Aquinas' theory of knowledge that consider the intellect as working on the information produced by the bodily senses but

⁹² Avery DULLES, *Models of Revelation* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), p. 25.

⁹³ AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. The Fathers of the English Dominican Province, I.75.4.

⁹⁴ Bernard LONERGAN, *Collections*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran, *Collected Works*, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 240, 242. Bernard LONERGAN, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran, *Collected Works*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 538-44. Bernard LONERGAN, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, *Collected Works*, vol. 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), pp. 3-11, 29-38.

⁹⁵ LONERGAN, *Insight*, p. 538.

⁹⁶ LONERGAN, *Collections*, p. 242.

⁹⁷ LONERGAN, *Collections*, p. 242.

⁹⁸ Anthony KENNY, *Aquinas on Mind* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 126. Robert PASNAU, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 49, 375.

⁹⁹ Karl BARTH, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 3, part 2, *The Doctrine of Creation*, ed. G.W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (New York: T&T Clark International, 2009), p. 121.

¹⁰⁰ Wolfhart PANNENBERG, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), p. 528.

¹⁰¹ Wolfhart PANNENBERG, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, trans. Mathew O'Connell (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), pp. 184, 200.

independently of it¹⁰². According to this understanding, human unity is limited to mediated interactions or transfers of data and commands between the soul and body. Donceel sees this reading as a latent dualism akin to a Cartesian interpretation of Aquinas' anthropology. In this view, the body and soul interact with each other through their actions¹⁰³. Kenny believes this interactionist view is a deeply spiritual interpretation of the human mind¹⁰⁴. In addition, these mediated interactions do not do justice to Aquinas' affirmation that «the soul is the form of the body», renders it difficult to explain the importance of the human body and the integration of neuroscientific facts into a Christian non-reductive monism.

For Donceel, the soul forms prime matter to unite all organic structures and bodily functions. Therefore, the intellectual soul exists in and forms the human body with its brain-neuronal anatomy¹⁰⁵. This «formation» renders possible all activities of the mind. Agreeing with this, Kenny affirms that the whole human being thinks, not the soul using the body as an instrument. This last perspective is close to Cartesian dualism¹⁰⁶. Donceel argues that the body «is the first result of the meeting of the soul with the prime matter. The union of these two components results in a body, a living body, a sentient body, a rational body»¹⁰⁷. The expressions «a living body», «sentient body», and «rational body» already imply a strong unity without reductionism: life, senses, and intellect are not reduced to matter.

One of the positive aspects of this embodied view of the soul is its capacity to integrate some neuroscientific facts. It follows the Council of Vienne's teaching of human unity as «united as a complete total reality». In addition, this model follows the traditional language used in the history of Christian theology.

However, the formula «the soul is the form of the body» requires many explanations today because contemporary scientists no longer use the hylomorphic conceptual framework. Moreover, the contemporary scientific notion of «matter» differs from the hylomorphic term of prime matter as pure potentiality or passivity¹⁰⁸. Today, matter is conceived as a dynamic reality capable of evolving through different structures and cosmological spatiotemporal contexts.

¹⁰² JOSEPH F. DONCEEL, *Philosophical Anthropology* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), 433.

¹⁰³ JOSEPH F. DONCEEL, «Immediate Animation and Delayed Hominization», *Theological Studies* 31, no. 1 (February 1970): 76-105 at 81, <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056397003100103>. Donceel, *Philosophical Anthropology*, pp. 424-25.

¹⁰⁴ KENNY, *Aquinas on Mind*, p. 124.

¹⁰⁵ DONCEEL, «Immediate Animation and Delayed Hominization», p. 83.

¹⁰⁶ KENNY, *Aquinas on Mind*, pp. 135-36.

¹⁰⁷ DONCEEL, *Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 432.

¹⁰⁸ DONCEEL, «Immediate Animation and Delayed Hominization», 80-81. Pedro Laín-Entralgo, *Cuerpo y alma* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1991), p. 291.

3.2. *Model 2: Theology of the Relational (Not Substantial) Human Soul*

In this model, the soul is not described as a substance but as a moment or aspect of the whole human life. Gevaert holds that the term «soul» is equivalent to a personal subject, a source of free and personal activities, irreducible to organic bodily functions or impersonal matter¹⁰⁹. The human spirit is related to the creation of culture and the unique identity that thinks, loves, wills, and relates with others¹¹⁰. The anthropological unity is evident in the affirmation that these human activities involve the material world and the body, which are «the place and milieu for the realization of the spirit»¹¹¹. Furthermore, the term «soul» is used to designate the constitutive interpersonal relationship between the human being and God. According to Gevaert, «salvation of the soul» should be understood as that personal relationship with the Creator who saves the whole human person, not only an immaterial or incorporeal aspect¹¹².

Joseph Ratzinger fully develops this relational and theological notion of the soul. In 1968 this German theologian affirmed the unity of the human being with the following formulas: «spirit in a body», «spirit only in a body and as a body», «corporeal spirituality and spiritualized corporeality»¹¹³. The term «body» refers to the whole human being, not to corporeal aspects separated from the soul¹¹⁴.

Ratzinger criticizes reducing the whole human being to matter or an isolated soul. The human person cannot be reduced to matter due to the human orientation toward God and the community¹¹⁵. In addition, human beings cannot be reduced to isolated souls because each human person intrinsically needs a corporeal reality to live and experience the communion of saints. Therefore, the idea of «*anima separata*» or «isolated soul» is obsolete¹¹⁶. Ratzinger develops a theology of the soul that is neither substantialist nor separated from the body. The following articulates Ratzinger's idea of the soul as «dialogical» in the following.

Having a spiritual soul means precisely being willed, known, and loved by God in a special way; it means being a creature called by God to an eternal dialogue and therefore capable for its own part of knowing God and of replying to him. What we call in substantialist language «having a soul» we will describe in a more historical, actual language as «being God's partner in a dialogue»¹¹⁷.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph GEVAERT, *El problema del hombre*, trans. Alfonso Ortiz (Salamanca: Sigueme, 1995), pp. 91, 139.

¹¹⁰ GEVAERT, *El problema del hombre*, pp. 141-44.

¹¹¹ GEVAERT, p. 140.

¹¹² GEVAERT, p. 91.

¹¹³ RATZINGER, *Introduction to Christianity*, pp. 184, 274.

¹¹⁴ RATZINGER, pp. 270, 273.

¹¹⁵ RATZINGER, p. 273.

¹¹⁶ RATZINGER, pp. 272, 274.

¹¹⁷ RATZINGER, p. 275.

The term «soul» is understood as the human person's capacity to be in relation to God and dependent on Him¹¹⁸. In 1977, Ratzinger interpreted the formula «the soul is the form of the body» in dialogical terms within an eschatological concern: «*anima forma corporis*» means that the relationship to God and His immortal love is at the core of the human essence and identity and is the ground of human immortality¹¹⁹. In his book *Eschatology* Ratzinger criticizes reductive materialism and Greshake's position of «resurrection in death». Ratzinger seems closer to Augustinian dualism in those critics, where the soul is separated from the body at death¹²⁰. However, he affirms a duality that is not dualistic and must be understood in terms of the unity of the human being¹²¹.

This model is clearly anti-reductionistic. A second positive aspect is its clear theological perspective. In addition, it does not have the difficulties presented by ontological definitions or descriptions of the soul. Some scholars argue that this «dialogical soul» concept is open to dialogue with neurosciences through the idea of «embodiment of mind»¹²². This dialogue could help avoid falling into «full neural determinism»¹²³. However, the proponents of this model (Gevaert and Ratzinger) do not develop such dialogue or at least indicate how to do it. Moreover, in his critique of reductionism, Ratzinger appears to identify monism with reductive materialism. He does not consider some non-reductive monism. Finally, exponents of this model do not integrate the human organic aspect in its anthropology, which is necessary to facilitate a dialogue with sciences and to integrate neuroscientific facts.

3.3. Model 3: Unity of Matter and Spirit

Theologians and philosophers in this model understand human unity using the concepts of «matter» and «spirit» instead of «body» and «soul». The unity between «matter» and «spirit», without falling into any reductionism, is envisioned as an evolutionary movement of matter toward spirit. Two representatives of this model are Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Karl Rahner.

Teilhard criticizes the Manichaeian tendency to oppose soul and body, matter and spirit¹²⁴. They are intrinsically related in the evolutionary process where

¹¹⁸ Joseph RATZINGER, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*, trans. Michael Waldstein and Aidan Nichols (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 259. Patrick FLETCHER, *Resurrection Realism: Ratzinger the Augustinian* (Eugene-Oregon: Cascade Books, 2014), p. 111.

¹¹⁹ RATZINGER, *Eschatology*, pp. 154-55, 158.

¹²⁰ FLETCHER, *Resurrection Realism*, pp. 113-15. RATZINGER, *Eschatology*, p. 155.

¹²¹ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, pp. 158-59.

¹²² Monika SZETELA and Grzegorz OSIŃSKI, «The concept of “dialogical soul” by Joseph Ratzinger against the latest concepts of neuroscience», *Scientia et Fides* 5, no. 2, (March 2017): 199-215 at 212, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/SetF.2017.018>.

¹²³ SZETELA, «Dialogical soul», p. 213.

¹²⁴ Pierre TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, *Millieu Divin. Essai de vie intérieure* (Paris: Seuil, 1957), 114.

matter tends to move toward the spirit, particularly in human beings¹²⁵. At the end of his life, in 1950, Teilhard expressed his vision of anthropological unity: the human being is an organic-psychic reality, a superior unification of matter and spirit¹²⁶. Matter and spirit are two different «states» of the cosmic material, where the spirit is a superior state of matter¹²⁷. The evolution of the Cosmos is a process where matter is spiritualized and becomes a human psyche¹²⁸. Therefore, human thought and consciousness emerged from the complexity of matter¹²⁹.

Karl Rahner used in his early writings hylomorphic concepts and formulations, particularly «the soul as the form of the body»¹³⁰. However, in posterior works, he prefers to avoid such terminology because, according to him, advances in biology make such concepts unproductive¹³¹. Therefore, he elaborates his anthropology based on the concepts of matter and spirit with a theological starting point: God is the Creator of one world, not two different and untouched realities, one spiritual and the other material¹³². Considering the Council of Vienne seriously, Rahner affirms, since his early texts, the «original unity of man», a primordial and essential unity between matter and spirit encompassing the plurality of characteristics, functions, or properties¹³³. The unity within a human being means that all actions are, at the same time, spiritual and material rather than solely one or the other. Even consciousness has an inner material constitutive element and not just an external or superficial basis which consciousness «rests upon»¹³⁴. At the same time, the German Jesuit rejects reducing spirit to matter due to an essential difference between both¹³⁵. That fundamental distinction is displayed in his explanation of the movement of self-transcendence of matter toward spirit¹³⁶.

¹²⁵ TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, *Millieu Divin*, pp. 116-17.

¹²⁶ Pierre TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, «Le Coeur de la Matière», in *Autobiographie spirituelle* (Paris: Points, 2013): 23-102 at 52.

¹²⁷ TEILHARD, «Le Coeur de la Matière», pp. 38-39, 51.

¹²⁸ TEILHARD, «Le Coeur de la Matière», p. 40.

¹²⁹ Pierre TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, «Le Christique», in *Autobiographie spirituelle* (Paris: Points, 2013): 103-136 at 112, 123.

¹³⁰ Karl RAHNER, *Spirit in the World*, trans. William Dych (New York: Continuum, 1994), liii, 100, 263, 354-355, 380. Karl RAHNER, *Hearer of the Word*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Continuum, 1994), p. 107.

¹³¹ Karl RAHNER, «Natural Science and Reasonable Faith», in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 21, trans. Hugh M. Riley (New York: Crossroads, 1988), pp. 30, 44.

¹³² Karl RAHNER, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 181. Rahner, «Natural Science and Reasonable Faith», pp. 34, 52.

¹³³ RAHNER, *Spirit in the World*, 239-249, 252-253. Rahner, *Hearer*, 106-107. Karl Rahner, *Grace in Freedom*, trans. Hilda Graef (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 232.

¹³⁴ RAHNER, «Natural Science and Reasonable Faith», pp. 40, 43.

¹³⁵ RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 184. RAHNER, *Grace in Freedom*, p. 232.

¹³⁶ RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 184.

Rahner states that matter is a limited, and concrete mode of being¹³⁷. It is a deficient moment of created spirit¹³⁸. Furthermore, the created spirit is the advancement of matter that becomes personal, self-conscious, free, and oriented toward God¹³⁹.

The non-reductive essential and primordial unity of «matter» and «spirit» is based on the dynamic process of «self-transcendence», where a particular reality goes beyond its inherent limits to «become» something substantially new and different, «a leap to something essentially higher», in the sense of «being more»¹⁴⁰. Through a history of self-transcendence, the human spirit, with its complexity, emerged from living organisms, and complex organic systems emerged from purely physical systems¹⁴¹. Matter is oriented toward the spirit, and the spirit is the self-transcendence of matter.

Teilhard and Rahner have the merit of taking evolutionary theory seriously. They elaborate the concepts of «matter» and «spirit» to affirm the original human unity, against dualism, without falling into reductive materialism. They state that consciousness is not something spiritual as opposed to material. Finally, they explicitly develop an anthropology that integrates scientific facts. Perhaps, a disadvantage found in their anthropologies is that they do not consider neuroscientific facts¹⁴².

3.4. Model 4: Structural Anthropology and the Psychic-organic Systematic Unity

This model integrates scientific knowledge from life sciences, evolutionary theory, and neurosciences to overcome different dualisms. Some structural (not to be confused with structuralist) anthropology representatives are Heinrich Rombach¹⁴³, Alexander Ganoczy¹⁴⁴, Xavier Zubiri, and Pedro Lain-Entralgo. Let us discuss the last two.

Xavier Zubiri is a Spanish philosopher and theologian who, since the 1970s, has abandoned the terms «body», «soul», and «substance» to explain human unity. He replaces the word «substance» with his neologism «substantivity», which is a system or structure of «notes» understood as essential qualities,

¹³⁷ Karl RAHNER, *Hominisation: The evolutionary origin of man as a theological problem*, trans. W. T. O'Hara (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), pp. 56, 82. RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 183.

¹³⁸ RAHNER, «Natural Science and Reasonable Faith», p. 34.

¹³⁹ RAHNER, *Hominisation*, 59. RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 183.

¹⁴⁰ RAHNER, «Natural Science and Reasonable Faith», p. 38. RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 185. RAHNER, *Hominisation*, pp. 87-88.

¹⁴¹ RAHNER, «Natural Science and Reasonable Faith», p. 40. RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 186.

¹⁴² Alexandre GANOCZY, *Christianisme et Neurosciences* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2008), p. 11.

¹⁴³ Heinrich ROMBACH, *Strukturanthropologie: Der menschliche Mensch* (München: Alber, 1987). Heinrich ROMBACH, *El hombre humanizado. Antropología estructural*, trans. Remei Capdevila-Werning (Barcelona: Herder, Barcelona, 2004).

¹⁴⁴ Alexander GANOCZY, *Christianisme et Neurosciences*.

properties, and functions of things being «noticed»¹⁴⁵. «Structure», as equivalent to «system» and «substantivity», means the primordial, intrinsic, and systematic unity of a diversity of essential notes that are sufficient to constitute what the thing is¹⁴⁶.

A structure is not an extrinsic sum or a posteriori synthesis of functions or qualities that could exist independently of each other¹⁴⁷. It is not an aggregate of extrinsic, added, and non-essential properties. It is an intrinsic, systematic unity of properties, qualities, or crucial functions in a particular reality. The essential properties or qualities cannot exist outside the systematic-structural unity. Structural unity cannot exist without essential properties. If a structure loses a fundamental property, it ceases to be a whole, *unum* and *totum*. It remains no more in existence or becomes something else.

The human being is a personal substantivity with a primordial, structural unity (not to be confused with the Aristotelian substantial unity) of all the essential organic and psychic notes¹⁴⁸. Zubiri prefers to call «organism» the ensemble of the physical-chemical-biological properties, qualities, and functions to avoid the ambiguity of the term «material», sometimes wrongly understood in terms of reductive materialism. The human organism lacks constitutional sufficiency to exist independently of human substantivity¹⁴⁹.

Moreover, Zubiri prefers the term «psyche» and avoids the term «soul», wrongly interpreted within the Cartesian or Platonic dualist framework¹⁵⁰. The human psyche is the ensemble of essential human psychic properties: intelligence, sentiments (feelings), and will¹⁵¹. Against dualism, the Spanish philosopher affirms that the human psyche lacks «constitutional sufficiency» to exist independently of the whole human structure¹⁵². The organic notes are united to and determine the psychic notes and vice versa¹⁵³. They function as a systematic whole. Therefore, all human activities are psychic-organic, even when one aspect dominates (organic or psychic)¹⁵⁴.

According to Lain-Entralgo, a Spanish scholar, reductionism does not consider the fact that matter is a dynamic activity where the whole is more

¹⁴⁵ Xavier ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», *Asclepio* 25 (1973): 479-86 at 479. Diego GRACIA, «La antropología de Zubiri», in *Guía Comares de Zubiri*, ed. Juan Antonio Nicolas-Marín (Granada: Comares, 2011): 251-76 at 265-66.

¹⁴⁶ ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», 480. Xavier ZUBIRI, *Hombre y Dios* (Madrid: Alianza, 1984), p. 19.

¹⁴⁷ ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», p. 480.

¹⁴⁸ ZUBIRI, p. 480.

¹⁴⁹ ZUBIRI, p. 481.

¹⁵⁰ ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», p. 481. Xavier ZUBIRI, *Sobre el hombre* (Madrid: Alianza, 2007), p. 455.

¹⁵¹ ZUBIRI, *Sobre el hombre*, p. 455. ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», pp. 481-82.

¹⁵² ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», p. 481. ZUBIRI, *Sobre el hombre*, p. 456.

¹⁵³ ZUBIRI, «El hombre y su cuerpo», p. 482-83.

¹⁵⁴ ZUBIRI, *Sobre el hombre*, p. 456.

than the sum of its parts¹⁵⁵. Cosmic dynamisms produce new and more complex structures that cannot be reduced to basic components¹⁵⁶. Reductive materialism wrongly conceives human reality as an extrinsic addition of some material elements. However, the human psychic-organic structural unity emerges as new and original within cosmic evolution¹⁵⁷. Within it, systemic human properties simultaneously have organic and psychic functions and are irreducible to subatomic, atomic, molecular, or cellular components¹⁵⁸.

Zubiri explains (against reductive materialism) that the human psyche emerges as something essentially new from the evolutionary process. God, Creator of a cosmos in the process of self-formation, is the foundational reality that, from the depth of the material world, brings forth the human psychic with properties that could not be the product of pure material transformation¹⁵⁹. Matter participates in God's act of creation to give from itself the human psyche¹⁶⁰. God creates through the mediation of an evolutionary process that goes from the most basic material structure to essential human qualities and functions¹⁶¹.

Two Anglican theologians, Arthur Peacocke, and John Polkinghorne, arrive at similar structural anthropology based on scientific facts and biblical anthropology. For them, the human being is a psychosomatic personal unity¹⁶².

This model asserts a strong, immediate, and intimate unity following the Vienne Council's affirmation. Moreover, it is a model that clearly elaborates a non-reductive monism. The notion of «psyche», not separated from the organism, facilitates a dialogue with neuroscientists, integrates scientific facts well, and better explains the mind-brain relationship without falling into dualism or reductionism. Perhaps, its difficulty is found in its highly abstract conceptual framework, which is difficult to explain to a non-specialist.

3.5. Model 5: Theology of the Body

Theologians in this model conceive the human body as the principle of personal unity of a plurality of dimensions. Many of the anthropologies exposed in previous models converge on a theology of the body. Some exponents of hylomorphic anthropologies (model 1) explain that the body results from «the

¹⁵⁵ LAÍN, *Cuerpo y alma*, 97, p. 263.

¹⁵⁶ LAÍN, p. 152.

¹⁵⁷ LAÍN, p. 372.

¹⁵⁸ LAÍN, p. 372.

¹⁵⁹ XAVIER ZUBIRI, *El Problema Teológico del Hombre: Cristianismo* (Madrid: Editorial Alianza 1999), pp. 203, 225.

¹⁶⁰ ZUBIRI, *Cristianismo*, p. 230.

¹⁶¹ ZUBIRI, p. 229.

¹⁶² ARTHUR PEACOCKE, *Creation and the World of Science* (New York: Oxford, 1979), 125, 189. JOHN POLKINGHORNE, *Exploring Reality: The Intertwining between Science and Religion* (New Haven: Yale University, 2005), pp. 46-47.

union of prime matter and the soul as the intellectual form»¹⁶³. They prefer this formula to «the union of body and soul». Benedict Ashley, who in many aspects belongs to model 1, develops a theology of the body where corporeality becomes the center of unity¹⁶⁴. His objective is to overcome any dualism whose influence on Christianity remains¹⁶⁵. This Dominican theologian, bearing in mind contemporary sciences, refers to the human being with the following formulas: «my body-self»¹⁶⁶, «creative body»¹⁶⁷, «bodily self»¹⁶⁸, «our bodily existence»¹⁶⁹, «my body-person»¹⁷⁰, «a body among bodies»¹⁷¹, «human person as a real body»¹⁷², «a body that is transcendently spiritual»¹⁷³, «a bodily humanity»¹⁷⁴, «human body person»¹⁷⁵, «bodily and spiritual beings»¹⁷⁶, «intelligent embodied beings»¹⁷⁷. He understands Saint Paul's expression of the «living soul» («psyche») as a living body with natural human life¹⁷⁸.

Karl Rahner, a proponent of model 3, states that the body is «the concrete existence of the spirit itself in space and time»¹⁷⁹. Our corporeal reality «is identical precisely with the reality of the finite human spiritual nature»¹⁸⁰. This is precisely Rahner's understanding of the Council of Vienne¹⁸¹. Moreover, the body manifests the spirit in the world open to God's revelation¹⁸². Therefore, the body is already «the corporeality of a spiritual and free being»¹⁸³. Finally, the German theologian does not hesitate to affirm that «we know only the spirit as corporeal and historical spirit»¹⁸⁴.

¹⁶³ RAHNER, *Spirit in the World*, p. 324. RAHNER, «The Body in the Order of Salvation», in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 17, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: Longman and Todd, 1981): 71-89 at 83-84. DONCEEL, *Philosophical Anthropology*, p. 432.

¹⁶⁴ Benedict ASHLEY, *Theologies of the Body*, (Braintree: Pope John Center, 1995) xviii, pp. 154, 157-58, 271, 321, 507, 599, 694-96.

¹⁶⁵ ASHLEY, *Theologies of the Body*, xviii, pp. 104, 321, 485-86, 510, 515, 536, 599-600, 602, 694.

¹⁶⁶ ASHLEY, pp. 4, 7, 312, 334, 693.

¹⁶⁷ ASHLEY, p. 7.

¹⁶⁸ ASHLEY, p. 10.

¹⁶⁹ ASHLEY, pp. 12, 483, 512.

¹⁷⁰ ASHLEY, p. 310.

¹⁷¹ ASHLEY, p. 311.

¹⁷² ASHLEY, pp. 329, 540.

¹⁷³ ASHLEY, p. 334.

¹⁷⁴ ASHLEY, p. 486.

¹⁷⁵ ASHLEY, pp. 536, 585, 604, 615.

¹⁷⁶ ASHLEY, p. 584.

¹⁷⁷ ASHLEY, pp. 619-20.

¹⁷⁸ ASHLEY, pp. 540, 593.

¹⁷⁹ RAHNER, «The Body in the Order of Salvation», p. 84.

¹⁸⁰ RAHNER, *Hominisation*, p. 58.

¹⁸¹ RAHNER, p. 58.

¹⁸² RAHNER, «The Body in the Order of Salvation», p. 85. RAHNER, *Spirit in the World*, p. 406. RAHNER, *Hearer*, pp. 116-17, 120-21. RAHNER, *Hominisation*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁸³ RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 435.

¹⁸⁴ RAHNER, *Foundations*, p. 435.

Pedro Lain-Entralgo, an exponent of structural anthropology (model 4), explicitly identifies the human body with the unity of the human being. According to Lain, the human body is the structural, dynamic, and living unity that is organic and psychic¹⁸⁵. We are our own bodies that live, think, digest, feel, contemplate, and sense the surroundings¹⁸⁶.

Adolphe Gesché is a Belgian theologian that belongs to this model. Considering the incarnation, resurrection, and the sacraments, he sees the body as the hermeneutical key to understanding human salvation and Christianity¹⁸⁷. For him, Christianity's decisive theological and anthropological aspect is the body, not the soul¹⁸⁸. An understanding of the body, not reduced to its organic elements, manifests that our whole personal reality has a bodily structure that is intelligent and capable of revealing who we are to ourselves and others¹⁸⁹.

Nancey Murphy, an academic who develops her work in dialogue with neurosciences, holds as a central thesis that we are «spirited bodies», where «spirit» refers to the whole person in relation to God¹⁹⁰. She criticizes as insufficient all forms of substantial dualism that conceive of an extrinsic addition of a substantial soul or spirit to the body.

This model asserts a strong unity of the form «united as a complete total reality». The human body includes irreducible and inseparable dimensions: organic, psychic, personal, relational, social, cultural, historical, cosmic, and open to salvation. It is in continuity with the Christian Tradition's appreciation of the human body against any form of dualism. Biblical Anthropology influences it, where the terminology «*basar*» or «*soma*» is identified with the whole human being. Theology of the body can integrate scientific facts through the organic aspects and provide a foundation to develop a non-reductive monism. It avoids reductive materialism by arguing that the organic-biological aspect is a dimension of the body, but it is not the whole corporeality. Finally, it integrates many positive aspects of other models.

4. SOME THEOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF A CHRISTIAN NON-REDUCTIVE MONISM

Pope Francis is urging ecclesiastical studies, particularly philosophy and theology, to develop a cross-disciplinary «guiding synthesis» that contributes to humanizing our present culture¹⁹¹. For that reason, theology needs to engage

¹⁸⁵ LAÍN, *Cuerpo y alma*, pp. 196, 199, 261, 351.

¹⁸⁶ LAÍN, pp. 314, 327, 328, 342, 345, 351, 373.

¹⁸⁷ Adolphe GESCHÉ, «L'invention chretienne du corps», in *Le corps chemin de Dieu*, (ed.) A. Gesché and P. Scolas (Paris: Cerf 2005): 31-75 at 53, 64.

¹⁸⁸ GESCHÉ, «L'invention chretienne du corps», p. 63.

¹⁸⁹ GESCHÉ, pp. 63, 73-74.

¹⁹⁰ MURPHY, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?*, ix, p. 21.

¹⁹¹ Pope FRANCIS, *Veritatis gaudium* (December 8, 2017), §§3, 4c, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_constitutions/documents/papa-francesco_costituzione-ap_20171208_veritatis-gaudium.html.

in dialogues with neurosciences and philosophy of mind. This will help bring theological perspectives to ongoing debates on human unity.

Based on the strengths and weaknesses of the discussed models, we believe that models 3, 4, and 5 are the most suitable for theologians who aim to develop a cross-disciplinary Christian non-reductive monism that integrates neuroscientific data while also acknowledging the significance of models 1 and 2. The Council of Vienne and the chosen models help us highlight and broaden some specific theological contributions to the problem of human unity. Inspired by these, we will explore various aspects that complement the selected models, such as dynamic, soteriological, relational, Christological, and eschatological.

5. DYNAMIC UNITY

Usually, human unity has been conceived statically. Nevertheless, we must think of human unity as an active process of becoming whole within a historical and cultural context. Though we experience our human reality as a unity, we also experience a calling to deepen this unity by advancing in a dynamic personal and spiritual integration. Moreover, the experience that we are not yet fully realized confirms that human wholeness is not a state acquired once and for all but an open process that includes the risk of failing in such integrative development. This dynamic integrative process involves growth in wisdom, freedom, emotional maturity, social relations, and action in the heart of the world. It also includes growth in our personal relationship with God.

5.1. *Soteriological Unity*

Salvation should not be understood as a spiritual reality detached from the material. It should be understood in the context of a spiritualization of our systematic personal human unity. The personal spiritualization of our whole psychic-organic unity is not an automatic process. It is a divine calling to freely use human capacities to reach our ultimate potential. In the words of Teilhard de Chardin,

the further we advance along the highways of matter toward the perfecting of our organism, the more imperative will it become for the unity our being has won to be expressed, and to be completed, in the fibres of our consciousness by the predominance of spirit over flesh, by the harmonization and sublimation of our passions¹⁹².

¹⁹² Pierre TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, *Science and Christ*, trans. René Hague (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 33.

This embodied spiritualization encounters the experience of personal division, a reality that Paul mentions in Romans 7. In addition, we experience the vulnerability of our psychic-organic system, which is always at risk of losing its biological, emotional, psychological, and relational wholeness, particularly facing the menace of death. Moreover, violent, unstable, and pandemic events in our socio-cultural settings can become external sources of vulnerability, threatening our harmony. The opposite of human unity produces disintegration and human suffering. These experiences show our need for salvation, directly related to healing our unity and our growth in embodied spirituality.

In the New Testament, we find different, though complementary, notions of salvation. One of them sees salvation as the full realization of the human being. The Gospel of John teaches that Christ has come to provide us with the possibility of a more abundant life (Jn 10:10). For these reasons, there is a soteriological aspect of unity understood as a harmonic integration of all human realities and full human flourishing. We constantly need the salvation God offers to fulfill our psychic-organic spiritualization and personalization. Our soteriological unity is possible if we arrive at the maturity and fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13).

5.2. *Relational Unity*

Our dynamic and soteriological spiritualization is not achieved in a self-absorbed immanence and isolation. According to Scripture, the body is a human aspect that reflects our relationships with others¹⁹³. Christian Tradition affirms that we are created in the image and likeness of a Triune God, a community within personal differences. Our relational unity is displayed in various ways. First, precisely for being a psychic-organic unity, there is a relation to the whole creation that includes but goes beyond the organic exchanging of materials and energy with our milieu. Symbols and culture mediate our relationship with creation due to our psychic properties and functions. Our organic-symbolic relation with creation is a vital ingredient for finding purpose and pursuing personal, social, and cultural endeavors.

Second, the body as relational involves experiencing ourselves as a whole within the community with others. In Scripture, the other is considered as «bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh». We experience an inner calling to reveal ourselves while also being receptive to others' utterances. Furthermore, we are open to a personal, soteriological, and dynamic (historical) relationship with God, whose self-communication grounds our embodied unity and existence.

Accordingly, our matter-spirit unity implies that our immanence is open to transcendence, and our transcendence exists within our immanence. We are «united as a complete total reality», not in isolation, but always in relation to an otherness: creation, other human beings, and God.

¹⁹³ WOLFF, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, p. 29.

5.3. *Christological Unity*

The Council of Vienne emphasizes the connection between the incarnation of the Logos, human unity, and salvation. Christological unity is related to the mystery of Christ, the Logos Incarnate, the exemplar of our embodied spiritualization and personalization. Regarding the incarnation, Irenaeus affirms that God creates human nature to be assumed by the Logos¹⁹⁴. The bishop of Lyon understands this incarnation as the whole life of Christ, including its fullness in the resurrection. For him, Christ recapitulates in himself all creation and humanity. Consequently, we can affirm that Christ recapitulates the spiritualization and personalization of the psychic-organic structural unity. Christ fulfilled the meaning of human life: to be in communion, transfigured, and resurrected in God.

Christ's life deepens the embodied personalization and spiritualization through his wisdom, feelings, freedom, personal relationships, and the project of the Kingdom of God. Christ's relationship with his Father accomplishes, on an insuperable level, the wholeness of matter and spirit, organism and psyche, person and relations, in his structured unity.

Finally, the human embodied unity becomes fully spiritualized and divinized (*theosis*) in Christ. As the letter of Colossians puts it, «In Christ dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily» (Col 2:9-10). Christ's resurrection reveals God's intention of divinization regarding human bodily wholeness.

5.4. *Eschatological Unity*

As mentioned above, we experience intrinsic and structural human unity. Still, at the same time, we experience moments of lack of harmonic integration and conflicts with others that manifest that we are not yet fully realized. We live in our bodily self the eschatological tension expressed in the formula: human unity and wholeness as already present but not yet fully realized. What is fulfilled in Christ's resurrection awaits to be realized in us in the form of complete salvation and human realization of what is already spiritualized in our bodily beings: our conscience, freedom, intellect, personal projects, values, the meaning of life, interpersonal relations, and creation of culture. As Ilia Delio states:

The resurrection recapitulates the whole evolutionary emergent creation as a forward movement to become something new, a new reign of God, a new heaven on earth. What took place in Jesus Christ is intended for the whole cosmos, union, and transformation in the divine embrace of love¹⁹⁵.

¹⁹⁴ Irénée DE LYON, *Contre les hérésies: Dénonciation et réfutation de la gnose au nom menteur*, trans. Adelin Rousseau (Paris: Cerf, 1985), V, p. 33, 4.

¹⁹⁵ Ilia DELIO, *The Emergent Christ: Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2011), p. 77.

Meanwhile, we hope to achieve our wholeness by answering God's calling to collaborate in grace as co-creators of our dynamic, soteriological, relational, and Christological unity. God's calling and our collaboration are already an anticipation of the full spiritualization and divinization of our reality.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary sciences lead present scholars to reject all kinds of dualisms and to adopt monist anthropologies. Material monism (equivalent to reductive materialism) holds that our bodies are nothing more than their organic aspects, properties, and functions. For evident reasons, Christian theologians do not accept that anthropology. However, it would be a mistake to consider reductive all anthropological monism. Non-reductive monism integrates current scientific facts and is open to dialogue with Christian anthropology.

Christian anthropology could benefit from such a dialogue. It will contribute to it through the development of a non-reductive monism that follows Vienne's principle of «*simul unitas*», interpreted as «united as a whole» or «united as a complete total reality». By fully acknowledging human beings' strong, immediate, and intimate unity, a contemporary Christian non-reductive monism could and should incorporate the latest findings from neurosciences.

Furthermore, our understanding of the Council of Vienne's formulation of human unity, and its interpretation by some recent theological models, enables us to explore various theological perspectives on the issue of human unity, including dynamic, soteriological, relational, Christological, and eschatological aspects.

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