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Michael A. Moore, O.Carm., received from James McMahon, a diocesan priest, the offer of an endowed New York City parish and convent. Archbishop Corrigan did not allow the Carmelites to accept the offer and he was reported to Propaganda Fide for denying the Carmelites this benefice. Corrigan answered the charges. The Irish provincial came to New York seeking a resolution of this situation. When Corrigan offered him an East Side New York parish, the provincial accepted. Four Carmelites arrived in New York March, 1889 to begin Our Lady of the Scapular Parish. Corrigan feared the Carmelites' presence would cause his priests to lose their Scapular faculties. These were assured of these and McMahon made a formal apology for his accusations against Corrigan. The next foundation was in Tarrytown, NY. Edward Southwell, O.Carm., sought unsuccessfully to take the two foundations from the Irish Province. A parish in Otisville, NY and its missions was given to the Carmelites in 1910 but they moved their headquarters to Middletown, NY to have community life and better serve their pastoral obligations. After a search for a seminary site, the Carmelites bought Saint Albert's, Middletown, NY in 1917. In 1919 the Carmelites bought a house in the Bronx, NY and began Saint Simon Stock Parish. This gave the New York Carmelites five foundations. A commissary was established in 1922. Lawrence Flanagan, Commissary General, requested of the general the status of a province and it was granted in 1931.

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En continuación de la relectura de los textos antiguos referentes a la Ermita (desde la fundación de la Orden en el Monte Carmelo hasta el surgimiento del Carmelo Teresiano; ya publicada), aquí se hace una lectura teresiano-sanjuanista de la Ermita, actualizando la antigua interpretación de dos libritos (Valencia, 1773 y 1774), que eran de lectura obligada para los frailes que vivían en el Desierto de Las Palmas y se retiraban a sus ermitas.

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This article uses the illuminations in the Carmelite Missal, London (BL Additional 29704-5 & Additional 44892) as a case study to examine the functions of visual images in manuscripts. Such illuminations do not merely illustrate the text. In addition to their most simple function – to provide a simple visual index – they may be used to promote the patron

who provided payment for the production of the manuscript, for doctrinal affirmation and to evoke a devotional response. Lastly, they may have a social function, to be 'proclamatory', that is they make a public statement, often on a controversial issue. In this way the Carmelite Missal gives us an insight into Carmelite identity and their doctrinal and devotional interests.

- IAN CHRISTOPHER LEVY, Guido Terreni: Reading Holy Scripture within the Sacred Tradition** 73
- This study examines the ways in which the Carmelite theologian Guido Terreni (d. 1342) based his arguments against heresy upon the authority of Holy Scripture read within the enduring faith of the Catholic Church. As a theologian, and thus a magister sacrae paginae, Terreni recognized that Holy Scripture was the supreme standard of Catholic orthodoxy, but he refused to let Scripture be detached from its natural place within the life and tradition of the Roman Church. Terreni never ceded the apostolic ground to the heretical sects. In fact, he believed that the very authority and structure of the Church were rooted in the original apostolic witness as recorded in the New Testament. Terreni's principal goal was to preserve the ancient faith of the Church that is revealed in Holy Scripture and safe-guarded across the ages.*
- KEES VAN WAAIJMAN, O.CARM., Carmel: an Empty Space for God** 107
- The Carmelite Rule provides a set of practices and exercises to be interiorized: obedience, remaining in the cell, meditation on scripture, and so on. These practices are innerly oriented on the priority of the heart, creating an open space for God. This is not only the inner orientation of all the exercises presented in the Rule, it is also the inner dynamic and perspective of every exercise as such. This thesis will be demonstrated on the basis of three exercises: meditation, work, and silence.*
- HEIN BLOMMESTIJN, O.CARM., Praying in the dark** 127
- In the Carmelite tradition often is it spoken about the Dark Night. This idea is mostly linked to John of the Cross, but the tradition belongs more generally to human experiences of the mystical process. During the ages this idea is expressed in several ways to a whole cluster of metaphoric images, like desert, solitude, poverty etc. Today many people experience that their prayer is performed in darkness and getting more and more silent.*
- JOS HULS, O.CARM., Encountering God in the the Nothingness of being: Meister Eckhart** 139
- In his sermon "Intravit Jesus in quoddam castellum," which deals with the encounter between Martha and Jesus, Eckhart speaks of human receptivity as a precondition for the encounter with God. Although he sometimes seems to be raising abstract theological issues way above the heads of his unsophisticated public, he considers them a vital matter for inner*

life. Eckhart is in the first place a mystagogue. The images of the virgin, the wife and the citadel of the soul all seek to make us realise that our creaturely reality is a receiving reality that does not exist in itself. This tension opens up space for life as a dialogic reality. The spiritual way is depicted as a process in which we let the Other expose ever deeper levels of ourselves in light of the truth. From the human perspective this transformation is an annihilation that detaches us from our clinging to everything that God is not. In themselves humans are Nothing and their entire beings are suspended in God's being. It is at this point of our Nothingness – what Eckhart calls the citadel of our soul – that we are like God.

CARLOS MESTERS, O.CARM., *Jesus e a Tradição Sapiencial* 177

Nossa reflexão sobre “Jesus e a Tradição Sapiencial” terá três partes e um pequeno suplemento. A 1ª parte tenta definir o que entendemos por “Tradição Sapiencial”: sua origem; a evolução das suas formas literárias, e a ambivalência que afeta a Sabedoria na sua raiz. A 2ª parte descreve a evolução da Tradição Sapiencial ao longo dos séculos, desde o seu início até à sua influência na vida e na prática de Jesus. Nesta parte veremos as diversas formas de atuação da Sabedoria no meio do povo, tanto o seu desejo de dar nome às coisas e de controlar os vários setores da atividade humana como a sua resistência rebelde contra tudo que possa abafar ou diminuir as expressões da vida, por exemplo: a denúncia da superficialidade e a reconstrução do relacionamento humano na convivência diária (Qohelet); a crítica radical à manipulação da imagem de Deus (Jó); a resistência contra a marginalização e exclusão da mulher (Cântico, Rute). A 3ª parte procura oferecer um resumo de como Jesus se situava dentro da Tradição Sapiencial: sua atitude frente aos “sábios”, fariseus e escribas; sua maneira de ensinar e de transmitir o conhecimento; sua atitude frente à Lei de Deus; sua atitude frente às práticas e tradições religiosas; sua atitude frente às pessoas de outra raça e religião; sua atitude frente ao povo, sobretudo frente aos pobres; sua experiência de Deus que lhe dá um novo olhar para rever tudo. O suplemento final traz um resumo de como os primeiros cristãos identificavam Jesus como a sabedoria personificada de Deus

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EDITORIALE

Carissimi lettori,

siamo lieti di proporvi un nuovo numero di *Carmelus*, seppure ancora in ritardo sulla normale periodicità. Stiamo lavorando per recuperare il passo e speriamo proprio di tornare in pari con l'inizio del 2010. D'altra parte, i problemi organizzativi che abbiamo dovuto affrontare sono stati in certo modo provvidenziali, visto che ci hanno offerto l'occasione di metter mano ad una ristrutturazione generale della rivista. Ristrutturazione che non appare in modo evidente, ma richiede un ripensamento sia dal punto di vista editoriale, con una programmazione di maggior respiro e, speriamo, di qualità sempre maggiore. In tal senso una delle misure che stiamo per intraprendere è quella di sottoporre gli articoli alla lettura previa di esperti, per garantirne ulteriormente la qualità scientifica. Questo in realtà è sempre accaduto nel passato, benché in maniera non dichiarata e istituzionale, visto che i responsabili che si sono succeduti alla guida della rivista e i membri dell'*Institutum Carmelitanum* responsabili della pubblicazione erano persone di riconosciuta preparazione e competenza, le quali esaminavano e valutavano preventivamente i lavori proposti o richiesti. La ricerca e la condivisione dei risultati nella comunità degli studiosi hanno comunque bisogno di crescere sempre e di aggiornarsi e questa può essere l'occasione opportuna per sviluppare capacità e confronti utili a far conoscere ad un pubblico sempre più vasto la ricchezza della storia del Carmelo e della sua spiritualità.

Si tratta di uno dei principali compiti istituzionali che l'*Institutum carmelitanum* persegue ormai da 58 anni, un'età di tutto rispetto per un'istituzione chiamata a investigare la ricchissima tradizione del Carmelo in tutte le sue dimensioni: personali e comunitarie, spirituali e pratiche, teologiche e culturali, sociali ed ecclesiali, ecc. Perciò il Comitato Centrale dell'*Institutum carmelitanum* sta lavorando in varie direzioni, sia sul versante della ricerca che su quello della comunicazione, per mettere a disposizione del più ampio numero di specialisti, studiosi, studenti e persone variamente interessate risultati delle ricerche, testi, notizie e documenti.

Tra l'altro è in programma una serie di seminari sul tema della contemplazione nel Carmelo, ai quali saranno invitate studiosi non solo carmelitani. Si tratterà di un percorso articolato in moduli temporali successivi, con approccio interdisciplinare ai testi proposti, in vista di una sintesi globale che illustri in che modo il concetto di contemplazione proprio del Carmelo si è evoluto, se e in che misura può aver influito sul più vasto mondo ecclesiale e culturale.

Sono in programma anche altre iniziative di pubblicazione di testi spirituali e mistici, carmelitani e non, in vista di una loro maggiore e più profonda diffusione in aree linguistiche diverse. Inoltre è già a buon punto la digitalizzazione dei testi costituzionali dell'Ordine: si prevede una nuova collana in cui saranno pubblicati tutti a partire dalle Costituzioni più antiche dei frati note (quelle del Capitolo di Londra del 1281) fino alle attuali; si proseguirà con i testi delle Congregazioni di Osservanza e le Costituzioni dei Riformati; per terminare si pensa alla trascrizione dei testi delle Costituzioni delle monache. La collana prevede anche l'elaborazione di indici utili alla ricerca e allo studio di tutto il materiale.

Un'ulteriore iniziativa in programma riguarda i *Monastica* nazionali, alcuni dei quali già in avanzato stato di elaborazione e altri da completare o da aggiornare. Si pensa di pubblicarli per offrire ai ricercatori strumenti indispensabili per la conoscenza della storia delle migliaia di conventi di frati e suore carmelitani che hanno costellato tutte le regioni europee. Molti di essi sono ormai abbandonati, ma proprio per questo è necessario raccoglierne la memoria indicandone altresì i principali riferimenti archivistici e bibliografici.

Il presente fascicolo si apre con un articolo di Alfred Isacson, O. Carm., che tratta della fondazione dell'Ordine Carmelitano nello stato di New York. La ricerca presenta le vicende della fondazione e illustra il coraggio di diversi carmelitani autori di quella missione.

Fa seguito un altro articolo di Ignacio Husillos Tamarit, O.C.D. sulla lettura teresiano-giovanista dell'eremitismo nel deserto di las Palmas (Castellón). L'autore, riprendendo il discorso iniziato nell'articolo pubblicato nel precedente numero di *Carmelus* (55/1 [2008], pp. 7-40), in cui trattava della vita eremitica carmelitana in generale, questa volta esamina lo stesso tema nelle opere di s. Teresa di Gesù e s. Giovanni della Croce. Con l'aiuto di testi sulla vita eremitica tratti dalle opere di ambedue i santi, l'autore cerca di sintetizzare diversi aspetti importanti della vita eremitica. Inoltre indica anche i punti di contatto e le differenze sul tema tra i due grandi santi e termina indicando l'aspetto a suo parere più importante di questa forma di vita, che potrebbe essere utile anche al presente.

Valerie Edden presenta la sua ricerca sull'iconografia liturgica carmelitana in epoca medievale. L'argomento risulta importante per diversi aspetti riguardo alla vita carmelitana in particolare dal punto liturgico. Il suo articolo indirizza il nostro sguardo sulla storia del Carmelo e in particolare ci informa su diversi aspetti significativi dell'importanza della liturgia carmelitana e sulle celebrazioni più importanti.

Uno dei principali teologi del XIV secolo fu il carmelitano Guido Terreni di Perpignano. Il ricco articolo di Ian Levy illustra la prospettiva biblica della sua teologia, tutta fondata su solide basi scritturistiche. La Sacra Scrittura, per Terreni, costituiva, infatti, il fondamento sicuro e infallibile, capace di sostenere la vera ortodossia e, dunque, di contrastare e vincere ogni eresia.

La ricerca di Kees Waaijman intitolata "Carmel: an Empty Space for God" presenta un'interessante possibile lettura della Regola del Carmelo, alla luce di quello che l'autore chiama lo "spazio mistico". Si tratta di un ulteriore contributo al già ricco panorama di interpretazioni della Regola carmelitana. All'inizio della ricerca, Kees Waaijman indica il significato e lo scopo del termine "empty space", inteso in senso mistico. Prosegue presentando diversi modi per conquistare lo spazio mistico e conclude dimostrando l'importanza dello spazio mistico nel nostro cammino di vita.

Non è certo necessario spiegare cosa sia la "notte oscura", vista la notorietà di tale termine creato da s. Giovanni della Croce e ormai classico nella teologia spirituale. Diversi mistici fino ad oggi hanno seguito la sua traccia, apportando al concetto contributi interessanti di approfondimento teorico ed esperienziale. Hein Blommestijn, presenta una panoramica con cui l'espressione "notte oscura" è stata usata dalla *Noche Obscura* di Giovanni della Croce e da altri mistici. L'articolo cerca di filtrare il significato dell'espressione usata dagli autori scelti studiati nel contesto della loro ambiente e della vita spirituale del tempo.

Jos Huls nel suo articolo intitolato "Encountering God in the Nothingness of Being" affronta il tema affascinante suggerito dall'apparente aporia indicata dal titolo. Occasione della riflessione è l'esame dell'omelia di Meister Eckhart sull'incontro tra Marta e Gesù. Lo studio esamina attentamente questo incontro dal punto di vista mistico, illustrando i diversi termini usati. Si tratta essenzialmente di termini mutuati dall'ambito filosofico, perciò l'autore cerca di approfondirne il significato ponendoli in relazione con l'ambito spirituale. Alla fine della ricerca, presenta una breve bibliografia utile a chi intenda approfondire il tema.

Chiude il fascicolo l'articolo di Carlos Mesters. Da biblista l'autore affronta un argomento molto attuale: il rapporto fra Gesù e la tradizione sapienziale. La sua ricerca inizia con l'indicazione del significato della tradizione sapienziale e la sua identità nella Sacra Scrittura, in particolare nell'Antico Testamento. Cerca poi di identificare il cammino della tradizione sapienziale al tempo di Gesù Cristo. Il punto successivo della ricerca propone in che modo Gesù si può situare nella tradizione sapienziale. Anche in questo caso si presenta una bibliografia per approfondire l'argomento.

La Redazione

A CHILD OF IRELAND THE FOUNDING OF
THE NEW YORK PROVINCE OF SAINT ELIAS

ALFRED ISACSSON, O.CARM.

The Irish Carmelite, Andrew Day, wrote in 1852 to Joseph Lobina, the general, about the needs of Catholics in the United States. He explained that many Irish had emigrated there and their faith was exposed to many dangers. Day related that he had often been invited to work there by bishops and priests. He favored New York or Philadelphia.¹

As was the case with many of their fellow countrymen, the eastern shores of the Atlantic beckoned the Carmelites of Ireland. The provincial, Simon Carr, had in 1873 at least two of the province go to the United States for vacation. Apparently, these two were not the only ones to sail to America for their holidays.²

The Irish Province in 1889 had forty-six priests and fourteen clerical students in their membership. This does not include those members working in the United States in the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province. Twenty-three stationed in Dublin at Whitefriars Street was indicative of a surplus.³

Michael A. Moore was the Irish provincial, 1878-81, and visited Rome at the end of his term. The following year, he left for Australia. Moore had received from the general a commission to collect alms not only in Australia but also in North and South America.⁴ It was probably in connection with this work that Michael Moore was in New York where he met on September 5, 1887, a priest of the archdiocese, James McMahan. McMahan had studied in Canada and was ordained a Sulpician but was persuaded by John Farley, later to become the

¹ Day to Lobina, Dublin, Oct 16, 1852, Archives of the Order (AO), II Hib 3.

² Carr to Savini, Dublin, Nov 24, 1873; same to same, Dublin, May 18, 1874, AO, II Hib 1.

³ Visitation Report, Galli, Sept, 1890, AO, II Hib, 1.

⁴ Farrington to Savini, [Dublin], May 13, 1882, AO, II, Hib 1; *Regista Savini* (1863-1881) 94, AO, II CO1 (68).

cardinal archbishop of New York, to join the archdiocese where he had become the pastor of Saint Andrew's. In their conversations, McMahon offered Moore and the Carmelites an endowed parish and convent. When Moore told Archbishop Corrigan of New York of this, his initial reaction to this offer was favorable and Moore was optimistic.⁵

When Moore told McMahon of Corrigan's favorable reaction, McMahon put his offer into writing specifying the amount of money involved. Moore told his provincial, John Bartley, of McMahon's offer. He replied to Moore that he should go ahead and secure this foundation. When Moore showed McMahon's written offer and Bartley's permission to Corrigan, the archbishop said that he would see his consultors.⁶

The site offered the Carmelites by James McMahon was on the west side of Manhattan's Central Park close to the present Museum of Natural History. This the consultors felt was too close to Blessed Sacrament Church. Faced with this refusal, Corrigan offered a compromise. The Carmelites had to help Matthew Taylor, the Blessed Sacrament's pastor, with his debt. They would pay for eleven years the interest on \$50,000 or \$2,500 a year. Moore responded that he had to consult his provincial and McMahon. Bartley accepted Corrigan's compromise.⁷

Michael Moore saw Andrew Donnelly, vicar general, about the McMahon offer and was told that it was too close to Blessed Sacrament. Moore then went to see Archbishop Corrigan who expressed sorrow at his inability to make possible the acceptance of McMahon's offer. He did offer Moore part of Saint Stephen's parish on New York's East Side along with the care of Bellevue Hospital. In response to this, McMahon said that he had made his offer but had no power to make it acceptable. When Moore reported this to Corrigan, the archbishops said the matter was ended.⁸

Early on in this venture on December 14, 1887, John Bartley wrote to his assistant general, Luigi Galli, of the denial by Archbishop Corrigan of the benefice offered the Carmelites by McMahon. This letter found its way to *Propaganda Fide* under whose jurisdiction the

⁵ *De Un Cospicuo Dono*, Rome, 1888, 3-4, Archives of the New York Province (ANYP).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 6-8; Taylor to Corrigan, NY, Apr 9, 1889, Archives of the Archdiocese of New York, Dunwoodie (DA); Blessed Sacrament, cf. *Vestigium IV*, no. 3, 29-33.

⁸ *Di Un Cospicuo Dono*, 9-11.

United States was. There the notation, "P. Bartley asks to found a house in New York," was written on the letter.⁹

Cardinal Simeoni, the head of *Propaganda Fide*, requested from Corrigan on January 26, 1888 why he had denied this benefice offered to the Carmelites by McMahan.¹⁰ Corrigan replied on February 10, 1888. It is obvious that James McMahan was not one of the archbishop's favorite priests. In the first part of his two part letter, Corrigan very undiplomatically informed Simeoni that he was ignorant of the facts of the matter - a fatal mistake when dealing with any superior. He mentioned that his consultants felt there were too many churches in the area designated for the Carmelites and his consultants denied the request. Then in the second part marked "*riservata*," the archbishop stated that McMahan owned a hotel in Long Branch, New Jersey, that on one occasion he had been drunk in public and had used the money collected for a school in his parish to build a grand rectory. The site offered the Carmelites was one McMahan had sold but had to take back when the buyer was unable to make the mortgage. Finally, Corrigan saw "D. Giacomo," as he called him, making the offer to the Carmelites in restitution.¹¹

Bartley again wrote his general Angelo Savivni on March 14, 1888. The provincial felt the denial of the benefice was an evil matter that should be corrected. He expressed hopes of still obtaining a New York foundation.¹² The substance of the reply of Corrigan to Simeoni was forward on March 21, 1888 to the Carmelite procurator general who ordinarily handled the order's affairs in Rome.¹³

At the end of May, 1888 Michael Moore arrived in Rome via Ireland. Letters sent to Rome concerning the McMahan offer had been turned into a complaint of injustice to the Carmelites. In the files of the Carmelites archives there are a good number of written foolscaps concerning the offer and how its denial was such an injustice. They are in different hands and with the arrival of Moore in Rome his

⁹ Bartley to Galli, Dublin, Dec 14, 1887, in *Propaganda Fide* (PF), Rome, *Scrittura Originali Riferite nei Congressi, America Centrale*, 1887, 2 Semestre, # 1347, 1349.

¹⁰ Simeoni to Corrigan, Rome, Jan 26, 1888, #5825-1887, DA I-4; draft in PF, *Lettere e Decreti della S.C.*, 1888, #33, 5825.

¹¹ Corrigan to Simeoni, NY, Feb 10, 1888, PR, *Scrittura Riferite nei Congressi, America Centrale*, 1888 (48) 1 Semestre, # 137; a draft of the entire letter is in DA, I-41.

¹² Bartley to Savini, Dublin, Mar 14, 1888, AO.

¹³ *Propaganda Fide* to Procurator General of the Carmelites, Rome, M1r, 21, 1888, draft, PF, *Lettere e Decreti della S. C.* (1888), # 169-1015. June 20, 1987 then procurator general of the order informed me verbally that his files dated back only to 1927.

contributions appear. He appears to have been responsible for the final form of the entire set of notes which was printed as *Di un Cospicuo Dono* and a copy was received at *Propaganda Fide* on June 7, 1888 the same date that Moore has at the end of this treatise.

On *Propaganda's* copy is written "After the printing of this document, Mgr. Archbishop of New York sent in answer the following telegram 'New York, June 10, 1888. Consultors decided against the offer. Archbishop'."¹⁴ There are only three days between the reception of *Di un Cospicuo Dono* at *Propaganda Fide* and the reply of Corrigan. This was possible because Ella Edes, an agent of Corrigan with intimate access at *Propaganda Fide*, wired the reception of a pamphlet by Moore which "attacks not only Archbishop Corrigan but also his predecessors in the See of New York."¹⁵ An immediate reply was thus possible.

John Bartley, despite the denials for the McMahan site still hoped for a foundation in New York. He wrote of this to general Angelo Savini and his intention of going to New York to pursue them.¹⁶ Bartley went to stay with the Carmelites of the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province at Saint Cecilia's in Englewood, New Jersey. From there he wrote Archbishop Corrigan requesting an appointment.¹⁷ Bartley saw Corrigan, McMahan and the East Side site offered Moore by Corrigan. McMahan would not allow his offer to be transferred to the East Side site.¹⁸ Corrigan notified Bartley that the consultors had reaffirmed their opposition to the McMahan site. Bartley expressed to Corrigan the hope "that you will soon be able to accept a gift by which religion will be greatly benefitted."¹⁹

Visiting Corrigan again, Bartley was urged by the archbishop to accept the East Sided site. The Carmelites in Englewood did the same. Apparently Bartley decided to follow the advice he was given and sought permission from Savini. He asked the general to cable "*etiam*" or "yes" giving his permission.²⁰

¹⁴ PF, *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi, America Centrale*, 1888, 1 Semestre; Alfred Isacson, *Carmel in New York, 1889-1906*, Maspeth, 1978, 26-30 summarizes findings about the origin and composition of *Di un Cospicuo Dono*.

¹⁵ Private Record, Mar 16, 1888, 138, DA; for Edes, cf. Bruce Kupelnick, *Encyclopedia of American Church History* Thomas Shelley, Michael Glazier, Editors, Collegeville, 1997, 478-9.

¹⁶ Bartley to Savini, Dublin, Sept 17, 1888, AO, II Hib 1.

¹⁷ Bartley to Corrigan, Englewood, Nov 17, 1888, DA, C-21.

¹⁸ Bartley to Savini, Englewood, Nov 28, 1888, AO, II Hib 1.

¹⁹ Bartley to Corrigan, Englewood, Dec 8, 1888, DA, C-21.

²⁰ Bartley to Savini, Englewood, Dec 11, Dec 17, both in AO, II Hib 1.

Savini cabled one of the positive choices as Bartley was able to write Corrigan that he had the general's permission and would pick out a site for the church within the limits set for him by the archbishop. Bartley then intended to return to Dublin and bring back with him fathers to begin the parish.²¹

John Bartley chose seven adjoining lots on the East Side, four on 28th Street and three on 29th Street and had Theodore McDonald of the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province purchase them and he, in turn, signed them over to Archbishop Corrigan. Bartley planned to get living quarters before returning to Ireland.²² While this was in progress, Corrigan applied and received from *Propaganda Fide* permission for the Carmelites to accept the parish in New York.²³

Bartley had Edward Southwell, Philip McDonnell and Michael Daly pack their bags for the trip to New York where they would build a church.²⁴ The four left from Cobh on March 21 on the *SS Germanic* and arrived in New York on March 29.²⁵ The Carmelites went to live at the Sinclair House, Broadway and 8th Street and then to a rented house on East 30th Street. They were able to purchase in November, 1889, a house on East 29th Street adjoining their church property.²⁶

While the Carmelites were organizing their parish and saying Mass at Duke's Tobacco Factory at 29th Street and First Avenue, when Archbishop's Corrigan's mail on April 5, 1889 contained two items that would be for him a source of discomfort. One was a copy of the April, 1889 issue of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* containing an article by Pius Mayer, then an assistant general of the order. Mayer stated that the presence of a Carmelite house within five miles removed any faculties given to priests for imposing the Brown Scapular. Archbishop Corrigan had obtained these faculties for his priests and through his granting the Carmelites a parish, they would disappear. Also in the mail were 8½' "by 14" typed pages of material from Michael Moore's *Di Un Cospicue Dono*. Corrigan said he would never have given the Carmelites a parish had he known of these two matters. The New York Carmelites claimed no knowledge of "Moore's dirty work." Corrigan wrote Moore on April 23 demanding a retraction of the charges he had made. Corrigan also drew up a document "Conditions

²¹ Bartley to Corrigan, Englewood, Dec 27, 1888, DA, C-21.

²² Bartley to Savini, Englewood, Feb 1, 1889, AO, II Hib 1.

²³ PF, Rescript, Jan 20, 1889, AN YP.

²⁴ Bartley to Savini, Dublin, Mar 14, 1889, AO, II Hib 1.

²⁵ Dixon, Frank *Archbishop Corrigan and the Irish Carmelites*, Maspeth, [1977], 1.

²⁶ "Members of the 28th Street Community," *Vestigium V*, no 3, 8-9.

of Foundation” in which demanded the suspension of the Scapular regulation and Moore’s retraction of his charges.²⁷

John Bartley received from Savini in Rome the information that Scapular privileges remained to the priests and churches of New York and he forwarded this to Corrigan.²⁸ Corrigan, meanwhile was gathering material to defend himself from Moore’s accusations.²⁹ He also communicated to Moore that if there was not a retraction, the fathers would have to return to Dublin.³⁰ Moore sent an apology to Corrigan but the archbishop did not consider it sufficient. Bartley apparently fed up with the intransigence of Moore, placed the entire matter in the hands of Savini.³¹

Corrigan drew up an agreement by which for the sum of one dollar, the Carmelites would agree to the retention of Scapular faculties by the New York priests. He insisted it be signed by the general. This Savini did.³²

There was a Carmelite general chapter in Rome in October, 1889. Luigi Galli was the newly elected general and probably through Bartley’s arrangements, Cardinal Simeoni of *Propaganda Fide*, Galli and three other Carmelites convened to hear the total retraction by Moore of all he had written about Corrigan. The archbishop was appeased and the first Irish foundation in New York was established on firm grounds.³³

The first mention in documents of Tarrytown is in a letter of the provincial, Joseph Hall, to Galli informing the general that Archbishop Corrigan had offered the Carmelites a parish in Tarrytown, “fifteen miles” from New York.³⁴ Hall wrote to Corrigan of the Carmelite acceptance of the parish.³⁵ The property chosen by Edward Southwell was the Cleveland Estate located on Broadway at Cleveland Place,

²⁷ Corrigan to Preston, NY, Apr 5, 1889; Conditions of Foundation, April, 1889; Private Record, 138-9, all DA.

²⁸ Savini to Bartley, Rome, cable, Apr 5, 1889; Bartley to Corrigan, Dublin, June 7, 1889, two items, DA.

²⁹ Statement, Galligan, Apr 11, 1889; Answers to Moore’s Allegations of June 7, 1888; Purchase of Property in Manhattan Square, all in DA.

³⁰ Corrigan to Moore, NY, May 27, 1889, copy, DA.

³¹ Bartley to Corrigan, Dublin, June 21, 1889, DA.

³² Agreement, Carmelites and Corrigan, Sept 14, 1889, Our Lady of the Scapular File, Chancery Office, Archdiocese of New York.

³³ Bartley to Corrigan, Rome, Oct 25, 1899; Moore to Corrigan, Rome, Oct 25, 1889 both in DA C-39.

³⁴ Hall to Galli, Dublin, Jan 17m 1895, AO, II Hjib 1.

³⁵ Hall to Corrigan, Dublin, Jan 17, 1895, AO, II Hib 1.

presently Prospect Street. It extended from Broadway, a main north south road, to the Croton Aqueduct of New York City. The price was \$25,000 but legal problems were involved in the transfer of the parcel. Southwell felt that clear title would be obtained by July, 1896. The house was purchased for the Carmelites by Thomas M. Ryan to conceal the real purchasers and prevent a rise in price because of the purchase for a religious institution.³⁶ The first Mass in the parish was offered on Rosary Sunday, 1896, in a room of the Cleveland mansion. It was on October 24, 1897, that Archbishop Corrigan traveled from the city to bless the cornerstone of the church which was dedicated on October 16 a year later. On both occasions Corrigan mentioned that besides being a parish, the foundation was to be a formation house for the Carmelites. Corrigan also said that the name of the parish, Transfiguration, was suggested by Joseph Egan, the past of neighboring Saint Teresa, North Tarrytown, now Sleepy Hollow. Egan felt the name referring to Elias at the Transfiguration fitted the past of the Carmelites.³⁷ Archbishop Corrigan asked *Propaganda Fide* for the canonical establishment of the parish at Tarrytown and the congregation asked General Galli for information. He wrote in reply that Corrigan had asked the Carmelites to establish the parish. It was open and when more priests came from Ireland, it would have regular observance. Galli seconded Corrigan's petition.³⁸

The establishment was granted.³⁹

No pastor was appointed for Transfiguration. Southwell and other Carmelites commuted from the city for many of the services. He also obtained the services of Carmelites of the Most Pure Heart of Mary Province in Englewood. When interrogated by Corrigan about a pastor, Southwell replied that personnel problems prevented an appointment. Some were unable and some were unwilling to serve and he promised to care for the parish and that it would not be neglected.⁴⁰ A month later, Southwell had Thomas I. McDermott

³⁶ Ryan to Southwell, Daly and Stone, Sept 26, 1896; Southwell, Daly and Stone to the Missionary Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 24, 1897, lib 1465, p. 366. Contrary to archdiocesan regulations, the property was purchased in the name of the Carmelites. When a loan was sought by the parish to enlarge Transfiguration School, the archdiocese brought about the transfer of the property to the parish corporation.

³⁷ Mt. Pleasant News (N. Tarrytown) Oct 21, 1898.

³⁸ Galli to *Propaganda Fide*, Rome, Sept 27, 1897, copy, AO, II Hib 1.

³⁹ Rescript, *Propaganda Fide*, Nov 2, 1897, N. 25486, ANYP.

⁴⁰ Southwell to Corrigan, Tarrytown, Oct 17, 1898, DA C-35.

residing in Tarrytown but he was retaining charge of the parish. He would leave it this way until the provincial appointed a “regular superior.”⁴¹

In 1899, Andrew Farrington was elected the Irish provincial. Because of discontent with his administration, Richard Colfer was appointed commissary general and conducted a visitation of the Irish and New York houses. The result of these was that the New York and Tarrytown houses were to be separated. New York money had been used to establish the Tarrytown parish and Colfer set up a repayment of this debt by both houses. Finally, a pastor was to be appointed. Bishop Farley told Colfer that if there was no pastor appointed, the Carmelites would have to leave.⁴² All this brought Southwell to action. Simon O’Byrne was appointed pastor and Tarrytown was separated from New York.⁴³ Eight years after its foundation, Transfiguration had a pastor and became an established house.

Edward Southwell began an enduring correspondence with Luigi Galli, the general (1889-1900). When Southwell began, he proposed the separation of Our Lady of the Scapular from the Irish province. By July, 1897, Southwell enlarged his plan to include the Tarrytown parish but wanted the two houses placed directly under the general. He tried to include the American province in this and was able to have Anastatius Kreidt promise him two men for his plan. Southwell tried unsuccessfully to gain the support of Sebastian Martinelli, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. He was successful with Archbishop Corrigan who wrote a letter of support to Luigi Galli. After the death of Galli in 1900, Southwell enlisted the aid of Pius Mayer, assistant general. Southwell briefed Mayer on his plan and asked him to explain it to Simon Bernadini, the new general. By this time, Southwell had involved in his plan, at least in his own mind, the American Province’s parish in Englewood, New Jersey.

The term of the provincial, Michael A. O’Reilly, ended in 1909 and Edward Southwell was elected his successor. Once he had the authority of provincial, Edward Southwell never pursued his separation plan leading one to wonder if the possession of authority was behind it all.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Southwell to Corrigan, NY, Nov 20, 1898, DA G-35.

⁴² Colfer to Bernadini, Dublin, July 24, [1902], CG, Hib (1900-5).

⁴³ Southwell to Mayer, NY, Sept 18, 1902, CG, Hib (1900-5).

⁴⁴ ALFRED ISACSSON, “Edward Southwell’s Plan,” in *The Sword* 65 (Fall, 2005) 191-205.

A mission church of Transfiguration, Tarrytown was Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Elmsford, NY, just a little over a mile east of the mother church. There are no documents concerning its establishment but when Joseph Butler a Carmelite from Dublin was visiting in 1904 a church was under construction in the midst of a housing development.⁴⁵

While he was stationed at Transfiguration with Denis O'Connor, Lawrence D. Flanagan used to commute to Saint Joseph Church in Wurtsboro, NY to assist in Sunday Masses. How he traveled is not chronicled but provincial lore is that he used "milk trains" to reach the mother church or one of its four or five missions. These early morning train collected the fresh milk from farmers and brought it to the creamery. One of these missions he served was in Otisville, NY.

Edward Southwell, then the Irish provincial, received the "gift" of the parish of the Holy Name of Jesus in Otisville, NY along with the tubercular sanitarium in the village.⁴⁶ Father Basset, the Wurtsboro pastor, had written Archbishop Farley that he was caring for four churches while building another one. He had Mass in Otisville every other Sunday but if he were to care for the sanitarium, he would have Mass at Otisville just once a month.⁴⁷ This perhaps was influential in Farley asking the Carmelites to assume care of Otisville.

Carmelite ministry began in 1910 with Lawrence D. Flanagan as the first resident pastor. Though Farley had given him \$500 towards the building of a rectory, Flanagan boarded in a cottage near the church.⁴⁸ The contract between the Archdiocese of New York and the Carmelites was very explicit. It gave to the care of the Carmelites Holy Name Parish in Otisville and the missions of Our Lady of the Assumption in Bloomingburg and Saint Paul in Bullville.⁴⁹

Farley wanted to make a parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Elmsford, the mission of Transfiguration in Tarrytown and told Southwell he wanted to make one of his priests the pastor. Faced with this change, Southwell pressed Farley for a parish in Middletown, NY, where he could have four or five Carmelites who would care for the Otisville parish and its missions from the Middletown location. Farley granted this request.

⁴⁵ Diary of Joseph Butler (1904-7), Archives Irish Province.

⁴⁶ Southwell to Mayer, Tarrytown, Oct 25, 1910, AO, Hib (1906-21).

⁴⁷ Basset to [Farley], n.p. Feb 24, 1908, DA, I-14.

⁴⁸ Flanagan to Daly, Williamstown, Feb 22, 1957, ANYP

⁴⁹ Ferrante to Southwell, NY, Aug 5, 1911; Agreement, Farley and Southwell, July 27, 1911, ANYP.

Southwell chose a “business and industrial” section of the city for the new parish. A house with a large barn and a grist mill was bought in November, 1912. The barn was converted into a chapel where the first Mass was at 5:00 AM on Christmas morning. Peter Elias Magennis preached at the 10:00 AM Mass that day.⁵⁰ The church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, was not built until 1925 because of the lack of funds.⁵¹

Denis O’Connor, the superior at Our Lady of the Scapular, apparently asked Richard Colfer, the pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Middletown, to search for a house for the formation of students, a goal mentioned repeatedly by Irish provincial chapters.⁵²

Colfer found a large estate with an apple orchard and pond that he felt would be suitable. The price was \$20,000 with \$500 to be paid on signing and \$7,500 to be paid at the closing leaving a mortgage of \$12,000. There were a number of problems about the land and covenants but all were cleared for the closing on August 13, 1917.⁵³ John Cardinal Farley was so pleased by the Carmelites opening a house for candidates that he sent a \$500 donation.⁵⁴

Once this house for a preparatory seminary was established, it became obvious that a novitiate, the next stage of student formation, was needed. Land adjoining the original purchase and including another lake, a house and cabin were purchased from Romer Grey, the brother of Zane Grey the author of American westerns. An addition including classrooms, dining room and chapel was added to the Grey residence.⁵⁵

The establishment of this preparatory seminary was so pleasing to John Cardinal Farley of New York that he promised the Carmelites “a beautiful parish in apart of New York with great promise for the future.” It was not to be done until after World War I.⁵⁶ Farley’s death in 1918 appeared to cancel the promise but the Irish provincial, John Cogan, came to New York to see Farley’s successor, Patrick Hayes,

⁵⁰ Unidentified newspaper clipping, Apr 26, 1913 ANYP.

⁵¹ *Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Middletown, New York*, Hackensack, 1976, 3-5.

⁵² The original purpose of Tarrytown was to be a preparatory college for students, *Church of the Transfiguration, Fortieth Anniversary, 1938*, nul. pag., ANYP; *Acta Capituli Provincialis*, June 2, 1903 and May 8, 1906, both in ACP, CG Hib (Capituli et Congregationes, 1900-64).

⁵³ O’Connor to Cortina, Mortgage, Aug 13, 1917, Lib 504, p. 295; ALFRED ISACSSON, *The Lands of Saint Albert’s Junior Seminary*, Middletown, 1973, 1-5.

⁵⁴ Farley to Southwell, NY, Sept 25, 1916, ANYP.

⁵⁵ Grey to the Missionary Society, Apr 1, 1921, lib. 609, p. 410; Dormitory Specifications, Ewing and Allen, May 28, 1923, ANYP.

⁵⁶ Magennis to Lorenzoni, NY, Apr 3, 1918, CG, Generali 2.

about the promise. He was successful and received from Hayes the promise of a parish “in the northern part of the city.”⁵⁷

Denis O’ Connor bought in 1919 land with a house on Valentine Avenue at 184th Street in the Bronx for the new parish of Saint Simon Stock.⁵⁸ The package of permissions needed for the new parish was completed by the Congregation of Religious on February 17, 1920.⁵⁹

The large house on the property was used for Mass beginning on Palm Sunday, March 28, 1920. As the church and parish buildings neared completion in 1921, Gerard O’Farrell, the pastor, duelled by mail with Archbishop Hayes over the ceremony concluding the building. In a sense, O’Farrell won because Hayes came on October 2, 1921 for a combined cornerstone laying and church dedication. Hilary Doswald, president of Saint Cyril College, Chicago, gave the address.⁶⁰

With the opening of Saint Simon Stock, the Carmelites in New York had five houses: Our Lady of the Scapular, Transfiguration, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Saint Albert’s and Saint Simon Stock. The journal for the New York Carmelite Bazaar of 1922 referred to Denis O’Connor as the “Pro. Provincial.” At the Irish chapter of that year, Peter Elias Magennis, the general, appointed Denis O’Connor the “procurator provincial” before any deliberations took place. Magennis did this because New York had the hope of becoming a province. A petition for the Congregation of Religious was drawn up but found not to be needed. There is no extant document for the establishment of the commissary and a petition was never filed at the Congregation of Religious because it was a matter for the order. The date of the commissary is September 7, 1922, the opening of the Irish chapter.⁶¹

Denis O’Connor, while he was the commissary general, was also the pastor of Our Lady of the Scapular and very active in the Irish Freedom Movement making his parish a center of Irish cultural and social activities. He was ill for some time and though there are various accounts of his malady, there is no authoritative description of its nature.

⁵⁷ Cogan to Lorenzoni, NY, Apr 23, 1919; same to same, Dublin, July 26, 1919, both in CG, Hib (1906-21).

⁵⁸ Agreement, O’Connor and Roth, Dec 4, 1919; Certificate of Incorporation, Mar 23, 1920, CONY.

⁵⁹ Establishment of St. Simon Stock, Lib. III, p. 130/1920, ANYP.

⁶⁰ O’Farrell to Dineen, Bronx, Sept 28, 1921, DA O 19a; HILARY DOSWALD, *Carmel in New York*, no place, [1921].

⁶¹ N. IV *America S. P. Eliae, erectio Commissariatus*, Mar 5, 1923, CG, Am Sti Eliae (1922-38).

⁶² ALFRED ISACSSON, *Carmel in New York, 1906-1926*, Maspeth, [1977], 199-200.

He died at Saint Vincent's Hospital on March 1, 1924.⁶² The general, Peter Elias Magennis wrote of O'Connor, "The death of O'Connor was a calamity not only for the Commissariat but especially for us in Rome because the Fathers can't help us as he did; we miss friends."⁶³

Magennis named Gerard O'Farrell the commissary general and named the commissary "The Irish-American Commissariat of Saint Simon Stock." O'Farrell resigned his pastorate of Saint Simon Stock to devote himself entirely to his new responsibilities.⁶⁴ Gerard O'Farrell had the problem of kidney stones that required surgery for its alleviation. His responsibilities especially construction at Saint Simon Stock inclined him to postpone his operation. He finally went to the hospital and had the operation but died afterwards on June 15, 1926 of complications after the surgery.⁶⁵

The meeting of the consultors after the death of O'Farrell was postponed a number of times but when it was finally held, Lawrence D. Flanagan tied with Robert Power then in Australia but Flanagan was appointed to the position.⁶⁶

In a letter of November 14, 1930, to the general, Peter Elis Magennis, Flanagan dealt with a number of matters and in between these Flanagan requested that his commissariat be established as a province. He mentioned in his favor that this was a goal also of Magennis.⁶⁷ A petition to the Sacred Congregation of Religious was drawn up with this request. The response was positive and with this faculty, the order established the Province of Saint Elias.⁶⁸ A child of Ireland was born.

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⁶³ Magennis to Franco, NY, [Aug 11, 1924], CG, Generali 2.

⁶⁴ Decree, E. Magennis, Rome, Nov 3, 1924; unidentified clippings, St. Simon Stock scrapbook, both ANYP.

⁶⁵ *The New York Times* (June 16, 1926) 25; (June 17, 1926) 23.

⁶⁶ Consultors Minutes, Nov 22, 1926; Decree, E. Magennis, Sept 3, 1926, both in ANYP.

⁶⁷ Flanagan to Magennis, Bronx, Nov 14, 1930, copy, ANYP.

⁶⁸ Sacred Congregation of Religious, Mar 24, 1931, 1319/31; Decree, Franco, VG, Mar 31, 1931, copy ANYP.

LECTURA TERESIANO-SANJUANISTA DE LA ERMITA DESDE EL DESIERTO DE LAS PALMAS

IGNACIO HUSILLOS TAMARIT, O.C.D.

I. INTRODUCCIÓN

La ermita. Ése es el objetivo de mi estudio desde hace unos años, a raíz de vivir en un convento que está compuesto de ermitas: el Desierto de Las Palmas (Castellón)¹. El presente artículo se enmarca en un proceso de investigación sobre la ermita en el Desierto de Las Palmas. El paso anterior a este artículo versa sobre las raíces de las Ermitas en el Carmelo Teresiano², en donde se muestra que existió un hilo conductor “eremítico” entre las ermitas en el Monte Carmelo (época medieval) y el surgimiento del Carmelo Teresiano (época moderna).

En continuación de aquello, aquí pretendo presentar una aproximación a la idea de la ermita a partir de los textos de santa Teresa de Jesús y de san Juan de la Cruz, fundadora y cofundador del Carmelo Teresiano³. Si se habla del Carmelo Teresiano, hay que ir a beber de sus fuentes: Teresa de Jesús y Juan de la Cruz. Primero, las raíces (antiguo Carmelo). Luego, las fuentes⁴.

¹ Sobre este lugar: A. RUIZ CALAVIA – I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT, *El Desierto de Las Palmas. Historia y Vida*, Castellón, Fundación Desierto de Las Palmas, 2008.

² I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT, *Apuntes sobre las raíces de las Ermitas en el Carmelo Teresiano*, en *Carmelus*, 55 (2008), 7-40.

³ Cf. EFRÉN DE LA MADRE DE DIOS, *El ideal de Santa Teresa en la fundación de San José*, en *Carmelus*, 10 (1963), 206-230; F. DOMINGO, *Ávila, fundación de San José*, en Tomás ÁLVAREZ (dir.), *Diccionario de Santa Teresa. Doctrina e Historia*, Burgos, Monte Carmelo, 2002, 740-741; CARMELITAS DESCALZAS DE DURUELO, *El lugarcillo de Duruelo*, Ávila, Diputación Provincial de Ávila. Institución Gran Duque de Alba, 1995.

⁴ Cf. *infra* “Textos teresianos” en el §. II; y “Textos sanjuanistas” en el §. III.

II. LECTURA DESDE EL DESIERTO DE LAS PALMAS

He tomado una clave de lectura para los textos teresianos y sanjuanistas. La clave me la dio la historia: me puse imaginariamente en el lugar del fraile que llegaba al antiguo Desierto de Las Palmas; el religioso recibía o hallaba en su celda un ejemplar del librito del P. Tomás de Jesús (1564-1627)⁵ titulado *Instrucción espiritual para la vida eremítica* (ed. 1773), que le serviría para toda su estancia en el Desierto⁶. En él encontraba las formas y los contenidos del modo de vida que debía llevar en este convento peculiar —Santo Desierto—, lugar al que llegaba y era acogido en calidad de conventual (miembro de la comunidad religiosa). Al comenzar la lectura de ese librito, el fraile hallaba las figuras de santa Teresa de Jesús y de san Juan de la Cruz en forma de dos grabados a toda página. He aquí el nexo para la interpretación⁷.

1. *La Instrucción espiritual para la vida eremítica* (Valencia 1773)⁸

Instrucción espiritual, para los que professan vida eremitica. Por el M. R. P. Fr. THOMAS DE JESUS, Difinidor de los Carmelitas Descalzos de la Congregacion de Italia. A expensas de un devoto, quien la dedica à Sta. Teresa de Jesus, y S. Juan de la Cruz. En Valencia: Por Francisco Burguete, Impressor del Santo Oficio, vive en la Bolsería. Año 1773. ([6] h., 131 pp.; 10,5 x 15 cm. En pergamino.)

⁵ Cf. D. DE PABLO MAROTO, *Batuecas. Tierra mítica y desierto carmelitano*, Madrid, EDE, 2001, 79-92; T. EGIDO, *Tomás de Jesús Sánchez Dávila*, en *Monte Carmelo*, 110 (2002), 75-99.

⁶ En la Biblioteca del Desierto de Las Palmas (BDP) existen numerosos ejemplares con el número de la celda en la cual debían estar o bien con el nombre de la ermita en cuya pequeña (o grande) librería se debía colocar. Sobre la BDP, cf. I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT, *El Archivo y la Biblioteca del Desierto de Las Palmas*, en VV. AA., *El Santo Desierto*, Valencia, Generalitat Valenciana, 2006, 129-131.

⁷ Tomás de Jesús se funda en la Santa al concebir los Desiertos: “Tomás de Jesús, una vez que descubrió a Santa Teresa, estuvo convencido de la precisión de la oración, del retiro eremítico, la mejor de las garantías para la otra misión eclesial y teresiana, la de velar por la salvación de las almas puesto que para él ambas dimensiones no sólo eran compatibles: se exigían la una a la otra”. T. EGIDO, *Tomás de Jesús Sánchez Dávila*, 99.

⁸ Destaco esta edición por las características peculiares que enseguida explicaré. La edición anterior, también valentina, salió a la luz: “En Valencia, en la Imprenta de Francisco Mestre, Impressor del S. Oficio, junto al Molino de Rovella. Año 1698” ([3] h., 119 pp., [1] p.). Existen dos ejemplares en la BDP. Hubo otras ediciones: 1) Lovaina 1626 (en latín); 2) Madrid, Herederos de la viuda de Pedro de Madrigal, 1629; 3) THOMAS A JESU, *Opera Omnia* (ed. P. Pablo de Todos los Santos), t. II, Coloniae 1684, 62-79 (en latín); 4) Madrid-Ávila, Eds. de Espiritualidad-Impr. Católica Sigirano Díaz, 1950.

La portada ocupa la hoja [2]. A continuación, las hojas [3] y [4] contienen sendos grabados, representando a santa Teresa y a san Juan de la Cruz (página en blanco, página con el grabado de la Santa, página con el grabado del Santo, página en blanco: de manera que ambos grabados quedan enfrentados al abrir el libro por las hojas [3] y [4]). El texto de la portada (transcrito en el párrafo anterior) está rodeado con un grabado a modo de marco, el mismo que se utiliza para enmarcar las figuras de la Santa y del Santo en los dos grabados mencionados. En las hojas [5] y [6] aparecen las licencias y aprobaciones necesarias para la publicación del libro. A partir de la sexta hoja (que inicia la paginación con números arábigos), se extiende el contenido del libro (pp. 1-131). Tiene dos partes diferenciadas por el título en la cabecera de la página: «Instrucción espiritual para la vida eremitica» (pp. 1-101) y «Costumbres santas de los Desiertos» (pp. 102-131). El título completo de esta segunda parte (sin portada aparte pero con caracteres mayores) es: «Costumbres santas de los Desiertos, de Religiosos Descalzos de Ntra. Señora del Carmen» (p. 102). Cada edición contenía, como colofón, dichas *Costumbres santas*, aprobadas por el Definitorio General de 1628 «para evitar la diversidad de devociones particulares, que suelen ser causa de menos unión y paz entre los religiosos»⁹.

Resulta interesante el hecho de que la edición valentina de 1773 posea esos dos grabados, pues denota cierta interpretación del editor: tanto santa Teresa de Jesús como san Juan de la Cruz son propuestos como modelos del fraile que va a vivir en el Santo Desierto («ermitaño» se le solía llamar), y que se retirará, como era habitual, durante algún tiempo a una de las ermitas del Desierto. Por eso cada una de las figuras va acompañada de un texto alusivo al retiro, nota esencial de la vida en la ermita; textos que veremos y analizaremos más adelante.

⁹ Testimonio del P. General Juan del Espíritu Santo (Martínez Bilbao, 1574-1649) que se encuentra en las respectivas introducciones de cada una de las ediciones españolas. Sobre este general (de la Provincia OCD de Castilla la Vieja), cf. SILVERIO DE SANTA TERESA, *Historia del Carmen Descalzo*, t. IX, Burgos 1940, 100, 112, 127, 289, 332, 373, 387, 395, 410, 421, 443, 445, 504, 513, 514, 655-657, 662, 677, 680, 824-845, 884; G. BELTRÁN, *Catálogo de los Superiores Generales del Carmen Descalzo (1581-1597) y de la Congregación española (1600-1875)*, Roma, Teresianum, 1995 (=MHCT. Subsidia Selecta, 2), 28-29; M. DIEGO SÁNCHEZ (ed.), *Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales OCD de la Provincia de San Elías de Castilla la Vieja (1589-1832)*, Roma, Teresianum, 2002 (=MHCT, 20), 47, 50, 51, 55, 56, 57, 59, 79, 84, 85, 94, 121, 123, 139, 142, 144, 169, 170 (y nota 221), 174, 882, 883 nota 11, 885.

2. El *Resumen de las obligaciones para los que viven en las Ermitas* (Valencia 1774)

Existe un folleto relacionado circunstancialmente con la edición valentina de la *Instrucción espiritual para los que profesan vida eremítica* (1773). La Provincia OCD de Aragón y Valencia editó una especie de anexo a la *Instrucción* (aunque independiente de ésta), como pensando en los religiosos que venían a morar en el Santo Desierto de Las Palmas. En realidad, la *Instrucción* era suficiente para entender el tenor de vida llevado en el desierto carmelitano (tanto en el de Las Palmas como en cualquier otro de la Orden); sin embargo, se quiso ofrecer al religioso (al «ermitaño»), un pequeño resumen de lo relacionado directamente con el Desierto de Las Palmas: desde una breve descripción geográfica hasta un relato de las prácticas de virtud (reuniones comunitarias o «colaciones», comidas, paseos, oraciones, disciplinas, sacramentos, etc.). Así, el fraile que vivía en el convento, una vez retirado en una de las ermitas (y convertido, por tanto, en «ermitaño» temporal), supiera cómo organizar su nuevo ritmo de vida en todos sus puntos. De hecho, este folleto estaba pensado, específicamente, para los frailes-ermitaños: aquéllos que una vez llegados al Desierto, pedían retirarse a una de las ermitas; dentro de la ermita pasaban ciertas temporadas (por ejemplo, en adviento o cuaresma). Este folleto se publicó en 1774, un año después que la *Instrucción* valentina, y lo titularon así:

Resumen de las principales obligaciones de los que viven en las Ermitas del Yermo, y Desierto santo de Las Palmas, de Religiosos Carmelitas Descalzos de Nuestra Señora del Carmen de la Provincia de Aragon, y Valencia, con titulo de N. Madre Santa Teresa de Jesús. En Valencia: Por Josef Estevan y Cervera, Plaza del Horno de S. Andrés. Año 1774. (40 pp.; 10 x 14 cm. Sin encuadernar.)¹⁰

Es de notar que en este *Resumen* también están presentes los grabados de la Santa y del Santo, antes mencionados¹¹. De nuevo hallamos la misma interpretación del editor de la *Instrucción espiritual para la vida eremítica*, con la singularidad de que, en este caso, se aplica al Desierto de Las Palmas en forma de *Resumen de obligaciones de los que viven en las Ermitas*. Por esta razón he querido titular el presente artículo «Lectura teresiano-sanjuanista de la Ermita desde el Desierto

¹⁰ En contraportada se lee: “Reimprimase”. Se conserva un ejemplar en el Archivo del Desierto de Las Palmas (ADP) (signatura: ADP, L, XVII) y otro (incompleto) en el Archivo del convento OCD de Barcelona. Sobre el ADP, cf. I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT, *El Archivo y la Biblioteca del Desierto de Las Palmas*, 117-128.

¹¹ *Resumen de las principales obligaciones...*, [4]-[5].

de Las Palmas». Tal vez coincida con la lectura hecha desde otros desiertos (o antiguos desiertos) OCD, pero ante las posibles diferencias y distancias (en el tiempo y en el espacio), he preferido circunscribir la lectura al lugar desde el cual se hace y se publica.

Antes de sobrevolar los textos en que santa Teresa habla de las ermitas, es bueno que nos detengamos en analizar la curiosa interpretación que hace el editor (tanto de la *Instrucción* como del *Resumen*), de la relación existente entre la Santa y el Desierto carmelitano¹². Del ideal apuntado en esa interpretación anónima depende la experiencia de vida en la Ermita¹³.

III. LECTURA TERESIANA DE LA ERMITA¹⁴

1. Dos letrillas de tradición teresiana

Los dos grabados en que figuran Sta. Teresa de Jesús y S. Juan de la Cruz respectivamente, contienen sendas composiciones poéticas. La primera, de gran sabor teresiano, cuyo autor y fecha desconozco (letrillas ① y ②); la segunda, atribuida al Santo de Fontiveros y, por

¹² Cf. T. ÁLVAREZ, *Simbología bíblica: Desierto*, en *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 579-580; Id., *Soledad*, *ibíd.*, 599-600; A. M. Z. IGIRUKWAYO – C. CICCONE, *Deserto*, en E. BOAGA – L. BORRIELLO (dirs.), *Dizionario Carmelitano*, Roma, Città Nuova, 2007, 223-231; C. DOBNER, *Deserti carmelitani*, *ibíd.*, 222-223; A. RUIZ CALAVIA, *El desierto. Doctrina y vivencia teresianas*, en I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT (ed.), *Espiritualidad del Desierto. I Seminario Desierto de Las Palmas*, Castellón-Burgos, Fundación Desierto de Las Palmas-Monte Carmelo, 2006, 99-126. Ver E. PACHO, *Los santos desiertos carmelitanos en España*, en *Estudios carmelitanos III*, Burgos, Monte Carmelo, 1998 (=Horizonte 2000, 6), 35-37.

¹³ Cf. C. DOBNER, *Eremitismo carmelitano*, en *Dizionario Carmelitano*, 330-335.

¹⁴ Para las obras: STA. TERESA DE JESÚS, *Obras completas*, Madrid, EDE, 1994⁴. Siglas: C: *Camino de perfección* (CV: ms. de Valladolid; CE: ms. de El Escorial); CC: *Cuentas de conciencia*; Const: *Constituciones*; Cta: *Carta*; F: *Fundaciones*; M: *Moradas* (1M = primeras moradas); MC: *Meditaciones sobre los Cantares*; P: *Poetas*; V: *Vida*. En el ámbito biográfico: *San José de Ávila*, Burgos, Monte Carmelo, 1998, 90-107 (cap. 5: *Monjas y ermitañas*); EFRÉN DE LA M. DE DIOS – O. STEGGINK, *Santa Teresa y su tiempo. II.1 Teresa de Jesús*, Salamanca 1984, 7-34 (§§ "I. Un ideal de ermitañas", p. 7-18, nn. 14-22; "II. El rostro de una descalza", p. 19-34, nn. 23-34). En el ámbito arquitectónico: M. M. CARRIÓN, *Arquitectura y cuerpo en la figura autorial de Teresa de Jesús*, Barcelona, Anthropos, 1994, 22-43; L. CERVERA VERA, *Complejo Arquitectónico del monasterio de San José en Ávila*, Valencia, Ministerio de Cultura, 1982. Y en el ámbito literario: cf. F. RODRÍGUEZ DE LA FLOR, *Barroco. Representación e ideología en el mundo hispánico (1580-1680)*, Madrid, Cátedra, 2002, 276-277, 280, 281-282, 283-284, 295-296. Existe un artículo sobre este asunto que no me ha sido posible consultar: A. SAINT-SÄENS, *Thérèse d'Avila ou l'Érémisme sublimé*, en *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 25 (1989), 121-143. Se ha aludido también a la Ermita en el universo teresiano al hablar de la espiritualidad del desierto: A. RUIZ CALAVIA, *El desierto. Doctrina y vivencia teresianas*, 99-101, 111-120, 124-125.

tanto, escrita antes de 1591, fecha de su muerte¹⁵. Así suenan los primeros versos en clave teresiana:

LETRILLA ①

*Hermano, una de dos,
o no entrar, o hablar con Dios,
que en el Yermo de TERESA
el silencio se profesa.*¹⁶

La letrilla anterior se escribió sobre una placa cerámica y estuvo colocada en la portería del convento antiguo del Desierto de Las Palmas¹⁷. Nos ubicamos en la época en que se vivía la observancia como Santo Desierto (1709-ca.1860). Está inspirada y transformada a partir de la que originalmente se lee en los locutorios de monasterios de las carmelitas descalzas, e indica una actitud del corazón, un talante para el camino, un proyecto de vida para el caminante que se llega a las puertas del desierto carmelitano y quiere vivir cual eremita en medio del mundo, de la Iglesia, de la comunidad, al modo de la amada o esposa que aparece en el *Cántico espiritual* de san Juan de la Cruz: “*En soledad vivía, / y en soledad ha puesto ya su nido*”¹⁸. Y es que para Teresa de Jesús, para el Carmelo y para los ermitaños que en él iniciaron la vida carmelitana el yermo es fuente de inspiración e imagen tipológica de la vida espiritual¹⁹:

«Aparte el profeta Elías, otros tipos de vida en el desierto son san Jerónimo y María Magdalena [V 11, 10 y 22, 12]. Y en general los grandes solitarios del Yermo²⁰. Su admiración por ellos llega a provocar en Teresa una especie de emulación. “Comencé a haber envidia de los que están en los desiertos, pareciéndome que como no oyesen ni vieses nada, estaban libres de este divertimento” [*Relaciones* 4], y todavía a la altura de las sextas moradas “ha gran envidia a los que viven y han vivido en los desiertos” [6M 6, 3]. Algo del ideal pasa a su concepción de los nuevos carmelos: serán pequeños desiertos en plena ciudad; sus monjas serán

¹⁵ La veremos en el § “III. *Lectura Sanjuanista de la Ermita*”.

¹⁶ *Resumen de las principales obligaciones...*, [4]. El destacado es original.

¹⁷ Cf. D. ANDRÉS, *Guía del viajero en el Desierto de Las Palmas*, Valencia, Impr. de “El Valenciano”, 1866, 7; F. MIRALLES MESSEGUER, *Un viaje al Desierto de Las Palmas*, Tortosa, Librería Fenollera, 1898, 117; PLÁCIDO M^a DEL PILAR, *El Desierto de Las Palmas. Monografía*, [Valencia], Tip. Vernés, 1934, 147.

¹⁸ CA 34, vv. 166-167; CB 35, vv. 171-172. (Sobre las siglas de las obras sanjuanistas, ver *infra* nota 67.)

¹⁹ Cf. T. ÁLVAREZ, *Simbología bíblica: Desierto*, 579.

²⁰ Teresa los conoció en diversas obras que estuvieron a su alcance: el *Flos Sanctorum*, las *Vitae Patrum* o las *Colaciones* de Casiano. Cf. CC 26, 1; V 7, 22.

ermitañas [CV 13, 6]²¹, “como nuestros Padres santos pasados ermitaños, cuya vida pretendemos imitar” [CV 11, 4]. Y otro tanto deseará para la vida de los descalzos, iniciada por fray Juan de la Cruz^{22»}²³.

De ahí que el tipo de “Santo Desierto” esté fuertemente vinculado con el tipo o ideal de la ermita, la cual formará parte esencial del mismo Desierto. En el ámbito femenino, la ermita aparece ya en los monasterios fundados por la madre Teresa de Jesús; y en el masculino, aparece en los Santos Desiertos comenzados por el P. Tomás de Jesús. Eso es debido a que, en la teoría, se hallaba bien anclada la imagen simbólica de lo que se había de vivir²⁴.

Veamos las diferencias entre los versos ya presentados (letrilla 1) y los que se presentan a continuación (letrilla 2): de su comparación surgen características del *modus vivendi* del Desierto ideado por Tomás de Jesús, pero que retraen a la época fundacional del Carmelo Teresiano. De hecho, se habla del *Yermo de Teresa* y no del Desierto de Tomás. La segunda letrilla, pues, es como sigue (se puede leer aún hoy en los monasterios de carmelitas descalzas):

LETRILLA ②

*Hermanas, una de dos,
o no hablar, o hablar de Dios,
que en la casa de Teresa
esta ciencia se profesa.*

²¹ Cf. VV. AA., *Eremita insieme: elementi essenziali del carisma teresiano*. Atti raduno Carmelitane Scalze, Marola, 22-29 maggio 2002. Milano, Assoc. “Regina Pacis” Monasteri di Carmelitane Scalze, 2002.

²² Cf. Cta. 130, 26 (Toledo, 10.1576; al P. Ambrosio Mariano de San Benito, Madrid) sobre el traslado de los frailes descalzos del convento de la Peñuela al convento de El Calvario (Jaén), lugares bien apartados a modo de “desiertos pre-tomasianos”.

²³ T. ÁLVAREZ, *Simbología bíblica: Desierto*, 579.

²⁴ “La tipología y las características dimensionales y ornamentales de iglesias, conventos y todo tipo de edificaciones producidas por la Orden estaban condicionadas por precisas reglas de la construcción y de la estética, dictadas por razones funcionales e ideológico-espirituales. Un riguroso cuadro normativo, ya presente *in nuce* en los autógrafos de santa Teresa y en seguida formalizado en la preceptiva constitucional, junto a costumbres prácticas y constructivas progresivamente afirmadas, imponían un programa de ascetismo constructivo acuñado al gusto por la desnudez arquitectónica, por una estructura humilde y proporcionada, por una rigurosa sobriedad decorativa. La fiel adopción de los prototipos referenciales canalizaba en un surco de sustancial homogeneidad tipológica todas las fundaciones de iglesias, conventos o monasterios, desde finales del siglo XVI hasta al menos la mitad del siglo XVIII. (...). Lo mismo ocurre en el caso específico de la especial tipología eremítica del Desierto, heredada de precedentes experiencias contemplativas congregacionales, y reelaborada en el seno del

Las diferencias que se encuentran en la comparación de ambas composiciones poéticas hablan de *genero* y *número* (verso 1), de una *actividad* particular contrapuesta (v. 2), de un *lugar* habitado (v. 3) y de *silencio* (v. 4). Detengámonos una por una.

2. Género y número

Los receptores principales o directos, es decir, los lectores de estos versos, cambian considerablemente de un caso a otro.

① Hermano, una de dos, ② *Hermanas, una de dos,*

Es de notar el NÚMERO del primer sustantivo con que empieza el poema en ambos casos: *hermano* – *hermanas*. 1) Singular. Se dirige a un varón, no a un colectivo de ellos. 2) Plural. Se dirige a un grupo de mujeres. La experiencia que se ofrece al visitante, en el primer caso, será una experiencia personal e individual, de introspección; en el segundo caso, personal y comunitaria, de extraversión. Analicemos ambos en cuanto al GÉNERO se refiere.

En el primero, evidentemente, son varones, frailes²⁵ carmelitas descalzos en su mayoría —los que vienen destinados como conventuales al Santo Desierto—, además de algunos trabajadores que poseían licencia del provincial o del general para introducirse en el Santo Desierto y realizar sus actividades propias (las crónicas conventuales y otra documentación los designan como «criados»). No desestimamos la posibilidad de incluir en este conjunto a algunos eclesiásticos y religiosos de otras órdenes, y quizá también a ciertos hombres piadosos que pudieron acceder en su momento a la clausura papal (tal era la propia de los Desiertos). Se habla aquí siempre del período *anterior* a la desamortización (1836) y consiguiente exclaustración (que provocó la desaparición de los Desiertos carmelitanos en España, excepto la de Las Palmas), durante la cual, precisamente en el Des-

Carmelo en el marco del movimiento de la ‘descalcez’. S. STURM, *L'Eremo di Montevirginio e la tipologia del Santo Deserto. L'architettura dei Carmelitani Scalzi in età barocca*, Roma, Gangemi, 2002, xiv.

²⁵ Nótese que no se da el binomio padre-hermano; se dice directamente “hermano”, de modo que desde el principio se igualan todos los hombres en la fraternidad creada por medio de Jesucristo, el Hermano mayor. Cf. C. MACCISE, *Hacia una nueva identidad. La vocación y la misión del Hermano laico en la Orden*. Carta circular, Roma 2002; G. POZZOBON, *Fraternità e vita comune*, en *Dizionario Carmelitano*, 386-391.

ierto de Las Palmas, se trocó en costumbre promovida la acogida de estas personas y su morada entre los frailes²⁶.

En el segundo caso, el grupo receptor del mensaje es la comunidad de monjas carmelitas descalzas. El cartel en cuestión solía y suele estar ubicado principalmente en dos lugares: en la entrada al convento o en alguno de los locutorios del monasterio. Así que sus lectores se subdividen en dos grupos: 1) los que acceden al monasterio por la puerta principal y leen el poema que sobre ella está colocado: las monjas que vienen trasladadas al monasterio, los trabajadores o repartidores, los limosneros y los pobres, las visitas en general (familiares y bienhechores; algunos eclesiásticos o frailes como el confesor, el provincial, etc., quienes, debido a su cargo o responsabilidad, realizan visitas periódicas a las monjas); 2) los que entran al locutorio directamente —que aunque pasan ante la puerta principal no leen el poema porque no se halla allí—: sería el grupo de visitas en general ya descrito²⁷. En definitiva, el público receptor de tal mensaje es mayoritariamente de sexo masculino. ¿Cómo, pues, la relación con el receptor se establece en femenino plural (*Hermanas*)? Podemos deducir que el consejo incluido en estos versos no va dirigido a los externos sino más bien a los internos, no tanto a los que vienen de fuera cuanto a las mismas monjas que moran el monasterio, según aquello de santa Teresa:

«[4.] (...). No es ya tiempo, hermanas, de juego de niños, que no parece otra cosa estas amistades del mundo, aunque sean buenas; ni haya entre vosotras tal plática de “si me queréis”, “no me queréis”, ni con deudos²⁸ ni [con] nadie, si no fuere yendo fundadas en un gran fin y provecho de aquel ánima. Que puede acaecer, para que os escuche vuestro deudo o hermano o persona semejante una verdad y la admita, haber de dispo-

²⁶ Cf. A. RUIZ CALAVIA – I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT, *El Desierto de Las Palmas*, 74, 79-89, 105-113. Los eclesiásticos Enrique de Ossó y Cervelló (hoy santo), Manuel Domingo y Sol (hoy beato) y Mons. José M^a Benito Serra, osb (hoy venerable) fueron tres casos paradigmáticos de esa acogida en el Desierto de Las Palmas.

²⁷ Al respecto, el Definitorio General OCD publicó el 04.01.1653 un decreto “para que las religiosas no admitan al locutorio seculares, clérigos o religiosos de otras órdenes sin permiso del Provincial, ni se confiesen con ellos”. M. DIEGO, *Un repertorio legislativo del Carmelo Teresiano español*, en *Archivum Bibliographicum Carmeli Teresiani*, n. 41 (2003), 500, núm. 15.

²⁸ *Deudos*: parientes, por la especial *deuda* que existe entre ellos de amarse (cf. STA. TERESA DE JESÚS, *Obras completas*, 674 nota 8). Cf. CV 4,7 y, especialmente, CV 9. Hay que leer y entender estos textos a la luz de lo que la Santa vivió y narró en *Vida* capítulos 7, 8, 9, 23 y 24. Respecto a sus familiares más cercanos, cf. T. ÁLVAREZ, *Familia de Teresa*, en *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 293-297 y 899-900.

nerle con estas pláticas y muestras de amor que a la sensualidad siempre contentan; y acaecerá tener en más una buena palabra —que así la llaman— y disponer más que muchas [palabras] de Dios, para que después éstas quepan. Y así, yendo con advertencia de aprovechar, no las quito. Mas, si no es para esto, ningún provecho pueden traer y podrán hacer daño sin entenderlo vosotras. Ya saben que sois religiosas y que vuestro trato es de oración. No se os ponga delante: “no quiero que me tengan por buena”, porque es provecho o daño común el que os vieren. Y es gran mal a *las que tanta obligación tienen de no hablar sino en Dios —como las monjas—*, les parezca bien disimulación en este caso, si no fuese alguna vez para más bien. Éste es vuestro trato y lenguaje; quien os quisiere tratar, depreñdale; y si no, guardaos de deprender²⁹ vosotras el suyo: será infierno.

[5.] Si os tuvieren por groseras, poco va en ello; si por hipócritas, menos. Ganaréis de aquí que no os vea sino quien se entendiere por esta lengua. (...). Y así, ni os cansarán ni dañarán, que no sería poco daño comenzar a hablar nueva lengua; y todo el tiempo se os iría en eso. Y no podéis saber como yo, que lo he experimentado, el gran mal que es para el alma, porque por saber la una se le olvida la otra, y es un perpetuo desasosiego del que en todas maneras habéis de huir; porque lo que mucho conviene para este camino que comenzamos a tratar es paz y sosiego en el alma.

[6.] Si las que os trataren quisieren deprender vuestra lengua, ya que no es vuestro de enseñar, podéis decir las riquezas que se ganan en deprenderla; y de esto no os canséis, sino con piedad y amor y oración porque le aproveche, para que, entendiendo la gran ganancia, vaya a buscar maestro que le enseñe; que no sería poca merced que os hiciese el Señor despertar a algún alma para este bien» (CV 20, 4-6).

Esta interpretación viene apoyada por la existencia de leyes internas en la Orden para evitar la distracción (y los males derivados de ella) a raíz del hablar ocioso de las carmelitas descalzas y de cualquier conversación que éstas pudieran tener con otras personas ajenas al monasterio. Un ejemplo es el decreto del Definitorio General OCD «acerca del hablar con las religiosas» con fecha del 18 de septiembre de 1695³⁰, justo en la época en que el convento primitivo del Desierto de Las Palmas veía la luz de los planos (*las trazas*) y atisbaba las obras arquitectónicas de fundación, que en breve darían comienzo³¹.

²⁹ *Depreñdale*: apréndale. *Deprender*: aprender.

³⁰ Ese definitorio se celebró en Duruelo (Ávila); cf. M. DIEGO, *Un repertorio legislativo del Carmelo Teresiano español*, 506, núm.76.

³¹ Cf. P. SELLÉS CANTOS – B. ZACHAR – G. CHWALA, *La arquitectura del primer convento del Desierto de Las Palmas*, en VV. AA., *El Santo Desierto*, 47-67.

3. Actividad

En el locutorio, hablar; en el yermo, entrar... y hablar con Dios. Hay otra variante: callar en vez de entrar. *O callar o hablar con Dios*. Ésta se acerca a la letrilla original, en donde se contraponen, en el plano del contenido, callar y *hablar*: ha de ser con Dios o de las cosas de Dios.

① O no entrar o hablar con Dios, ② *O no hablar o hablar de Dios*,

Entrar – hablar. El primer poema, estampado en una placa cerámica, se podía leer al llegar al Santo Desierto de Las Palmas, como ya se ha apuntado. Al fraile que allí se llegaba, a la portería del convento, se le proponía esta letrilla: lectura y recomendación espiritual. Y tenía su razón de ser. El paso decisivo en un Desierto carmelitano —de igual modo ocurre en la Ermita— es entrar. Esta acción definitiva acarrea toda una serie de consecuencias prácticas, una larga lista de actos y actitudes para desarrollar: caminar, orar, trabajar, comer, leer, contemplar... Así que la persona que se determina a entrar³² ha de tener bien clara la lógica de vida en el Desierto y, por ende, en la Ermita. Ha de ser introducido, ciertamente, pero la iniciativa reside siempre en el eremita³³. Su voluntad pasa la prueba de fuego al entrar —la primera negación de sí—, ya que esto le exige una tensión continua para encarnar el ideal expresado en este tipo de vida. O si queremos, la segunda negación de uno mismo: dejar delante de la puerta todo lo que él es hasta ese momento, toda su vida de pecado, todo el hombre

³² Ese determinarse (cf. CV 21, 2) se halla en el umbral del camino; en nuestro caso, a las puertas del Desierto, para entrar en él. Cf. T. ÁLVAREZ, “*Determiné*”. Camino 1, 2, en *Monte Carmelo*, 100 (1992), 341-349.

³³ Para el rito de acogida de los nuevos frailes que venían destinados al Santo Desierto de Las Palmas, cf. TOMÁS DE JESÚS, *Instrucción espiritual*, 102-105 (inicio del apéndice: *Costumbres santas de los Desiertos de los Religiosos Descalzos de Nra. Señora del Carmen*: § I. *De los que van de nuevo al Desierto*): “Los Ermitaños, que van de asiento al Desierto, se han de recibir de esta manera. Si no hubiere dentro de dos días de como llega Colación, antes de hablarles otro que el Prelado, se junte la comunidad en el Coro, y dicho el Himno *Veni creator Spiritus*, etc. ... En común se tenga un poco de Oración, por el buen suceso de su venida; y luego digan la Antífona: *Sub tuum praesidium*, con los Versos, y Oraciones siguientes. Y si fuere día de Colación, se vayan a tenerla, abrazándole, y dándole la bienvenida; y si no, le abracen en el Coro, y le den la bienvenida sin ruido, y se vaya cada uno a su celda. Y el Padre Prior le dé que lea lo que aquí y en las Constituciones está escrito, para que sepa lo que ha de guardar” (102-103). Siguen las preces y oraciones, amén de otras advertencias y consejos.

viejo, para —al cruzar el umbral— revestirse del hombre nuevo, comenzar «siempre de bien en mejor»³⁴ la vida de gracia y dar los primeros pasos por el camino del *no-ser*, antes que del *ser*³⁵. San Juan de la Cruz lo explica mejor en sus *Dichos de luz y amor* (n. 51): «Si quieres venir al santo recogimiento, no has de venir admitiendo sino negando». En el caso de que ésta fuera la segunda negación de sí mismo, la primera, entonces, sería la *salida* de su casa, entendiendo por “casa” la vida que ya tiene establecida y acomodada³⁶, equivalente al éxodo bíblico y que este sujeto experimentará de nuevo cuando viva en la Ermita. Ante todo, en este nuevo estado deberá hablar con Dios, como recomienda Teresa de Jesús:

«Esto es ya para personas que traen cuidado de sí, y tienen entendido no han de hablar a Dios y al mundo junto. Lo que podemos hacer nosotros es procurar estar a solas —y plega a Dios que baste, como digo— para que entendamos con quién estamos y lo que nos responde el Señor a nuestras peticiones. ¿Pensáis que se está callando? Aunque no le oímos, bien habla al corazón cuando le pedimos de corazón. Y bien es consideremos somos cada una de nosotras a quien enseñó esta oración y que nos la está mostrando, pues nunca el maestro está tan lejos del discípulo que sea menester dar voces, sino muy junto. Esto quiero yo entendáis vosotras os conviene para rezar bien el *Paternóster*: no apartarse de cabe el maestro que os le mostró. (...) Yo lo he procurado algunas veces, y el mejor remedio que hallo es procurar tener el pensamiento en quien enderezo las palabras. Por eso tened paciencia y procurad hacer costumbre de cosa tan necesaria» (CV 24, 5.6).

Hablar de Dios – hablar con Dios. La relación intrínseca entre los interlocutores cambia considerablemente. En el primer caso, *hablar de Dios*, éste se convierte en objeto de tratamiento, en punto de partida en la discusión. Pero no se llega a él.

Así de tajante. El eremita poco o nada puede hablar de Dios si antes no habla con Él. De hecho, no va a la Ermita para lo primero sino única y

³⁴ F 29, 32.

³⁵ Cf. SAN JUAN DE LA CRUZ, 1S 13, 11: “Para venir a serlo todo, / no quieras ser algo en nada”.

³⁶ “Veníamos atraídos por la llamada del Desierto. Después de muchos meses sumidos en nuestros trabajos y afanes, un grupo de nueve amigos de Albacete y Alicante nos dirigimos al Santo Desierto de Las Palmas (Castellón) en busca de silencio, tranquilidad y oración. En suma, en busca de la cercanía de Dios, fuera de las distracciones, ruidos y comodidades propias de nuestras vidas” (*El Carmelo* III época, n. 42 [ago.-oct. 2003] 33).

fundamentalmente para lo segundo. Puestas así las cosas, entendemos la variante del verso: *O callar o hablar con Dios*. Expresa la reverencia, propia de la teología apofática o negativa, al reconocer su humildad y su poquedad en el lenguaje sobre Dios, y prefiere callar y contemplar el misterio. Otra variante reza así: *o no entrar, o hablar de Dios*³⁷. También podemos interpretar ésta y la letrilla original como opción radical por la alabanza de Dios al cantar sus maravillas³⁸.

Sin embargo, al *hablar con Dios*, se supone una relación íntima establecida por parte de Dios con el que habla. Se adentra, pues, en el meollo del misterio de comunicación divina y, a la vez, es un ejercicio extraordinario para la salud espiritual del eremita. Si su vida no está alimentada del diálogo con Dios, toda su jornada carecerá de fuerza, de sentido y caerá entre las preocupaciones normales de la rutina. Sin embargo, la sabiduría en la que bebe y se educa el eremita contempla la palabra sólo desde Dios. Parte de su propia experiencia y se va educando progresivamente: a la presencia, a la contemplación, a la escucha, al diálogo, al realismo... para entrar, por fin, en la dimensión trinitaria, comunitaria y familiar del Dios tripersonal³⁹. El místico que acaba siendo cae en la cuenta de que su palabra sólo es una: Dios. No hay otra; no sabe otra. Ésa es su vida, su experiencia, su realidad, el sentido de su existencia⁴⁰. Por ello, no hay palabra humana sin palabra divina. Este misterio tiene pleno apogeo en la revelación del Hijo de Dios como Palabra de Dios (cf. Jn 1, 1-18). Aquí prende el significado de su palabra, de su hablar. Y de ahí surgirá, por tanto, el hablar de Dios, la palabra sobre Dios, dedicada con todo amor e inmenso cuidado a los hermanos. El diálogo establecido a partir de ella ha de ser, necesariamente, fraterno, creador de comunidad, porque de una comunidad ha nacido⁴¹.

³⁷ TOMÁS DE JESÚS, *Instrucción espiritual*, [4].

³⁸ Cf. Sal 88; 147, 1; 34, 9.

³⁹ Cf. T. ÁLVAREZ – J. CASTELLANO, *Teresa de Jesús, enseñanos a orar*, Burgos, Monte Carmelo, 1981, 122-135; F. K. NEMECK – M. T. COOMBS, *Corazón que escucha*, Madrid, Narcea, 1984, 43-44.

⁴⁰ Cf. M. HERRÁIZ, *Solo Dios basta*, Madrid, EDE, 1992⁴, 15-44 (§ I. *Dios, primera palabra*).

⁴¹ Cf. E. RENEDO, *Diálogo fraterno*, en *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 223-228; A. LÓPEZ QUINTÁS, *Diálogo*, en *Diccionario Teológico de la Vida Consagrada*, Madrid, Claretianas, 1989, 488-502; I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT (ed.), *El Diálogo. III Seminario Desierto de Las Palmas*, Castellón, Fund. Desierto de Las Palmas, 2008.

4. Lugar

- ① Que en el Yermo de Teresa ② *Que en la casa de Teresa*

La casa de Teresa, adonde viven sus hijas, se convierte en el Yermo de Teresa, adonde sus hijos han puesto sus pies, cual mensajero anunciador de la paz: el Desierto en medio del mundo abrumado por el tener, el ruido y la guerra⁴². Este lugarcillo, tan inusitado en los primeros siglos del cristianismo como ahora⁴³, se torna oasis para el hombre sediento de Dios, para el fraile que desea ardientemente estar «cabe el maestro», sin por ello evadirse del mundo, pues en él nació, en él vive y en él morirá; aunque «no es del mundo» (cf. Jn 15, 19).

Hay que percatarse de la atribución con tintes fundacionales de la nueva realidad que supone el “Yermo”. Se aplica a santa Teresa, cuando ella no lo creó materialmente, pero sí puso las bases ideales para que alguno de sus hijos, más avisado, recogiera el deseo y lo concretara en un texto, en una estructura arquitectónica y humana, en una espiritualidad peculiar⁴⁴, etc. Algunos estudiosos del ambiente histórico, espiritual y teológico de santa Teresa, han querido explicar este “deseo” teresiano: «Quería recobrar la vida de los primeros ermitaños del Monte Carmelo; pero seguía las pautas de los pontífices que condicionaron su traslado a occidente. Las *Constituciones* de Londres en 1281 habían recogido la fragancia de los ermitaños primitivos en el estilo de mendicantes. Lograr un fondo eremítico con forma monástica era la idea genial que se propuso realizar»⁴⁵. Al cabo de los años reconocerá cierto éxito a su obra fundadora: «creo se va cumpliendo el deseo con que se comenzaron estos monasterios»⁴⁶.

En el imaginario colectivo, sin embargo, las entidades “yermo” y “casa” han sido reiteradamente identificadas entre sí, de modo que el yermo es la casa para los hijos de Teresa. Hallamos un ejemplo de esto

⁴² El *desierto* entre las monjas ocd, cf. JUAN PABLO II, *Virtutis exemplum et magistra* (14.10.1981), n. 2.

⁴³ Sobre los antiguos yermos: D. DE PABLO MAROTO, *Los Padres del Yermo: la vida en el “desierto”*, en I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT (ed.), *Espiritualidad del Desierto. I Seminario Desierto de Las Palmas*, 65-98. Y los actuales: R. MARTÍN, *Actualidad de los Desiertos Carmelitanos*, en *Revista de Espiritualidad*, 62 (2003) 161-179.

⁴⁴ Cf. MARTÍN DE LA MADRE DE DIOS, *Estaciones del Hermitaño de Christo*, Zaragoza, Diego Dormer, 1651. Cf. mi trabajo de investigación tutelado (para la obtención de la suficiencia investigadora) dentro del Doctorado en Arquitectura (Universidad Politécnica de Valencia): *Las Estaciones del Ermitaño de Cristo del Desierto de Las Palmas. Patrimonio cultural: Literario, Artístico y Arquitectónico*, Valencia 2008.

⁴⁵ EFRÉN – STEGGINK, *Santa Teresa y su tiempo. II.1*, 14.

⁴⁶ Cta. 158, 5 (Toledo, 13.12.1576; al P. Jerónimo Gracián, Sevilla).

en unos versos publicados en 1912 por la *Revista de Castellón*, año en que el Desierto de Las Palmas estuvo presente también en sus páginas con la colaboración de Elisa Pérez, quien relataba en los últimos meses una excursión al convento⁴⁷. Pues bien, en el poema que se transcribe seguidamente aparece la expresión «la casa de Teresa» referida al Desierto carmelitano de Las Palmas, tan conocido en toda la provincia de Castellón:

«La brisa y la resina del pino perfumado
al caminante brindan efluvios de contento,
se adivinan lejanas paredes de convento
entre las altas cumbres del monte resguardado:
La cigarra en su canto monótono ha cesado,
de vez en cuando sopla huracanado viento,
que a caminar me obliga con paso firme y lento
de la penosa ruta mi cuerpo fatigado,
compensa mis trabajos la fiel naturaleza
emporio de tesoros y sin igual belleza...
En el convento suena la voz de la campana.
La casa de Teresa! Venero sus umbrales,
olvidome al cruzarlos de la miseria humana
y mi alma solo alienta ideas celestiales»⁴⁸.

5. Silencio⁴⁹

- ① El silencio se profesa. ② *Esta ciencia se profesa.*

Este silencio expresado y profesado, elevado a ciencia, será una de las notas características de los desiertos instaurados por el P. Tomás de Jesús. De hecho, para lograr el silencio se ha de pasar por la experiencia de la *soledad*. Es más, ha de ser una pura necesidad en la vida de la carmelita, según el ideal teresiano. «Para testificar a Dios desde ella, Teresa no cree necesario ir al desierto: la clausura es de por sí un oasis de soledad en la ciudad. Dentro de la clausura, la celda de cada carmelita será una soledad en la soledad. Y todavía las ermitas dise-

⁴⁷ E. PÉREZ, *Del álbum de una turista. Un viaje al Desierto de Las Palmas*, en *Revista de Castellón*, 1/16 (15.11.1912), 8-10; 1/18 (15.12.1912), 6-9.

⁴⁸ F. CALPENA, *Desierto de Las Palmas*, en *Revista de Castellón*, 1/15 (30.10.1912), 10. (La cursiva es mía.) El autor firma "Fernandito Calpena", pseudónimo de Jaime Bellver Huguet.

⁴⁹ Cf. S. J. BÁEZ ORTEGA, *Silenzio*, en *Dizionario Carmelitano*, 792-804; J. CASTELLANO, *Aportaciones del Carmelo Teresiano al silencio*, en I. HUSILLOS TAMARIT (ed.), *El Silencio. II Seminario Desierto de Las Palmas*, Castellón-Burgos, Fund. Desierto de Las Palmas-Monte Carmelo, 2007, 91-117.

minadas en la huerta tendrán función de ulterior soledad intensiva»⁵⁰. De igual modo, el silencio nacido en la soledad se convierte en quid y núcleo de la vida del Desierto (en la Ermita)⁵¹.

*Textos teresianos*⁵²

Las ermitas en su vida seglar⁵³

«Mis hermanos ninguna cosa me desayudaban a servir a Dios. Tenía uno casi de mi edad (juntábamonos entrambos a leer vidas de santos), que era el que yo más quería, aunque a todos tenía gran amor y ellos a mí. Como veía los martirios que por Dios las santas pasaban, parecíame compraban muy barato el ir a gozar de Dios, y deseaba yo mucho morir así; no por amor que yo entendiese tenerle, sino por gozar tan en breve de los grandes bienes que leía haber en el cielo; y juntábame con este mi hermano a tratar qué medio habría para esto. Concertábamos irnos a tierra de moros, pidiendo por amor de Dios, para que allá nos desca-bezasen. Y paréceme que nos daba el Señor ánimo en tan tierna edad, si viéramos algún medio, sino que el tener padres nos parecía el mayor embarazo.

De que vi que era imposible ir adonde me matasen por Dios, ordená-bamos ser ermitaños; y en una huerta que había en casa procurábamos, como podíamos, hacer ermitas, poniendo unas piedrecillas, que luego se nos caían, y así no hallábamos remedio en nada para nuestro deseo; que ahora me pone devoción ver cómo me daba Dios tan presto lo que yo perdí por mi culpa.

Hacía limosna como podía, y podía poco. Procuraba soledad para rezar mis devociones, que eran hartas, en especial el rosario, de que mi madre era muy devota, y así nos hacía serlo. Gustaba mucho, cuando jugaba con otras niñas, hacer monasterios, como que éramos monjas; y yo me parece deseaba serlo, aunque no tanto como las cosas que he dicho» (V 1, 5.6).

De cómo han de ser las ermitas en los monasterios

«La casa jamás se labre, si no fuere la iglesia, ni haya cosa curiosa, sino tosca la madera; y sea la casa pequeña y las piezas bajas; cosa que cum-

⁵⁰ T. ÁLVAREZ, *Soledad*, 600.

⁵¹ «Silencio y soledad son condiciones vitales para que el hombre sea humano, plenamente humano..., es decir, hijo de Dios». JEAN DE LA STE. FACE, *Les ailles de la rencontre...*, en *Carmel*, n. 78 (1995/4), 63.

⁵² Cf. J. L. ASTIGARRAGA – A. BORRELL (eds.), *Concordancias de los escritos de Santa Teresa de Jesús*, 2 t., Roma, Teresianum, 2000. La cursiva resalta aquellas frases donde aparece explícitamente la Ermita.

⁵³ En su período fundacional, Teresa conoce también otras ermitas en caminos y ciudades, en su mayoría ermitas-capilla o ermitas-santuario (cf. F 28, 8.44; 29, 13.23.28; CC 30, 1).

pla a la necesidad, y no superflua. Fuerte, lo más que pudieren, y la cerca alta, y campo para hacer ermitas, para que se puedan apartar a oración, conforme a lo que hacían nuestros Padres santos» (Const 32).

«Muy mal parece, hijas mías, de la hacienda de los pobrecitos se hagan grandes casas. No lo permita Dios, sino pobre en todo y chica. Parezcámonos en algo a nuestro Rey, que no tuvo casa, sino en el portal de Belén adonde nació y la cruz adonde murió. Casas eran éstas donde se podía tener poca recreación. Los que las hacen grandes, ellos se entenderán; llevan otros intentos santos; mas trece pobrecitas, cualquier rincón les basta. *Si porque es menester por el mucho encerramiento tuvieren campo —y aun ayuda a la oración y devoción— con algunas ermitas para apartarse a orar, enhorabuena;* mas edificios y casa grande ni curioso, nada; ¡Dios nos libre! Siempre os acordad se ha de caer todo el día del juicio; ¿qué sabemos si será presto?» (CV 2, 9)⁵⁴.

Su experiencia en las ermitas de los monasterios

«Estaba una vez con grandísima pena⁵⁵, porque sabía que una persona, a quien yo tenía mucha obligación, quería hacer una cosa harto contra Dios y su honra, y estaba muy determinado a ello. Era tanta mi fatiga, que no sabía qué hacer; remedio para que lo dejase ya parecía que no le había. Supliqué a Dios muy de corazón que le pusiese; mas hasta verlo, no podía aliviarse mi pena. *Fuíme —estando así— a una ermita bien apartada, que las hay en este monasterio, y estando en una adonde está Cristo atado a la columna, suplicándole me hiciese esta merced, oí que me hablaba una voz muy suave, como metida en un silbo.* Yo me espelucé toda, que me hizo temor, y quisiera entender lo que me decía; mas no pude, que pasó muy en breve. Pasado mi temor —que fue presto—, quedé con un sosiego y gozo y deleite interior, que yo me espanté que sólo oír una voz, que esto oílo con los oídos corporales y sin entender palabra, hiciese tanta operación en el alma. En esto vi que se había de hacer lo que pedía, y así fue que se me quitó del todo la pena, en cosa que aún no era, como si lo viera hecho, como fue después. Díjelo a mis confesores, que tenía entonces dos, harto letrados y siervos de Dios» (V 39, 3). *«Estando yo un día después de la octava de la Visitación encomendando*

⁵⁴ Cf. CE 2, 9 (en cursiva, el texto modificado o eliminado): “Muy mal parece, hermanas mías, de la hacienda de los pobrecitos, *que a muchos les falta*, se hagan grandes casas; no lo permita Dios, sino pobre en todo y chica. Parezcámonos en algo a nuestro Rey, que no tuvo casa, sino en el portal de Belén *fue su nacimiento*. Los que las hacen, ellos *lo sabrán; yo no lo condeno; son más*; llevan otros intentos; mas trece pobrecitas, cualquier rincón les basta. Si por el mucho encerramiento tuvieren campo y ermitas para apartarse a orar, *y porque esta miserable naturaleza nuestra ha menester algo*, enhorabuena; mas edificios y casa grande ni curioso, nada; ¡Dios nos libre! Siempre *se acuerden* se ha de caer todo el día del juicio; ¿qué sabemos si será presto?”.

⁵⁵ En el monasterio de San José de Ávila.

a Dios a un hermano mío, en una ermita del Monte Carmelo, dije al Señor, no sé si en mi pensamiento: ¿Por qué está este mi hermano adonde tiene peligro su salvación? Si yo viera, Señor, un hermano vuestro en este peligro, ¿qué hiciera por remediarle?

Parecíame a mí que no me quedara cosa que pudiera por hacer. Díjome el Señor: ¡Oh, hija mía!, hermanas son más estas de la Encarnación, y te detienes. Pues ten ánimo; mira lo quiero Yo, y no es tan dificultoso como te parece. Y por donde pensáis se perderán estotras cosas, ganará lo uno y lo otro; no resistas, que es grande mi poder» (CC 17)⁵⁶.

«Estando en San José de Ávila, víspera de Pascua del Espíritu Santo, en la ermita de Nazaret, considerando en una grandísima merced que Nuestro Señor me había hecho en tal día como éste veinte años había —poco más o menos—, me comenzó un ímpetu y hervor grande de espíritu que me hizo suspender. En este gran recogimiento, entendí de Nuestro Señor lo que ahora diré: Que dijese a estos Padres Descalzos de su parte que procurasen guardar estas cuatro cosas y que, mientras las guardasen, siempre iría en más crecimiento esta religión; y cuando en ellas faltasen, entendiesen que iban menoscabando de su principio. La primera, que los cabezas estuviesen conformes. La segunda, que, aunque tuviesen muchas casas, en cada una hubiese pocos frailes. La tercera, que tratasen poco con seglares, y esto para bien de sus almas. La cuarta, que enseñasen más con obras que con palabras. Esto fue año de 1579. Y porque es gran verdad, lo firmo de mi nombre, Teresa de Jesús» (CC 59).

De cómo fueron las monjas

«(...) estas almas de ángeles⁵⁷, que a mí no me parecían otra cosa, porque ninguna falta, aunque fuese interior, me encubrían, y las mercedes y grandes deseos y desasimiento que el Señor les daba eran grandísimas; *su consuelo era su soledad, y así me certificaban que jamás de estar solas se hartaban*, y así tenían por tormento que las viniesen a ver, aunque fuesen hermanos; *la que más lugar tenía de estarse en una ermita, se tenía por más dichosa*» (F 1, 6).

De cómo han de ser las monjas⁵⁸

«Todo el tiempo que no anduvieren con la comunidad, o en oficios de ella, se esté cada una por sí, en las celdas o ermitas que la priora las señalare;

⁵⁶ En el monasterio de Medina del Campo, 16 de julio de 1571: “Reza por su hermano Agustín de Ahumada y el Señor le encomienda las monjas de la Encarnación [Ávila]” (título).

⁵⁷ Las monjas carmelitas descalzas de San José de Ávila, primera fundación teresiana (1562).

⁵⁸ Cf. Cta. 24, 15 (Toledo, 17.01.1570; a Lorenzo de Cepeda, Quito): habla de la virtud de doña Ana de Cepeda, “que nunca me he atrevido a meterla en una de estas casas [= de sus fundaciones], y no por falta de virtud sino que veo es lo que la conviene

en fin, en el lugar de su recogimiento; haciendo algo los días que no fueren de fiesta, llegándonos en este apartamiento a lo que manda la regla, de que esté cada una por sí» (Const 8)⁵⁹.

«Acordémonos de nuestros padres santos pasados, ermitaños, cuya vida pretendemos imitar; ¡qué pasarían de dolores y qué a solas, y de fríos y hambre y sol y calor, sin tener a quién se quejar sino a Dios. ¿Pensáis que eran de hierro? Pues tan delicados eran como nosotras. Y creed, hijas, que, en comenzando a vencer estos corpezuelos, no nos cansan tanto. Hartas habrá que miren lo que es menester; descuidaos de vosotras si no fuere a necesidad conocida. Si no nos determinamos a tragar de una vez la muerte y la falta de salud, nunca haremos nada» (CV 11, 4)⁶⁰.

*«¡Oh, qué grandísima caridad haría y qué gran servicio a Dios la monja que en sí viese que no puede llevar las costumbres que hay en esta casa, conocelo e irse! Y mire que le cumple⁶¹, si no quiere tener un infierno acá, y plega a Dios no sea otro allá, porque hay muchas causas para temer esto, y por ventura ella ni las demás no lo entenderán como yo. Créanme en esto —y si no, el tiempo les doy por testigo—, porque *el estilo que pretendemos llevar es no sólo de ser monjas, sino ermitañas, y así se desasen de todo lo criado, y a quien el Señor ha escogido para aquí particularmente veo la hace esta merced*. Aunque no sea en toda perfección, vese que va ya ella por el gran contento que le da y alegría; ver que no ha de tornar con cosa de la vida y el sabor en todas las de la religión» (CV 13, 5-6)⁶².*

aquello (...) y está harto bien para su propósito. Parece cosa de ermitaña y aquella bondad que siempre tuvo y penitencia grande". Cta. 197, 1 (Toledo, 02.07.1577; a la M. Ana de San Alberto, Caravaca): sobre las monjas ocd de Caravaca de la Cruz (Murcia): "que deben parecer ermitañas".

⁵⁹ A este texto le antecede la referencia a las obras que habrán de constar en la biblioteca, a la mano de las monjas, "para el mantenimiento del cuerpo". Dice así: "Tenga cuenta la priora con que haya buenos libros, en especial *Cartujanos, Flos Sanctorum, Contemptus mundi, Oratorio de Religiosos*, los de Fray Luis de Granada, y del Padre Fray Pedro de Alcántara, porque es en parte tan necesario este mantenimiento para el alma, como el comer para el cuerpo" (Const. 8). La Santa relaciona, por tanto, los libros, la lectura espiritual, con la vida-retiro en las ermitas dentro de sus conventos. Este particular recuerda las bibliotecas constituidas para las Ermitas del Desierto de Las Palmas, de las cuales queda todavía un fondo no pequeño en la actual BDP.

⁶⁰ Cf. CE 16, 4: "santos ermitaños".

⁶¹ *Que le cumple*: que le interesa, que le conviene.

⁶² En la 3ª redacción del *Camino de perfección* (códice de Toledo), retoca todo este pasaje. Sobre los frailes, escribe la Santa al P. Ambrosio Mariano de San Benito (que se halla en Madrid: octubre de 1576), tratando del proyecto de fundar un convento de carmelitas descalzos en Salamanca (en el que los frailes serían vicarios): "Yo digo a vuestra reverencia que hay más que hacer de lo que piensa y que por donde pensamos ganar quizá perderemos; ni me parece para autoridad de nuestra orden que entren con ese oficio de vicarios (que no los quieren para otra cosa) gente que cuando los vieses se había de mirar como ermitaños contemplativos, y no de aquí para allí con mujeres

Del fruto recolectado en la Ermita

«Digo ahora que, aunque todas las que traemos este hábito sagrado del Carmen somos llamadas a la oración y contemplación, porque este fue nuestro principio; de esta casta venimos, de aquellos santos padres nuestros del Monte Carmelo que *en tan gran soledad y con tanto desprecio del mundo buscaban este tesoro, esta preciosa margarita de que hablamos*, pocas nos disponemos para que nos la descubra el Señor» (5M 1, 2).

En la tradición reciente de las carmelitas descalzas existe una canción titulada «Ermiticas», compuesta el 15 de octubre de 1964, solemnidad de Santa Teresa de Jesús, por la Hna. Inocencia del Inmaculado Corazón de María (Amelia Fe y Olivares), (Jaén, 1911-Puzol, 1975) del Monasterio de la Sagrada Familia, Puzol (Valencia). Las ermitas a las que se refiere el título son las existentes en el Monasterio de San José (Ávila), fundado en 1562 por santa Teresa de Jesús, las cuales mandó construir precisamente la Santa. El contenido es una descripción, preñada de afecto filial, de esas mismas ermitillas⁶³.

Ermiticas

Ermiticas (bis)
ermiticas teresianas
ermiticas de la huerta
de las primeras descalzas.
Yo quisiera (bis)
solitarias ermiticas
que de la Madre Teresa
nos hablarais a sus hijas.

Ermitas de San José
que Teresa levantó...
avellanos y laureles
que con su mano plantó.
Añoranza del desierto

En la ermita que cuidaba
llamada de Nazaret,
sobre ella vio una paloma
—Pascua de Pentecostés—.
Eran sus alas conchitas
que daban gran resplandor.
¡Oh glorioso arrobamiento de amor...
en que el alma se perdió!

A San Agustín Teresa
una ermita dedicó
del santo fue muy devota
con sus hijas se educó.
Santa Catalina, mártir,

semejantes, que fuera de sacarlas de su mal vivir, no sé si parecerá bien” (Cta. 130, 15). El P. Ambrosio había entrado en la Orden por el influjo eremítico de Catalina de Cardona (1519-77), una famosa y extravagante ermitaña asentada en La Roda (Albacete) tras haber vivido intensos años en la corte de Madrid al socaire de la princesa de Éboli. Cf. T. ÁLVAREZ, *Cardona, Catalina de (1519-77)*, en *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 798-799; ID., *Ambrosio Mariano, ocd (1510-94)*, *ibid.*, 701-702; ID., *Mendoza, Ana de, Princesa de Éboli*, *ibid.*, 1.044-1.045; A. DE ARTEAGA, *La princesa de Éboli*, Madrid, Martínez Roca (=Booket, 6014), 2003⁵.

⁶³ Agradezco a las carmelitas descalzas del Monasterio de San José y Santa Teresa, en Teruel, que me la dieron a conocer musicalizada, y a las del citado Monasterio de Puzol, quienes me facilitaron el texto completo.

y oasis de la oración
donde recibió Teresa de Dios
tantas muestras de favor:

Ermita de la Columna
con un fresco del Señor
“Señor de los lindos ojos”
el de la flagelación.
Como el pintor no acertara
a pintar un desgarrón
mientras ella se extasiaba quedó
pintado con gran primor.

es de otra la titular
con cipreses a su puerta
que invitan a contemplar:

Ermiticas (bis)
ermiticas teresianas
ermiticas de la huerta
de las primeras descalzas.
Yo quisiera (bis)
solitarias ermiticas
recoger vuestro mensaje
que nos habla de ella misma.

IV. LECTURA SANJUANISTA DE LA ERMITA⁶⁴

LETRILLA

*Olvido de lo criado,
memoria del Criador;
atención a lo interior,
y estarse amando al Amado.*⁶⁵

El título de estos versos es *Suma de perfección*: un método abreviado para llegar a la perfección de vida cristiana, según el lenguaje de la época. Nos preocupa y aguijonea la relación del contenido que expresa y sugiere con el ideal de la Ermita. Aún más: con la actitud inicial del eremita. Éste ha de venir al Desierto, que no conoce, y ha de entrar en la lógica de la Ermita, que conoce menos aún, olvidando *lo criado* y haciendo memoria de su *Criador*. No habrá manera de acabar con él ningún asunto si antes no pasa por aquí, siguiendo la pauta

⁶⁴ Para las obras: SAN JUAN DE LA CRUZ, *Obras completas*, ed. F. Ruiz y J. V. Rodríguez, Madrid, EDE, 1993⁵. Y las siglas: C: *Cántico espiritual* (CA: 1ª redacción; C o CB: 2ª redacción); D: *Dichos de luz y amor*; L: *Llama de amor viva* (LA: 1ª redacción; LB: 2ª redacción); N: *Noche oscura*; P: *Poesía*; S: *Subida del Monte Carmelo* (1S / 1N: 1^{er} libro de *Subida / de Noche*). Sobre las ermitas, cf. G. STINISSEN, *Le désert de Jean de la Croix*, en *Carmel*, n. 78 (1995/4), 19-30; G. CASTRO, *Soledad*, en E. PACHO (dir.), *Diccionario de San Juan de la Cruz*, Burgos, Monte Carmelo, 2000, 1.349-1.359; ID., *Cavernas del sentido*, *ib.*, 303-305; ID., *Cuevas*, *ib.*, 369-370; ID., *Desierto*, *ib.*, 391-399; ID., *Desnudez espiritual*, *ib.*, 399-408; A. BALDEÓN-SANTIAGO, *Silencio*, *ib.*, 1.313-1.320. En lo literario (más sobre el desierto): F. RODRÍGUEZ DE LA FLOR, *Barroco*, 281-282, 291, 294.

⁶⁵ *Poesías* 15 (S. JUAN DE LA CRUZ, *Obras completas*, 90); TOMÁS DE JESÚS, *Instrucción espiritual*, [7]; *Resumen de las principales obligaciones*, [5]. Cf. M. S. ROLLÁN, *Olvido*, en *Diccionario de San Juan de la Cruz*, 1.066-1.075.

sanjuanista: «*Para venir adonde no sabes, / has de ir por donde no sabes*»; «*para venir a lo que no conoces, / has de ir por donde no conoces*» (1S 13, 11). Por esta razón, al igual que desgajamos el anterior poemilla de ascendencia teresiana, vamos a entresacar de esta estrofa su contenido atendiendo siempre al trasfondo que nos interesa: el ideal de la Ermita.

*Olvido (criado) – memoria (Criador)*⁶⁶

Para santa Teresa de Jesús, *olvido* significa «desasimiento de todo lo criado»⁶⁷. Para san Juan de la Cruz, *olvido* supone, más bien, soledad y extrañamiento. La soledad y el desierto, como apunta Maximiliano Herráiz, alcanza su máxima espiritualización en ambos místicos. «Más y antes que cuestión geográfica, la soledad es cosa de espíritu, es decir, posicionamiento amoroso, de opción vocacional. Buscar en soledad a Jesús no es ponerse en camino a lejanos lugares, sino entrar dentro o, mejor, referir a él toda nuestra existencia con vigorosa determinación y urgencia de amor. Así, para lograr la liberación de los “deudos”, no es solución dejar la propia casa y poner tierra por medio. Según la formulación teresiana se trata de “que determinadamente se abraza el alma con el buen Jesús, Señor Nuestro, que como allí lo *halla* todo, lo *olvida* todo”»⁶⁸. De este modo, el eremita no viene huyendo al Desierto —flaco favor le haría el Desierto a un fugitivo o a un derrotado de la vida.

Alguien podría pensar la Ermita como lugar de refugio para aquellos que sucumbieron en la vida. Y, así, el *olvido* se convertiría en el propio enterramiento. Como escribe una voz de nuestro tiempo, cuya palabra ha sido calificada como “poética de la desposesión”⁶⁹: «Ni secreto ni pacto.

⁶⁶ Cf. P. CEREZO GALÁN, *La antropología del espíritu en Juan de la Cruz*, en *Actas del Congreso Internacional Sanjuanista* [1991], t. III, Valladolid, Junta de Castilla y León, 1993, 151-154.

⁶⁷ CV 4,4; cf. CV 8: “Trata del gran bien que es desasirse de todo lo criado interior y exteriormente” (tít.).

⁶⁸ M. HERRÁIZ, *Soledad y desierto en la espiritualidad teresiana-sanjuanista*, en VV. AA., *Historia, teología y espiritualidad del Desierto. III Centenario de los Carmelitas en el Desierto de Las Palmas*, Desierto de Las Palmas (Castellón), Centro de Espiritualidad, 1994, 65. La cita teresiana, en CV 9, 5.

⁶⁹ L. GARCÍA JAMBRINA, *Poética de la desposesión*, en *Blanco y Negro Cultural*, (29.03.2003), 13. Ada Salas “(...) publica en 1994 *Variaciones en blanco*, con el que obtiene el Premio Hiperión y se aproxima a la llamada “poética del silencio”. En el siguiente, titulado *La sed* (1997), su expresión se depura y su voz alcanza ya la madurez. Es la suya una poesía esencialista en la que puede decirse que menos es más. (...) Como el anterior, *Lugar de la derrota* está compuesto por una serie de poemas breves y sin

/ Ni muda sumisión / ni profecía. Escucho cómo llega / la crecida fluvial de las palabras. / Reúno los despojos. Abrazo / los cadáveres / y con ellos enciendo / esta pira común para el olvido»⁷⁰. Mas no hay idea más lejana de la realidad que ésta. A un derrotado, la Ermita le derrota más.

Por el contrario, el eremita ha de llegar al Desierto recogándose o ya recogido en sí mismo, que no ensimismado⁷¹; para que el exterior (las construcciones, el paraje, los caminos) le ayude realmente a entrar en sí —cual teresiano castillo interior—; o bien, siguiendo el modelo sanjuanista, a salir de sí, saliendo de todo lo que no es Dios, para entrar de nuevo en sí con sólo Dios, que mora allá, en el hondón del alma.

«¡Ea, pues, alma hermosa!, pues ya sabes que en tu seno tu deseado Amado mora escondido, procura estar con él bien escondida, y en tu seno le abrazarás y sentirás con afección de amor» (CB 1, 10).

El eremita cae en la cuenta primero; se pone en camino y se llega al Desierto para vivir en la Ermita lo que no sabe ni entiende.

«Cayendo el alma en la cuenta de lo que está obligada a hacer, viendo que la vida es breve, la senda de la vida eterna estrecha, que el justo apenas se salva, que las cosas del mundo son vanas y engañosas, que todo se acaba y falta como el agua que corre, el tiempo incierto, la cuenta estrecha, la perdición muy fácil, la salvación muy dificultosa; conociendo, por otra parte, la gran deuda que a Dios debe en haberle criado solamente para sí...; y [conociendo] que gran parte de su vida se ha ido en el aire; y que de todo esto ha de haber cuenta y razón..., y que ya es tarde y por ventura lo postrero del día; para remediar tanto mal y daño, mayormente sintiendo a Dios muy enojado y escondido..., tocada ella de pavor y dolor de corazón interior..., renunciando todas las cosas, dando de mano a todo negocio sin dilatar un día ni una hora, con ansia y gemido salido del corazón herido ya del amor de Dios, comienza a invocar a su Amado y dice: *¿Adónde te escondiste, / Amado, y me dejaste con gemido? / Como el ciervo huiste, / habiéndome herido; / salí tras ti clamando, y eras ido*» (CB 1, 1).

título: son los fragmentos de un discurso amoroso. En la mayor parte, además, el último verso aparece separado del resto por un amplio espacio en blanco, como un vacío o un hueco o un agujero de silencio. (...). He aquí, pues, la culminación de lo que podríamos llamar la poética de la desposesión” (*ibid.*).

⁷⁰ A. SALAS, *Lugar de la derrota*, Madrid, Hiperión, 2003, 54.

⁷¹ Significa que, al menos, ha iniciado el proceso de “sosegar la casa del sentido y del espíritu”, casa que es la misma persona, según lo que dice en *Noche: “estando ya mi casa sosegada”* (canción 1, v. 5; canción 2, v. 10). Sólo quien se ha adentrado en este camino, podrá entender la Ermita y aprovecharse de sus frutos en sazón.

Entonces, olvidado de sí y de todo *lo criado*, se entrará en *las cavernas del sentido* a gustar *el mosto de granadas* con el Amado, en una *cena que recrea y enamora...*

La actitud fundamental del *olvido* es para el Santo, según Manuel Ballester un *modo de ser*; y según M^a SAGRARIO ROLLÁN un *modo de estar*. Escuchemos a cada uno.

Modo de ser

«Por ello el olvido no es noche que rodee, y en la que progresivamente se penetre, ni simple ausencia de noticias; no es un espacio oscuro, es un *modo de ser*; tampoco oscuridad, sino neutra desaparición. Juan de la Cruz ha apuntado a estos vectores de significación, tematizándolos apenas: “Tenga esta cautela: en todas las cosas que oyese, viese, oliese, gustase o tocase no haga archivo ni presa de ellas en la memoria, libre y desembarazada... *dejándola libremente perder en olvido*” (3S 2, 14). El golpe vaciante, que destruye las formas retenidas, es *disolución simultánea* de la potencia. Y esa entrada en olvido le aporta al espíritu más profunda quietud; no sólo le aleja de los perfiles definidos o apaga el rayo que le ataba a sus representaciones; le libera y *le suelta*. Foco de intuición que, al captar el alcance del acto de olvido, puede desentrañar las múltiples significaciones que en él se encierran»⁷².

«El golpe que vacía la memoria es, en su último estrato, momento del acceso a lo *estático, cierto y permanente*. *El olvido es puerta abierta al ser*, porque borra lo que la rememoración perpetuamente resucita y salva, los fantasmas del tiempo, “agitación... dolor... temor... odio... vana esperanza y vano gozo y vana gloria”. Y como acceso al río inmóvil de la verdad, apaga el sufrimiento»⁷³.

Modo de estar

«En esta breve letrilla, queda resumido el sentido hondo y radical del olvido sanjuanista, el sentido místico del olvido. El olvido no es sólo la negación de una potencia espiritual —la memoria—, ni el olvidar un medio entre otros, para llegar al fin de la unión con Dios; el olvido es mucho más, es un modo de estar, contrapunto del recuerdo amoroso de *Llama*⁷⁴. El alma que ha llegado a su ser en Dios, su verdadero ser, es

⁷² M. BALLESTERO, *Juan de la Cruz: de la angustia al olvido. Análisis del fondo intuitivo en la “Subida del Monte Carmelo”*, Barcelona, Península, 1977 (=Historia, ciencia, sociedad, 138), 204 (dentro del § “*El horizonte del olvido*”, 204-207; cf. también, *ibid.*, § “*Nuevas formas de la memoria*”, 214-219). La perspectiva de este autor parte del análisis según los presupuestos del materialismo dialéctico crítico.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁷⁴ Poema *Llama de amor viva*, canción 4^a: “;*Cuán manso y amoroso / recuerdas en mi seno, / donde secretamente solo moras! / Y en tu aspirar sabroso, / de bien y gloria lleno, / ¡cuán delicadamente me enamoras!*”.

toda olvido. Contrariamente al alma como ser en el mundo, que se vive como cuidado, pues el cuidado y la preocupación son constitutivos de nuestra existencia finita en el tiempo, según ha puesto de manifiesto la filosofía de este siglo (Heidegger en *Ser y tiempo*)»⁷⁵.

Sobre el “recuerdo de Dios”, se ha afirmado que «es memoria de futuro y no tiene nada que ver con el recordar, recordar o revivir el pasado, ya que es algo presente, proyectado en la bienaventuranza (LB 4, 4). El “recuerdo de la excelencia de Dios” es inefable (*ib.*, 10-17) y no llega a colmar totalmente la capacidad posesiva del alma humana. Mientras el hombre peregrina en la tierra, camino de la “beatífica vista”, “vive en esperanza todavía, en que no se puede dejar de sentir vacío; tiene tanto de gemido, aunque suave y regalado, cuanto le falta para la acabada posesión de hijos de Dios” (LB 1, 27). (...). El vacío de la memoria, purificada de imágenes y recuerdos, ha sido colmado por la esperanza; el recuerdo no es evocación forzada del pasado, sino presencia del bien supremo ya presente en ella, pero no poseído aún totalmente. Así concluye la tensión dialéctica entre memoria y esperanza»⁷⁶. En esta línea, el recuerdo de Dios es fuente de consolación para la persona que activa la memoria *a lo divino*⁷⁷.

De ahí, que el olvido vaya tan íntimamente relacionado con el cuidado, con lo criado: *Olvido de lo criado*. ¿Qué se olvida? “Mi cuidado”. ¿Quién se encarga, pues, de él? “El Amado”. En el plano ascético, el Santo explica, por medio de algunos *Dichos* que ofrecen luz al respecto, el sentido de tal olvido:

«Bienaventurado el que, dejado aparte su gusto e inclinación, mira las cosas en razón y justicia para hacerlas» (D 44). Porque «el camino de la vida de muy poco bullicio y negociación es, y más requiere mortificación de la voluntad que mucho saber; el que tomare de las cosas y gustos lo menos, andará más por él» (D 57). Por eso, «aunque obres muchas cosas, si no aprendes a negar tu voluntad y sujetarte, *perdiendo cuidado de ti y de tus cosas*, no aprovecharás en la perfección» (D 71)⁷⁸.

⁷⁵ M. S. ROLLÁN, *Olvido*, 1.067.

⁷⁶ E. PACHO, *Memoria*, en *Diccionario de San Juan de la Cruz*, 961 y 962.

⁷⁷ “Que el hombre ame las cosas “en sí”, he ahí la raíz de toda idolatría. Que las ame “en el Criador de todas ellas”, tal es el efecto de la consolación”. J. A. GARCÍA, *Oficio de consolar: recibir y transmitir la consolación de Dios*, en *Manresa*, 75 (2003), 282.

⁷⁸ S. JUAN DE LA CRUZ, *Obras completas*, 99-100, 100-101, 102, respectivamente. (La cursiva es mía.)

En el plano místico, la última canción del poema *Noche oscura* aclara la aparente paradoja del olvido de sí y de su cuidado, a sabiendas de que el Criador (Dios Padre), por medio del Amado (Dios Hijo), sostiene a la persona en un amor continuo (Dios Espíritu); cuánto más cuando ella se deja amar «del todo por el Todo», en un abandono pleno de plena confianza:

*Dejéme y olvidéme,
el rostro recliné sobre el Amado,
cesó todo, y dejéme,
dejando mi cuidado
entre las azucenas olvidado.*⁷⁹

Así, pues, existe un paralelismo entre la actividad aconsejada en el último verso de la *Suma de perfección* —*estarse amando al Amado*— con las acciones descritas en el poema de *Noche*. Una actitud (amar) nacida del *interior*, por lo que necesita de suma *atención* para acrecentarla y profundizar en ella.

«San Agustín afirma que la búsqueda de la vida “interior” es la búsqueda de la verdad, es decir, de las cosas tal como son. No es una huida, como podría sugerirnos la palabra interior, es hallar por dentro la raíz de todas las cosas, la sede de todas las elecciones, la motivación de todas las decisiones que se toman en el mundo y, por tanto, el lugar donde se construye la ciudad, la sociedad, la historia.

La vida interior no es un refugio, sino una actitud determinante para la historia humana. No hay historia humana si no es por las decisiones que los hombres maduran en su interior. Cuando alcanzamos y cultivamos la vida interior, alcanzamos también las raíces de toda decisión humana: social, económica, política, cultural, afectiva, religiosa.

Por eso, el descubrimiento que hace Agustín de la vida interior vale para el ser humano y para las leyes internas de la historia. Es la ventana desde la cual podemos contemplar las dos ciudades y las dinámicas de la historia, comprender el porqué de los imperios y de su caída, y de cómo se va formando el Reino de Dios en medio de los acontecimientos humanos. Podemos comprender cómo la Jerusalén celeste baja del cielo y está ya presente en la historia humana.

La vida interior es el lugar que nos hace entender el porqué de todas las acciones que hacen la historia de los hombres que, a través de una serie de relaciones, construyen la humanidad nueva, la ciudad de Dios»⁸⁰.

⁷⁹ Poema *Noche oscura*, canción 8ª.

⁸⁰ C. M. MARTINI, *El presbítero como comunicador*, Madrid, PPC, 1998² (=Sauce, 57), 128-129.

Éste y no otro será el ideal propuesto desde los Desiertos en el Carmelo Teresiano: la atención a lo interior, la cual posibilita la vida espiritual que transforma la realidad⁸¹. Por tanto, se hace imprescindible la apertura a la trascendencia, que siempre es desconocida y está más allá de la esencia⁸², para amar, para responder amando al que primero nos amó, al Amado⁸³.

*Textos sanjuanistas*⁸⁴

No hallamos más que un lugar en las obras de san Juan de la Cruz donde hable directa y concretamente de las ermitas. Éstas eran muy frecuentes en su tiempo, en la devoción popular del siglo XVI español. Aún más, en ocasiones existía un visionario o visionaria, o cierta persona particular que llamaba la atención a partir de la publicidad que se daba de haber recibido revelaciones sobrenaturales, palabras y oráculos de Dios. Con lo cual, hacía de ese sitio, de esa ermita o capilla, un lugar de peregrinación de curiosos y gentes muy variopintas, dejándose llevar unos y otros por el calor y la emotividad de gestos y palabras, la incultura de la fe y las malas costumbres heredadas de épocas precedentes.

Un caso típico y mal entendido en la historia del Carmelo Teresiano es la figura de Catalina de Cardona. Santa Teresa de Jesús habla de ella en el libro de las *Fundaciones*⁸⁵ y, curiosamente, ha sido leído por unos para demostrar que la Santa defiende y promueve ese ejemplo de vida cristiana dentro de la Orden, y por otros para explicar en su justa medida el camino que Teresa adopta en relación con la pobreza en los nuevos monasterios y conventos por ella fundados⁸⁶. De hecho, algunos primeros carmelitas quedaron atraídos por la estela de santidad de la Cardona,

⁸¹ Cf. FELIPE DE LA VIRGEN DEL CARMEN, *La vida interior en los Desiertos de la Reforma Teresiana en su primer siglo*, en *Revista de Espiritualidad*, 21 (1962), 584-600.

⁸² Cf. E. LEVINAS, *De otro modo que ser o más allá de la esencia*, Salamanca, Sígueme, 1987.

⁸³ Cf. JUAN DE JESÚS MARÍA (SAERA), *Le amará tanto como es amada*, en *Ephemérides Carmeliticæ*, 6 (1955), 3-103; S. CASTRO, *El amor como apertura trascendental del hombre en san Juan de la Cruz*, en *Revista de Espiritualidad*, 35 (1976), 431-463.

⁸⁴ Cf. J. L. ASTIGARRAGA – A. BORRELL – F. J. MARTÍN DE LUCAS (eds.), *Concordancias de los escritos de San Juan de la Cruz*, Roma, Teresianum, 1990. (Se han puesto en cursiva las frases donde aparece la ermita.)

⁸⁵ Leer el capítulo 28 en donde la autora hace un panegírico “aparente” de Catalina de Cardona.

⁸⁶ “Extraño personaje, coetáneo de Teresa, estrechamente vinculado al noviciado de Pastrana, y capaz de interferir negativamente en el ideal de vida religiosa propuesto por la Santa”. T. ÁLVAREZ, *Cardona*, 798-799.

tan atractiva en el tiempo que vivían⁸⁷. Una vez muerta, y ya en vida, éstos y muchos otros quedaron vinculados de por vida a los lugares en que había morado la Cardona —su famosa cueva—, y comenzó a andar una devoción hacia aquel lugar. Tanto es así que a lo largo del tiempo ha gozado de gran veneración en el seno de la Orden⁸⁸. Y aquella covachuela, lugar de peregrinación como ermita tosca y escondida, hace su camino en el imaginario popular llegando a crear equívocos en otros ámbitos teóricamente más serios y serenos, como la crítica literaria⁸⁹ o la arqueología⁹⁰.

Por el contrario, las ermitas a las que se refiere el Santo son lugares piadosos, que inducen a la oración e infunden devoción. En 3S 39 escribe sobre los oratorios y templos y cómo usarlos «encaminando el espíritu a Dios por ellos»; y 3S 40 continúa: «La causa, pues, por que algunos espirituales nunca acaban de entrar en los gozos verdaderos del espíritu, es porque nunca acaban ellos de alzar el apetito del gozo de estas cosas exteriores y visibles. Adviertan estos tales que, *aunque el lugar decente y dedicado para oración es el templo y oratorio visible, y la imagen para motivo, que no ha de ser de manera que se emplee el jugo y sabor del alma en el templo visible y motivo, y se olvide de orar en el templo vivo, que es el recogimiento interior del alma*» (3S 40,1)⁹¹. Sigue: «Debes, pues, para purgar la voluntad del gozo y apetito vano en esto y enderezarlo a Dios en tu oración, sólo mirar que tu conciencia esté pura, y tu voluntad entera en Dios, y la mente puesta de veras en él; y, como he dicho, *escoger el lugar más apartado y solitario que pudieres, y convertir todo el gozo de la voluntad en invocar y glorificar a Dios*; y de esotros gustillos del exterior no hagas caso, antes los procures negar. Porque, si se hace el alma al sabor de la devoción sensible, nunca atinarás a pasar a la fuerza del deleite del espíritu, que se halla en la desnudez espiritual mediante el recogimiento interior» (3S 40,1.2). Por último, el colofón (3S 41), sobre «algunos daños en

⁸⁷ Es el caso de los italianos Mariano Azzaro (P. Ambrosio Mariano de San Benito, ya citado) y Giovanni Narduch (Hno. Juan de la Misericordia); sobre éste, cf. T. ÁLVAREZ, *Juan de la Misericordia, ocd (1526-1616)*, en *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 994-995.

⁸⁸ Cf. ANSELMO DEL PILAR, *Una pérdida lamentable para la Orden Carmelitana: el cuerpo de la Vble. Catalina de Cardona*, en *Monte Carmelo*, 45 (1941), 321-329.

⁸⁹ Cf. F. RODRÍGUEZ DE LA FLOR, *Barroco*, 294-296.

⁹⁰ Cf. Y. ÁLVAREZ DELGADO – M. T. MARCOS BERMEJO – S. PALOMERO PLAZA, *Excavaciones en la cueva de D^a Catalina de Cardona. Convento de N^a S^a del Socorro 1572-1603*, en *Noticario Arqueológico Hispánico*, 22 (1985), 299-366 (cf. p. 317).

⁹¹ Cf. *Dichos* n. 51: “Si quieres venir al santo recogimiento, no has de venir admitiendo sino negando”.

que caen los que ya se dan al gusto sensible de las cosas y lugares devotos de la manera que se ha dicho» (título).

Así, pues, la advertencia que el Santo hace a sus lectores se refiere al uso de estos “lugares de oración”. Sobre todo, al uso que suelen hacer los que se encuentran más adelante en el camino espiritual de la vida cristiana, los llamados *espirituales*, según la terminología tradicional. Avisa para que las ermitas no sirvan de excusa al tapar las inmadureces normales del caminante: ahora viviendo en una ahora viviendo en otra, ora arreglando una ora desarreglando otra. De este modo escribe al finalizar el tercer y último libro de *Subida del Monte Carmelo*:

Capítulo 41

De algunos daños en que caen los que se dan al gusto sensibles de las cosas y lugares devotos de la manera que se ha dicho

1. Muchos daños se le siguen, así acerca de lo interior como de lo exterior, al espiritual, por quererse andar al sabor sensitivo acerca de las dichas cosas; porque acerca del espíritu nunca llegará al recogimiento interior del espíritu, que consiste en pasar de todo eso, y hacer olvidar al alma todos esos sabores sensibles, y entrar en lo vivo del recogimiento del alma, y adquirir las virtudes con fuerza. Cuanto a lo exterior, le causa no acomodarse a orar en todos los lugares, sino en los que son a su gusto; y así, muchas veces faltará a la oración, pues, como dicen, no está hecho más que al libro de su aldea.

2. Demás de esto, este apetito les causa muchas variedades, porque *de éstos son los que nunca perseveran en un lugar, ni a veces en un estado, sino que ahora los veréis en un lugar, ahora en otro; ahora tomar una ermita, ahora otra: ahora componer un oratorio, ahora otro.*

Y de éstos son también aquellos que se les acaba la vida en mudanzas de estados y modos de vivir; que, como sólo tienen aquel hervor y gozo sensible acerca de las cosas espirituales, y nunca se han hecho fuerza para llegar al recogimiento espiritual por la negación de su voluntad y sujeción en sufrirse en desacomodamientos, todas las veces que ven un lugar devoto a su parecer, o alguna manera de vida o estado que cuadre con su condición e inclinación, luego se van tras él y dejan el que tenían. Y como se movieron por aquel gusto sensible, de aquí es que presto buscan otra cosa, porque el gusto sensible no es constante, porque falta muy presto».

La Ermita como menor lugar

«Así lo hacían los anacoretas y otros santos ermitaños, que *en los anchísimos y graciosísimos desiertos escogían el menor lugar que les podía bastar, edificando estrechísimas celdas y cuevas y encerrándose allí*; donde San Benito estuvo tres años, y otro, que fue San Simón, se ató con una cuerda

para no tomar más ni andar más que lo que alcanzase; y, de esta manera, muchos, que nunca acabaríamos de contar. Porque entendían muy bien aquellos santos que, si no apagaban el apetito y codicia de hallar gusto y sabor espiritual, no podían venir a él ni ser espirituales» (3S 42, 2).

La Ermita, lugar solitario y áspero

«Aunque es mejor orar donde más decencia hubiere, con todo, no obstante esto, aquel lugar se ha de escoger donde menos se embarace el sentido y el espíritu de ir a Dios. (...). Y así, no ha de ser lugar ameno y deleitable al sentido, como suelen procurar algunos; porque, en vez de recoger a Dios el espíritu, no pare en recreación y gusto y sabor del sentido. *Y, por eso, es bueno lugar solitario, y aun áspero, para que el espíritu sólida y derechamente suba a Dios, no impedido ni detenido en las cosas visibles; aunque alguna vez ayudan a levantar el espíritu, mas esto es olvidándolas luego y quedándose en Dios.* Por lo cual, nuestro Salvador ordinariamente escogía lugares solitarios para orar (Mt 14, 23) y aquellos que no ocupasen mucho los sentidos, para darnos ejemplo, sino que levantasen el alma a Dios, como eran los montes que levantaban de la tierra, y ordinariamente son pelados de sensitiva recreación» (3S 39, 2).

V. RECOPIACIÓN

Santa Teresa de Jesús y san Juan de la Cruz vienen a decir esencialmente lo mismo cuanto a la sustancia del concepto y de la realidad de la Ermita (porque coinciden al entender y experimentar las claves vitales de interpretación: Dios, Mundo y Hombre). «Teresa lo dice y matiza con diamantina y bella femineidad; Juan de la Cruz masculiniza su teología erudita con ternura de hombre poeta. Es envidiable y único en la historia de la espiritualidad este complemento en una Escuela. La oración los hizo contradizos en la misma experiencia de fe»⁹².

Un bello ejemplo de esto mismo lo expresa de manera inmejorable el autor de una biografía novelada de san Juan de la Cruz. Titula, precisamente, el capitulillo así: «Los desiertos»⁹³.

⁹² L. RUANO DE LA IGLESIA, *Teresa de Jesús y Juan de la Cruz. ¿Dos conceptos de Dios, del mundo, del hombre?*, en *Monte Carmelo*, 97 (1989), 376.

⁹³ J. JIMÉNEZ LOZANO, *El mudejarillo*, Barcelona, Anthropos, 1992, 70-71. José Jiménez Lozano ganó el Premio Cervantes en 2004. Para conocer en algo su interioridad, cf. T. MERMALL, *Estética y mística: el castillo interior de José Jiménez Lozano*, en *José Jiménez Lozano. Premio Nacional de las Letras Españolas 1992*, Madrid, Ministerio de Cultura, 1994, 91-98 (también en: *Anthropos*, n. 200 [2004], 198-203).

«A la monja Teresa la habían vuelto la cabeza con esto y con lo otro y con lo de más allá sobre aquel frailecillo: los denuestos y los encomios; (...). Pero cuando [fray Juan] comenzó a hablar, a la monja le pareció un Séneca, que fue lo que las dijo a las otras monjas, cuando las contó lo que habían hablado de los desiertos y ermitillas, de los lugares donde no había nadie, ni nada, ni otra cosa que silencio. O donde sólo crecían palmitos que se iban pelando hoja a hoja y, al fin, estaba el cogollo, que era fuera de la sombra del mundo.

—Ni éste —decía el frailecillo.

—Ni éste —decía ella.

—Ni éste.

—Ni éste.

—Nada.

—Nada.

Y se callaban luego; y el otro fraile que acompañaba a fray Juan perdía de vista a éste y a la monjuela, cuando iban por aquel desierto del que estaban hablando, y siempre parecía que había más desierto, pero a fray Juan le parecía siempre poco. Y le parecían muy grandes las casas de eremitas que ella le iba diciendo: blancas, con una esterilla en el suelo, una cruz de madera en la pared y un cántaro.

—Y un ventanuco que entre luz; y para escribir.

—¿Escribir? —dijo Juan—. En la Cartuja no se escribe.

Pero es que era muy mozo este Padre, aunque fuese un Séneca, iba diciendo ella luego a las otras monjas, cuando se acabó la entrevista, y se había enfadado un poco porque ella le había hablado de escribir.

—Pero es que es muy mozo —decía Teresa.

Y que a lo mejor le habían estragado los libros y escrituras de Salamanca o qué sé yo, porque ¿cómo no iba a escribir? (...)»⁹⁴.

Jiménez Lozano evoca varios elementos principales que han surgido en nuestra reflexión: el Desierto (*los desiertos*), los eremitas (*casas de eremitas*), la Ermita (*ermitillas* - ermitas pequeñas -, *blancas, con una estrellita en el suelo, una cruz de madera en la pared y un cántaro. Y un ventanuco que entre luz; y para escribir*), el encuentro con Dios (*el cogollo*), la comunicación de la experiencia espiritual (*¿cómo no iba a escribir?*), la complementariedad de las experiencias de Teresa de Jesús y de Juan de la Cruz (*el otro fraile que acompañaba a fray Juan perdía de vista a éste y a la monjuela, cuando iban por aquel desierto del que estaban hablando*) y la diferencia entre ambas experiencias (*se había enfadado un poco porque ella le había hablado de escribir*); algunas actitudes del eremita, tales como la soledad (*no había nadie, ni*

⁹⁴ J. JIMÉNEZ LOZANO, *El mudejarillo*, 70-71.

nada), el silencio (*ni otra cosa que silencio*), la *fuga mundi* (*fuera de la sombra del mundo*), etc. Con todo, la lectura teresiano-sanjuanista de la Ermita no ha terminado. Aquí sólo la he esbozado, resaltando los puntos que he considerado de interés (recuérdese que he realizado esta lectura desde las coordenadas específicas del Desierto de Las Palmas, relacionando lo general con lo concreto). El que está llamado a vivir en la Ermita (sea donde fuere) entenderá «estas verdades» y no hará falta mayores explicaciones. Y el que no goce de esa llamada peculiar, las puede contemplar impresas aquí, quizá dando pábulo a su entendimiento, haciéndola suya, ampliándola o componiendo otra (desde sus propias coordenadas⁹⁵), incluso, dialogando (ojalá) con la lectura propuesta en estas líneas, que ahora tocan ya a su fin.

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⁹⁵ Recomiendo realizar una lectura similar desde las circunstancias de otros Desiertos carmelitanos y, especialmente, desde la experiencia de la Ermita en esos Desiertos. En España, al menos, hay dos oficialmente y uno más “extraoficial”: el de San José en las Batuecas (Salamanca) y el de San José de Rigada, en Hoz de Anero (Cantabria); el extraoficial: las Ermitas de Córdoba, un eremitorio que al incorporarse a la Orden no llegó a ser Desierto; es actualmente un lugar de acogida para la experiencia de la Ermita en ámbito carmelitano-teresiano.

VISUAL IMAGES AS A WAY OF DEFINING IDENTITY:
THE CASE OF THE RECONSTRUCTED CARMELITE MISSAL

VALERIE EDDEN

The Carmelite Missal, London BL Additional 29704-05 & Additional 44892, is famous for two quite different reasons, firstly for its lavish illumination and secondly for its post-medieval fate. In the nineteenth century, the children of the then owner, Philip Hanrott, cut it up and pasted many of the illuminations in scrapbooks. Subsequently the manuscript became newsworthy because of the brilliant detective work done by Margaret Rickert, who reconstructed it from the fragments.¹ The work of 3 illuminators may be detected, whose work has been identified in other manuscripts, secular as well as religious; the manuscript has been described as a 'foyer of contemporary artists'.²

It can be dated with some accuracy, since it excludes feasts introduced into the Carmelite Calendar in 1393 (the Visitation, the Presentation of the Virgin in the temple and Mary of the Snows), which suggests that the manuscript was at least commissioned before this date. The Solemn Commemoration of the Virgin, introduced before 1387, is included but seems to be squeezed in, suggesting that its inclusion was not originally planned. It is the only Marian feast to be without illumination; indeed even quite minor feasts have some visual representation. This too suggests that the feast may have been added after the volume was originally conceived. There was a long review of Miss Rickert's edition by Bruno Borchert, in which he discussed the extent to which the illuminations reflect Carmelite liturgical practices and emphases in doctrine.³

¹ MARGARET RICKERT, *The Reconstructed Carmelite Missal: An English Manuscript of the late XIV Century in the British Museum* (London, 1952).

² KATHLEEN SCOTT, *Later Gothic Manuscripts: 1390-1490*, II (London, 1996), pp. 24-30 and PAUL BINSKI, 'The *Liber Regalis*: Its Date and European Context', *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, ed. Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas and Caroline Elam (London, 1997), p. 246.

³ BRUNO BORCHERT, 'A Fourteenth Century English Missal Restored', *Carmelus* 1 (1954), 145-151.

I have previously invited a re-examination of this manuscript. Its worth, status and function have to be considered. Some of the rubrication is too small to be legible and it is clear that this Missal is not one to be used to help the priest say Mass.⁴ I have suggested previously that the illuminations in the manuscript promote devotion to the Virgin and are used to define and promote Carmelite identity, and that the illuminations also comment on the relationship between the friars and the donor and his wife.⁵ In this essay the function of these images is explored more fully.

The placing of images in a Missal involves choices: the size and prominence given to particular feast days, which are to have historiated initials and how the material is to be presented. In this manuscript there are twelve 6-line illuminations, used exclusively for those feasts afforded the highest status (*totum duplex*) in the Carmelite liturgical year. The large illuminations are thus for: the Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi and the Dedication of the Church in the Temporale and the Purification, Annunciation, Assumption, the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, All Saints and the Conception of the Virgin in the Sanctorale.⁶ Such illuminations do not merely illustrate the text. They have a number of functions. At the simplest level, they serve as a sort of visual index; they enable one to find one's way easily round the liturgical text without needing to read the text.

I. IMAGES AND PATRONS

Secondly, they serve to aid and sometimes to promote the patron, - in the case of the Carmelite Missal a surprisingly self-effacing one. Whether in this case such promotion was this-worldly (a statement of power, wealth or status) or other-worldly (with the intention that the friars should offer prayers and Masses *post mortem* for them), we will never know. If Robert Knollys was the patron of this manuscript, as seems likely,⁷ then he was a man well in his seventies, a widower and

⁴ RICKERT, pp. 24-25.

⁵ VALERIE EDDEN, 'A Fresh Look at the Reconstructed Carmelite Missal: London, British Library, MS Additional 29704-05', in *Imagining the Book*, ed. Stephen Kelly and John Thompson, (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 111-126.

⁶ One section of the manuscript has not been recovered, - that is for the section in the Temporale between the first Sunday in Advent and Holy Saturday. Borchert states incorrectly that all the 6-line illuminations are for Marian feasts (Borchert, 149).

⁷ EDDEN, pp. 113-116.

childless and generous in his dealings with the Carmelite Order. It would seem that the donor paid, possibly had a hand in the choosing the illuminators,⁸ but left the choice of subject to the friars of London Whitefriars.

II. IMAGES AND DOCTRINE

Thirdly, illuminations may be used for doctrinal affirmation. The most detailed of those in this Missal have several frames which relate the narrative events celebrated by the feast. Many include detail or iconography which clarify points of belief, as for example the illumination for the votive Mass for Trinity (f. 193v, fig. 1), of which Nigel Morgan has written⁹ Here the Father is represented as an old man with an orb, the Son on his right hand. The Holy Spirit as a dove hovers between Father and Son. Morgan points out that a number of other aspects of this image are unique and derive from adapting traditional Trinitarian iconography to illustrate the first lection reading, Apocalypse 4:10, which describes the throne of God. The streams of grace from the beak of the dove of the Holy Spirit move us from the throne and contemplation of judgement to the means of grace. Below these are three scrolls, bearing the legend: *'et cum ipso'*, *'et per ipsum'* and *'et in ipso'* (Romans 11:36), the Epistle for the Mass in Carmelite (and Sarum) usage. Below the Trinity we have the figure of the Woman clothed in the Sun from Apocalypse 12, usually taken to signify the Virgin and also the Church. Her arms are outstretched, her mantle spread, as if to protect her sons. She is *Mater Misericordiae*, a *'scala salutis'*: a symbol of the intervention and mediation of Mary through her Son, who in turn intercedes with the Father, as Borchert points out.¹⁰ Two scrolls follow the lines of her outstretched arms, inscribed with the words: *'Pater de celis, miserere nobis'* and *'Sancta*

⁸ One of the illuminators of this manuscript was also involved in a manuscript commissioned by Thomas of Woodstock and another commissioned by Woodstock's wife, Eleanor of Bohun. See LYNDA DENNISON, 'Oxford, Exeter College MS 47: The Importance of Stylistic and Codicological Analysis in its Dating and Localization', in *Medieval Book Production: Assessing the Evidence*, ed. Linda L. Brownrigg (Los Altos Hills, 1990), pp. 56-57. For Knollys and Woodstock, see Edden, pp. 114-115.

⁹ NIGEL MORGAN, 'The Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity and Other Texts and Images of the Glorification of Mary in Fifteenth-Century England', *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Nicholas Rogers (Stamford, 1994), pp. 223-241.

¹⁰ BORCHERT, pp. 46-47.

Maria ora pro nobis'. Two further scrolls follow the lines of her mantle and are inscribed: '*Genui deum et hominem*' and '*elegit et pre-elegit me dominus*', the latter drawn from a responsory used at Marian feasts, including the antiphon at Lauds on Saturday of Commemoration of the Virgin between the Nativity and the Purification.¹¹ In the corners the four evangelists, represented symbolically, carry quotations from their respective gospels. Borchert writes 'Each ... shows the opening words of a passage of his Gospel, by which they indicate to us the principle moments in the redemption: Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany and Ascension.'¹² John bears the opening words of his Gospel: '*In principio*', the gospel for the Nativity; Luke's quotation is '*Missus est*', the words which begin his account of the Annunciation. Mark, has '*Recumbentibus*', from 16:14, 'He appeared more recently to the eleven when they were at table', the gospel for the Annunciation. The Matthew quotation is difficult to decipher; it probably reads '*Cum natus esset*' The opening words of the second chapter of the gospel, which open Matthew's account of the Epiphany, are '*cum ergo natus esset*', but these letters are very indistinct.

Here in shorthand is the story of the redemption, including the roles of each person of the Trinity, Christ as redeemer and judge of mankind and the Virgin as intercessor and mediatrix between God and man. As Morgan states, the reference here to the Church as the means of grace affirms orthodox doctrine in the face of Wycliffite heresy.¹³ The illumination also presents Mary as mediating on behalf of her sons, another Carmelite emphasis, one which also inspires devotion and will be considered later.

The illumination for the feast of the Conception of the Virgin (f. 165, fig. 2) also engages with controversial doctrine, a fact of which we are reminded by the heading from Sibert's *Ordinale* (c.1312) '*Concepcio sancte marie uel potius ueneracio sanctificacionis sancta marie*'. By the late fourteenth century the doctrine had become firmly established amongst the Carmelites. They had been active in promoting it and had introduced it into their calendar early, in 1306, giving it the status of *totum duplex*.¹⁴ In 1342 Archbishop Fitzralph

¹¹ The actual incipit is '*Elegit eam deus et praelegit eam*'.

See www.bach.music.uwo.ca/cantus.

¹² BORCHERT, p. 150.

¹³ MORGAN, p. 231.

¹⁴ KALLENBERG says that the feast was celebrated as a patronal feast ('The feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Liturgical Tradition of the Order', *Carmelus* 47 (2000), 11, citing John of Hildesheim, '*in festo Concepcionis gloriosae Virginis, venerantes in hoc*

had famously affirmed the belief that the Order's white habit was adopted in honour of this feast.¹⁵ John Baconthorpe (d. ?1348) interpreted Elijah's little cloud, which restored the dry land to fruitfulness, (1 Kings 18:42-44) as revealing the mystery of the Virgin's sinless birth; the idea was further discussed by Felip Ribot, writing at about the same time as this manuscript was made.¹⁶ Both the importance afforded to the feast and the elaborate illumination given to it in this Missal affirm the importance of the feast to the Carmelites, who had their own distinctive liturgy for the feast.¹⁷ There are four frames; the iconography is standard:¹⁸ Joachim and Anna in the temple where his gift is rejected, Joachim with an angel, the angelic announcement to Anna, and the meeting at the Golden Gate, the moment of the Immaculate Conception. This sequence is clearly modelled on the Annunciation, the Visitation and Joseph's dream but is distinguished from these events iconographically. Whilst the Annunciation is almost always located in a chamber, here the angel appears to Anna in a garden lush with trees. In some versions of the legend, Anna looks at the trees and the sparrows in them, envies them their fertility and asks God for a child.¹⁹ These details may also underline the chaste maternity of Anna, prefiguring the chaste maternity of her daughter. The angel who speaks to Joachim, who has retired to work amongst the shepherds, is located in a wooded landscape. It is possible that the sheep are a reminder that from this chaste maternity will come, in the next generation, the Lamb of God, in direct line from the shepherd king, David. As Reau points out, the story of Anna and Joachim is of particular interest to Carmelites.²⁰

patronam ordinis' (*Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, ed. Adrianus Staring (Rome, 1989), p. 374) but this does not seem to mean more than 'honouring in this feast the patron of the Order', that is, like all Marian feasts, this feast celebrates the patron of the Order. Hildesheim goes on to point out that the other orders of friars also honour her on this feast, which seems to make the point clear.

¹⁵ BENEDICT ZIMMERMANN, 'Ricardi Archiepiscopi Conceptione B. V. Mariae habiti in ecclesiis Carmelitarum annis 1342 et 1349 e codicibus Oxoniensibus,' *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum*, 3 (1931), p. 166.

¹⁶ BACONTHORPE, *Laus Carmelitarum* I ix (Staring, p. 226); Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books of the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, Book VI 1-2, edited and translated by Richard Copsey (Rome, 2005), pp. 82-84.

¹⁷ JAMES BOYCE, *Praising God in Carmel: Studies in Carmelite Liturgy* (Washington, 1999), p. 107.

¹⁸ LOUIS REAU, *Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien* Vol. II. ii (Paris, 1957), pp. 155-161.

¹⁹ REAU, p. 158.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

John of Hildesheim, following, John de Hesdin, says that the first Carmelite convent was built on mount Carmel near the Golden Gate.²¹ Reau says that according to Carmelite legend, Anna accompanied her parents on a pilgrimage to Carmel before marrying Joachim but I have not been able to trace this legend.

III. IMAGES TO INSPIRE DEVOTION

These images may inspire devotion as well as present controversial doctrines; they appeal to both head and heart. Some images, however, are clearly designed primarily to prompt devotion. This is particularly likely in a Missal. Christopher de Hamel writes:

'A Missal is a unique kind of book. It is the vehicle for a sacrament. Pictures cannot be taken as strictly illustrative in a text which, taken on its own terms, is not for the use of a reader as such, but rather to recreate the most holy moments of religious worship... The images of Christ on the Cross and of the Father in majesty become part of the presence of God in the sacrament... The picture of Christ on the cross was kissed devoutly by the priest.'²²

Sadly, since the section of this Missal for Holy Week does not survive and consequently there are no illuminations for the Passion. The illumination for Trinity Sunday (f. 36v), however, does present an image of Christ on the cross. This is of interest because, unlike some images of this period, it seems designed to evoke worship and adoration of Christ as redeemer rather than evoking compassion for his suffering. The wound in his side is unobtrusive and he wears a halo, not a crown of thorns.

The illumination for the Assumption (f. 132v, fig. 3), the patronal festival until it was replaced by the Solemn Commemoration in the fifteenth century, is one of the most elaborate illustrations in the manuscript. Two lay figures, presumably the patron and his wife, appear on the descender. The head of the initial is divided into four scenes. On the extreme left, angels lead the disciples to where the Virgin, already wearing a splendid golden crown, lies on her deathbed. In the lower right, disciples attend the bier; a Jew falls head downward and another has his hand attached to the bier, trying to steal the body.

²¹ STARING, pp. 330, 374.

²² CHRISTOPHER DE HAMEL, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 2nd. Edition (London, 1994), p. 210.

This image, not infrequently found in treatments of this subject, mirrors the story of the Jew who was struck dead when he touched the tabernacle (Ark of God) to steady it (2 Samuel 6:6). The Virgin's womb was the tabernacle of God incarnate.²³ In the centre, the disciples are gathered round the closed tomb. The eye is drawn towards the upper section which depicts the coronation, and includes a detail: she hands down her girdle to a still doubting Thomas, reflecting the legend found in the Golden Legend.²⁴ In the upper section, her role reflects the lection passages for the feast, which include both Apocalypse. 12 and also psalm 45:9-11: 'At your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir'. Roundels surround the initial, depicting various scenes of the miracle of the Virgin.²⁵ At one level, these images are instructive. The deathbed and the bier affirm the reality of her death; the Thomas legend affirms the corporeal nature of her assumption. Archdale King comments that the collect '*veneranda nobis*' also suggests belief in a corporeal assumption.²⁶ These images tell a story but their primary function is surely to evoke a devotional response. What is evoked here (and elsewhere in the manuscript) is devotion to Mary as to a Mother, who through her Son invites all her followers to sonhood.

The iconography for All Saints (f. 152v, fig. 4) is unique. It shows the crowning of the Virgin by a trinity of the *Gnadenstuhl* type; the Virgin is crowned by the right hand of the Father, who holds the Son (in the form of a crucifix) in his left hand. This scene is surrounded by saints and angels. This illumination has been discussed fully by Nigel Morgan.²⁷ Mary is here crowned Queen of heaven and intimately linked to the Trinity as a source of grace.

There is a similar emphasis in the illumination for the Annunciation (f. 99r), in which the Virgin, presented standing, is observed by the Father, from whom rays of light flow to the Holy Spirit, a dove hovering above the scene. The book on the lectern may be said to represent the Word, whose incarnate life has just been initiated. Here too, the Virgin plays her part in the redemptive work of the Trinity.

²³ See REAU, p. 611.

²⁴ JACOBUS DE VORAGINE, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, translated by William Grainger Ryan. Vol. 2. (Princeton, 1993), p. 82.

²⁵ JACOBUS DE VORAGINE, Vol. 1, pp. 101-102.

²⁶ ARCHDALE KING, *The Liturgies of the Religious Orders* (London, 1955), p. 275.

²⁷ MORGAN, pp. 227-229.

IV. CARMELITE DEVOTION TO MARY

Borchert comments on the images of the Virgin in the manuscript:

‘Devotion to Mary as Protectress of the [Carmelite] order took a very subordinate place in the veneration of our Lady in 14th century England, which directed itself apparently much more to the beauty of her sanctity and to her maternity willed by God from eternity as the principle of the union of man with him: *Mater et Decor.*’²⁸

This comment invites reconsideration and possibly revising. Images of the Virgin in this manuscript reflect varied aspects of Carmelite devotion to her. The illumination for the Assumption does indeed celebrate Mary’s maternity, as we have commented, but we do not find images of the lactation nor of the deposition, though of course, with Christmas and Holy Week missing, it is difficult to be sure what was originally there. There are many opportunities to present Mary as a figure evoking our pity and compassion but invariably what is evoked is awe and admiration. In the illumination for the Purification (f. 93r) the emphasis is on the handing over of the child to Simeon, who stands by the altar, reminding us that Christ is to be the sacrificial victim. Mary’s look is serene; no sword pierces heart and we are not invited to consider this as in any way a sorrowful event.²⁹ Rickert comments on the unusually devotional nature of the illumination for the Nativity of the Virgin (f. 138v, fig. 5): ‘Everything is quiet and orderly: the three coifed women... standing with thoughtful faces, while Anna, as she reaches for the child, has a far-away look on her face.’³⁰ What is celebrated most frequently is her role as a tool in the redemptive process, and as Queen of Heaven, interceding on behalf of her followers. As we have seen, the illumination for All Saints uses the feast as an opportunity to celebrate the Coronation and even the votive Mass for Trinity affords Mary a significant role as mediatrix and intercessor. To use them as meditative objects is to be drawn into the relationship between a generous Queen and her retinue. She is both ‘Regina coeli’ and ‘Flos Carmeli’.

Fourteenth century Carmelite writers stress Mary’s role as patron of the Order. Bernard Oller (d. 1383) explains, ‘post ascensionem Christi in eiusdem montis declivo in honore beatae Mariae

²⁸ BORCHERT, p. 151

²⁹ For the iconography of the Purification, see REAU, pp. 261-266.

³⁰ RICKERT, p. 108.

genitricis Dei oratorium consruerunt, et ipsam in patronam specialem et advocatam devote elegerunt.³¹ In his treatise *Laus Religionis Carmelitarum*, Baconthorpe relates a legend about Mary's visits to Mount Carmel in her girlhood, supposedly drawn from an account by Matthew of the infancy of the Virgin.³² In this story an angel takes Mary to Carmel whilst she is still a child and prophesies that she will become the bride of Christ. The angel disappears but Mary remains on the mountain and dedicates her life to God and to becoming the bride of God, making a vow of virginity. The angel returns and makes a second prophecy: that Mary will be known as 'domina', 'our Lady'. Saggi points out the implications of her patronage: she is the foundress of the Order; it exists to honour her and, because of this, she is the protectress of the Order.³³ This is made clear by Arnold Bostius in his 'De patronatu et patrocinio'.³⁴ The relationship is feudal; where Christ is 'dominus', Mary is 'domina'. Baconthorpe calls her 'domina loci': 'mistress of this place', that is Carmel. She has dominion over Carmel, which is of course both a place and a choice of life.

It is because of her role as patron, that she mediates on behalf of her followers. Baconthorpe describes her as 'advocata gratissima', explaining 'Carmelitae vero sub titulo speciali Mariam obtinent advocatam sine aliquo sancto medio post Dominum, ut in professionis vinculo patet eorundem'.³⁵ Mary's power to mediate comes because of her relationship with her son. Arnold Bostius speaks of Mary as the new Bathsheba, who interceded with King David on behalf of her son Solomon; she is the Queen of Heaven dispensing heavenly power and favours.³⁶ Baconthorpe writes of Elijah's little cloud of rain (3 Kings 18:44) as prefiguring Mary, through whom streams of grace flowed to mankind and who is herself the fount of pity, 'Fons iste Carmeli Maria est'.³⁷

³¹ STARING, p. 411.

³² As Staring points out (p. 220), this particular story is not in any of the standard infancy narratives.

³³ *Santi del Carmelo*, ed. L. Saggi (Rome, 1972), p. 112.

³⁴ See EAMON CARROLL, 'The Marian Theology of Arnold Bostius, O.Carm. (1445-1499)', *Carmelus* 9 (1962), pp. 197-236, especially pp. 212-216. Bostius lived after the completion of this Missal but his comments reflect earlier Carmelite devotional emphases.

³⁵ STARING, p. 241.

³⁶ See CARROLL, p. 227.

³⁷ *Laus Religionis Carmelitarum*, I. ix-x, Staring, pp. 226-227.

V. CARMELITE DEVOTION TO MARY: THE LITURGY

Carmelite liturgy celebrates Mary's dominion over Carmel and as powerful Queen of Heaven, asking for her protection and mediation. This theme recurs in the five antiphons used in all Carmelite Marian feasts.³⁸

Haec est regina virginum quae genuit regem velud rosa decora virgo Dei genitrix per quem reperimus Deum et hominem alma virgo intercede pre nobis omnibus.

Tu decus virgineum virgo Dei genitrix Maria te solem inter omnes virgines caastissimam exoramus ut pro salute nostra apud Dominum intercedere digneris.

Sub tuum presidium confugimus Dei genitrix nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus sed a periculis libera nos semper virgo benedicta.

Sancta Maria, succurre miseris iuva pusillanimes refove flexibiles ora pro populo interveni pro clero intercede pro devoto femineo sexu.

Beata dei genitrix Maria virgo perpetua templum Domini sacrarium Spiritus Sancti tu sola sine exemplo placuisti Domino Iesu Christo, ora pro populo interveni pro clero intercede pro devoto femineo sexu.³⁹

Boyce comments, "These antiphons all have the common theme of Mary as intercessor from individuals to God which formed an integral part of the Carmelite devotion to her. From the posture of the small and humble suppliant who wants nothing more than to be found pleasing to God, The Carmelite begs the favour of her intercession. Mary as the vessel of the holy ("temple of the Lord an vessel of the Holy Spirit") supplies the reason for venerating her."⁴⁰ Boyce also shows how Mary's roles as intercessor is stressed in the first of these antiphons, as it is the only word to carry melodic independence.⁴¹

Another antiphon praises Mary as 'Ave regina caelorum, ave domina angelorum', queen of heaven and mistress of the angels. Two later liturgical chants gained a special place in Carmelite liturgy because they were (falsely) ascribed to the Carmelite saint, Simon Stock. One was the hymn 'Flos Carmeli', which reminds Mary of the privileges promised to the Carmelite brothers:

'Flos Carmeli, vitis florifera, splendor caeli, virgo puerperal singularis; mater mitis, sed viri nescia Carmelitis da privilegia, stella maris.'

³⁸ See BOYCE, p. 343.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 343-344.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 344-345.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

The other, the antiphon 'Ave stella matutina', actually written by Peter the Venerable, asks for Mary's: favour:

'Ave stella matutina, peccatorum medicina, mundi princeps et regina... Tu nos in hoc carcere solare propitia, dei plena gratia.'⁴²

VI. IMAGES AS PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Finally I want to consider the way in which visual images make public statements. I shall call this function 'proclamatory'. The manuscript was presumably on display. Its visual images make a public and official pronouncement about Carmelite identity. We have considered how the elaborate illumination afforded the feast of the Conception of the Virgin serves as a statement of a doctrinal position: a belief in the Immaculate Conception. It may also be said to remind those who 'read' its meaning that the order was very active in promoting the doctrine. A more striking example is to be found on f. 38r (fig. 6), the initial for Corpus Christi. Carmelites did not celebrate the feast with a procession, which was a common subject for this day. The illumination here is a reminder that the feast celebrates the Eucharist. The words of consecration (from 1 Corinthians 11:14-25) are given on scrolls: '*Accipite et comedite, hoc est corpus meum*' and '*Hic calyx nouum testamentum est in meo sanguine.*' The lower section presents the elevation of the Host at Mass and includes two Carmelite friars and two laymen adoring the host. In the corners, roundels show two Carmelite friars and two white dogs. Margaret Rickert, followed by all other scholars, links these white dogs with Wyclif's castigation of Carmelite friars as 'white dogs'.⁴³ These roundels are placed outside the frame and are surely placed as a reminder that it was the Carmelites who came into conflict with Wyclif by championing the orthodox doctrine of the Eucharist against his denial of transubstantiation.

Another example would be the illuminations figuring John the Baptist: the Nativity of John, a 5-line illumination, showing Elizabeth seated and Zachariah writing John's name on a scroll (f. 113v). The beheading of John (f. 136v) is one of the most elaborate

⁴² *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi*, ed. Clemens Blume & Guido M. Drevs, XLVIII (Leipzig, 1905, repr. 1961), p. 243.

⁴³ RICKERT, p. 50.

initials with four compartments, showing John preaching to Herod and Herodias, Salome dancing, his beheading and deposition. The prominence given to John can easily be explained and is another example of the use of illuminations to make a public statement. In the late fourteenth century, the antiquity of the various orders was a contentious issue. The Carmelites claimed to be established by Elijah and to have a continuous history on Carmel from his time until the Saracen incursions in the twelfth century. John the Baptist has a significant role in this history, with scriptural authority for seeing him in direct line from Elijah, following his way of life, living an eremitic life in the wilderness (Luke 1:17). The issue was a matter of public debate at Cambridge in 1374, between the Carmelite Hornby and the Dominican Stokes. The debate was decided in favour of Hornby.⁴⁴

The claim was backed up by Felip Ribot, whose history of the Order stresses the Elian heritage of the Order and the role of John the Baptist as a link between Old and New Testament eras. This work was translated into English by Thomas Scrope/Bradley,⁴⁵ who himself either wrote or merely transcribed a poem on Elijah which makes much of the link between John and Elijah:

Gaude prece Jesus Christi,
Baptiste typum iam cepistis.
Diversorum adventum
Johannes adventum primum
Set Helya tu secundum
Venturi ad iudicium.

[Rejoice, herald of Jesus Christ, you have taken on the figure of the Baptist. Of the two comings, John heralded the first coming, but you Elijah heralded the second coming of him who will come to judge.]⁴⁶

Another example of the use of images as proclamation concerns a group of manuscripts known as the 'Carmelite Netter' group, manuscripts of Netter's works copied in Carmelite houses. Several of these are presentation copies with rich illuminations. Netter's

⁴⁴ J. P. H. CLARK, 'A Defense of the Carmelite Order by John Hornby, O.Carm., A. D. 1374', *Carmelus* 32 (1995), pp. 73-106.

⁴⁵ A text which I am editing for Middle English Texts.

⁴⁶ London, British Library, Harley 211, f. 85.

Doctrinale was a learned, polemical treatise attacking the heresies of John Wyclif and his followers, written at the prompting of Henry V (to whom he was confessor) and dedicated to Pope Martin V. It survives in whole or in part in 23 manuscripts with two additional manuscripts containing a paraphrase and a selection of extracts respectively.⁴⁷ Eight of these are illuminated. Two have images of the sacraments. Oxford, Lincoln College 106 has the royal arms and seems to have been presented to Lincoln College by Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln. Oxford, Merton College 319 includes a picture of a royal figure and may have been intended as a gift to some member of the royal family. Netter's links with the royal family were strong. He was confessor to Henry V and for a short while before he died in 1430, to the young Henry VI. He acted as Henry V's ambassador on a number of missions. Henry supported him when he went to the Council of Constance as a defender of orthodoxy. The Lincoln College manuscript and Paris Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 3378 have images of the sacraments, though rather oddly, there is no image of the Eucharist in the Lincoln College manuscript. This latter manuscript has an image of the Virgin displaying the infant Christ to four Carmelite friars (on f. 3v), an image which affirms the Virgin's role as mother of God, as mediatrix of her Son's grace and also her special relation with the Order. Kathleen Scott comments that these manuscripts give 'compelling evidence of the Carmelite struggle against heresy'.⁴⁸ One may draw a second conclusion - that these manuscripts have a public nature. One has to ask why anyone would go to the trouble and very considerable expense of making a presentation copy of Netter's works. Gifts, of course, always carry significance. Whether these manuscripts were read by those to whom they were presented is immaterial. Their illuminations instantly affirm an orthodox theology of the sacraments, the priestly role conferring them and serve also to emphasise Carmelite orthodoxy in places of influence. Their production is both a political and a polemic one.

⁴⁷ See MARGARET HARVEY, 'The Diffusion of the Doctrinale of Thomas Netter in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', in *Intellectual Life in the Middle Ages: Essays presented to Margaret Gibson*, ed. Leslie Smith and Benedicta Ward (London & Rio Grande, 1992), pp. 281-294; RICHARD COPSEY, O.Carm., 'The Carmelites in England 1242-1540: Surviving Writings', *Carmel in Britain*, Vol. 3: The Hermits from Mount Carmel, pp. 393-396.

⁴⁸ SCOTT, p. 188.

The Carmelite Missal itself makes a public statement about the nature of the order: its devotion to the Virgin, its origins as an eremitic order in whose history John the Baptist has an honoured place, their current role upholding orthodoxy, the priestly role and the centrality of the sacraments in the Christian life.

We need to broaden our conception of how these images were used, how they were 'read' and to consider, on the one hand, what happens to in both mind and heart when an image becomes an object of meditation and also, from a different perspective, the social and public function of images.

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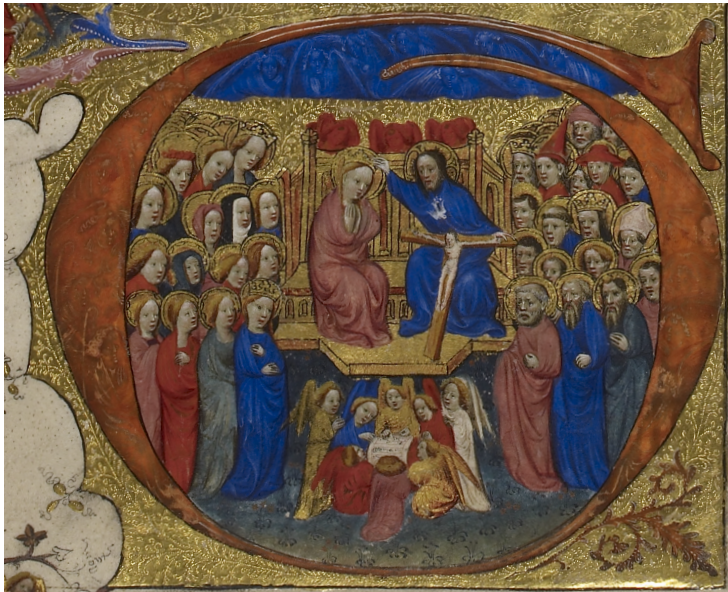
BL Add 29704-5 fo 38r detail - Corpus Christi



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fo 132v detail 2



BL Add 29704-5 fo 138v detail - Nativity of Mary



BL Add 29704-5 fo 152v detail - Coronation of Virgin & All Saints



BL Add 29704-5 fo 165r detail - Conception of Virgin Mary



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GUIDO TERRENI:
READING HOLY SCRIPTURE WITHIN
THE SACRED TRADITION

IAN CHRISTOPHER LEVY

Guido Terreni was one of the most prolific and important theologians of the Carmelite order in the fourteenth century. A master of theology at the University of Paris by 1313, he was elected prior general of the Carmelites just a few years later in 1318. Terreni proved to be a staunch advocate of the papacy, especially the policies of Pope John XXII, and he died at Avignon in 1342.¹ The first few decades of the fourteenth century were tumultuous years as the Church faced the fallout from the Franciscan Spiritualist crisis and the attacks on ecclesiastical power leveled by Marsilius of Padua. Responding to these and other concerns, Terreni penned a number of substantial works which covered the nature of heresy, evangelical perfection, canon law, and papal infallibility. The focus of this study will be largely confined to two major works: his *Summa de haeresibus* and his *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*. Specifically, this study will look at the ways in which Terreni based his arguments upon the authority of Holy Scripture read within the enduring faith of the Catholic Church. As a theologian, and thus a *magister sacrae paginae*, Terreni recognized that Holy Scripture was the supreme standard of Catholic orthodoxy, but he refused to let Scripture be detached from its natural place within the life and tradition of the Roman Church. In fact, as we shall see, Terreni believed that the very authority and structure of the Church were grounded in the original apostolic witness as recorded in the New Testament.

¹ B.M. XIBERTA, *De scriptoribus scholasticis saeculi XIV ex Ordine Carmelitarum*, (Louvain: 1931), pp. 137-38.

I. TERRENI AND THE LAW

As noted above, Guido Terreni was a theologian by trade, but he also displayed an expert knowledge of canon law. Canon law became increasingly influential among the theologians of the Late Middle Ages, perhaps driven by the secular mendicant and Church State controversies which sent them to legal texts to make their arguments. Yet, as Thomas Turley notes, Terreni was exceptional among his fellow theologians whose knowledge of the law tended to be rather superficial. Terreni did not simply acquaint himself with the law. In his 1336-1339 *Commentarium super Decretum* he actually set out to correct the errors he found therein errors which he believed to be born of the canonists' insufficient knowledge of theology. Terreni spares no one, as he contends that Gratian himself had not understood the full theological significance of the material incorporated into his *Decretum*. Against the modern canonists, Terreni appealed to the Church fathers in their original sources, rather than the excerpts found in the canon law collections. This approach to the sources also had direct practical application to his battle against Spiritual Franciscans and Marsilians, since he believed that their misreading of Scripture and canon law had stemmed from the commentaries upon which they relied. Terreni set out, therefore, to reclaim the tradition from his opponents. It is noteworthy, as Turley suggests, that Terreni may actually have learned this technique of correction when studying at Paris where defenders and detractors of Thomas Aquinas issued various *correctoria* in their battle over the true meaning of patristic texts.²

When Terreni commented upon Gratian's *Decretum* he made numerous corrections, ranging from the proper citations of book titles or chapter numbers to a restatement of the cited source's actual meaning. He often filled out and clarified Gratian's citations in order to aid the reader.³ This was all vitally important because Terreni knew that the *Decretum* was not only a book for canonists; theologians also depended upon it for their knowledge of the historical sources. Thus it was imperative to get them right.⁴ Terreni's emphasis on reading

² THOMAS TURLEY, "Guido Terreni and the Decretum," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 8 (1978): pp. 29-34; and TURLEY, "Guido Terreni, Heresy, and the Reconstruction of Tradition: 1317-1342," in *Tradition and Ecstasy: The Agony of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Ottawa: 1997), pp. 51-68.

³ P. MELSEN, *Guido Terreni, Ord. Carm. Iurista* (Rome: 1939). Melsen provides selections from the text which I cite below.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

the original sources in their entirety is evident when he notes that Gratian's selected quotes lack the authority that the sayings of the saints possess in their unadulterated form.⁵ Indeed, Terreni often takes issue with Gratian's use of sources, reckoning them misapplied or not to the point. Sometimes he must supply words in order to capture the true meaning of a given citation.⁶ Terreni did not comment on all the chapters of the *Decretum*, however, but only those that pertained to theology. His lack of confidence in the judgments of the canonists is sometimes vividly displayed as he forthrightly asserts the superiority of the theologians in matters of doctrine. At one point he even tells Huguccio to be quiet (*taceat*) and leave the matter to the theologians (*virī theologi*). Terreni, for his part, will always take his stand with the fathers and holy doctors.⁷

Before we move on to a deeper study of Terreni, it will be instructive to say a few words about two fellow Carmelites in this period: Sibert of Beek and John Baconthorpe. Sibert had been a student of Terreni and had defended the papalist cause against Marsilius of Padua in his 1327 *Reprobatio sex errorum*. Like Terreni, he immersed himself in the historical sources, in his case drawn largely from *Causa* 23 of Gratian's *Decretum*, in order to demonstrate the long history of the Church as an institution of property and legal rights. His point, as Turley has shown, was to prove that the hierarchical Church and papacy of the fourteenth century was in perfect continuity with the Church of previous ages, and thus had not fallen into a decadent state as Marsilius claimed. Hence, rather than construct an elaborate metaphysical justification as other papalists were doing, Sibert would stake the papacy's claim in the historical record borne out by ancient texts.⁸ Most Carmelite theologians tended

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11: "Unde verba doctrinae purioris et maioris ponderis sunt in originali quam in exteriori allegante Ex quo pater cum Gracianus ad probandum dicta inducat dicta sanctorum, quod dicta sanctorum in originalibus suis sunt maioris auctoritatis quam posita in rivulo libri Graciani."

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11: "Praeterea Gracianus omisit, quae ad rem faciunt"; Hec verba Augustini interserui satis ad propositum, quae omisit Gracianus"; p. 2: "Et miror Gracianum quod haec verba Augustini inducit, quoniam Augustinus non loquitur de iure naturali ibi, sed de iure illo divino quo bona Ecclesiae voluit esse communis."

⁷ B.M. XIBERTA, *Guiu Terrena: Carmelita de Perpinyà* (Barcelona: 1932), p. 65: "Sed taceat Hugucio, quia viri theologi omnes tenent et sequuntur Augustinum"; "Nec crederem contra hoc Hugucionem nec Speculatori, sed magis teneo S. Thomam et Raymundum"; "De Hugicione et Bernardo, in hac materia parvipendo, ubi patres et doctores eis contrarios reperio."

⁸ THOMAS TURLEY, "Sibert of Beek's Response to Marsilius of Padua," *Carmelus* 52 (2005), pp. 81-104.

to adopt a rather conservative stance towards their adversaries. Thus Guido and Sibert followed the moderate path of the decretists when making their historical case, rather than adopting the more extreme arguments of the decretalists who claimed that the pope was free to change so many practices as he saw fit. These Carmelites were, like their opponents, much more attuned to the *ecclesia primitiva* and the need to maintain continuity with the apostolic Church.⁹

John Baconthorpe, however, seems to have adopted a less reactionary stance. Beryl Smalley points out that, whereas Baconthorpe's master Terreni had defended the ecclesiastical hierarchy largely on the basis of the fathers and the later theologians, Baconthorpe chose instead to make his case from a whole host of canon law extracts. She finds that he "transferred the legal outlook of the Curia to the pages of his postill." This affection for canon law was a sign of Baconthorpe's willingness to embrace development within the Church just at a time when many were hearkening back to the *ecclesia primitiva*. Ecclesiastical wealth and papal power were, for Baconthorpe, necessary elements of the Church's healthy progress.¹⁰ Relying on the *Decretum*, Baconthorpe had argued that the mendicant life could actually be traced back to the apostles, but that a series of popes had, by their power to dispense, relaxed these strict requirements over time for the good of the wider Church when they allowed for the accumulation of property. In this way, as Turley notes, Baconthorpe could argue that the friars were not really introducing anything new; they were simply the ones who adhered to the most rigorous form of apostolic law. In that sense, Baconthorpe was taking a page out of the decretalists' playbook by emphasizing the pope's right to dispense from apostolic law as the times required *oportet leges moderari et mutare*.¹¹

⁹ THOMAS TURLEY, "The Impact of Marsilius: Papalist Responses to the *Defensor Pacis*," in *The World of Marsilius of Padua*, ed. Gerson Moreno-Riaño (Turnhout: 2006), 47-64. For more on the positions of the decretalists see Walter Ullmann, *Medieval Papalism: The Political Theories of the Medieval Canonists* (London: 1949); J.A. WATT, "The Use of the Term 'Plenitudo Potestatis' by Hostiensis," *Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Medieval Canon Law*, ed. S. Kuttner and J. Ryan (Vatican City: 1965), pp. 161-87; JOHN HACKETT, "The State of the Church: A Concept of the Medieval Canonists," *The Jurist* 23 (1963): pp. 259-90.

¹⁰ BERYL SMALLEY, "John Baconthorpe's Postill on St. Matthew," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 4 (1958): pp. 91-145.

¹¹ THOMAS TURLEY, "Tradition, Papal Power, and John Baconthorpe," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 12 (1982): pp. 81-89.

II. DEFINING AND COMBATING HERESY

We can now turn directly to Terreni's *Summa de haeresibus* which provides a very good look of how Terreni understood the way in which the Catholic faith is to be determined. Very early on in this work Terreni presented a definition of heresy and what precisely makes someone a heretic. "Heresy is a false and erroneous opinion in the intellect through which the intellect opines falsely and erroneously about something contrary to the truth of the faith." Heresy is a sort of infidelity, therefore, inasmuch as it opposes faith. And while not every error is a heresy, every heresy is an error. Hence it must be noted that there are various sins that run contrary to the truth of Scripture which are nevertheless not heresies. For example, a person can be a thief and thus violate one of the Ten Commandments without being a heretic. After all, were this not the case, then every sinner would have to be classified as a heretic.¹²

From here, Terreni will run through different standards according to which someone can be classified as a heretic. The first among these requirements would be that a person hold a false and erroneous opinion contrary to the truth. More specifically, a person would hold a false and erroneous opinion contrary to the truth of the faith and the determination of the Church in matters pertaining to faith and morals, and those necessary for salvation. And we see that, for Terreni, Holy Scripture will be at the center of the Church's determination. "The Church believes in the steadfast content of the faith and the infallible truth of Holy Scripture."¹³ The Church's authority is also manifested in her promotion of the sacraments wherein the divine power is at work, some of which have been exhibited immediately and expressly by Christ himself. These include Baptism, Eucharist, and Holy Orders, which the Church has received from the Lord and then hands down. There are other sacraments whose institution is not expressly recounted in Scripture (*non legatur expresse*), and yet they

¹² *Summa de haeresibus et earum confutationibus*, ed. Iodocus Badius Ascensius (Paris: 1528), *De haeresibus generatim*, ch. 3, f. 3r: "Est enim haeresis falsa opinio et erronea in intellectu per quam false et erronee intellectus opinatur de aliquo contra fidei veritatem."

¹³ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3r: "Secundo requiritur ad hoc vt quid haereticus dicatur quod habeat falsam et erroneam opinionem contra veritatem fidei et ecclesiae determinationem quoad ea quae ad fidem pertinent et bonos mores, et quoad ea quae necessaria sunt ad salutem et consecutionem vitae aeternae. ... Credit autem ecclesia indubiam fidei et scripturae sacrae infallibilem veritatem."

too must be maintained. This is because Jesus Christ instituted all the sacraments in an immediate manner. Indeed, it only stands to reason according to Terreni, for if Moses had immediately instituted the sacraments of the Old Law, then surely Christ the head of the Church would have personally instituted those of the New Law.¹⁴ Although Terreni does not say so explicitly, he surely has the Franciscan theologians in his sights, those such as Alexander of Hales and St Bonaventure who would extend the institution of the sacraments beyond Christ's own lifetime even as they connected them to Christ via the intermediary role of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵ As we shall see, Terreni is extremely keen to root all Catholic doctrine in the most primitive community: Christ together with his apostles prior to the Ascension.

All of this is connected to the question of heresy precisely because Terreni reckons that it would run contrary to the truth of the sacraments and against Holy Scripture to reject the aforementioned principles. Holy Scripture and the truth of the sacraments go together for Terreni, since it is in Scripture that Christ's institution of the sacraments is recorded, even if not expressly, then at least implicitly. That is why Terreni invokes Jerome's definition of a heretic here: one who understands Scripture in a way other than the Holy Spirit requires. Of note also is that Terreni cites Jerome from the original source of his Galatians commentary, rather than the more traditional citation taken from the *Decretum*.¹⁶ This cannot be an accident, since it is in keeping with Terreni's emphasis on the original sources (*originalia*) as the basis of sound doctrine, rather than what may have been mangled by the decretists.

Moving on to the third standard: a heretic must have been properly baptized and have professed the Catholic faith. Someone who

¹⁴ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)*, ch. 3, f. 3r-3v: "Et quamuis de omnibus non legatur expresse, tenetur tamen communiter quod omnia sacramenta immediate Christus instituit, quod videtur multum rationabile ...".

¹⁵ Cf. BONAVENTURE, *Sent.* 4.7.1-2 in *Opera Omnia* (Paris: Vives, 1866), Vol. 5. pp. 402-404. See also J. Bittremieux, "L'Institution des Sacraments d'après Alexandre de Halès," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 8 (1932), pp. 234-51; P. HIPPOLYTE BARIL, *La Doctrine de Saint Bonaventure sur L'Institution des sacraments* (Montreal: 1954), pp. 41-50.

¹⁶ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3v: "...vnde sentientes contra veritatem sacramentorum et contra scripturam sacram eam aliter intelligens quam efflagitet spiritus sanctus haereticus appellari potest vt Hieronymus dicit super epistolam Pauli ad Galatas." See JEROME, *Comm. in Epist. ad Galatas*, PL 26, 417a; and the *Decretum* chapter C. 24, Q. 3, c. 27 in *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2 vols., ed. Emil Friedberg (Graz: 1959), 1: 997-998.

never held the faith cannot properly be a heretic, therefore, but simply an infidel; this is the case with pagans and Saracens. Hence the Church does not render judgment on those who are completely outside of the faith (1 Cor 5:12). The Jews, for their part, are on the outside in matters pertaining to the New Testament, and thus are not judged by the Church in that regard. Yet, says Terreni, if Jews err when it comes to the truth of the Old Law, then the Church may indeed judge and punish them, since such things would fall under the Church's jurisdiction.¹⁷ Terreni is actually echoing a long established position. When the Talmud was ordered burned in 1242 this was in keeping with the general belief among the canonists that the pope had a duty to protect the correct interpretation of the Old Testament within Judaism. The Talmud, therefore, was regarded as a distortion of the Jews' own Law.¹⁸

At all events, the fourth requirement concerns the person who is divided from the truth of the faith and the unity of the Church through error, and is thus a schismatic.¹⁹ The fifth pertains to the person who errs against some truth of the faith that he ought to hold, since in erring against one particular article of faith he actually falls away from the truth of the faith as a whole. Thus even as he may indeed believe some of the articles, to err in one is to be guilty in all (Jas 2:10). One does not believe with the requisite integrity when erring in a single article of faith, therefore, since we should believe in all that the Catholic Church and the apostolic see hand down.²⁰ The sixth requirement speaks to those who, with an obstinate and pertinacious will, choose an error contrary to the faith, thereby reckoning their own doctrine superior to that of the Church. Again, Terreni returns to Jerome's Galatians commentary rather than the *Decretum* for this definition. Heretics are not simply those who beget erroneous opinions, but those who defend them pertinaciously (*pertinaciter defendunt*). Hence the person who wrongly understands some point of doctrine, yet is willing to be corrected, is not a heretic.²¹

In the next chapter, Terreni very clearly affirms his strict adherence to Holy Scripture as the ultimate standard in all matters of doctrine. He writes: "An opinion is heretical which expressly and

¹⁷ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3v.

¹⁸ BENJAMIN Z. KEDAR, "Canon Law and the Burning of the Talmud," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 9 (1979), pp. 79-82.

¹⁹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3v.

²⁰ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3v.

²¹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3v-4r.

evidently stands opposed to Holy Scripture, such that it runs contrary to the express text of the Old or New Testament. For this canonical and Catholic Scripture is of the most eminent authority. ... Hence the canonical Scripture contains nothing but the truth. ... It is not licit to say that doctors of the holy books uttered a falsehood, nor is it licit to doubt Holy Scripture, inasmuch as it speaks the truth.”²² Following the classic text, Wisdom 7:26, Terreni affirms that Scripture is the radiance of the eternal light and the mirror without taint or fault. Consequently, someone who pertinaciously holds an opinion contrary to Scripture stands opposed to divine truth itself.²³

III. THE RANGE OF SCRIPTURAL TRUTH

Having established the absolute authority of Scripture, Terreni must probe more deeply into the ways in which the truth is revealed therein. All heresy, as we have just seen, resolves to a contradiction of Holy Scripture. Now we must see how this would be determined. Terreni contends that there are three ways in which someone can speak in ways contrary to Scripture. First of all, there are those who would say something that runs directly (*directe*) against what is expressly (*expresse*) stated in Scripture; for instance, denying that God created heaven and earth or that Christ was conceived from the Holy Spirit. Second, one might speak against evident deductions from Scripture which cannot be reasonably contradicted, even though such a truth might not be expressly (*expresse*) written in the text. An example of this would be the fact that the opening words of Genesis state that God created heaven and earth, but does not expressly state (*exprimat*) that this occurred at the beginning of time. Yet this truth can nevertheless be proven by way of an evident and immediate deduction through some other text of Scripture. Hence to speak in this way against Scripture is the mark of a heretic. Another example

²² *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 4, f. 4v: “Opinio etenim illa haeretica quae expresse et euidenter scripturae sacrae aduersatur, sic quod est contra expressum textum novi vel veteris testamenti. Haec enim est scriptura canonica et catholica eminentissimae auctoritatis. ... Vnde scriptura canonica nil continet nisi verum. ... Non licet dicere doctores sacrorum librorum falsum dixisse, nec de canonica scriptura licet dubitare, quantum verum dixerit.”

²³ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 4, f. 4v: “Et ita quis pertinaciter contra scripturam novi vel veteris testamenti aliquid tenet est haereticus contra diuinam veritatem.”

Terreni offers pertains to the person of Christ. Although Holy Scripture does not expressly (*expresse*) state that Christ is an animal, it does clearly (*clare*) say that he is a genuine man who feels sorrow and otherwise acts as a sentient being. By rational deduction, therefore, one can conclude that Christ is an animal, since every man is an animal. Because this is an evident deduction, anyone who denies that Christ is an animal, or says that he assumed a body without a soul, is a heretic. The third and final way in which one can speak heretically against Scripture would involve matters that are “very remote, distant, hidden, and not evident: things about which even holy and Catholic men offer contrary opinions.” Now there are instances in which wise men, who agree on first principles and those things that can be deduced immediately from them, might nevertheless disagree about remote and particular conclusions. So too, then, in matters deduced from Scripture which are not obviously contrary to Scripture, otherwise holy men might differ without danger of lapsing into heresy until such time as the Church has determined in favor of one side and against the other. Indeed, we find that the saints often varied in their opinions. Many saints, for instance, said that God created the universe over the succession of six days, whereas Augustine said God created all things at once. Both sides cannot maintain the truth of Scripture in this matter, seeing as they are contrary to one another, while Scripture itself contains no such discord. One party in this debate, therefore, must have spoken contrary to Holy Scripture. Of course, we would not deem these saints heretics. Hence one will have to suspend judgment until such time as a given position is expressly and evidently (*expresse et evidenter*) censured through Holy Scripture and the Church. One is a heretic, therefore, only if one pertinaciously defends what has clearly been shown to be an error.²⁴ It must be emphasized that Terreni connects all heresy to the refutation of Scripture. Thus even the third category of remote and hidden truths are nevertheless scriptural truths which merely require ample time to resolve fully. The Church will render the authoritative definition, but it will always be a decision rendered regarding the truth as it is revealed in Scripture however obscurely at times.

Terreni then goes on to demonstrate how an opinion can be proven heretical which is opposed to an article of faith. Right away, though, he binds the articles of faith to Scripture. “An error contrary

²⁴ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 4, f. 4v-5r.

to the faith deviates from the right faith, and is not an error contrary to the faith except for the fact that it runs contrary to Holy Scripture, since the articles of faith come down expressly (*expresse*) from Holy Scripture.” An example of this would be the unity of God which is clearly (*clare*) derived from Deuteronomy 6:4, “Hear Israel, the Lord your God is one,” and various other passages of the Old and New Testaments. Likewise, the article concerning the Trinity is clearly revealed (*clare patet*) in the different Gospel passages.²⁵ Such passages can then be cited against the heretics. For example, Christ’s words, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30) can be used to refute the Arians, since it affirms unity of substance while still maintaining the plurality of persons. Terreni finds a great deal of testimony to support Christ’s divine sonship, all of which “expressly and evidently proceeds from Holy Scripture.” He will move methodically through the entire Nicene Creed, citing passage after passage in defense of each article, all of which are “expressly drawn from Holy Scripture.” And all of this leads to the conclusion that those who contradict the articles of faith are thereby contradicting Scripture. Shoring up the connection between Holy Scripture and the Catholic faith, Terreni appeals to Augustine (*De doc. chr.* 1.37.41) where the saint had remarked that the very faith of the Church will totter if the authority of Scripture should ever waver. The creeds still serve an important function, however, in that they present a concise extract from Holy Scripture, thereby pulling together in a few sentences what is necessary for faith. The point is that the creeds are really nothing but a distillation of scriptural truth. The articles of faith are the truths of Scripture in compendious form; a creed is not an addition to Holy Scripture. That is precisely why Terreni can say that to contradict the articles of faith listed in the Creed is to stand in opposition to Holy Scripture itself the very source of those articles.²⁶

²⁵ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 5, f. 5r: “... qui error contra fidem deuiat a recta fide, nec est error contra fidem quin sit contra scripturam sanctam eo quod articuli fidei descendunt ex scriptura sancta expresse.”

²⁶ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 5, f. 5r-6r. See f. 6r: “Igitur carnis resurrectio ad vitam aeternam et caeteri fidei articuli contenti in symbolo Apostolorum expresse trahunt de sacra scriptura, quare qui expresse seu propinqua et evidenti deductione dicunt contra articulos fidei dicunt contra sacram scripturam consimiliter: vnde Augustinus ... Titubat fides si sacrarum scripturarum vacillet auctoritas. Nec tamen, inutile fuit, immo multum expediens et vtile fuit habere symbolum fidei extractum de scriptura sacra in quo sub certis breuibisque sententiis et articulis necessaria ad fidem continentur.”

IV THE COUNCILS AND THE FATHERS

From the creeds, Terreni moves on to the teaching of the general councils as affirmed by the apostolic see. Of prime importance are the first four ecumenical councils: Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, all of which proclaimed right doctrine in keeping with Holy Scripture and condemned heretics who maintained the contrary. Once more we see that Scripture takes precedence as Terreni contends that the Council of Nicea condemned Arius “because his aforementioned error is opposed to Holy Scripture.” Rather than appealing to the fathers, however, Terreni makes the case for Christ’s full divinity based solely upon the Scriptures. The point is to prove that the Council of Nicea is in complete conformity with Holy Scripture. Indeed, according to Terreni, the Arian heresy was condemned based upon the express witness of Holy Scripture and the evident deductions drawn from it. He continues down the list of councils, confirming their censure of various heretics from the testimony of Holy Scripture as he goes. The authority of the councils is thereby upheld by their steadfast adherence to the biblical witness which is clearly sufficient to defeat everyone from Arius to Nestorius.²⁷ It is interesting to note that Terreni nowhere commends the authority of the councils by an appeal to their divine inspiration and operation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The key, for Terreni, is that they correctly applied the teachings of Holy Scripture. Like the articles of faith which they produced, their authority is based entirely on their adherence to Scripture.

The special inspiration of the fathers was widely accepted throughout the Middle Ages and Terreni never denies it, but as we will see below he appears to a little wary of exalting the fathers if that might compromise the absolute authority of Scripture. Terreni writes: “Although the writings of the holy doctors which fall outside of the canon of the Bible should be examined and read, and received with due reverence, they are nevertheless not of such firm authority and inviolability that one would not be permitted to contradict them or raise doubts concerning them. Such is the case with those statements which are not proven expressly and evidently through Holy Scripture,

²⁷ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 6, f. 6v: “... eius errorem damnat vt haereticum, synodus Nicena, quia dictus error aduersatur scripturae sacrae ...” See 7r: “... et Nicena synodus conformis per omnia sacrae scripturae ... Merito ergo Arii damnatur impietas et comprobatur Nicenae synodi auctoritas per ecclesiam expressis sacrae scripturae testimoniis et euidentibus deductionibus confirmata.”

nor confirmed, nor authorized through the Church, and so determined to contain the steadfast and certain truth. Hence the opinion of heretics cannot positively be refuted through the statements of the saints which remain outside of the biblical canon. For where there is no infallible truth, there can be no steadfast and certain faith, since a steadfast faith depends upon the infallible truth. Yet there is no infallible assent with regard to these writings, nor any certain and steadfast adherence. And so, because there is no certain and infallible truth, there is no steadfast and certain faith, which means that assent in these instances will always be coupled with doubt and the fear of falsehood.”²⁸

Unlike the patristic writings, however, Holy Scripture does indeed contain the infallible truth, and does so in everyone of its parts, such that one may firmly believe in it with a steadfast faith. Terreni calls upon Augustine’s own admission of error and his desire to be corrected. He made it very clear that he did not want his own works to rival the authority of Holy Scripture. The saint speaks humbly, says Terreni, but truthfully. Here again, Terreni recounts the various instances in which the holy doctors have been at odds with each other when only one could be right. “The statements of the saints, therefore, do not rest upon infallible truth when they contradict one another, since one side is necessarily false.”²⁹ Here too Terreni cites Augustine’s famous remark to Jerome that the canonical Scriptures take precedence over all other writings and, free as they are from all error, any apparent contradiction must be the result of faulty texts or one’s own incomprehension.³⁰ Terreni concludes that, although the sayings of those saints listed in the canon *Sancta Romana* (D. 15, c. 3) are read and accepted in the

²⁸ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 7, f. 7v: “Quamuis autem sanctorum doctorum scripta extra canonem Bibliae sint tractanda, et legenda, et cum debita reuerentia suscipienda, non tamen sunt sicut summae auctoritatis et inuioabilitatis, quin liceat eis contradicere, et circa eu dubitare: vbi per scripturam sanctam euidenter et expresse non probantur, nec firmantur, nec per ecclesiam auctorizantur, ac determinantur: firmam veritatem et indubiam continere: vnde per dicta sanctorum extra canonem Bibliae praecise non conuinceretur opinio haeretica. Nam vbi non est infallibilis veritas, ibi non est fides certa et indubia, cum certa fides veritati infallibili innitatur, immo circa talia non est assensus infallibilis, nec indubius, nec adhaesio firma. Ex quo enim non est certa et infallibilis veritas, ibi non ets fides certa et indubia, et semper assentitur cum dubio et cum formidine falsi.”

²⁹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 7, f. 8r: “Igitur dicta sanctorum non innituntur infallibili veritati quum sibi contradicunt, quorum vna pars necessario est falsa.”

³⁰ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 7, f. 8r. See Augustine, *Ep.* 82.1; PL 33:277.

Church, they are still not on a par with Holy Scripture or the Four Councils, neither of which may be contradicted.³¹

Terreni then turns to the authority of the papacy a topic we will return to when taking up the question of papal infallibility. Here Terreni notes that while it is not permissible to contradict what has been determined by the apostolic see and commanded to be held by all the faithful since one must obey God and Holy Mother Church not everything held in the Church is of such an obligatory nature that one would be condemned as a heretic for failure of observation. This is because the Church contains truths of varying magnitude. There are some things that are wholly necessary and must be believed as a matter of faith, such as those which are in Scripture, or deduced expressly from it, and the articles of faith. One may not doubt such things, since doubt here amounts to infidelity. Yet the Church holds other things that need not necessarily to be believed as matters of faith, even as they are quite likely and are in keeping with the statements of the saints. For instance, Pope Innocent III's decree regarding Baptism, *Maiores*, left open for discussion among the masters the precise effect of the sacrament upon children. Thus one could have disagreed with the decree without fear of condemnation up until the time of the promulgation of the *Clementines* that collection of decrees and decretals issued by Pope Clement V in 1314. Another question concerns the sort of bread used in the Mass and at the Last Supper. The Roman Church reckons it more probable that Christ consecrated the host from unleavened bread, but she does not condemn the Greeks for their use of the leavened. Even the form used by the Roman Church for the ordination of a priest ("Accept the Holy Spirit ...") is not observed by many churches, nor are they condemned on that account. Terreni says that he could come up with many more examples of this sort were he not concerned to keep things brief. On the other hand, the Church holds as an immutable truth, and determines as a matter of faith—as she did at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274 that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son as from one principle, thereby condemning as heretics those who assert the contrary. So too did the Council of Vienne in 1312 determine as a matter of faith (against Peter John Olivi) that the

³¹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 7, f. 8v: "Vnde quamuis dicta sanctorum numerata in decretis xv. dist. in ecclesia leguntur, et recipiuntur: non tamen sic vt scriptura sacra aut quatuor concilia quibus non licet contradicere ..." See D. 15, c. 3; Friedberg 1:36-41.

rational soul is the form of the human body. Hence this statement must be observed by all, opposition to which is heretical.³²

We have seen that Terreni believes that pertinacious error in one article of faith undermines the whole edifice thereby rendering someone a heretic. In this vein, he will then make the point that a person who errs with regard to one article of faith loses the entire infused habit of faith. This is because error in one article means the loss of the certitude of truth, not only as it concerns that one article, but all the others that one must believe. Terreni ties this principle directly to the authority of Scripture: to question one article of faith is to call the veracity of Holy Scripture itself into question. And yet, as Augustine stated, even one error renders the whole authority of Scripture suspect. If it is found to be false in one place, there is no reason to trust that it is true anywhere else. Thus, says Terreni, if someone errs pertinaciously in one article of faith, he is really saying that Holy Scripture and the judgment of the Church are false. For example, the person who claims that Christ was not born of the Virgin Mary is actually saying that Scripture and the Church speak falsely when they call Mary the mother of Jesus. Consequently, there can be no certitude of truth in this case, since one cannot infallibly hold to Scripture and the Church's judgment anymore. One will no longer believe that Scripture wholly contains the infallible truth; and it is at this point that the faith itself will begin to collapse.³³

V. REFUTATION OF THE EASTERN CHURCH

Having laid out his general guidelines for determining the standards of heresy, Terreni proceeds to devote the bulk of this work to the refutation of specific heresies. We will only examine a few, such as the Franciscan Joachite problem. First, though, it will be instructive to look at Terreni's response to the (so called) Greek heresies, since this should provide greater insight to his theory of doctrinal development. For here Terreni must justify Latin doctrines and

³² *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 8, f. 8v-9r. For Innocent III's *Maiores* see *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, ed. H. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer (Rome: 1976), p. 780; *Greg. IX Decr.* L. 3, t. 42, c. 3; Friedberg 2:644. For the Second Council of Lyons see Denzinger, 850. For the statement against Olivi see Denzinger, 902. See also *Liber Clementinarum* L. 3, t. 15, c. 1; Friedberg 2:1174.

³³ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 9, f. 9r.

practices which the Greeks regard as corruptions of the ancient faith. The first “error of the Greeks,” not surprisingly, concerns the double procession of the Holy Spirit. The Greeks offer some formidable arguments for the fact that the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. As far as Terreni is concerned, however, they all amount to errors. First of all, they turn to Scripture where Christ said, “I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father ...” (Jn 15:26). There are also the first four ecumenical councils which all speak of the Spirit’s procession from the Father with no mention of the Son. And then, says Terreni, they attempt to bolster their error by pointing out that Pope Leo III himself had the unaltered version of the Nicene Creed inscribed upon a silver tablet. What is more, the council declared that the Creed must not be contradicted upon pain of anathema. Much of this material had been presented by Peter Lombard in his *Sentences* (1.11) and was later rehearsed in the many commentaries on this work throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

At all events, Terreni complains that it is for these reasons that the Greeks reckon Latins accursed for teaching the double procession. This may seem like a pretty strong case, but not in Terreni’s eyes. For, in fact, the Greek position is “an error expressly opposed to the determination of the apostolic see and the Holy Roman Church, which does not err in matters of faith.” Terreni declares his confidence that Christ’s prayer for the papacy and the Roman Church will ultimately confirm the truth about the Trinity. For the Lord had assured Peter that his faith would not fail (Luke 22:32).³⁴ The Roman Church remains forever immaculate. The Lord has provided that Peter and his successors would remain steadfast in the future, firmly persisting against the assaults of heresy.³⁵ Terreni makes it very clear that, because the apostolic see and the Roman Church approve the *filioque* clause, so it must be maintained. In this matter, therefore, the Greeks “prove themselves through their malevolent ignorance to be heretics

³⁴ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 1, f. 19r: “Hic error expresse aduersatur determinationem sedis apostolicae et sanctae Romanae ecclesiae quae in his quae fidei sunt non errat, ne deficit Christo orante ... Ipse enim pro fide sedis apostolicae et Romanae ecclesiae in Petro ait Lucae xxii. Rogavi pro te ...”

³⁵ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus generatim)* ch. 3, f. 3v: “Determinatio etiam dubiorum emergentium circa fidem maxime pertinet ad Christi vicarium summum pontificem Petri successorem cui per se et suis successoribus dominus ait Luc. xxii ... Item sancta Romana ecclesia quae semper immaculata permansit domino providente et beato Petro opem ferente in futuro permanibit ...”

rather than Catholics, since they do not believe that the One, Holy, and Catholic Church speaks the truth in this matter.” Yet this is the very Church which, by divine providence, remains forever immaculate, founded upon the unshakeable foundation of Christ and Peter’s true confession of faith. Against this Church the gates of hell, which is to say the heretics, will never prevail (Matt 16:19).³⁶

Terreni does not rest his case on a bare assertion of Roman authority, however, for he devotes the rest of the chapter to proving that the Roman position is correct. After all, the point is that the apostolic see and the Roman Church have received the unique capacity to perceive scriptural truth and pronounce upon it infallibly. Hence Terreni turns immediately to Holy Scripture. When, for instance, Christ speaks of the Spirit of truth (Jn 15:26) this must refer to the Spirit of the Son who says of himself, “I am the truth” (Jn 14:6). Paul too speaks of the Spirit of the Son (Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6). The very phrase ‘Spirit of the Son’ cannot be taken as a genitive of possession any more than ‘Spirit of the Father.’ Rather, says Terreni, it denotes the fact that the Son, like the Father, is the principle of the Spirit and thus the one from whom he proceeds. Here Terreni enlists various Greek patristic sources to back up his claim that ‘Spirit of truth’ implies ‘Spirit of the Son’ who is himself the Truth. None of this should be seen to undermine the essential unity of the Trinity, however, as though there were two principles within the Godhead. Following the formulation of the Second Council of Lyons (1274), Terreni affirms that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as from one principle (*tamquam ab uno principio*), because in producing the Holy Spirit the Father and Son are one, as Christ himself says (Jn 10:30). Apart from the properties of unbegottenness and begottenness, which are unique to the Father and Son respectively, the Son shares in all that the Father possesses including the capacity to spirate the Holy Spirit.³⁷

Thus, in response to the various Greek arguments, Terreni argues that one must allow for the meaning implicit within the authoritative texts. One is not always confined to what is explicitly stated. As such,

³⁶ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 1, f. 19v: “Igitur quia confessionem huius veritatis, scilicet quod spiritus sanctus procedit a patre et filio sedes apostolica et ecclesia Romana approbat et edocet tenendam: patet Graecos qui in hoc non culpant se probant maliuolos imperitos non catholicos, sed haereticos: non credentes vnam sanctam catholicam ecclesiam in hoc dicere veritatem: quae vt dicitur in dicto ca. semper immaculata, domino prouidente ...”

³⁷ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 1, f. 19v-20r. For Lyons II, see DENZINGER, p. 850.

he contends that the biblical passages the Greeks cite should be read so as to include the Son with the action of the Father. Likewise, in the Creed, when one confesses belief in God the Father, creator of heaven and earth, this surely does not exclude the Son and the Holy Spirit from the action and omnipotence of the creator, even though the Father is the only one of the persons specifically mentioned (*exprimitur*) in this clause. The Father is spoken of here insofar as he is the origin of authority which the Son has from the Father, the person from whom the Son is creator along with the Holy Spirit. Terreni then applies this same principle to the procession of the Spirit. Speaking of the Father's primacy within the Godhead does not detract from the Son's role in the production of the Spirit. As for the fact that the Nicene council pronounced an anathema upon those who teach otherwise, Terreni appeals to the argument that the fathers were only referring to those who would teach something contrary (*aliud quod id est contrarium*). Yet if the Latin position is correctly understood, one will see that it is not contrary to the Creed. Here Terreni follows the usual course by citing the example from Galatians where Paul anathematized 'another gospel' by which he too meant something contrary (Gal 1:8). Hence the Latin Church was merely rendering explicit the truth that was otherwise implicit in the Creed; there is no opposition, nor even addition. One does not teach some other doctrine, says Terreni, when one explicates the implicit truth through a process of elucidation.³⁸

It should be noted that in a quodlibet concerning usury Terreni had also treated the double procession of the Holy Spirit as an example of legitimate exegetical deduction. Here he points out that truth can be proven through divine law (*per ius divinum*) in two ways. The first is through express authority (*per expressam auctoritatem*), as in the fact that there is one God, "Hear Israel, the Lord your God is one" (Deut 6:4). The second way is not through such express authority, but rather through a deduction drawn from Scripture (*per scripturae deductionem*). An example of this, says Terreni, is the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and from the Son. There is no express authority which states this fact precisely. Nevertheless, it can

³⁸ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 1, f. 20r: "Vnde cum dicitur quod spiritus sanctus qui a patre procedit intelligatur procedere a filio non docetur aliud sed implicitum explicatur ... Non ergo docet aliud qui implicata explicando elucidat ... Igitur fideles Romanae et catholicae ecclesiae sancti patres elucidantes hanc veritatem ..."

be deduced from Scripture which does speak of the Spirit of the Son (Gal 4:6). Given this relationship between the two Persons, therefore, it is reasonable to deduce that the Spirit is indeed from the Son.³⁹

We have seen that Terreni did not reckon the Greek use of leavened bread in the Eucharist heretical, since this was a matter around which there could be some discussion and disagreement. Here, then, it is the Greeks who charge the Latins with heresy as they claim that the host cannot be consecrated from unleavened bread. They base their argument on the Gospel of John (13:1), claiming that the Last Supper was celebrated prior to Passover when the Jews would still have been using the regular leavened bread. Terreni, however, quickly turns this dispute too into an attack on Roman indefectibility. The Greeks “condemn the See of Peter and the Roman Church” for adoring a host in which the body of Christ does not exist, thereby charging them with idolatry and thus heresy. Of course, to believe this about the Holy Mother Roman Church is itself a heresy, says Terreni, since it violates the very words of the Creed: “I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.” What is more, this error debilitates the efficacy of Christ’s own words which are capable of transforming the substance of wheaten bread into the true body of Christ. The power of these words cannot be impeded by the accidents of the bread, whether they be leavened or unleavened, since their efficacy is directed at the substance of the bread which is transubstantiated into Christ’s body, not the remaining accidents. Hence Christ’s words must be effective for transubstantiating the bread, no matter whether leavened or unleavened. And with recourse to the biblical text itself, Terreni notes that when the Gospel records this event it simply states that Christ took bread in his hands; it does not specify whether it was leavened or unleavened. Indeed, it is of no consequence what sort of bread it was in order for the transubstantiation to have taken place.⁴⁰

For Terreni this is ultimately a matter of scriptural veracity. The Greeks lapse into heresy when they contradict “the evangelical truth” by insisting that Christ did not consecrate from the unleavened bread.

³⁹ Quodlibet 6.12, “Utrum punicio usare de iure diuino pertineat ad iudicem ecclesiasticum,” edited in Pier Giorgio Marcuzzi, “Una Soluzione Teologico-Giuridica al Problema dell’Usura in Una Questione *De Quolibet* Inedita di Guido Terreni (1260-1342),” *Salesianum* 41 (1979): 647-84, at p. 661: “... ut quod Spiritus Sanctus procedat a Filio expresse auctoritate non probatur; que dicat Spiritum procedere a Filio; tamen per reductionem Scripture, probando quia dicitur Spiritus Filii, igitur habitudo alicui est inter Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, igitur Spiritus a Filio.”

⁴⁰ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 2, f. 20r.

For the Gospel plainly states (*plane dicit*) that Christ consecrated the host on the night that the Jews were not permitted leavened bread (Matt 26:17). Here Terreni will go into some detail to prove from Scripture that the bread was indeed unleavened for the sake of the Passover. The Gospel of Matthew makes it clear (*clare patet*) that Christ confected his body from unleavened bread precisely because it was unlawful to eat the leavened at this time. The Gospels of Mark and Luke make the very same point (Mk 14:12; Lk 22:7). Hence the Greeks are simply not speaking the truth. They are making erroneous assertions based upon a misreading of the texts. First of all, says Terreni, they bypass the three synoptic Gospels in order to make their case from the Gospel of John. Even this is misguided, since there is no way that John could actually disagree with the others. "There is no conflict in the teaching of evangelical truth, since the Evangelists are in complete accord." What is more, the Greeks have even misunderstood the Gospel of John. When the Evangelist said that it was before the day of Passover (Jn 13:1) he meant it was the day before the evening when Christ was going to celebrate the Passover, since the Jews count the day from evening until evening. Thus Christ would have been eating the Passover meal that night with unleavened bread. Terreni can only lament "the blind error" of the Greeks, hoping that "they might return to the light of truth and believe the evangelical doctrine that Christ confected from unleavened bread. And so might they also return to the Holy Roman Church which confects the true body of Christ from the unleavened bread. Yet she still does not condemn the Greeks in this matter, since she certainly concedes to them the right to confect the body of Christ from leavened bread."⁴¹

As one has already realized, a major issue between East and West is going to be that of papal primacy and authority. And, needless to say, Terreni finds the Greeks to be in error for saying that the Roman Church does not possess such primacy; that the patriarchs are not subject to her; and that what the pope does without the consent of the Greek patriarchs is without force. Terreni reckons, in fact, this error contains both schism and heresy. The Greeks are even worse than those who crucified Christ, for at least they did not rend his tunic (Jn

⁴¹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 2, f. 21v: "Graeci ergo erroris caecitate percussi redeant ad lucem veritatis, et credant euangelicae doctrinae quod Chritus confecit ex pane azimo, et redeant ad sanctam Romam ecclesiam quae verum corpus Christi ex pane azimo confecit; nec Graecos damnat in hoc, immo concedit eis ex pane fermentato corpus Christi conficere."

19:24), whereas the Greek schismatics tear apart the very body of Christ which is the Church. Beyond this schism, however, they posit a manifest heresy, since they violate the basic teaching that Christ founded only one Church (Matt 16:18) and has only one bride (Song 4). They also proceed against fundamental order whereby the many factions ought to be subject to one leader (cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1076a), just as the many members of the Universal Church are subject to one head (Eph 4:15). It is for this very reason that Christ chose Peter and gave him the keys, so that he might preside over the whole Church and would surpass all others in power and primacy (Matt 16:18-19). At all events, Terreni runs through many biblical arguments for Petrine primacy, drawing on other classic passages such as Lk 22:32 and John 21:17. The point is that to deny primacy to the seat of Peter and the Roman Church is heretical because it is tantamount to saying that Peter was not really the head of the apostles and all the faithful. Moreover this is to deny that the Church as the bride of Christ is not one entity, nor subject to one head. It is all heretical, therefore, precisely because it is contrary to Holy Scripture (*contra sacram scripturam*).⁴² These are only three Greek errors; Terreni lists twenty six in all, ranging from questions of purgatory to matrimony to dietary restrictions.

VI. HERETICS IN THE WEST: WALDENSIANS AND APOSTOLIC BRETHERN

Closer to home, Terreni has to reckon with the claims of various dissenting groups who claim to represent the true Church amidst Roman apostasy. This means that Terreni must not simply reaffirm the power of the Church and papacy; he must prove that the very records of the apostolic Church, namely the New Testament, bear witness to the ongoing authority of Rome and the Roman pontiff. Training his sights on the Waldensians, Terreni notes that their first error is a refusal to submit to the papacy and the other Roman prelates. Hence they err in their denial that the Roman Church is the head of all the faithful (*caput omnium fidelium*).⁴³ That they do not recognize the authority of the decretals and constitutions of the pope, nor the decrees of the fathers, amounts to a denial that the apostolic see is the head of the Church with the power to bind and loose. All such opinions must be false for the very good reason that they are contrary to the

⁴² *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Graecorum)* ch. 3, f. 21r-21v.

⁴³ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Valdensium)* ch. 1, f. 79r.

Holy Gospel (*contra sanctum evangelium*).⁴⁴ Here we see that Terreni is not attempting to outline a theory of development so much as he is trying to affirm a direct connection to the apostolic era. Roman authority and primacy is a product of the New Testament.

Terreni faces a similar set of problems with the sect known as the Apostolic Brethren, whom he labels instead the Pseudoapostles. They were founded around 1260 by Gerard Segarelli of Parma who was later arrested and executed in the year 1300. First of all, says Terreni, this group claims that all the authority which Christ had bestowed upon the Roman Church has been forfeited due to the wickedness of her prelates. Hence the Roman Church is no longer even the Church of God, but is instead the great whore of Babylon, having apostatized from the faith of Christ. For Terreni, however, this is once more a matter of scriptural authority. These presumptuous heretics, he says, are bringing false charges against Holy Scripture itself which testifies to the fact that the authority of the Church will abide forever. The fullness of authority resides in the seat of Peter and his successors. Again, this is because Christ has built his Church upon the solid foundation such that she will withstand all the assaults of the heretics (Matt 16:18-19). This is not to say that Terreni harbors any illusions regarding the sanctity of all those counted in her ranks. He freely admits that the Church at present is a mixed body. But she will nevertheless endure despite the presence of those evil members who will finally be separated out on the judgment day. "The Church, the seat of Peter, which is the Roman Church, will remain the Church of God until the end of the age." Hardly the whore of Babylon, as the heretics slander her, she is the bride of Christ founded upon Peter's steadfast confession of faith (Matt 16:18).⁴⁵ Terreni consistently hearkens back to these central passages in the New Testament and thus to the irrevocable promises of Christ himself. He cedes no ground to those who claim the apostolic mantle for themselves. No, indeed, for the Roman Church is herself the Church of the apostles.

In keeping with their basic position outlined above, this sect of the Apostolic Brethren claims that the power which God gave to the primitive Church (*ecclesia primitiva*) has been transferred to them such that they now possess a power equal to that of Peter and the apostles, since they alone maintain the apostolic life of perfection and poverty. In response, Terreni points out that there is really no way that

⁴⁴ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Valdensium)* ch. 4, f. 82v-83r.

⁴⁵ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Pseudoapostolorum)* ch. 1, f. 89r-90r.

these sectarians can prove their claim that this transference has occurred. Actually, their perfect status is belied by the very fact that they refuse obedience to the Roman Church and the successors of Peter. For Christ's true sheep would surely heed the voice of the shepherd (Peter) whom the Lord has set over them. And in a decisive blow to their very *raison d'être*, Terreni contends that merely imitating the apostles' manner of life does not necessarily amount to reproducing their power and authority. Many believers gave up all they had, but they did not thereby succeed to equal authority with the apostles (Acts 4:32).⁴⁶ Here again we see that, for Terreni, the very structure of the Roman Church and its allotment of authority had already been set in place during the apostolic epoch—the very epoch that the heretics call their own. And Terreni need look no further than the New Testament to prove his point.

True to their call of apostolic imitation, the Brethren contend that the Roman pontiff cannot absolve anyone unless he himself is as holy as Saint Peter, and thus as poor and humble. Such claims, Terreni observes, resemble those of the Waldensians. Yet they only serve to denigrate the power of Christ who bestowed this power upon the successors of Peter. With lack of worldliness as their touchstone, this sect has rejected the legitimacy of the papacy since the time when Sylvester accepted the Donation of Constantine. They only make an exception for the poor hermit Pietro del Morrone who briefly held the papal office in 1294 as Pope Celestine V. Yet Terreni finds a fundamental inconsistency in their position. The Brethren still call Celestine a poor man despite the fact that when he was pope he lived among the riches that he possessed in the name of the Church. If they can allow for this, says Terreni, then there is no reason to dismiss the other holy popes who also loved Christ even as they did not relinquish the riches that the Church holds in common. In fact, these popes had worthily administered the Church's common wealth. Like Celestine, therefore, they do not fall from sanctity or perfection, since they too are poor men in spirit to whom belongs the kingdom of God (Matt 5:3).⁴⁷ In the end, Terreni chalks up the Apostolic Brethren's many heresies and errors to the affection they feel for Joachim of Fiore and Peter John Olivi, whom he will then deal with at length in the following book.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Pseudoapostolorum)* ch. 2, f. 90r-90v.

⁴⁷ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Pseudoapostolorum)* ch. 3, f. 90v-91r.

⁴⁸ For the Apostolic Brethren and their adaptation of Joachite ideas see MALCOLM LAMBERT, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation* (Oxford: 1992), pp. 202-203.

VII. THE SPIRITUAL FRANCISCANS

Working as he did during the tumultuous years surrounding the pontificate of John XXII, Terreni considered the refutation of the Spiritual Franciscans to be a mainstay of his mission. Turley believes that his early training at the feet of the secular master Godfrey of Fontaines, in addition to the influence of Dominican thought, had combined to make Terreni deeply suspicious of Franciscan ideas on apostolic poverty, especially given what their ideas of perfection would mean for the rest of the Church.⁴⁹ In the first few decades of the fourteenth century, the Spirituels were relying heavily upon Peter John Olivi's Apocalypse commentary in support of their refusal to obey the established Church. And it was around the year 1319 that Terreni, along with the Dominican Pierre de Palu, censured a Catalan writing that was redolent of Olivi's work.⁵⁰

Here in the *Summa de haeresibus*, Terreni begins his attack on the Spiritual Franciscans by pointing out that the Roman Church has repeatedly condemned the many blasphemies and fables told by Joachim of Fiore and Peter John Olivi as heretical and contrary to the true faith, devoid of reason, and—perhaps most importantly—opposed to the authority of Scripture. Terreni ran through Joachim's three *status* and three *ordines*. The third and final order, that of the monks, began with Benedict and started to bear fruit in the time of Joachim. Then, says Terreni, Peter John Olivi established the connection to the Franciscans in his Apocalypse commentary, except that he claimed that the third spiritual state began with Francis of Assisi. Terreni locates many errors within this scheme, starting with the fact that it is simply wrong to say that people of the Old Testament were only living according to flesh; some were indeed spiritual. We will not go over all of his examples, but suffice it to say that Terreni rejects such an historical arrangement as contrary to Scripture (*contra scripturam*) and heretical, since it would thereby condemn all the saints and prophets of the Old Testament. Likewise, the Joachites err in their claim that men of the third state will not live according to the flesh, but only in the spirit. This too is heretical, since there is no state within

⁴⁹ THOMAS TURLEY, "Ab Apostolorum Temporibus: The Primitive Church in the Ecclesiology of Three Medieval Carmelites," in *Studia in honorem Alphonsi M. Stickler*, ed. Rosalio Castillo Lara (Rome: 1992), pp. 559-80, at pp. 568-74.

⁵⁰ DAVID BURR, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (University Park, PA: 2001), pp. 207-09.

this present age that is free from the demands of the flesh. And once more, Terreni marshals a whole host of biblical texts to prove his point.⁵¹ Terreni's analysis may amount to a caricature of Joachim's actual teachings, since the abbot believed that the three *status* overlapped one another; but the point is clear: the whole scheme is opposed to the true biblical witness.

Terreni, the Carmelite friar, was clearly irked by what he regarded as "the presumptuous and heretical" claims put forward by Olivi whereby this band of Franciscans could call themselves the true spiritual men (*virī spirituales*). He accuses them of preferring the life of their own order to that of Christ and the apostles a preference which is itself contrary to the truth of the faith (*contra veritatem fidei*). By claiming that the true spiritual life began with St Francis, by calling themselves the true spiritual men, they are setting themselves above even the apostles. Many passages from the New Testament are thus invoked to demonstrate the spiritual eminence of the apostles who lived in the humility and charity which the Franciscans now claim for themselves.⁵² Likewise, their contention that the third state will usher in a law of liberty proves to be heretical, since it denigrates Christ's own gospel by implying that it was not itself a gospel of freedom. This is clearly a heresy that runs contrary to apostolic teaching (*contra doctrinam apostolorum*).⁵³ Terreni will test all their claims against the exemplar of the apostolic age.

The arrogance of these Franciscans shines through as they contend that the apostles had only preached the gospel according to the literal sense (*secundum literam*) rather than the spiritual understanding (*secundum spiritualem intellectum*) which would arrive with these men of the third state. Such a claim is obviously a further denigration of the apostolic age and one that Terreni believes to be refuted by Scripture. The New Testament texts make it clear that apostolic preaching had been informed by the mysteries revealed in the primitive Church through the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴ Echoing the words of

⁵¹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 94v-95r.

⁵² *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 95v-96r.

⁵³ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 98r.

⁵⁴ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 99r-100r.

their nemesis, Pope John XXII, Terreni observes that while these Franciscans claim to follow the apostles, they have shown no such poverty of spirit as exhibited through obedience and humility. The apostles counseled obedience to one's superiors, but Joachim and Olivi have proudly withdrawn their obedience from Holy Mother Church. For Terreni, the very fact that the Spiritual Franciscans refuse obedience to John XXII is direct evidence that they are not truly spiritual men, since obedience is a sign of the genuine spiritual life.⁵⁵

Terreni then goes on to reject as heretical the notion that the clerical order will come to an end in the third state, for that would also mean the end of the sacraments which are the unique province of clerics not monks and friars minor. Once more, Terreni has recourse to the most primitive record: the New Testament itself. We have seen that he traced all the sacraments directly back to Christ, thereby ensuring their absolute and enduring validity. Here, in defense of the present clerical order, Terreni points out that Christ had specifically instituted the episcopacy and priesthood with his commission of apostles and disciples (Matt 28:19). It is for priests to administer the sacraments, not monks, and not even friars except by papal dispensation. The sacramental life depends, therefore, upon the diocesan clerical order. To claim that the sacraments would cease within the Church militant is nothing less than heresy. Christ himself has promised to remain with the priesthood until the end of the age (Matt 28:20); it cannot pass away. What is more, says Terreni, Olivi was simply wrong in his prediction that the order of clerics would cease in 1300, for here we are in 1342 and the priesthood still abides.⁵⁶ What we see here is that Terreni, himself a friar, is accusing the Spiritual Franciscans of upsetting the divinely established *status ecclesiae*, the very charge brought against the mendicant orders by their secular opponents.⁵⁷

There is another facet to Terreni's criticism, however, namely the debate between the mendicants over what constitutes evangelical perfection. Terreni is a friar himself, of course, and must defend the

⁵⁵ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 96v-97v. See John XXII's decretal *Quorundam* in *Extravag, Ioann. XXII* T. 14, c. 1; Friedberg 2:1220-1224.

⁵⁶ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 98r.

⁵⁷ The classic study is Yves Congar, 'Aspects ecclésiologiques de la querelle entre mendicants et séculars', *Archives D'Histoire Doctrinale et Littérature du Moyen Age*, 28 (1961), pp. 35-151.

legitimacy of the other mendicant orders against the claim that only Franciscan poverty achieves the Gospel ideal. Hence if the Spirituals believe that the Roman Church is carnal because she possesses wealth and holds her goods in common if this a sign of spiritual imperfection as Olivi claims then that too is heretical. Christ did indeed live a life of supreme perfection and yet he had a purse which he and the apostles used to buy necessities (Jn 13:29). And the Acts of the Apostles speaks of the early community sharing all their goods (Acts 4:32). In other words, property held in common is not an obstacle to spiritual perfection. If Christ and the apostles could live this way, then surely the Church may also hold goods in common. To exclude those who hold goods in common from the state of perfection amounts to nothing less than rendering the whole Church imperfect: from the apostles to the bishops, priests, monks, canons, and other religious orders. In fact, says Terreni, to contend that Christ possessed nothing, whether personally or in common, is a heresy that was recently condemned by Pope John XXII. That this rises to the level of heresy accords perfectly, not only with Terreni's notion of heresy as that which contradicts Scripture, but also with the papal condemnation itself. For in his 1323 bull, *Cum inter nonnullos*, John XXII proclaimed it heretical to deny that Christ and the apostles possessed any common property, since it amounts to a direct contradiction (*contradicit expresse*) of Holy Scripture.⁵⁸

Finally, to accuse the Roman Church—which worships the triune God—of being the synagogue of Satan is heretical and blasphemous for the very fact that it runs against the very article of faith established in the Creed: belief in the Church herself. Despite the presence of evil members in her current state, she remains holy as she abides in the true faith. The very Church whom Christ loves and gave himself for is forever immaculate. Terreni's consistent refrain resounds: this is the Church established by Christ upon the firm foundation; it will never be succeeded by another. To say otherwise is to contradict Christ himself (*contra verba Christi*).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 101v. See John XXII's decretal, *Cum inter nonnullos* in *Extravag. Ioann. XXII*. T. 14, c. 4; Friedberg 2:1229-1230: "...assertionem huiusmodi pertinacem, quum scripturae sacrae, quae in plerisque locis ipsos nonnumma habuisse asserit, contradicat expresse, ipsamque scripturam sacram, per quam utique fidei orthodoxae probantur articuli, quoad praemissa fermentum aperte supponat continere mendacii ..."

⁵⁹ *Summa de haeresibus (De haeresibus Abbatis Ioachim et Petri Ioannis)* ch. 1, f. 102r-103r.

VIII. THE ARGUMENT FOR PAPAL INFALLIBILITY

As we have seen above, Terreni believed that Scripture was the sole source of Christian doctrine, whether these teachings were contained therein implicitly or explicitly. Yet Terreni, an ardent defender of papal infallibility, also maintained that the pope was the final arbiter of the true meaning of Scripture, guided as he was by the Holy Spirit. Whereas Brian Tierney labeled William of Ockham an anti papal infallibilist (and a destructive one at that) he reckons Terreni a champion of pro papal infallibility.⁶⁰ Before turning directly to Terreni's treatise on papal infallibility, however, we will look at his comments on three key New Testament passages cited as the basis for papal authority. Commenting on John 21:17 where Christ tells Peter, "Feed my sheep," Terreni finds that this passage condemns Marsilius of Padua who had opposed the plain meaning of the text (*contra apertam sententiam*) by claiming that Christ left behind no vicar or head of the Church. Terreni, for his part, sees Christ establishing Peter as "vicar, prelate, and pastor of the Lord's entire flock." Peter is clearly the head of all the apostles and supreme pontiff over the whole Church. So too, then, is the Roman pontiff the successor of Peter, for he has his authority from Christ through Peter.⁶¹ Turning to Matthew 16:18, Terreni argues that just as Christ is "shepherd of the shepherds," and then after him Peter shepherd of the Church, so Christ is the "foundation of the foundations," followed by Peter the foundation of the Church founded upon Christ.⁶² And finally, when commenting on Luke 22:32, Terreni admits that Peter did indeed sin when he denied Christ. Yet he observes that Christ had not prayed that Peter would not deny him, but rather that his faith would not fail. Peter retained the seed of the faith within his heart even as he did not confess it with his mouth. The point is that Christ prayed for the faith of his vicar in order that he might then care for the faith of the whole Church.⁶³ This verse from the Gospel of Luke became a mainstay in Terreni's defense of papal infallibility and he devoted a considerable amount of space

⁶⁰ See BRIAN TIERNEY, *Origins of Papal Infallibility: 1150-1350* (Leiden: 1972), 238-72; and TAKASHI SHOGIMEN, "William of Ockham and Guido Terreni," *History of Political Thought* 19 (1998), 517-30.

⁶¹ *Quatuor Euangelistarum quasi in vnum ordinem redactorum concordia*, ed. Johannes Seiner (Cologne: 1631), p. 1038.

⁶² *Quatuor Euangelistarum*, p. 560.

⁶³ *Quatuor Euangelistarum*, p. 895.

to this passage in his commentary.⁶⁴ Some of that material can be found in the work to which we will now turn.

In his *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, Terreni begins by asking the question whether a papal successor (with the counsel of his cardinals) can revoke, or even establish the opposite of, what his predecessor had established as a matter of faith, such that it must be firmly believed and its opposite deemed heretical. It would seem that he could, since what has been established by human beings can be erroneous, and error must be always be corrected. Thus the erroneous ruling by a former pope will have to be corrected by his successor. Furthermore, the pope can surely err in matters of faith as Peter did when he denied Christ (Matt 26:69-75) and then later when rebuked by Paul at Antioch (Gal 2:11-14). And there is also the case of Pope Anastasius who had aligned himself with the heretic Photinus. Indeed, canon law even allows for the deposition of an heretical pope (*Si Papa*, D. 40. c. 6).⁶⁵

Terreni responds to these objections first by appealing to Christ's prayer that Peter's faith would not fail (Lk 22:32). He then offers an extensive recounting of Thomas Aquinas's treatment of conciliar decisions issued under papal authority (ST 2.2, q. 1, a. 10). This is noteworthy, because Thomas's objective here was not to exalt papal power so much as to secure the veracity of Church teaching. And that is really what Terreni wants to achieve as well. It is clear that, for Terreni, the notion of papal infallibility was seen as a bulwark established for the security of the Catholic faith. The papal infallibility question is always handled, therefore, within a larger ecclesial context. Indeed, Terreni contends that Christ's prayer in Luke 22:32 was for the faith of the Church. The Church is herself founded upon the solid rock of the true faith from which she will never fall away. The Church does not err with respect to the truth of the faith, or Holy Scripture, when she renders a determination concerning the Catholic faith, precisely because the Church in these instances is guided by the Holy Spirit who teaches all truth and repels all falsehood.⁶⁶

The infallibility of ecclesiastical decrees is most essential when dealing with Catholic doctrines that Scripture does not explicitly address. For even as such doctrines are thoroughly scriptural, they are

⁶⁴ *Quatuor Euangelistarum*, pp. 895-901.

⁶⁵ *Guidonis Terreni Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, ed. B.M. Xiberta (Aschendorf: 1926), pp. 9-10.

⁶⁶ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, p. 13.

not immediately evident, and thus stand in need of further explication. And it is to the Church that one looks for such clarification. Hence Terreni insists that the Church cannot err when she renders determinations on those matters of belief which are not evidently (*evidenter*) grasped from Scripture. For if the Church could err that would leave the faithful in a constant state of doubt as to whether the Church has erred in any given instance.⁶⁷ Terreni is certainly not setting up the Church as a separate source of revelation divorced from Holy Scripture; rather the Church is simply performing her sacred task as the steadfast interpreter of Scripture. One must be able to depend upon her, therefore, in those instances when the meaning of the sacred text is not immediately apparent. There must be one final arbiter of scriptural truth. It is in this vein that Terreni notes that if such determinations concerning matters of faith which are not evidently (*evidenter*) grasped from Scripture were themselves mutable and revocable, then such determinations would not depend upon the infallible truth, but rather upon fallible human judgment. Yet that would destroy any certain and stable adhesion to articles of faith, since it would leave Catholics in a constant state of doubt. No stability and concord could remain in the Church. For if the first determination could be revoked as contrary to the faith by the next determination, then one could reasonably doubt the following determination and so forth.⁶⁸ When the Church determines a matter of faith, therefore, this decision should be believed on her authority, for one cannot have more confidence in what one believes than in the authority on account of which one believes. Yet if the Church could err then it would not seem just to obligate the faithful to believe with a firm and undoubting belief, or to expect that the Church's determination will be held with an unshakeable faith.⁶⁹ The Church, therefore, secures the content of the Catholic faith which is itself ultimately grounded in Holy Scripture.

⁶⁷ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, p. 13: "Quia in hiis que ecclesia determinat fide credenda, que evidenter ex scriptura sacra non habentur, si in hiis posset ecclesia errare, fluctuarent fideles, an ecclesia errasset vel non ..."

⁶⁸ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 13-14: "Per hanc viam fides catholica in hiis per ecclesiam determinarentur credenda que evidenter non haberentur ex scriptura, si talis determinatio mutabilis et revocabilis esset, iam non inniteretur infallibili veritati, sed humano iudicio fallibili, et sic in hiis periret certa et stabilis ac firma adhesio in hiis credendis fide, quia tunc quilibet fluctuaret dubitans, an ecclesia verum determinasset vel non."

⁶⁹ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 14-15.

There is no other authority by which the faith is confirmed apart from what the prophets and the Holy Gospel have proclaimed, and what the Roman Church teaches, since there is no more certain faith than what is found therein. And it is here, when affirming the authority of the prophets and evangelists, that Terreni draws the careful distinction between the man and the office which will prove essential for his doctrine of papal infallibility. One can rely upon the steadfast faith of the prophets. As human beings it is true that they were liable to error. Yet in matters of faith they spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and thus remained inerrant. And it is by the same authority, says Terreni, that the pope and the Roman Church are also directed by the Holy Spirit to determine the truth infallibly in matters of faith. For the Holy Spirit would never permit the pope, or the Church, to err in these instances. Indeed, Christ the inerrant Truth is present whenever the pope meets with the college of cardinals, or with a general council gathered in the Lord's name for the sake of his faith. At such moments one can be sure that the pope will be directed by the Holy Spirit who will be speaking through him.⁷⁰

For Terreni, as we have seen, the Church's determination of true doctrine will always rest upon Holy Scripture. Thus it is essential that the texts of Scripture itself also be proven infallible. In this vein, Terreni contends that it is by the authority of the Church that the books of the biblical canon are confirmed. It was through the Church that the books of the Bible were admitted into authority, and it is by the authority of the Church that the faithful firmly trust that these books infallibly contain the truth. Here he cites Augustine's famous retort to the Manichees that he would not have believed the authority of Scripture had the authority of the Catholic Church not moved him. Terreni concludes that if, in the selection of the canonical Scripture the Church could not err inasmuch as she is directed by the Holy Spirit so it also stands to reason that the Spirit would not allow the pope to remove anything from the canonical books nor determine against their express truth. Hence one should believe that the pope would not err in the determination of the faith, since it is with him that the authority

⁷⁰ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 15-16: "Ergo eadem auctoritate summus pontifex et ecclesia romana per Spiritum Sanctum directa absque errore docet et determinat veritatem in hiis que ad fidem pertinent, nec in hiis Spiritus Sanctus, qui docet omnem veritatem, permetteret summum pontificem aut ecclesiam errare."

of the Catholic Church abides, as he is all the while directed by the Holy Spirit.⁷¹

There can be no doubt, therefore, that Terreni sees the papacy as operating within the larger context of the Church which is preserved from error. The pope renders determinations regarding the truth as it is infallibly contained within Holy Scripture. Yet if the pope's word is that final word in such determinations the possibility that he might err would lead to chaos. Terreni explores two scenarios. First, if the pope were to determine on a matter of faith that must be believed, and yet did so with some doubt, then his determination would itself be doubtful. Indeed, the rest of the faithful would also have to believe his determination with doubt, since they cannot be expected to believe in a determination any more so than the one who determined it. The result would be to plunge the whole Church into doubt regarding matters of faith, thereby rendering all the people infidels which is impossible. On the other hand, were the pope to err in rendering a determination and yet believe that error pertinaciously, such that he could not be corrected by his successor, then he would be a heretic. Either possibility, therefore, would cast the faith of the Church into doubt.⁷²

Much of this had direct application at the time. For it might seem indeed it did seem to some Franciscans that John XXII had revoked the determination of a previous pope, namely the 1279 bull *Exiit qui seminatur* issued by Nicholas III in support of Franciscan poverty. In light of Terreni's principles outlined above he can hardly allow for such a revocation, since it would imply that the previous pope had erred. In this case Terreni contends that John XXII never really revoked anything in that bull pertinent to the faith, but only clarified some issues concerning use and dominion with regard to consumable goods. Because this was not a question pertaining to faith and morals, therefore, the successor was free to revoke and alter what his predecessor had established if he believed it to be expedient.⁷³

⁷¹ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 17-18: "Igitur si ecclesia in electione scripture canonice, ut non erraret, creditur fuisse directa Spiritu Sancto, sic quod non liceret summo pontifici aliquid detrahere de libris canonicis aut contra eorum veritatem expressam determinare ..." See AUGUSTINE, *Contra epistolam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti* 5; PL 42:176-77.

⁷² *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 21-22.

⁷³ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 22-24. See p. 24: "... tum quia, ut dominus Papa dicit, illa non pertinent ad fidem specialiter quid et qualiter fratres Minores habeant; istud enim non pertinet ad fidem et in talibus que non sunt de necessitate fidei et bonorum morum generaliter potest successor revocare et mutare

As noted above, Terreni insisted on making a distinction between the man and the office, as he must given the reality of human foibles. The high priest Caiaphas, for instance, was able to prophesy correctly about Christ on account of the dignity of his office, notwithstanding the fact that he was personally heretical (Jn 11:51). Hence even if there were an heretical pope, God would never permit him to determine a heresy, or anything contrary to the faith, since the truth of God must always remain immutable within the Church. God would prohibit such an event in some way, whether through the pope's death, the resistance of the faithful, instruction from others, or internal inspiration. There are many ways that God will provide for the faith of his Church.⁷⁴ Here again it is the faith of the whole Church which is always at issue: that is the faith which cannot fail. The pope who personally lapsed into heresy would never be allowed to exercise the powers belonging to the office in such a way that would imperil the faith of the Church. Indeed, the office itself is protected from just such an eventuality, because it always remains under aegis of the Holy Spirit.

The Church's faith is not founded upon the papacy, but ultimately upon Holy Scripture to which all Catholics are subject. Here Terreni plainly confesses that every statement or statute contrary to the faith, or the determined teaching of Holy Scripture no matter who proclaims it must be rejected and revoked. Once again, though, God would never permit the Church to determine against the faith or the truth of Holy Scripture. Terreni will reiterate his earlier point that when the biblical authors human as they may be spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit they could not have erred. Hence the truth of Holy Scripture remains solid and its authority never vacillates.⁷⁵ And so too, even as the pope could err in himself (*in se*), the Holy Spirit will not permit him to determine anything contrary to the faith. It is for this very reason that Terreni has no

que statuit predecessor, prout sibi visum fuerit expedire, cum in hiis par in parem non habet imperium." See *Exiit qui seminat* in *Sexti Decretal.* L. 5, t. 12, c. 3; Friedberg 2:1109-21; and *Quia nonnunquam* in *Extravag. Ioann. XXII.* T. 14, c. 2; Friedberg 2:1224.

⁷⁴ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, p. 26: "Ergo multo forcius, si esset papa hereticus, propter immutabilem veritatem Dei et fidei datam a Deo benedictionem toti ecclesie et populo christiano non permetteret Deus enim eum determinare heresim aut aliquid contra fidem."

⁷⁵ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, p. 27: "Sic eciam prophete et ceteri scriptores sacre scripture, quamvis ut homines possent errare, tamen quia inspirati et in eis Spiritus Sanctus loquebatur, non poterunt errare, ut veritas scripture firma esset et ne scripturarum sanctarum auctoritas vacillaret nec fides titubaret."

qualms about admitting the genuine failings of St Peter: all of his lapses were strictly personal affairs. When Peter denied Christ he erred as a singular person, not as pope. Investigating this more deeply, though, Terreni proposes that when Peter erred in denying Christ he likely did so out of fear, rather than having erred in his heart, which is to say that he had not erred in the faith. But even if one were to admit that Peter did err in faith, the important point is that he did not determine or establish this error in the Church. So, again, even if the pope is a heretic *in se*, God still does not permit him to determine an error against the faith of the Church.⁷⁶

IX. CONCLUSION

No matter what modern church historians may make of the doctrine of papal infallibility and we will leave that debate aside it is very clear that in proposing such a doctrine Terreni believed that he was following a very conservative course. Papal infallibility, for Terreni, was a defensive measure against heresy. He could not have imagined himself to have been doing anything new. Quite the opposite: the authority of the papacy was in place to protect the apostolic faith from the novelties of the heretics—from those who would seek to undermine the continuous witness of the Holy Catholic Church. Terreni had one over arching goal: to preserve the ancient faith of the Church that is revealed in Holy Scripture and safeguarded across the ages. For as we saw in his *Summa de haeresibus*, Terreni never ceded the apostolic ground to the heretical sects. Even the papacy at its most exalted was nevertheless the natural expression of the New Testament texts. The Church, with her infallible supreme pontiff, is the very

⁷⁶ *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili Romani pontificis*, pp. 28-29: “Quod vero dicitur quod summus pontifex potest errare: dicendum quod summus pontifex, etsi ut est persona singularis possit in se errare, tamen propter communitatem fidelium et universalitatem ecclesie, pro cuius fide rogavit Dominus, non permittit eum determinare aliquid contra fidem in ecclesia Spiritus Sanctus, a quo ecclesia in fide regitur: ... Non obstat quod dicitur de Petro: Tum quia Petrus erravit existens singularis persona, licet enim pontificatus sibi esset promissus, ut patet Math. XVI cum loquatur in futuro ... Tum quia Petrus, etsi erravit negando Christum ex timore, tamen non apparet quod erravit corde: et sic non erravit in fide ... Tum quia esto quod Petrus errasset in fide negando Christum, non tamen determinavit aut statuit predictum errorem in ecclesia ... Unde posito quod papa esset hereticus in se, tamen Deus non permetteret eum errorem contra fidem determinare, ut ex predictis patet.”

Church which Christ had established when he set Peter above the rest for the good of the whole body. It is she - not the Greeks or the sectarians - who has remained true to her original commission all the while.⁷⁷

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⁷⁷ Much of the research for this article was conducted at Whitefriars Hall in Washington D.C. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Carmelites for allowing me full access to their library, and for all their generous hospitality throughout my stay with them in August 2008.

CARMEL: AN EMPTY SPACE FOR GOD

KEES VAN WAALJMAN, O.CARM.

Sometimes upon entering a building, one may feel openness and space. It seems as if the building invites me: you are welcome. The architecture is pervaded with perspicuity, it provides a view. Other buildings breathe a closed and oppressive atmosphere. They are filled with things. They seem to exclude me: you are not welcome.

Last week we had a meeting of the Society for Spiritual Theology in Würzburg. Würzburg is an old town in the South of Germany. The theme of the three days meeting was Popular Spirituality. Friday in the afternoon we had a guided tour of the old city. The guide, a university professor and a real expert, gave us a full explanation of the different images and buildings. Of course we visited a lot of churches. Entering the churches I felt immediately the atmosphere, before any explanation. Sometimes I did not understand how this building could be a house of prayer. The stuffy and closed atmosphere oppressed me. The space was filled with things and images. No view, no breath, no openness. In other churches I perceived a Presence, beyond the 'things' presented to me. It felt as if the architecture invited me to be open and receptive for God.

Sometimes I visit a monastery, giving a retreat or some days of recollection. Sharing the daily life of the monks or sisters and listening to their stories, I feel a closed atmosphere. Day and night are filled with practices and observances. It seems as if a hidden rule has closed the windows and the doors. The liturgy is correct, but terrified. The conversation is decent and even nice, but without inner space. Observances are more important than spiritual growth. Sometimes, however, I observe the opposite. The community creates an open and fresh atmosphere. They do the things to be done, but are interiorly relaxed and open minded.

These paradigms are meant as preliminary observations introducing the theme I would like to share with you: *Carmel: An Empty Space for God*. My meditation is focussed on the Carmelite rule as the heart of Carmelite experience.

In July 2005 the *Institutum Carmelitanum* organized a conference on the *formula vitae* which Albert of Jerusalem bestowed on the Latin Hermits of Mount Carmel eight centuries ago. From different perspectives scholars examined the text and content of Albert's letter. They reconstructed the historical context of the Latin Hermits on Mount Carmel. They analysed carefully the text of the Rule. They gave a survey of its reception in various commentaries. They investigated the text as a living message for today.¹

On that conference I tried to unfold a dimension in the Rule that can be characterized as empty spots, gaps, and open spaces. I described six types of open space as articulated in modern hermeneutics and linguistics and elaborated these six kinds of open space in the text of the Rule. I discovered the following open spaces. Firstly, the Rule as a whole unveils different meanings. We can read the Rule as a letter, a juridical document, and an affirmation of lived experience. The rule does not fill up which perspective should be chosen – and perhaps there are more perspectives! Anyway, it is an open space. Secondly, in the spiritual exercises, Albert creates deliberately open spaces: exceptions, adaptations, alternatives, and so on. Thirdly, the Rule itself discloses at the end an open future. Fourthly, particularly the 'more' (*supererogatio*) in the last chapter is a challenging open space. Therefore discernment is needed! Fifthly, the Rule shows a contextual shift from a community in solitary areas into convents in the cities where you are give a site, inviting the Carmelites to enter new contexts. Finally, the Rule has a communicative openness, inviting every reader to enter the mystical space of Mount Carmel.²

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Carmelite Institute Malta, I would like to go one step further. I would like to explore the inner space of the exercises in the Rule. In my book *The Mystical Space of Carmel* I tried to explain that the Carmelite Rule as a whole can be understood as the unfolding of a spiritual process.³ This process starts with the presentation of some basic provisions (Chapter 4-9), followed by the exercises needed for the interiorization of these provisions (Chapter 10-17), oriented on the purity of heart, which receives the armour of God (Chapter 18-19), to be preserved by working in silence (Chapter 20-21). In this way the Rule as a whole unfolds a spiritual way, to be done by the Carmelites. We tried to explain that this way

¹ *The Carmelite Rule* (Ed. E. GOMES, P. McMAHON a.o.), Roma 2008.

² *Ibid.*, 221-277.

³ K. WAAIJMAN, *The Mystical Space of Carmel*, Louvain 1999.

is an open ended process giving way to a mystical journey, which leads beyond the Rule.⁴ John of the Cross qualifies this open space as follows: 'Here is no longer a way. For the righteous there is no law, he is the law for himself.' Beyond the Rule there is a 'more' and this is the more of the mystical space, into which the Rule guides us. 'Use however your discernment' (Chapter 24).

I would like to share with you that not only the Rule as a whole, but also the particular exercises within the Rule has the same mystical structure.

As all rules, the Carmelite Rule provides a set of practices and exercises to be interiorized: obedience, remaining in the cell, meditating on Scripture, saying prayers, keeping vigil, saying psalms, sharing goods, coming together for the Eucharist, discussing the observance of order and the salvation of the soul, fasting and abstinence, working in silence. These exercises are oriented on the Carmelite configuration of virtues to be internalized: purity and holiness; justice, love, faith and hope.

These practices and virtues are interiorly oriented on the purity of the heart, creating in the Carmelite a fundamental openness for the indwelling of God. Purity of heart is *vacare Deo*: widening the soul out of its narrowness, deepening out the soul of its superficiality, broadening the soul by entering in the infinite space of God, becoming an empty space for God. This is not only the inner orientation of all these exercises and virtues together, as a whole, but also the inner dynamic and perspective of every exercise and virtue.

I would like to demonstrate this thesis at the hand of three exercises: meditation, work, and silence. They are meant as paradigms by which you may understand the mystical way of every exercise, realising an empty space for God.

I. MEDITATING DAY AND NIGHT ON THE WORD OF THE LORD

This exercise can not be understood literally. It is impossible to meditate day and night literally. We need to sleep, at least four, five hours. But even to meditate the whole day on the Word of the Lord is impossible. There are other commandments to be performed: hearing Mass, discussing the preservation of order and the salvation of the

⁴ *Ibid.*, 259-279.

soul, working in silence, and other lawful activities. It is absolutely clear: this commandment cannot be carried out literally. Using our common sense is enough to understand the neurotic craziness which would be the effect of such a literal understanding. It would lock up the Carmelite in the closed area of a biblical prison. But what may be the meaning of this exercise, if it is not a one-dimensional commandment, leading to narrow-mindedness? I would like to present two strategies of interpretation leading to an empty space for God. The first way follows the intertextual signal of the commandment: the exercise is a quotation of psalm 1. The second strategy follows the way of the old tradition of spiritual Bible-reading: *lectio divina*.

The biblical background: Psalm 1

How blessed is anyone who rejects the advice of the wicked,
and does not take a stand in the path that sinners tread,
but who delights in the Word of the Lord
and meditates day and night on his Word (Ps. 1,1-2).

Psalm 1 portrays the person steeped in Scripture and living out the Torah. An essential element in his spiritual practice – living in the world, not as a monk but as a father with his family and doing his job – is what has been translated by ‘meditation’. The Hebrew word, however, *haga* means ‘murmuring’. The torah-mystic repeats the words somatically, sighing them out in order – deeply immersed in them – to follow their innermost movements. This performance – remembering the Word of God by steadily memorizing – is sustained by a deeply emotional involvement: the reader feels a deep need for instruction and delights in it: ‘My lips move oozily in celebration, yes, you teach me your rules. May my tongue mouth your promise, all your commandments are upright (Ps. 119,171-172).

In the performance of the text not only the directly touched strings – the words that are murmured – vibrate but other strings vibrate along with them. ‘How caressing is your promise to my palate’, the psalmist cries out (Ps. 119,103). The murmuring of the words caresses the palate. Sometimes the psalmist’s somatic reaction is quite intense: ‘My flesh trembles before you, your judgements fill me with fear’ (Ps. 119,120). At the same time deep insight and understanding of the Word of God break through: ‘Teach me to taste and feel, for in your commandments I find solidity’ (Ps. 119,66). With all its love he focuses on the instruction of the Lord: ‘I open wide my mouth and pant, yes I need your commandments’ (Ps. 119,131). The psalmist is

yearning for God. Doing so – waiting for his Word (Ps. 119, 81) – the psalmist is interiorizing his belonging to God: ‘I am yours (...) Your servant am I’ (Ps. 119, 125). The torah has so deeply immersed itself in the inmost of the psalmist that it lights up from within: ‘The unfolding of your words gives light and makes even the gullible understand (Ps. 119,130). The world of God establishes itself in the heart of the psalmist and he himself is led into the world of God. The presence of God draws near to the servant who exerts himself to interiorize the Word of God in all its respects: learning, looking, questioning, understanding, watchful and cautious. A sense of God’s Presence which speaks to the human heart is prompted by this process of interiorization. The human heart is thoroughly enlarged (Ps. 119,32). Touching the depths of the heart, widely open to God, the Word of God gives direction to the course of life from within. It is a lamp for our feet and a light on our path (Ps. 119,105).

Psalm 1 compares the torah-mystic, deeply rooted in the Word of God, with a tree transplanted on water courses.

He is like a tree transplanted near streams;
it bears fruit in its season
and its leaves never wither,
whatever he does, it succeeds (Ps. 1,3).

The tree is surrounded by water: the torah mystic is surrounded and penetrated by the Word of God, being the source of his fertility and his freshness. Being transformed by the water of the Word of God, the torah-mystic himself is a growing water course. Listen to the words of Jesus Sirach, completely transformed in the word of God.

And I, like a conduit from a river,
like a watercourse running into a garden,
I said, ‘I am going to water my orchard,
I intend to irrigate my flower beds.’
And see, my conduit has grown into a river,
and my river has grown into a sea (Sir. 24,30-31).

Transformed by the river of the torah, Jesus Sirach became a conduit arising from the river, he became a watercourse running into the garden of his life, watering the orchard of his deeds, irrigating the flower beds of his virtues. And what happened? The small conduit received the width and the depth of a river, the Word of God. But see! The river has grown into a sea: God’s infinite love.

This is what meditating in the Word of the Lord spiritually means: it is a process in which the soul of the torah-mystic is widened and deepened. As the psalmist says: 'I run the way of your commandments, for you have widened my heart' (Ps. 119,32). By the river of the torah my heart has become an empty space for God, receiving the sea of his infinite love.

This is what the exercise of pondering the Word is all about: creating an empty space to receive the infinite love of God. It is not an exercise of being boxed up in his bible, being imprisoned in a text, being enclosed by letters. It is not a neurotic behaviour fuelled by anxiety. On the contrary, meditating in the Word of the Lord is a spiritual way, leading to *vacare Deo*, leading to the emptiness of the channel to receive – through the river of his Word – the infinite love of God.

II. LECTIO DIVINA

Let us now follow the second reading strategy: the way of *lectio divina*. To understand the spiritual discipline of *lectio divina* I choose the so-called *Scala Claustralium*, a letter written by Guigo II, the Carthusian, to his friend Gervasius. This letter, written twenty years before Albert wrote the Carmelite Rule, is an admirable summary of the essence of *lectio divina*. Let us read one passage of this letter.

Reading comes first, and is, as it were, the foundation; it provides the subject matter we must use for meditation. Meditation considers more carefully what is to be sought after it; it digs, as it were, for treasure which it finds and reveals, but since it is not in meditations' power to seize upon the treasure, it directs us to prayer. Prayer lifts itself up to God with all its strength, and begs for the treasure it longs for, which is the sweetness of contemplation. Contemplation when it comes rewards the labours of the other three; it inebriates the thirsting soul with the dew of heavenly sweetness. Reading is an exercise of the outward senses; meditation is concerned with the inward understanding; prayer is concerned with desire; contemplation outstrips every faculty.⁵

Guigo understands *lectio divina* as an exercise, but this exercise is in itself a spiritual way, encompassing four main steps. 'The reading comes first.' But reading needs the 'exercise' of the meditation oriented

⁵ GUIGO II, *The Ladder of Monks. A Letter on the Contemplative Life and Twelve Meditations*, Kalamzoo (MI) 1981, XII.

on 'the inward understanding'. Meditation 'directs us to prayer'. And prayer receives 'the sweetness of contemplation'. Let us look more carefully to these four steps, attending on the empty space for God, *vacare Deo*.

The first step is the *lectio*: the senses are touched by the text from without. That is why the *lectio* is called 'an external exercise'. The reader 'cleaves to the surface'. The reading conveys the bunch of grapes that still contain the juice, and brings solid food to the mouth.⁶

The second step is the *meditatio*: seeking out the interior of the text. 'Meditation does not remain on the outside, is not detained by unimportant things, climbs higher (up the mystical ladder), goes to the heart of the matter, examines each point thoroughly.'⁷ The one who meditates is like a cud chewer: first ingesting the food (*lectio*), then regurgitating everything in morsels – returning again and again to a verse, a word, a phrase, or a paragraph.

But meditation is not the end. The third, and most important step is *oratio*. Guigo says: 'In my meditation the fire of longing, the desire to know you more fully has increased.'⁸ Meditation feeds prayer: 'The more I see you, the more I long to see you.'⁹ Longing is the basic movement of prayer, evoked by meditation: the soul is 'consumed with longing'.¹⁰ Longing is sighing, weeping, thirsting, painfully lacking.¹¹ Longing is the empty space for God. The outgoing prayer of the soul draws the soul out of itself: 'God makes the soul forget earthly things; by making it die to itself He gives it new life in a wonderful way'.¹²

This is the fourth step: *contemplation*. As the soul treads outside of itself in prayerful yearning, the Beloved himself enters the soul: 'But the Lord, whose eyes are upon the just and whose ears can catch not only the words, but the very meaning of their prayers, does not wait until the longing soul has said all its say, but breaks in upon the middle of the prayer, runs to meet it in all haste.'¹³ The empty space receives God's presence. His presence is the flip side of longing. Guigo calls this an *antiphrasis*. He says: 'Can it be that the heralds and witnesses of this consolation and joy are sighs and tears? If it is so, then the

⁶ *Ibid.*, III, IV, V, XII, XIII.

⁷ *Ibid.*, V.

⁸ *Ibid.*, VI.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, V.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, V, VIII, XV.

¹² *Ibid.*, VIII.

¹³ *Ibid.*, VII.

word consolation is being used in a completely new sense, the reverse of its ordinary connotation. What has consolation in common with sighs, joy with tears, if indeed these are to be called tears and not rather an abundance of spiritual dew, poured out from above and overflowing, an outward purification as a sign of inward cleansing?'¹⁴ The empty space is a sign of God's presence! Two contrary meanings – tears and joy, absence and presence, emptiness and fulfilment – are domiciled in a single sign. This is what Guigo calls an antiphrasis: 'a new antiphrasis and uncustomary meaning' (*nova est antiphrasis ista et significatio inusita*).¹⁵

On the basis of the intertextual relationship with the torah-psalms and on the basis of a spiritual analysis of *lectio divina* we may conclude, that meditating day and night on the Word of the Lord is an exercise which organises in its centre an empty space for God, an emptiness as a sign of God's presence, *vacare Deo* as the antiphrasis of God's fulfilment.

III. THE WAY OF WORK

Our second paradigm will be the work to be done, as presented in Chapter 20 of the Carmelite Rule: 'Some work has to be done by you...'. What kind of work Albert does have in mind? There are lots of models available in the history of Christian spirituality. The desert monks viewed work as something which accompanies, structures, and undergirds the life of prayer.¹⁶ Augustine, in his work *De opera monachorum*, states that physical work must be done with a view to the spirit and wellbeing of the community.¹⁷ He refers to Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians, as the Carmelite Rule does. It is not clear just what attitude the new religious movement of the eleventh and twelfth centuries assumed toward working, but we do know that the hermits and early Franciscans gave priority to working for the livelihood and only reverted to begging where it was necessary. It was not until later that they made their begging into 'work'.

Nicholas the Frenchman, who lived on Mount Carmel, witnesses that the friars distinguished two kinds of work: spiritual work (read-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, VIII.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Cf. JOHN CASSIAN, *Institutiones* 1.10.7-8.

¹⁷ AUGUSTIN, *De opere monachorum*, PL 40: 547-582.

ing, meditation, prayer) as well as physical work (copying codices, agriculture).¹⁸ The distinction itself throws an interesting light on 'work'. Even spirituality (spiritual reading, meditation, and prayer) is 'work'! Back in Europe, the Carmelites decided, like all other mendicants, to live from the gospel, which they viewed as 'work', the work of apostolate.¹⁹ The shift to the work of apostolate was formally accepted, from the moment Innocent IV bent the Letter of Albert in the direction of a mendicant Rule, by a number of modifications: having houses in the cities, eating together in the refectory, praying the hours, going around begging as a form of apostolic life.

These preliminary observations are looking to 'some work' from an outside perspective: activities to be done, kinds of work, job descriptions, priorities, and so on. But does the Carmelite Rule provide some information about work as a spiritual way, even a spiritual way leading us to an empty space for God? To find an answer to this question we start with the last words of Chapter 20 in the Rule of Innocent IV (1247), suggesting that work is much more than completing an assignment or doing one's share. It is a process-in-motion, a way, as we will see. The Rule states, concisely summing up the essence of work:

This way is holy and good,
walk in it.

These concluding words contain three intertextual references to the Bible. They can help us to learn more about the spiritual way of work and about the empty space for God unfolded in it. The first biblical reference points to the wisdom spirituality: *this way is good*.²⁰ In wisdom literature 'the way' is a familiar motif. The good way leads to life (Prov. 2,1-22; 16,2-9.25-29). The evil way leads to death (Prov. 2,12; 28,10). The way (*derek*) is: our way of life, encompassing everything which has to be lived through. The second quotation, melted into the Rule, comes from Isaiah: 'A highway shall be there, and it shall be called *the holy way*' (Is. 35,8).²¹ The holy way is a road such as only the most holy cities know: a splendid road leading into the holy city and the central sanctuary (Is. 35,8-10). From within the

¹⁸ NICHOLAS GALLUS, *Ignea Sagitta*, (1270), VIII; ed. A. Staring, in *Carmelus* 9 (1962), 237-307.

¹⁹ THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, 2a 2ae, quaest. 187, a. 3, especially ad 3 um.

²⁰ In the Vulgate the *via bona ac recta*.

²¹ In the Vulgate: *Et erit ibi semita et via, et via sancta vocabitur*.

sanctuary a holy way unwinds on which the pilgrims walk in. The third Scriptural given stems from Isaiah as well: 'This is the way, walk in it' (Is. 30,21).²² Past Israel's self-determination God's teaching will come through to it pointing the right direction. The three references to Scripture may disclose the way of work, leading to the empty space for God.

IV. THE GOOD WAY

Wisdom spirituality is reflected in the hundreds of proverbial sayings collected in the book of *Proverbs*. About forty percent of these proverbs are related to the area of work: building the house, caring of the fields and the cattle; doing justice at the gates; assuring security and so on.

The central value is the 'good' (*tov*), encompassing the virtuous, the pleasant, the joyful. The good is an atmosphere: safety, prosperity, and peace. The good is life itself, a thriving tree located by a spring, bearing fruit. From within the sphere of the good its ferment affects everything: proper speech, true witness, prudence, care, friendly association with one's neighbour, love for wife and children.

Work as the good way of life can be improved by an attitude of receptivity and deference: a tactful approach of God's creation, no defamation, no lying, no collaboration with injustice, promoting the good, pursuing peace and mutual respect (Ps. 34, 9-15).

God is the soul and sculptor of the good. When a person stands in 'fear' of the good, that person stands in awe of God. Awe teaches a person to read life down to the level of the good in the light of God. God is the centre of creation, the origin of good, the father of wisdom, the source of fertility, the giver of the life partner, the helper before the court. Awe leads into the awesome goodness of God.

The good way of work is threatened by the evil way, leading to death. It is undermined by laziness, addiction to drink, despondency, dishonesty, bearing false witness, blackmailing, theft, and criminal assault. Every human being is placed in the everlasting choice between doing his work well, and the wrong way of the evil doers.

The majority of parents and teachers saw the good way of work in the perspective of God's creation. To the psalmist of Psalm 104, for

²² In the Vulgate: *Haec est via, ambulate in ea.*

instance, work is a way of joining God in creating things based on his wisdom (Ps. 104,23-24). Psalm 8 views human beings as God's steward: humanity manages the creation on God's behalf and in the name of God. But there are also other voices. In Genesis work is seen as a punishment imposed on humans by God (Gen. 3,17-19). And Qohelet considers work as a vexation and vanity (Eccl. 2,18-23). But whatever may be the colour of appreciation – more joyful and optimistic or more sad and pessimistic – all parents and teachers consider the way of work to belong to the order of creation.

The Carmelite Rule places itself within the wisdom spirituality by saying: 'This way of work is good.' And it seems to have a more positive and optimistic view by using the word 'good', which includes, as we have seen, the pleasant and the joyful.

The question, however, remains: is this good way of work an open space? I think that this is not the case as long as we look to work from the perspective of wisdom spirituality. Doing our work well we are connected with God's creative power; being fertile we receive God's blessing, building our house we are the hands of God, protecting his creatures we are his steward, but it is not adequate to say: this way of work is an empty space for God. On the contrary, human life is filled with work, we live in our work, the danger always being that our work overwhelms us (Ps. 127).

But the good way of work is not the end of the story. The good way of work provides us, so to say, the 'material' in which the two other ways of work – the 'holy' way and the way 'to walk in' – take shape. In the fullness of our daily work the 'holy' way creates the open space of a sanctuary and the prophetic way 'to walk in' orients this open space completely on God's unconditional coming.

V. THE HOLY WAY

The Carmelite Rule does not only refer to wisdom spirituality. By calling the way of work 'holy', Albert is quoting Isaiah: 'A highway shall be there, and it shall be called *the holy way*' (Is. 35,8). The context speaks of the exiles' joyful return home through the desert. The desert, seeing the exiles going home, dresses itself in delight and blankets itself with flowers.

(Is. 35,1-2). The exiles who are returning need not to be afraid, they will without trouble survive the wilderness journey (Is. 35,3-7). A paved way will be constructed through the desert, a road such as only the most holy cities know: splendid roads which lead into the

sanctuary, therefore a 'holy' road (Is. 35,8-10). Essentially this holy way is the coming of God in his people: 'He will come and save you' (Is. 35,4). The holy way is God's coming: eyes and ears will be opened, strength enters people's legs, streams break forth (Is. 35,5-7). One may say, the holy way is the openness of sanctuary, receiving the coming of God. As psalm 24 says to the gates of the sanctuary:

Lift up your heads, o openings,
and be lifted up, o ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
Who is the King of glory?
The Lord of the hosts,
he is the King of glory (Ps. 24,9-10).

Applied to 'some work to be done' what does this mean? The holy way of work is receiving God's coming in the sanctuary of our work. 'Some work' (*aliquid operis*) in the Carmelite Rule is therefore, not work that does not matter much, work that is more or less routine in nature (*aliquod opus*). Work is: doing something in such a way that it receives God's coming, doing your work with attention and concentration. Whether it is working the land, making implements, building and restructuring, the care of animals, copying codices, studying sacred texts or the apostolate, the work in question requires such a concentration, that God can coming in and 'the devil may always find you occupied.'

Some work creates an open space for God, in which the soul is protected against 'idleness' giving the destructive forces (the devil) an easy entrance into the soul. Remaining in the cell, remaining near it, being occupied on lawful activities (Chapter 10), being occupied by some work – all these practices belong to the same spiritual strategy: building up a protected area for our soul, so that the destructive power is not able to enter this sanctuary. The spiritual function of work is to open up the inner person and to unfold interiority – welcoming God's presence. Indeed it is a holy way. Not the devil but God is invited to enter this sanctuary.

What may be the connection between the 'good' way and the 'holy' way? The wisdom teachers consider the good way of work as co-creation with God our Creator, giving us the material in which and through which we live and experience the goodness of life. In this material the holy way creates a sanctuary: a space opened for the coming of God. This twofold way can be seen as two steps on a spiritual path. The first step is the performance of work as the participation in creation, being an essential part of our life, whatever

may be the kind of work we are doing and whatever may be the colour of our feelings. The second step is: to create in this work, which in itself already is a vital relationship with our Creator, a holy space giving way to the coming of God. The third step is the way to walk in: emptying the holy space from every self-centeredness, and receiving exclusively God's future.

VI. THE WAY TO WALK IN

Isaiah says: 'This is the way, walk in it' (Is. 30,21). The context of this statement is the prophetic critique accusing the Israelites of 'carrying out a plan, but not mine' (Is. 30,1). They go their own way to a goal they have set for themselves (Is. 30,2). But this way does not receive God's future (Is. 30, 3-7). Self-determination has blinded Israel, closed its mind to God's instruction, which comes from outside its own self-made future (Is. 30,8-11). This way, by which Israel seals itself off, destroys itself (Is. 30, 12-14). The only thing which can help is for Israel to seek its point of gravity in God and to expect in silence everything from him and no one else (Is. 30, 15-17). But even past Israel's self-isolation and self-destruction, God's voice will come through to it saying: 'This is the way, walk in it' (Is. 30, 20-21). Then everything will change between God and his people: prosperity will prevail (Is. 30, 22-26).

By quoting this prophetic text of Isaiah, the way of work gets its critical point: in all work the pivotal question is whether or not we isolate ourselves in our own plans. Work that locks itself up in itself, ruins itself. Work that permits itself to be directed from Beyond receives the right direction: 'This is the way, walk in it.'

The prophetic way of work is completely oriented on God's work which is beyond every I-centred planning. It is a way of working 'in silence and hope' as Isaiah says (Is. 30,15), an essential quotation in the next chapter on silence, and about which we will speak in the next paragraph of this article. For our understanding of the prophetic way of work it is important to see how work can be completely transformed into waiting and hoping in God, who frees us from every self-centeredness in our way of working. This prophetic insight precisely, is the very reason why Albert extensively quotes Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians. Paul sees all human work from the perspective of God, coming in the End – past the horizon of time – to meet us in Christ. This is the perspective in which Paul situates work.

Some Thessalonians draw their own conclusion: they quit work. They were of the opinion that the End-time (in the strict sense) was already in effect (2 Thess. 2,2). And End-time means: the restoration of the paradisaal state. An essential element of this paradisaal restoration was the lifting of the necessity of work. No longer are humans obliged to eat their bread by the sweat of their brow (Gen. 3, 17-19). These Thessalonians broke with 'the good way' of work, they broke with the 'order' of creation. Therefore Paul says: they are dis-order-ly' (*atattos*).²³ They violate the divine order of work, the intrinsic bond between labour and livelihood: 'Anyone unwilling to work should not eat' (2 Thess. 3,10). This order – the divine order for this Age – may not be violated under the pretext that the End has come.

The position of Paul is clear. The 'good way' of work, co-creating with God's creation, should not be stopped in favour of the 'eschatological' way of work, expecting all from God's redemption, in hope and silence. No, the Thessalonians should do their work in a way that corresponds to the order of this Age, and at the same time live totally in terms of the coming of God's kingdom in the End. This is precisely the practice and the teaching which Albert quotes at length. Paul practices the tentmaker's trade (the order of this Age) and at the same time devotes himself to preaching the gospel (the order of the End).

What does this mean for our theme of empty space? The prophetic way of work, especially the eschatological way of working, empties itself from every self-determination. In hope and silence it devotes itself to God's work. The prophetic way of working abandons the prospect of personally experiencing the outcome of my work. It is hidden – past the horizon of our time – in the time of God. Prophetically working exceeds the boundaries of one's own time. This way of working is an empty space for God 'walk in it, this is the way'.

Listening to the intertextual relationships in chapter 20 of the Carmelite Rule – references to Proverbs, Genesis, Isaiah, the Second Letter to the Thessalonians – we discovered work as a spiritual way: the good way, the holy way, and the prophetic way. In the Rule they are intrinsically connected. They are one way: 'This way is holy and good, walk in it.' This way starts – every moment anew – with the good

²³ For background information about the order of creation, including work and the order of End-time redemption see M. MENKEN, Paradise regained or still lost? Eschatology and disorderly behaviour in 2 Thessalonians, in: *New Testament Studies* 38 (1992), 271-289.

way of God's creation, in which we participate. This is our life. In this material of our life, we pave the holy way, being the coming of God in the sanctuary of our work. This open space becomes an empty space for God when we walk in prophetic way: in hope and silence opening our work for the grace of God – beyond every self-centeredness. These three steps of just one spiritual path belong together. This is the reason why the Rule so emphatically features Paul as teacher and example. Both in his teaching and as an example he endures the tension between working in this Age – co-creating with God – and working from the End – unconditionally waiting on God's grace – mediated every moment by the holy way of a prayerful life: the sanctuary of our work, paving the holy way of God's coming, the coming of God alone.

VII. SILENCE

The third paradigm is silence. In religious traditions silence sometimes has been understood as the absence of sound. On particular times and places there should be complete silence: the absence of every noisy thing. Or silence is conceived as cessation of speech: no words, no communication. Sometimes religious traditions were extremely rigorous in their enforcement of silence. Particularly the night silence was sometimes a neurotic obsession of absolutely no sound and no conversation. The Rule seems to support this rigorous attitude, saying: 'at other times, however, although you *need not observe silence so strictly*, you should nevertheless be all the more careful to avoid much talking' (Chapter 21). But this strictness of the night silence has, as we will see, a function in itself: the purification of our consciousness from all the impressions of the day, to become free for God. The silence of the day does not have this kind of strictness. Even a superficial reading of the Rule can support the opinion that Albert is looking for a golden mean somewhere between *not-talking* and *much-talking*. In fact, this quantitative and objectivising approach, fails to do justice to the qualitative difference between the silence of the night (*silentium nocturnum*) and the silence of the day (*silentium diurnum*), as they come to expression in the Rule.

The qualitative dimension of silence, day and night, is silence as a spiritual way. This way is leading to an empty space for God. This is particularly true in case of the silence of the night, but also the silence of the day is deeply motivated by the longing and waiting for God's presence.

As in the case of meditation I follow a twofold strategy. Firstly, I listen to the biblical silence which is obviously present in the many biblical quotations in the chapter on silence. Secondly, I would like to present to you the spiritual dimension of silence from the viewpoint of the history of Christian spirituality.

VIII. BIBLICAL SILENCE

Famous is the silent voice, heard by Elijah (1 Kgs. 19,13).²⁴ This so-called gentle breeze, as the Septuagint understood it, was in reality, however, much more prophetic. In reality, Elijah was battered into silence by the divine voice. This silence, cultivated in the school of Isaiah, ripened into the tranquil hope of the exiles. Silence became a mystical-prophetic path. I will try to describe the main phases of this way.

The first step on this way is: being perplexed, touched by the silence of death, as Elijah was on mount Horeb. It was a bold step in the Elian tradition to link the silence of the death of Israel with a new theophany of Yahweh (1 Kgs. 19,11-12). The divine voice following Breath, Earthquake, and Fire, battering Elijah into silence, announced a new presence of God. The beginning of the way is: to be touched deeply by the silence of death. Time and again, we see in the Bible, how people grow silent, suddenly hit by a disease (Ps. 31,18) or a disaster (Ez. 26, 15-18). Death renders one silent (Is. 6,5; 38,10). This silence is a completely natural organic reaction. It happens automatically, as when a person gets gooseflesh.

The second phase, however, is maintaining this spontaneous reaction. This occurs when the silence of being shocked becomes a ritual to be conducted. This silence has been performed by the friends of Job. Seeing how the life of their friend Job is marked by death they stop talking, they enter the space of silence. They tear their robes, throw dust upon their heads, and sit down in silence by Job. Remaining in silence is going into the depth of life, which is death. Remaining in silence is living speechless through the crisis of death. A great deal happens in this silence, as we can hear in psalm 39, cited by the Rule. The psalmist remains in a furnace of silence in which all false illusions and fixations are melted down (Ps. 39,3-4). This is not the end of the way.

²⁴ See K. WAAIJMAN, *Elia*, Nijmegen 1985, 17-19; 64-69.

The third phase is: quiet expectation. The furnace of silence, emptying my soul of every illusion, leads me to a place where I become imbued with the awareness of my own nothingness (Ps. 39,5-7). I am neither externally nor internally able to give stability to myself. The only One who can give my life solidity is God. Apart from God 'my world is nowhere' (Ps. 39,6). The transient creature I am turns from within to the Source of my life: 'In You alone I hope' (Ps. 39,8-9). The furnace of silence is inwardly transformed into the quiet glow of expectation: 'In silence I wait for the One who wills my deliverance' (Lam. 3,26). The furnace of silence transforms us even more deeply. For though my fixations were already melted away and my trust in God had already been born, it was still *my* quiet expectation that sustained me. I was still clinging to *my* lack which *I* projected on Him. Dare I admit that God could possibly be quite different from what *I* am silently expecting Him to be? Here *my* yearning is touched at the roots and hence uprooted (Ps. 39,10-12). Now silence frees me from the fear of death. The focus of *my* silent expectation shifts to *Him*. This is the 'silence and hope' which the Rule recommends us, quoting Isaiah (Is. 30,15).

The last phase is becoming silent in God's silent presence. The one, who became anchored in God, has nothing left to lose. Silence has become his identity, his strength. He is the guest of God (Ps. 39,13). Everything, and particularly my own existence is a gift of God. I have nothing, but possess everything. 'Silence has become a celebration' (Ps. 65,2). It is silent triumph of a Presence which was no longer silently manipulated by my expectations. In this silent presence God is life in its imagelessness. Here the silence of hope of our Rule is rooted in God's incomprehensible and immediate Sovereignty.

If we interpret the silence of the Carmelite Rule from this biblical perspective, silence is a completely empty space for God's incomprehensible Presence.

IX. MYSTICAL SILENCE

In the history of Christian spirituality silence is leading us to an imageless naked surrender to God who is imageless and inexpressible, completely in line with the biblical silence.²⁵ Silence is the night of

²⁵ See for this mystical silence *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 14 (1990), 845-851.

God's unknowable and unfathomable Presence. On this point the entire mystical tradition – from Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius the Areopagite to Eckhart and John of the Cross – is unanimous. John of the Cross sings:

La noche sosegada,
 en par de los levantes del aurora,
 la música callada,
 la soledad sonora,
 la cena que recrea y enamora.²⁶

Night, silence, solitude, music – these are the keywords which open up the empty space of silence for God, the incomprehensible present One, living as a silent music in my silenced soul.

Let us listen to John Climacus. In his *Ladder of Divine Ascent* (around 680) John Climacus described how the soul ascends in thirty steps to the love of God. Silence is the eleventh step.

Silence that is lived through
 is the mother of prayer,
 freedom from exile,
 custodian of zeal,
 a guard on our inner movements,
 a watch on our enemies,
 a prison of mourning,
 a friend of tears,
 a sure recollection of death,
 a painter of punishment,
 a concern with judgment,
 servant of restlessness,
 foe of licence,
 a companion of stillness,
 the opponent of dogmatism,
 a growth of knowledge,
 a hand to shape contemplation,
 hidden progress,
 the secret journey upward. (...)
 Lovers of silence draw close to God.
 They talk to Him in secret
 and God enlightens them.²⁷

²⁶ JOHN OF THE CROSS, *Cantico Espiritual*, 5^o ed., Madrid, Editorial de Espiritualidad, 1993, 586.

²⁷ JOHN CLIMACUS, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 11,3.5, New York 1982, 158-159.

This poem on silence is like a diamond reflecting the colourful richness of silence. It is a summary of what spiritual tradition says about the practice of silence. Looking to this beautiful diamond, I see four interrelated elements of the spiritual way, composing together the empty space for God.

Firstly, silence takes away from us noise and obsession, bondage and exile, threatening enemies and depressive powers. In one word: silence is freedom from destruction and death.

Secondly, silence brings to the fore our desire. As a mother she gives birth to our prayer, as a custodian she cares about our zeal, as a guardian she protects our drives, as a servant she helps our restlessness, she keeps us away from narrow-mindedness and dogmatism. In one word: silence frees our desire and our longing.

Thirdly, silence guides this process of longing and desiring, of praying and restless search. She paints our strivings. In her hands our discernment grows. She canalizes our mourning and tears. In one word: she is the companion on our journey toward God.

Fourthly, silence unities us with God. As a divine artist she shapes contemplation and opens up our mind to know God. She draws us passionately close to God. She is the one who speaks secretly with Him. She is so transparent that God enlightens us. In one word: the empty space mediates the fullness of God.

Understanding Carmelite silence from the spiritual perspective, we may say, that it is an empty space for God, it frees from every obsession, as Basil says: 'Silence makes it possible for us to forget old habits.'²⁸ Silence pulls me away from the world of fixed patterns. Silence is not only freeing me, it leads me to an imageless naked surrender to God who is imageless. The empty space of silence is the 'silent music' of contemplation as John of the Cross explains it: 'The soul calls this music "silent" because it is tranquil and quiet knowledge, without the sound of voices. And thus there is in it sweetness of music and the quietude of silence. Accordingly, she says that her Beloved is silent music because in Him she knows and enjoys this symphony of spiritual music.'²⁹ The empty space of silence remains empty and silent. This is precisely what silence does. This empty space is only filled by the music of God's silent presence.

²⁸ Cited in *Silence*, in: *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* (1990), 838.

²⁹ JOHN OF THE CROSS, *The spiritual Canticle*, o.c., 472-473.

On the base of intertextual biblical references and on the base of our spiritual tradition we may conclude that silence in the Carmelite Rule is an empty space, waiting in hope on the imageless presence of God.

X. CONCLUSION

Our objective was to interpret the exercises and virtues as presented in the Carmelite Rule, from the perspective of spirituality, that is: we try to understand, them as articulations of a spiritual process.

In order to explore this perspective, we chose three paradigms: meditation, work and silence. Using intertextual strategies (in our case: quotations from Scripture) and listening to the history of spirituality (in our case: the history of dedicated life), we discovered that the commandments on meditation, work and silence are invitations to enter a spiritual way.

If we understood these ways well, they lead Carmelites to an empty space: meditation on the Word of God ends up in a deep yearning for God's Presence, silence initiates us into an unconditional waiting for his Presence and work looks for a way of doing which receives God's unpredictable future. These are the empty spaces we discovered.

These empty spaces themselves, however, are not the end of the way. They are an empty space for God, in the double sense of the Word: as purity of the heart and *vacare Deo* they realize an unconditional openness for God, but at the same time they are for God the way he communicates himself in his imageless Presence.

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PRAYING IN THE DARK

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Is it really possible to continue praying, when it becomes totally dark? Or is it rather so that then the way is cleared to come to real prayer? Behind these questions are the more fundamental questions: 'What is praying really?' 'Are we really praying, when we speak words to God and feel that we are in contact with Him?' Or 'is it rather so that praying begins *beyond* our praying, when all words and feelings fall silent? When the emptiness becomes total and there is nothing anymore to hold on to?'

A person who experienced a very dark Night, asked her spiritual accompanist: 'How long will this last, this dark Night?' The accompanist answered: 'That will not end, it will only become worse.' Indeed, the Dark Night is God who is imposing Himself on us. In this process we lose our grip of the situation. It is not a crisis that leaves us behind in confusion and powerlessness. On the contrary. Because God overwhelms us with his light, we get blinded and we experience only darkness. We really don't know anymore what we are up to. There is something wrong here, because all that is familiar disappears. Our whole way of looking, thinking and knowing falls apart. Our familiar world collapses completely. The consequence, however, is that from there on we can begin to see God Himself, because we do have no alternative than to abandon the projections of our desires, anxieties and longings. Our own human logic and common sense collapses completely.

At the end of the spiritual accompaniment the above mentioned person looked therefore back at the reaction of the spiritual accompanist: "It was terrible, when you said that this horrible dark night will not end, but will always become worse. But at an opposite reaction of yours I would have known that this is not true."

Precisely, because this person was acquainted with how God works in the midst of the terrors of the Dark Night, she knew that it couldn't be different, if you are going to meet God Himself. You really

have to lose all contact with everything that is your own and familiar to you. This person wrote in her diary the following:

I pull at the emergency brake, I am at my wit's end. I am afraid to get lost. All the ways that led me to God are blocked. To choose for Him doesn't work; to rely on Him blindly doesn't work either. I don't know anymore how these things might be practiced. To bow deeply before Him ... none of these familiar movements are still possible. It is as if I am sitting in a tomb, and I can't get out. My God is no longer my Beloved; I cannot please Him anymore, neither does He please me. He remains a stranger; it is a horrible situation. I don't want Him anymore. It is as if I am destined for ever to remain in this hole, where I don't feel anything and I am like an empty packing. I cannot anymore. Drowning people never give up, they keep on struggling, but me...

In a conversation this person stated that she didn't know anymore who is God or what the word 'God' means. Nothing familiar is left. There is only an uninhabitable no-man's land, where you feel no longer at home. It is as if you don't even remember anymore that you ever had a home. On the contrary, it looks as if you have lived all the time in a world of illusions.

When it is totally dark, you can miss a person whom you are looking for or you can run into him. We prefer to meet each other in full light. In the dark we easily get lost. In normal circumstances that is an undesirable situation, which we try to avoid or to stop as soon as possible. But this is perhaps to our advantage, when we are searching for God. To have lost your way may allow you to find Him. In full light we see mainly ourselves. We may speak with pious words about God, but actually we are standing before a mirror in which we see only our own face. Everything is a reflection of ourselves. This concerns all our social relationships, but more so our speaking and thinking about God. An other person can still contradict us and say: 'That person whom you are talking about and with whom you mean me, that is not me. You don't know me.' Because God is silent and defenseless when it comes to our speaking and thinking, He easily becomes the object of our projections. Frightening darkness is therefore the place where God himself can be born. Here we can finally contemplate God, beyond everything.

We must 'die of ourselves' in order to allow God to enter our inmost self. Because we get out from ourselves and from our fear, we are able to begin to contemplate the Countenance of God, who grants us life for free. We are always constructing an ideal 'God', who responds to our own human logic. The urge to survive and the

fundamental need to hold on to oneself locks us up in the prison of our own human identity. The Other cannot enter there. The Night compels us to abandon our projections and to step out of ourselves and thus approach Him.

I. ANYTHING HUMAN TO HOLD ON FALLS AWAY

The Night describes the encounter between two beloved. But this can only happen in the dark, where we go into unknown vistas. We are busy on the way to our destination and we stumble over God without noticing. Also in our spiritual life we are busy with ourselves for 99%. We tell our own story to God. When our praying falls in pieces, then we will be able to hear the Spirit praying in us. This is contemplation, receiving what God wants to give to us.

The encounter with God makes us step out from ourselves, out of our own familiar world in order to make room for the unconditional love of God in our life and in our thinking. In that space of God we don't know the way. We are there without a street map, like in a desert, in a night. We have nothing to go on.

Actually, we construct for ourselves an image of God. We use the word 'God', but to pronounce that word is nothing else than just indicating the direction towards a horizon we will never reach. For we don't know what we are saying. That is precisely the beauty of using the word 'God'. Every time again God upsets our images of Him. We first have to read the Scriptures and we know that all those images give us a lead, but in their absurdity and diversity they derail also our thinking every time. The Night is the process of being set free from our own images. The consequences of this are not only temporary but they always go deeper. It will go on further, there is no turning back!

We have the impression that we are in contact with the reality. And yet, all of a sudden we 'see' something that was there already for a long time. For the greater part of what is around us, we are blind, the same as that we do not hear also most of what is said. In the evaluation of a session of spiritual accompaniment we may notice that we were unable to hear or unconsciously we did not want to hear, what without doubt went into our ears? Indeed, for the greater part of the reality we are deaf and blind. Therefore, we must learn to listen carefully to the speaking of God in ourselves and in the whole of reality. God reveals himself in the silence, when we let loose of all our patterns of expectation. Silence is that what we don't expect. To have contact with the reality as we think we have, is an illusion. In no other

way can we make contact with our surrounding world than through our senses and our body. God escapes in every respect our sensual ability. We only listen to a language that we understand. Even if we listen to the Word of God in the Scriptures or in the liturgy, we hear only a language that is comprehensible for us. The reality of God escapes our construction of the reality. In the world of God all of us are strangers. We do not know his world and we shall never know it. And yet, we are carried along in it, but always unaccustomed and ill at ease. Our perception of autonomous functioning falls away. St. John of the Cross says: 'We must get out of our house...' And that is really true. We have to get out of our house, out of our familiar reality, out of ourselves, out of our created reality.

II. THE UNBEATEN TRACK

Carine Philipse wrote about her dark Night as follows:

At a critical moment there happened to be a turning point in this process. I was inclined to think that I should be able to solve my own problems. For instance how I might cope with my extreme sensitivity to penetrating sounds and with the stress experienced in this situation since it provokes whistling in my ear. I was of the opinion that I should reach psychologically the stage of ignoring and overcoming the stress by penetrating sounds, and reacting laconically to this whistling in my ear. All this was the remainder of my pursuit of autonomy and my idea that after all I should be able to steer my life in the right direction. That idea I have learned as a child. A belief that enables us to entrust ourselves completely to God and to lay down everything that occurs to us in front of Him, is completely unfamiliar to me. The decisive turning point away from this tendency to autonomy, the desire to solve my own problems and the idea that I should be able to do so, towards the willingness to surrender myself and all that occurs to me in his hands, took place during the weekend at the Trappist Abbey.

All my grief for this problem came up again by an incident with penetrating sounds. I was swamped by the sensation of my powerlessness to cope, the stress and the anxiety provoked by it, the grief that this problem of whistling in my ears unintentionally was caused by my friend. I was totally stuck in this pain and distress. All this culminated during this Saturday evening. I wanted to be by myself. Why? I secluded myself for God. Why? Even though I felt strongly how much this was hurting me. I knew that it was wrong, but

I could not tackle it differently. I was unable to break through the barrier of this enclosure, unless I had forced myself and that I did not want to do.

At that moment I made the choice to stick to this powerlessness, this despair, pain and grief. So I went to bed, in this darkness.

The next day I experienced forcefully that God himself called me. "Go out and stand before my Countenance"¹ I had chosen as a text for this weekend 1 Kings 19, and exactly this appeal to Elijah was now an appeal to me: "Go out, from your seclusion for me, and stand, just as you are, with all the pain, grief and despair which is in your heart, stand with all this before my Countenance".

This is what I did. I had no choice; I did not want to do otherwise. It was just such a relief to stand there, before Him, before Him who sees everything, who contemplates everything in me with his love.

He himself has called me. He was breaking through the barrier of my seclusion. He was breaking me open. Once for all. This was the turning point.

Ever since during prayer I always stand before Him who is seeing me as I am; who contemplates all aspects of me in his endless love; before Him who sees me, who always sees me with loving gaze, day and night, as long as I will live. He himself lighted his light in the darkness of my night.

Also at present I have all the time the experience that can just go to bed in his custody with all what is dejecting me and worrying me. It is not necessary that I am able to solve the problem, at the contrary I just let it be.

Once and again it is my experience how He takes away from my shoulders all burdens. The only thing that matters is the road which He walks with me. The importance of all other things is disappearing. All other things do not get anymore the chance to be important in my life.

O beloved,
do overtake me
every time again
in your total being-the-Other

And just if I build up
something again myself,
beat it out of my hands.

¹ 1 Kings 19:11

O Blessed,
You who are Everything.²

We adjust God into our life and we create a God who suits us. He invites us to abandon this human need and to tread the unbeaten track. He comes to meet us in our bankruptcy, our 'I can't go on anymore'. Bankruptcy is the highest we can reach, only then can God reveal Himself³. Only then can we say 'yes' to a God who manifests Himself in his own way. The manner in which God manifests Himself is actually characterized by unmannerliness, i.e. it is lacking the manner we are used to and can understand. It is without formality and far from our common sense.

Our biggest problem is our common sense. The reality of God does not fit our expectations. Our speaking of God constructs the image we have of Him, an image He fortunately disrupts every time again. The Night is getting rid of our own images. The more pious we are, the greater chance is that we lock ourselves up in our own spirituality. The Night breaks this open. In principle we always follow the logic of our reason. We are not as foolish as God is in his unconditional Love. We must learn to become as foolish as God is, while we actually think that God is as reasonable as we are. This ineradicable human logic is our problem. This logic does not concern so much our sinfulness but rather our human common sense, adapting God to us instead of surrendering ourselves to the process of transformation by God's Love.

III. WE ARE NOT GOD

When we are introduced by God into contemplating his Face, we must step out of ourselves. Although in God's space we become alive,

² Unpublished manuscript.

³ See JAN VAN RUUSBROEC, *Die Geestelike Brulocht / The Spiritual Expousals, Opera Omnia* 3, Tielt – Turnhout 1986, B 993-1003: God want to be loved by us according to His nobility; and in this all spirits fail (faelgeren); and thus their love becomes modeless and mannerless. For they know neither how to achieve it nor how to induce it, for the love of all spirits is measured. And therefore, love always begins again from the beginning, so that God may be loved according to His demand and according to their desire. And therefore all spirits gather together without cease and form one burning flame in love, so that they might accomplish the task of loving God according to His nobility. Reason clearly shows that this is impossible for creatures. But love always wants to satisfy love fully or (else) to melt away and burn up and be annihilated in its failure.

this getting out of ourselves means great darkness. When we abandon the perspective familiar to us, we begin to see God in his light and with his eyes. This is extremely strange to us and even unpleasant. But this darkness offers an opportunity that his Face might lighten up. After all, we are not God and God is not us. This darkness is the consequence of truly seeing, of finally really seeing what is there to be seen. When we as human beings understand and accept that we are not God, we begin to understand how all the created things are thoroughly alienating us from the fullness of God's existence. When we go into a relationship with God, we will therefore always come to life in the Dark Night. Indeed, when God becomes the only love in our life, our love disengages itself from everything that is not God, which means to say, from every created being. The night causes us to fall into the infinite depth of God's existence, where only the darkness of 'faith' can be our guide.

We are lifted up above our own limitations and let ourselves be carried on wings into the endless depth of God's love. The natural 'inclinations and movements' of our human existence, however, are always seeking something to hold on to and a security. That is why they inevitably resist to the loss of ourselves, something the divine love works out in us. In the night we receive the openness and the capacity to cling without any bending backwards to ourselves to the Unspeakable, who reveals his divine being to us. In this way we are liberated from any alienation in front of Him. God Himself causes this night by pouring in this contemplative look, which makes us see Him in his infinity. This 'contemplation' removes the human dynamics, which prevents us from receiving something of his infinite being.

In the midst of the cruelties of World War II a female lay mystic wrote in her diary:

My God, just as the sky during a night without any stars, so your Essence raises itself as a dome above my nothingness. You are dark and far away. Here I am standing small and lonely, immobile and powerless. The horrors of the darkness come towards me in doubtfulness and scary questions. O merciful God, Your Will may be done.⁴

A few months later the same woman wrote:

My God, this silence is a heavy cross to bear! Here I am standing with my stammering powerlessness, and I don't know the song that is present in my heart but does not break into song. Be perfect as your heavenly

⁴ Unpublished manuscript of Mrs TEN HORN†, January 30-31 1944.

Father is perfect. Growing silent, surrendered without will, without desires, staying awake and waiting. The Spirit of the Father and the Son, their mutual Love, is floating above my motionless soul. Everything should have a rest in God, any desire, no matter how holy. Set free from everything, and yet - a calm gladness remained.⁵

This woman is entering the dark night because she is encountering God. Some days before the first citation from her diary she wrote:

My God, it is You who lives in me. You are using my body as your instrument. Allow then that my tongue is speaking nothing else than your words. Do not allow me that I am interrupting you.⁶

She realizes that she does not possess a life of her own. She is simply contemplating God's operation in her powerlessness and nullity. She was not depressed nor did she have poor self-esteem. The dark night was not a passing incident or a temporary setback. At the contrary, the encounter with God provoked an utter darkness because the divine Light was overwhelming and dazzling her. Five years later no light was yet dawning at the end of the tunnel. Nevertheless, this was not disturbing her serenity.

Some days ago Jesus said to me: 'Now the night is falling, but I will stay with you'. I shuddered at the thought, although rather soon gladness was breaking through. The holy Will of God may happen. This morning I was giving thought to these words of Jesus. They may forebode all kind of horrors. My fantasy pictured several of them to myself. I have accepted them one by one. I was so much aware of my weakness and of many unpredictable possibilities that I was dismayed. Thereupon I thought that these words are also quite a comfort. I felt encouraged and repeated my unconditional surrender. Subsequently it occurred to me that these words might be considered as a whole. Then it becomes a quiet night, full of mercy, in which my self will be radiant as a star full of divine Light.⁷

These consoling insights were only the fruits of a sweeping process. Our human nature is nothing else than resistance to this thorough annihilation transforming us into divine life.

It is not easy to be a dead person. Nevertheless, serenity was taking place. For a long time I have struggled in agony in order to soothe reaction and

⁵ July 13-19 1944.

⁶ July 26 1944.

⁷ July 5-6 1949.

action. Now I am buried by Christ. My soul is alive. Nevertheless, I am far from faultless. The mortal body, inclined to wrongdoing, still to perish.⁸

Slowly this woman became aware of the real meaning of the dark night. She is experiencing that the divine Light is shining more and more in the midst of these negative impressions.

The core of the candle's flame is dark. God wants me to give light, but to stay myself in darkness.⁹

IV. ANGUISH AND UNCERTAINTY

Disappointed and disillusioned we are sometimes overpowered by feelings of negativity. These feelings may look like those of a depression. Is this the eclipse of God, which seems to be so dominant in our modern secularized culture? By placing us in the center of our being God leads us into a new relationship with Him. Finally we catch sight of Him self! In his abundant love for us He created us precisely for this purpose.

Caught in anguish and uncertainty we turn around in the delusions of our self-deception. We do not dare to leave the familiar ground of our identity, while 'God is conducting us along another road, which is contemplation and is very different from the first'.¹⁰ Our senses here cannot give information anymore about the road that is humanly speaking impassable. Now we can only 'trust in God', 'until He is getting us to the clear and pure light of love'.¹¹ It all seems to be a waste of time and useless. In ourselves we don't find motivations anymore. What remains left here is only that we 'must be content simply with a loving and peaceful attentiveness to God, and live without the concern, without the effort, and without the desire to taste or feel him'.¹² We are empty-handed. In this situation we only know that we will get inflamed with love, without knowing how this comes about in us. We can't make a step on our own anymore. Passionately

⁸ July 4 1951.

⁹ April 10 1953.

¹⁰ JOHN OF THE CROSS, *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, tr. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez, *The Dark Night I*, 10, 2, p. 317; San Juan de la Cruz, *Obras Completas*, Madrid 1993, *Noche Oscura*, p. 474.

¹¹ *The Dark Night I*, 10, 3, p. 317; *Noche Oscura*, p. 474.

¹² *The Dark Night I*, 10, 4, p. 317; *Noche Oscura*, p. 474.

we are carried along in the movement of God's love. 'We see ourselves only enamored, but know not how.'¹³ In this love we are more and more detached from ourselves. In naked faith we set off on the road to God. Characteristic of the Night is that— although it is experienced as deprivation – it actually doesn't take away anything from us, but that it is extremely advantageous for us in our ascent to God. Indeed, 'the soul consequently arrives at the true fulfillment of the first commandment which, neither disdaining anything human nor excluding it from this love, states: You shall love your God with your whole heart, and with your whole mind, and with your whole soul, and with all your strength'.¹⁴

The Night of John of the Cross knows not only the tragedy of a psychological or spiritual crisis, but it describes the final reality or the *telos* of human life. We are in essence beings who in our emptiness are focused on the fullness outside ourselves. By surrendering ourselves to this divine reality, we will become finally ourselves, i.e. 'who we are in the eyes of God'. It is tragic that we seclude ourselves in anguish for this reality. While we bend back to ourselves and look for something to hold on to we actually mistake this reality easily for ourselves. Only the darkness can liberate us from ourselves, which means from everything that we take wrongly for more real than the Reality. Everything becomes different because of the mystical transformation. In this we don't lose anything and we gain everything. Actually we lose only our own objects, which are not more than a mirage that always leaves us unsatisfied. Being brought to freedom we now have to 'love God intensely with all our strength and all our sensory and spiritual appetites'¹⁵. After all we are 'not desiring to make use of them or find satisfaction in anything outside of you'¹⁶.

Transformed in God, nothing of man is superfluous. Thus the way of the night ends on the perspective that makes life possible: God Himself, who through Christ leads us by the hand into the paradise of his love. In this solitude all words of the author John of the Cross fall silent, because here nothing else is more eloquent than being silent.

Persons who lived this mystical process through the ages express themselves in similar ways. They are all in search of the silence and nothingness of God in order to be born transformed in Love. Mrs Ten

¹³ The Dark Night I, 11, 1, p. 319; Noche Oscura, p. 476.

¹⁴ The Dark Night II, 11, 4. Dt. 6, 5, p. 353; Noche Oscura, p. 517.

¹⁵ The Dark Night II, 11, 3, p. 353; Noche Oscura, p. 516.

¹⁶ The Dark Night II, 11, 3, p. 353; Noche Oscura, p. 517.

Horn, mentioned already, interpreted her life as a growing disappearance in God's silence.

Be silent and disappear! When the masterpiece is finished, the chisel is thrown away. My act of prayer is actualized as a wordless getting lost in the dark nothingness. From the depths of my darkness the Light of the world surfaces again. God has me annihilated and begetted Himself.¹⁷

Motionless I am listening in the darkness of the night to an infinite Silence. I am keeping watch to a full emptiness, and formless I am getting lost. I am aware of your dwelling in my fabric. Therefore, this being-not-being may praise You, who is breaking open all earthly things and thus is speaking Your word of Life.¹⁸

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¹⁷ November 3 – December 12, 1945.

¹⁸ June 19, 1962.

ENCOUNTERING GOD IN THE THE NOTHINGNESS OF BEING:
MEISTER ECKHART

JOS HULS, O.CARM.

The spiritual way often has to do with letting go. To reach the inside, we have to let go of the outside. An image often used is that of an onion which has to be peeled, layer by layer. The question, however, is: what is meant by letting go. What *is* letting go, and what does it entail? Eckhart uses the term 'lâzen', which has a good deal of biblical background, but first and foremost it refers to the evangelical counsel to let go of everything.¹ Eckhart does not confine the meaning of this counsel to letting go of worldly possessions or material riches: what really matters is letting go of ourselves. He means that we should let go of our own free will. As long as we – uneasy about ourselves and our own situation – think that the encounter with God depends on some particular situation or condition, we have not yet let go of ourselves and are still seeking God outside of ourselves. When, however, we let go of this conditionality – knowing that nothing exists outside of God – then reality itself, as it appears to us in all its unconditionality, can become the space in which God speaks to us.²

In his sermon *Intravit Jesus in quoddam castellum*,³ which deals with the encounter between Martha and Jesus, Eckhart speaks of human receptivity as a precondition for the encounter with God. An important image here is that of a young, unmarried woman (*juncvrouwe*). Martha encounters Jesus in her virginal freedom. Like her, we have to be virginal and free if we are to be capable of receiving Jesus.

¹ Cf. Mt. 19; Lk. 18:28-30 and Mk. 10:28-30.

² Cf. ERIK A. PANZIG, *Gelâzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Leipzig 2005, 76-100.

³ MEISTER ECKHART, *Die deutschen Werke/ im Auftr. Der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft*. Stuttgart; Berlin; Köln; Mainz 1936 ff. (henceforth abbreviated as: *DW*); 24-41 (Pr. 2). The full title reads: *Intravit Jesus in Quoddam castellum et mulier quaedam, Martha nomine, excepit illum in domum suam. Lucae II.*

I have first quoted this saying in Latin; it is written in the Gospel and in German it means: "Our Lord Jesus Christ went up into a citadel and was received by a virgin who was a wife." Now mark this word carefully. It must of necessity be a virgin, the person by whom Jesus was received. 'Virgin' is as much as to say a person who is void of alien images, as empty as he was when he did not exist.⁴

A gifted preacher, Eckhart understood better than most the art of translating the speculative concepts he had gained from theology into a philosophy of life that could be understood by lay people. Because we modern readers often lack this speculative background, Eckhart's language comes across as abstract and philosophical. Yet his sermons have, first of all, to be understood as meditations on the gospel. In the aforementioned sermon, Eckhart starts with the opening sentence of the Gospel narrative about Martha and Mary. Proceeding from this sentence, he reflects on what it means to receive Christ or God into our life. The image of the young, still virginal woman who receives Jesus into her home exemplifies every human being's encounter with God. Eckhart considers it impossible to encounter God except in our virginal state. This may strike us as a rather liberal treatment of the Bible, but in fact it opens up a manner of reading Scripture that does not restrict us to the objective, historical meaning of the text.⁵ He reads this Gospel, first of all, as a mirror in which we directly encounter God. This requires us as readers to approach the Gospel not only in a rational discursive manner, but as a holy text which surrenders its meaning only when we are open to the immediate reality that is hidden from the objective eye and resonates within ourselves. Eckhart sets out to raise the question of dialogical reality in terms of the Gospel story about Martha and Mary.

Eckhart associates virginity with our capacity for forming images or objectifying. Only when we are emptied of all alien images can we receive God into our lives. This immediately brings us to what is meant

⁴ DW 1, 24,3-25,4 (Pr. 2): Ich hân ein wörtelîn gesprochen des êrsten in dem latîne, daz stât geschriben in dem êwangelîô und sprichet alsô ze tiutsche: "unser herre Jêsus Kristus der gienc ûf in ein bûrgelîn und wart empfangen von einer juncvrouwen, diu ein wîp was". Eyâ, nû merket mit vlîze diz wort: ez muoz von nôt sîn, daz si ein juncvrouwe was, der mensche, von der Jêsus wart empfangen. Juncvrouwe ist alsô vil gesprochen als ein mensche, der von allen vremen bilden ledic ist, alsô ledic, als er was, dô er niht enwas. Meister Eckhart, *Sermons and Treatises*, vol. I, transl. & ed. by M. O'C. Walshe, Shaftesbury, Dorset – Rockport MA 1991, Sermon 8, 71-78.

⁵ Cf. MEISTER ECKHART, *Werke I*, Frankfurt am Main 1933, commentary by Niklaus Largier, 760.

by 'alien' images. Are these images alien because they distort reality, or are they alien because every image we make automatically distorts reality? In his sermon it becomes clear that Eckhart means the latter. He speaks of our original state in God. Before we are called into existence, we are already in God and it is to this immediate life, coming from God, that he will bring us back. The historical framework in which Eckhart speaks has to be understood in an ontological sense. First and foremost, we are the immediate life springing from God, who incessantly calls us into existence. However, this immediacy remains hidden from the objective eye. From this perspective all 'image making' is alienating because it separates our image-based reality from the immediate reality of God, who pervades the whole of created reality.

Here Eckhart faces a dilemma. He knows that nobody can live without images. Images are necessary. We need them to find our way in created reality. Without the images in our memory, we would have to keep re-inventing the wheel and would, moreover, be unable to build on the knowledge we have accumulated through experience.

Now the question may be asked, how a man who has been born and has reached the age of rational understanding can be as empty of all images as he was when he was not; for he knows many things, all of which are images: so how can he be empty of them? Note the explanation which I shall give you. If I were possessed of sufficient understanding so as to comprehend within my own mind all the images ever conceived by all men, as well as those that exist in God Himself — if I had these without attachment, whether in doing or in leaving undone, without before and after but rather standing free in this present Now ready to receive God's most beloved will and to do it continually, then in truth I would be a virgin, untrammelled by any images, just as I was when I was not.⁶

Eckhart is positive about our use of images – that is why he does not ask us to get rid of them. On the contrary, he heightens the effect.

⁶ *DW*: 1, 25,4-26,3 (Pr. 2): Sehet, nû möhte man vrâgen, wie der mensche, der geborn ist und vor gegangen ist in vernünftic leben, wie er alsô ledic müge sîn aller bilde, als dô er niht enwas, und er weiz doch vil, daz sint allez bilde; wie mac er denne ledic sîn? Nû merket daz underscheit, daz wil ich iu bewîsen. Wære ich alsô vernünftic, daz alliu bilde vernünfticliche in mir stüenden, diu alle menschen ie enpfiegen und diu in gote selber sint, wære ich der âne eigenschaft, daz ich enkeinez mit eigenschaft hæte begriffen in tuonne noch in lâzenne, mit vor noch mit nâch, mêr: daz ich in disem gegenwertigen nû vrî und ledic stüende nâch dem liebsten willen gotes und den ze tuonne âne underlâz, in der wârheit sô wære ich juncvrouwe âne hindernisse aller bilde als gewærlîche, als ich was, dô ich niht enwas.

He posits that even if our brains could contain all images of all people and of God, it would still be possible for us to be empty and free from these images. The problem lies, rather, in the way we deal with them. On the one hand, we find our way in created reality by means of them. On the other hand, images can function as a shield to keep us outside ultimate reality. When that happens, the images possess us and thereby lose their intermediary function. Therefore our virginity relates to our capacity to be drawn by the Other from our world of imagination. In the encounter with God we are always virginal, because the reality of the Other cannot be reduced to something of our own. In this way the Other shows himself in the cracks of our logic. Jesus touches Martha deeply. He turns her life upside down, because in Jesus she is confronted with a reality that cannot be reduced to something she is able to comprehend in terms of her own logic. At the same time this encounter is a kind of awakening, for the reality which Jesus opens up to her is the 'truth' of her existence: God himself, who in his immediacy is beyond all images.⁷

I. THE MYSTERY OF HUMANKIND

We human beings never possess ourselves. In his anthropology Franco Imoda speaks of human beings as a mystery⁸ – meaning not so much the impossibility of defining a human being as the mystery that human beings are to themselves. Animals find their destiny in satisfying their immediate needs, but human beings cannot be content with this. From the time they draw their first breath they are searchers who are impelled to discover their destiny. Our life is inevitably a journey in search of our being or truth.

Part of the human drama is the fact that it is a journey without end. The 'truth' of our being is certainly not within our reach; it lies beyond everything we can grasp or understand with our discursive minds. God is beyond all images; and likewise there is no single image that could contain a human being in his or her totality. In this sense the Judaeo-Christian tradition speaks of humanity as the mirror of

⁷ Cf. REINER MANSTETTEN, Meister Eckharts Stellingnahme zu Predigt 2: *Intravit Iesus in quoddam castellum* im Kölner Häresieprozess. Ein Essay über Wahrheit und Nachvollzug, in *Meister Eckhart: Lebensstationen – Redesituationen*, Berlin 1997, 279-301.

⁸ FRANCO IMODA S.J., *Human development, psychology and mystery*, Peeters, Leuven 1998, 10-32.

God's being. Created in God's image and likeness, we can only find fulfilment of our being in the sight of the Other who is the wellspring of our life.

There is a tension or strain between this longing for our deepest 'truth' and our fear of the loneliness that lies concealed beneath it. For the 'truth' of humanity is not a collective given. Individual human beings always have their own 'truth' which can be uncovered only when they are ready to discard everything that is extraneous to their own being. We are caught between semblance and reality. For fear of the nakedness which we are in the depth of our being, we put on heroics that make us important in the eyes of others. We want to be seen, to count; we want to justify our existence. So we adjust to the expectations of others or strive for positions that confer prestige in our society.

The need to be appreciated and affirmed is a primary one. We cannot do without the warm regard of others. To develop properly as human beings, we must feel in one way or another that we are accepted. A human being who has lacked this cherishing closeness, for whatever reason, risks suffering the consequences lifelong. But however important the appreciative eyes of others may be, they can also alienate us from ourselves; for our love of others is never unconditional. The more we depend on others, the more we risk losing the freedom to go the way of our own soul. Fearing the naked reality of ourselves, we choose the warm nest of affirmation.

Mystics especially – deeply conscious of the divine being in humanity – have pointed out the dangers of socialising. No matter how well human society is organised, we constantly risk adjusting so closely to the expectations of others that in the end we no longer know who we are. In this connection Eckhart speaks of the merchant mentality in human beings. We want to buy the love of others and the love of God by our behaviour, not realising that our total existence is an act of love from God. Our existence itself is the immediacy of God's love. That is why we do not need to seek our justification in the eyes of others. We do not have to prove ourselves, we just have to 'be' and be aware of living totally in the sight of the Other.

This awareness that in ourselves we are 'nothing' is diametrically opposed to the ideas of modern people, who consider themselves the authors of their own lives and experience every infringement of this assumption as an attack on their freedom. To mystics this is a form of ignorance which leads irrevocably to slavery – for individuals who deny their own origin, and therefore their own nothingness, have no point of reference except the significance they have in the eyes of

others. Not being anchored in their own being, they enslave themselves to others and get entangled in this web of mutual dependencies. Real freedom comes only through the recognition that we do not engender ourselves and in this sense are a mystery to ourselves. For anyone who is aware of having been called into being by the Other will also see that we can only become ourselves by heeding the voice of this unconditional love who, from the beyond, is the voice of our being. In other words, we live in the sight of the Other, and the more we dare to admit this loving regard, the more we can let go of our care for ourselves and thus be born in the sight of the Other.

II. TWO ATTITUDES

Returning to Eckhart's text, we see two opposing attitudes.⁹ The first is that of persons who absolutise their own logic and, in so doing, leave no room for the reality that lies beyond their images. This attitude is defensive. Because we dare not confront reality as being Other, we escape into a world which allows us to take a hand in its arrangement. This attitude is ultimately monolithic, because it evades the encounter as a dialogical event. However, that is not to say that it is limited to people who attach no significance to belief. Eckhart certainly speaks to a public that takes its faith very seriously. But explicit belief in God is not, to him, any guarantee of a really believing attitude to life. Such an attitude consists in daring to encounter a reality that breaches our own logic.

The other attitude consists in openness to reality as being Other. In this attitude, too, images are used, but used in the full knowledge that as images they refer to something else; they are not taken as absolute. Therefore these images retain their mediating function and remain channels for an encounter with God – open to immediate reality which cannot be captured in images. This second attitude is fundamentally dialogical in structure because of its openness. Martha meets Jesus in the body, which means that she has a certain image of him. Yet this, to her, is just the outside. What really concerns her is his transparency as God, and it is this transparency that leads her beyond the images of her own logic and allows her to be born in God.

⁹ Cf. AMY HOLLYWOOD, *The Soul as Virgin Wife, Mechthild of Magdeburg, Marguerite Porete, and Meister Eckhart*, Notre Dame & London 1995, 146.

The immediate reality is invisible to the physical eye, and moreover cannot be objectified as something we can bring into our own world.

We cannot choose to hold either of these two attitudes to the exclusion of the other: they are in constant tension or conflict. We cannot decide to discard our defence mechanisms so as to open ourselves completely to God and love only him in everything. Neither are we able to retire undisturbed to a world to which the Other has no access. Something unexpected always happens to disturb this world.

III. THE ROLE OF THE BIBLE

To Eckhart the purpose of Scripture is to wean us from our own logic, for the Spirit speaks through Scripture. Therefore Scripture has, first and foremost, a mystagogical function. It sets out not to teach us a doctrine but to offer us a possibility of encounter. In it God can start speaking as the Other who addresses us from beyond. In this way it becomes something to be read again and again, a never-ending process. Time and again it appeals to us in a new way, because in its mystagogical dynamics we are transformed ever more deeply in God. The condition for this transforming dynamics is that we do not get fixated on the images of Scripture but look at them as doorways through which God comes to meet us.

To Eckhart Scripture is an essential source of inspiration. If we open ourselves to it, we are opened up by it and thus brought into contact with a reality that escapes our objectifying but, as an appeal, leaves a deep mark on us.¹⁰ In the Judaeo-Christian tradition this is called the voice of Love, which transcends the human logic of self-preservation and self-interest. Therefore the question is not whether our faith permits us to be led by images and representations, but rather how these images can open us up to the naked reality of the God beyond images. In this connection it is essential to acknowledge that the scriptures contain a hidden meaning which we can neither grasp nor understand in the categories of our discursive minds.

¹⁰ Cf. NIKLAUS LARGIER, *Kritik und Lebenskunst nach Eckhart von Hochheim, Heinrich Seuse und Margareta Porète*, in: Mariano Delgado & Gotthard Fuchs (Hrsg.), *Die Kirchenkritik der Mystiker, Prophetie aus Gotteserfahrung*, Fribourg, Stuttgart 2004, Band I Mittelalter, 141-155: 144-147. Id., *Intellekttheorie, Hermeneutik und Allegorie: Subjekt und Subjektivität bei MEISTER ECKHART*, in *Geschichte und Vorgeschichte der modernen Subjektivität*. Herausgegeben von Peto Luzius Fetz, Roland Hagenbüchle und Peter Schulz. Band 1, Berlin – New York 1998, 477.

However, this does not mean that we are talking about a speculative reality. The divine reality is beyond our reason, because in its immediacy it is prior to everything else. It is an appeal, a claim. This appeal is certainly mediated by the images of Scripture, but at the same time it is an event actuated in the reader directly as something that transcends its images.

When Eckhart speaks of the virginity of Martha, he is referring to this tension between the enclosed nature of the images of our own logic and the fundamental openness that is needed to let the divine scriptures enter into us. If the scriptures are to become really accessible to us, if they are to become the mirror of ultimate reality, we must not try to appropriate those images: the moment we lock ourselves into our own system, the images lose their transparency. By using the image of Martha's virginity, Eckhart clarifies that we can receive God only by the breakthrough of our own logic.

IV. DISPENSING WITH ATTACHMENT

A word that regularly recurs in Eckhart's vocabulary is 'attachment' in the sense of attribute or property (*eigenschaft*). With regard to our images we must learn to do without attachments, not to see anything in terms of attachments. Later on, mystics like Ruusbroec were to adopt this term to explain, for example, the distinction between secret friends and hidden sons of God.¹¹ The eminent Eckhart scholar Quint, followed by Frans Maas, translates this term as 'I-bonding'. But it is doubtful whether this or any translation does justice to what Eckhart tries to convey with the term. For attachment ('bonding') is not problematic in itself; the problem is the attachment to things, which imprisons us in ourselves and our own reality. It is more important to have a look at the Aristotelian background of the term. Aristotle distinguishes between characteristics or accidents (*συμβεβηκός*) and the essence or substance (*ουσία*) of things.¹²

¹¹ JAN VAN RUUSBROEC, *Vanden blinkenden steen (The Sparkling Stone)*, rr. 385-391 in: Jan van Ruusbroec, *Opera Omnia*, deel 10, Lannoo / Brepols Tiel / Turnhout 1991. 'Met eyghenscap' translated as 'in a self-conscious manner'.

¹² ARISTOTLE, *Categories* 4, 1b25: ten categories are distinguished, notably substance plus nine others, one of which is accidents. In principle, substance takes a more prominent place. All others are attributes. *Topica* I 9 (103b20) id. *Analytica posteriora* I, 22, 83a25: deals with the explicit relationship of substance to accidents. Aristotelian metaphysics presupposes this distinction.

Accidents are changeable, not inherent in the substance. To reach the substance, we have to let go of the accidents. Dispensing with accident does not mean that we are unbound, but rather that we bind ourselves to the essence by letting go of the accidents. One of the three vows a religious must take is to live 'without possessions' (*âne [ohne] eigenschaft*). Attachment to worldly possessions is forbidden to a religious. The purpose is not that they should be detached in all respects, but that in this detachment they should attach themselves to the one thing needful: God himself, who is the essence of all.

No-one can live without images, but there is a constant danger that images will become absolutes. When that happens, we exchange reality for a dream world of our own ideas. Often this is motivated by fear. For fear of what is strange we cling to the security of a fictional world which we ourselves have created. The more this fear takes possession of us, the more we enclose ourselves in the projection of our own images. In Eckhart's view this repression not only occurs in serious traumatic experiences; it is inherent in human existence as such. As finite creatures we are ruled by our urge to live, and for fear of death we are constantly safeguarding our own existence. However necessary this care for ourselves may be, it is the reason why the reality in which we live becomes the instrument of our goals and can no longer be contemplated in itself – that is to say, as the space of the Other. When Eckhart speaks of 'accident', he is speaking of this imprisonment into which reality, treated as an instrument, has been absolutised. We attach ourselves to the 'accidents' and therefore not the essence of people or things when we need them, consciously or unconsciously, for our self-preservation, and therefore we can only observe them from our own perspective. The repression means that, given this logic of self-preservation, we flee from reality as the immediacy of God's countenance. We seek security in creatures because they are visible and tangible, while the only one who can truly offer security is God himself, who is the hidden foundation of this intermediate created existence.

Eckhart lays great stress on the fact that we lock ourselves into ourselves and into the images of our own logic. Over and over again we have to be willing to let go of these images. Images which take root in us, thus becoming absolute, degenerate into idolatrous realities which prevent us from losing ourselves in God's unconditionality. The dynamics of self-interest and the necessity of holding on to images follow naturally from each other. Images become our property when, as a matter of self-interest, we view them as absolute. In that case we exchange appearance for reality and can no longer see it as a mirror

in which we are directly confronted with God. If we – knowing that God cares for us in everything – could let go of this anxious concern about ourselves, then the images too would not hamper the immediacy of our relationship with God. Freed from every attachment to self, we could freely be moved by God in everything. A life ‘without attachment’ is a life that has united itself completely with God. We are ‘without attachment’ when we let God move us freely in everything – God who, as an ever-receding perspective, forms the horizon of the images. This life no longer takes thought for itself because it has been totally consumed by Love. In the same way Eckhart speaks in his sermon of standing free and empty before God’s most beloved will.

V. WORKING VIRGINALLY

A true encounter is always a virginal event in which, time and again, we awaken from the dream world of our images to a profound awareness that we have locked ourselves into the quasi world of our own projections. Despite this tension, images and representations have a mediating function. Thus the image of the virgin shows us that God is received into the nothingness of ourselves. In the first place our life springs from God. He is the Being of our being; without his Being we vanish into the void. Consequently this ontological passivity pertains to every layer of our existence. Even the achievements we can boast of as human beings are only feasible through creaturely receptivity.

And yet I say that being a virgin by no means deprives a man of works that he has done: he yet remains virgin-free, offering no hindrance to the highest Truth, even as Jesus is empty and free and virginal in himself. Since according to the masters union comes only by the joining of like to like, therefore that man must be a maiden, a virgin, who would receive the virgin Jesus.¹³

Virginity implies a state of detachment. A virgin has not yet given herself to anybody, hence she can choose freely. In contrast to physical virginity, which is permanently lost through bodily union, Eckhart sees

¹³ *DW*: 1, 26,4-26,9 (Pr. 2): Ich spriche aber: daz der mensche ist juncvrouwe, daz enbenimet im nihtes niht von allen den werken, diu er ie getete; des stât er megetlich und vrî âne alle hindernisse der obersten wârheit, als Jêsus ledic und vrî ist und megetlich in im selber. Als die *meister* sprechent, daz glich und glich aleine ein sache ist der einunge, her umbe sô muoz der mensche maget sîn, juncvrouwe, diu den megetlichen Jêsum enpfâhen sol.

virginity as a potential that cannot be destroyed by any human act. Whatever people have done in the past and whatever images have been stored in their minds over the years, they all have the potential to return to the place where they stand naked before God and are just receptivity. In this spiritual virginity we meet truth face to face and are wholly filled by it. In the same way Jesus, too, was virginal and free in himself to receive God without impediment. Hence to Eckhart, virginity is an image of total receptivity. By nature we already have this receptivity at the level of our creaturely existence which we receive from the creator's hand every moment. In the first place we live by a Life that we in no way owe to ourselves. By the same token we can become spiritually conscious of our virginity by interiorising this ontological passivity – in which we are profoundly aware of living by the Other – at all levels of our existence. Another term associated with virginity is 'union'. In our virginity we are joined to God, because we are like him only in such a receptive state. Thus the phrase 'like to like' – said to form the basis of union – conveys the tension that characterises our spiritual journey. For however much we yearn for union with God, there is an absolute boundary between the images of our intellect or the works of our hands and God, who in his immediacy both fully penetrates and wholly transcends this creaturely reality.¹⁴ That is why we only encounter God in our virginity. There, beyond everything that we may regard as our own territory, we receive the Other and live directly by him.

VI. BECOMING FRUITFUL IN RECEPTIVITY

Now attend, and follow me closely. If a man were to be ever virginal, he would bear no fruit. If he is to be fruitful, he must needs be a wife. 'Wife' is the noblest title one can bestow on the soul – far nobler than 'virgin'. For a man to receive God within him is good, and in receiving he is virgin. But for God to be fruitful in him is better, for only the fruitfulness of the gift is the thanks rendered for that gift, and herein the spirit is a wife, whose gratitude is fecundity, bearing Jesus again in God's paternal heart.¹⁵

¹⁴ Cf. ERIK A. PANZIG, *Gelâzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Leipzig 2005, 70-74.

¹⁵ DW: 1, 27,1-27,9 (Pr. 2): Nû merket und sehet mit vlize! Daz nû der mensche iemer mê juncvrouwe wære, sô enkæme keine vruht von im. Sol er vruhtbære werden, sô muoz daz von nôt sîn, daz er ein wîp sî. Wîp ist daz edelste wort, daz man der sêle

The virginal receptivity of human beings is directly linked with their existence. Therefore they do not need to become virginal – virginity is inalienably part of their being. For the potential to become fecund, we have to be in contact with this divine layer. That is why the virgin has to be a wife. In Eckhart's imagery a wife is someone who receives God in her virginity and in fecund gratitude bears God again in God. It does not mean that wifeness destroys human virginity. On the contrary, virginity is what makes it possible to encounter God. But just as a mirror does not absorb the light it receives but reflects it, so humans too have to bear the light they receive from God in God again.

From the human perspective this relationship is marked by gratitude. Gratitude for the gift is what makes us bear God again in his paternal heart. Note that this should not be interpreted in a moral sense. Eckhart does not call on people to be grateful. Virginity makes us aware of life as an absolute gift, for when we look at our lives we are a gift and nothing but a gift. Hence the realisation that we are brought into existence by the Other is what makes us grateful and makes us realise that we live in the sight of the Other.

From other texts of Eckhart's we know that the birth of the Son in humans through the Father and the rebirth of the Son in the Father through human beings is actually a reciprocal movement.¹⁶ In other words, God and humans are born each in the other's countenance. Thus the structure is that of an encounter which does not stem from our intentionality but from the Other, who is our life apart from all peculiarities. We are born in God when we let ourselves enter into God without hindrance. In that exposure we bear God again as the immediacy by which we live.

Many good gifts, received in virginity, are not reborn back into God in wifely fruitfulness and with praise and thanks. Such gifts perish and all comes to nought, and a man is no more blessed or the better for them. In this case his virginity is useless because to that virginity he does not

zuo gesprechen mac, und ist vil edeler dan juncvrouwe. Daz der mensche got enpfæhet in im, daz ist guot, und in der enpfenclichkeit ist er maget. Daz aber got vruhtbærlich in im werde, daz is bezzer; wan vruhtbærkeit der gâbe daz ist aleine dankbærkeit der gâbe, und dâ ist der geist ein wîp in der widerbernden dankbærkeit, dâ er gote widergebirt Jêsum in daz veterliche herze.

¹⁶ DW: 1, 375-389 (Pr. 22) Ave gratia plena. Cf. *Gelâzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Erik A. Panzig, Leipzig 2005, 244-247. This reciprocal movement is expressed in Dutch by Kees Waaijman as 'tegeninnigheid', cf. Kees Waaijman, *De mystiek van ik en jij*, Kampen 1990.

add the perfect fruitfulness of a wife. Therein lies the mischief. Hence I have said, "Jesus went up into a citadel and was received by a virgin who was a wife." It must be thus, as I have shown you.¹⁷

The distinction between the receptiveness of the virgin and the fruitfulness of the wife is comparable to that made in the parable of the seeds¹⁸ between those who hear the word but through some circumstance or other do not let it come to fruition, and those who let it bear fruit in their hearts. There are many who admit the word receptively, yet only a few in whom the word becomes truly fruitful. The parable also shows that the role of human beings is confined to that of the soil. They are not the seed, nor the fruit growing in the seed; they are the soil in which the seed dies and blossoms. Hence the human's role is one of 'allowing', so that the divine seed may bear fruit in us. This is also found in Eckhart, who links virginal receptiveness to wifely fruitfulness. We receive God in our virginity, but this divine gift becomes fecund in our wifeness and we bear God again in himself. The distinction between virgin and wife makes clear that we must differentiate between the God who, beyond all images, is the immediacy by which we live and the fruition of that immediacy in our lives. That only happens when we dare encounter the divine reality of our lives as the ground of our existence.

VII. WORKING FOR GOD OR WORKING FROM GOD

Married folk bring forth little more than one fruit in a year. But it is other wedded folk that I have in mind now: all those who are bound with attachment to prayer, fasting, vigils and all kinds of outward discipline and mortification. All attachment to any work that involves the loss of freedom to wait on God in the here and now, and to follow Him alone in the light wherein He would show you what to do and what not to do, every moment freely and anew, as if you had nothing else, and neither would nor could do otherwise — any such attachment or set practice

¹⁷ DW: 1, 27,10 – 28,6 (Pr. 2): Vil guoter gâben werdent enpfangen in der juncvröuwelicheit und enwerdent niht wider ingeborn in der wîplichen vruchtbarkeit mit dankbarem lobe in got. Die gâbe verderbent und werdent alle ze nihte, daz der mensche niemer sæliger noch bezzer dar abe wirt. Dâ enist im sîn juncvröuwelicheit ze nihte nütze, wan er niht ein wîp enist zuo der juncvröuwelicheit mit ganzer vruchtbarkeit. Dar an lît der schade. Dar umbe hân ich gesprochen: "Jêsus gienc ûf in ein bürgelîn und wart enpfangen von einer juncvrouwen, diu ein wîp was". Daz muoz von nôt sîn, als ich iu bewîset hân.

¹⁸ Lk. 8:5-15.

which repeatedly denies you this freedom, I call a *year*; for your soul will bear no fruit till it has done this work to which you are possessively attached, and you too will have no trust in God or in yourself before you have done the work you embraced with attachment, for otherwise you will have no peace. Thus you will bring forth no fruit till your work is done. That is what I call 'a year', and the fruit of it is paltry because it springs from attachment to the task and not from freedom.¹⁹

In this passage Eckhart introduces, in addition to the images of the virgin and the wife, that of the married couple. A couple does not bring forth more than one fruit in a year. Despite this realism Eckhart is not concerned with such primordial reality. His sole concern is how we relate to God and how God becomes active in our lives. Hence the term 'married folk' does not refer to a love relationship between two people but to the way we attach ourselves to people or things. A married couple is someone who is bound 'with attachment' to diverse outward religious observances, hence is no longer free 'to wait on God in the here and now'. That makes the married couple the antithesis of the virgin, who faces the supreme truth free and unfettered.

Despite this antithesis Eckhart does not condemn human works generally and does not espouse any kind of quietism. He is not concerned with our works but with our attitude in accomplishing them. For there is a world of difference between works that we perform of our own accord to reach some goal and works performed because of the immediacy of the appeal.²⁰ To clarify the distinction he reiterates the term 'attachment' (*Eigenschaft*). Just as we should be

¹⁹ DW: 1, 28,7-27,11 (Pr. 2): Êliche liute die bringent des jâres lützel mê dan éine vruht. Aber ander êliche liute die meine ich nû ze disem mâle: alle die mit eigenschaft gebunden sint an gebete, an vastenne, an wachenne und aller hande ûzerlicher üebunge und kestigungne. Ein ieglichiu eigenschaft eines ieglichen werkes, daz die vrîheit benimet, in disem gegenwertigen nû gote ze wartenne und dem aleine ze volgenne in dem lichte, mit dem er dich anwîsende wære ze tuonne und ze lâzenne in einem ieglichen nû vrî und niuwe, als ob dû anders nihet enhabest noch enwellest noch enkünnest: ein ieglichiu eigenschaft oder vûrgesetzt werke, daz dir dise vrîheit benimet alle zît niuwe, daz heize ich nû ein jâr; wan dîn sêle bringet dekeine vruht, si enhabe daz werke getân, daz dû mit eigenschaft besezen hâst, noch dû engetriuwest gote noch dir selber, dû enhabest dîn werke volbrâht, daz dû mit eigenschaft begriffen hâst; anders sô enhâst dû dekeinen vride. Dar umbe sô enbringest dû ouch dekeine vruht, dû enhabest dîn werke getân. Daz setze ich vûr ein jâr, und diu vruht ist nochdenne kleine, wan si ûz eigenschaft gegangen ist nâch dem werke und niht von vrîheit.

²⁰ Cf. NIKLAUS LARGIER, *Intellekttheorie, Hermeneutik und Allegorie: Subjekt und Subjektivität bei MEISTER ECKHART*, in *Geschichte und Vorgeschichte der modernen Subjektivität*. Herausgegeben von Peto Luzius Fetz, Roland Hagenbüchle und Peter Schulz. Band 1, Berlin – New York 1998, 469.

unattached to the images of our rational minds, so we must have no attachment to the ascetic religious practices that we perform. Here, too, the term 'attachment' seems to be caught in the contradiction of humans who imprison themselves in the fragmented world of existing things and the immediacy of the encounter with the divine that breaks into that insulated reality. Just as the images of our rational minds – when treated as absolute – lose their mediatory function, so our ascetic practices, when we regard them as *our* works and in that sense make them our property, prevent true immersion in God.

Eckhart distinguishes between the outward or material quality of practices and their inner orientation. Religious practices like fasting, vigils and the like are inwardly directed to detachment from material fixations and, in that exposure, concentrating on the sole reality: God, who gives himself to us totally in our lives. Hence he is not opposed to ascetic religious practices, but warns against an attitude that makes the practices an end in themselves, thus blocking encounter with God. The distinctive element here is 'freedom'. The practices are meant to free us for God, so that we can 'wait on God in the here and now, and ... follow Him alone in the light wherein He would show [us] what to do and what not to do'. The concept of freedom as used by Eckhart should not be confused with our modern concept of freedom. Modern people are free when they are their own boss and nothing prevents them from having their own way. This self-determination allows them to actualise themselves. But in Eckhart's sense the concept of freedom occurs in a context of letting go of self-will.²¹ For him people are truly free only when they are free for God and are no longer moved by anything except God's own light. From this it is evident that here too the term 'attachment' pertains to an attitude in which people incarcerate themselves in the images of their own logic. For it is this logic that separates us mentally from God and imprisons us in the world of existing things. As long as we regard religious exercises as 'our' works that we perform for God of our own accord we remain closed to their transforming dynamics. Although we appear to be the subjects of our religious exercises, essentially they seek to free us to the immediacy of God's action, which is beyond all images. That immediacy precludes any goals that human beings set themselves, because these automatically shackle them to their own images and thus destroy the free space of encounter.

²¹ Cf. ERIK A. PANZIG, *Gelâzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Leipzig 2005, 54-66.

Another important aspect that Eckhart associates with the fecundity of human receptivity is trust. People who, imprisoned in their own perspective, have nothing but their works to offer God trust neither God nor themselves. This is alienating, because from a human perspective it is actually a matter of mutual trust, otherwise they would not offer God their works. On the one hand they trust God to graciously accept their works; on the other they trust themselves and their own ability to accomplish the works. Nonetheless Eckhart speaks of a lack of trust, because he sees works done with attachment as a wall behind which people hide. Fearing their nakedness, they offer God their works rather than themselves. Put differently: through their works they miss out on a genuine relationship with God because they do not trust that they – just as they are – are worth God's while. Hence from the angle of a relationship with God there is a twofold deficiency. The first is not trusting in the unconditional love of God, who loves humans not for their works but for what they are. The second is not trusting that they – just as they are – are desirable to God. Hence instead of offering themselves they offer their works to gain God's favour.

To sum up: the term 'attachment' means an attitude whereby people tie themselves to their own works because of a lack of trust. That gives the works an instrumental function, so they lose their capacity to open us up to God's unconditional love. Thus we perform works with attachment when, out of self-concern, we feel obliged to take on ourselves, something we must do to earn God's love. Through this necessity we forfeit the freedom to let God bear fruit in us.

These, then, I call 'wedded folk' for they are bound by attachment. They bring forth little fruit, and paltry at that, as I have said.²²

To Eckhart wedded folk are those who marry their own works because they shrink from the nakedness of a relationship with God. They'd rather clothe themselves in works performed for God than brave the leap into a life lived in the immediacy of God. Because of this mental 'separation' between God and humans, 'wedded folk' bear little fruit. For fecundity stems from virginal receptivity and can only blossom when we let go of our grip.

²² DW: 1, 29,11-30,2 (Pr. 2): Dise heize ich êliche liute, wan sie an eigenschaft gebunden stânt. Dise bringent lützel vrühte, und diu selbe ist nochdenne kleine, als ich gesprochen hân.

VIII. BEING BORN IN THE FACE OF THE OTHER

A virgin who is a wife, is free and unfettered by attachment; she is always as near to God as to herself. She brings forth many and big fruits, for they are neither more nor less than God Himself. *This* fruit and *this* birth that virgin bears who is a wife, bringing forth daily a hundred and a thousandfold! Numberless indeed are her labours begotten of the most noble ground or, to speak more truly, of the very ground where the Father ever begets His eternal Word: it is thence she becomes fruitful and shares in the procreation. For Jesus, the light and splendour of the eternal heart (as St Paul says (Heb. 1:3), that he is the glory and splendour of the Father's heart and illumines the Father's heart with power), this same Jesus is made one with her and she with him, she is radiant and shining with him in one single unity, as one pure brilliant light in the paternal heart.²³

Although Eckhart uses terms like 'free' and 'unfettered', he in no way cherishes the modern ideal of human autonomy. On the contrary. To him people who base themselves on their own individuality and activities are their own prisoners and hence essentially unfree. True freedom comes only when we cease allowing our images to control us, thus becoming receptive to that which descends on us from beyond. Once again Eckhart conveys this idea with the term 'attachment'. Those who are unattached are as close to God as they are to themselves. In this sentence Eckhart is referring to the mental divide we usually introduce between God and humans. For judging by our lives we tend to take ourselves and our reality as a self-evident point of departure, banishing God from our world as a reality apart. Thus God may be the origin of our existence, but for the rest we are our own property, entering into an independent relationship with him as autonomous beings. This separation creates a contradiction between the works we offer to God and the goals we seek to reach by doing them. To Eckhart the separation between God and humans is at an ontological rather

²³ DW: 1, 30,3-31,8 (Pr. 2): Ein juncvrouwe, diu ein wîp ist, diu ist vrî und ungebunden âne eigenschaft, diu ist gote und ir selber alle zît glich nâhe. Diu bringet vil vrûhte und die sint grôz, minner noch mêr dan got selber ist. Dise vrucht und dise geburt machet disiu juncvrouwe, diu ein wîp ist, geborn und bringet alle tage hundert mâl oder tûsent mâl vrucht joch âne zal gebernde und vruchtbare werdende ûz dem aller edelsten grunde; noch baz gesprochen: jâ, ûz dem selben grunde, dâ der vater ûz gebernde ist sîn êwic wort, dar ûz wirt si vruchtbare mitgebernde. Wan Jêsus, daz lieht und der schîn des veterlîchen herzen - als sant *Paulus* sprichet, daz er ist ein êre eund ein schîn des veterlîchen herzen, und er durchliuhtet mit gewalte daz veterlîchen herze - dirre Jêsus ist mit ir vereinet und si mit im, und si liuhtet und schînet mit im als ein einic ein und als ein lûter klâr lieht in dem veterlîchen herzen.

than a physical level (as if God were a distinct entity in the reality of our existence). He is the immediacy of the world created in time and space and as such the immediacy of our creaturely existence. We exist in God and the more we entrust ourselves to this source, the more we dare let go of ourselves as autonomous beings over against God. To Eckhart such self-relinquishment is vitally important,²⁴ for it is the dichotomy between us and God that stops us from really descending into ourselves as the space where we are received by God. Only in God do we become truly ourselves and as long as we see ourselves as separated from him we cannot enter the space of receptivity. Thus the separation between God and humans is within us, not outside us. As long as we see ourselves as entities separate from God and remain imprisoned in our creatureliness we are unable to let go of our own perspective that is necessarily attached to the attributes of the goals we set ourselves. When we dare let go of ourselves in God, we receive ourselves from the Other who – beyond all images – is our life. In this immediacy we bear many fruits, because we are living by God's own power. All Eckhart's images show that he is speaking about an attitude in which humans in their own right play a passive role. We bear fruit when we let God be God within us and do not intervene ourselves. Just as a woman's fruit reaches full maturity without any intentionality on her part, so it is only in such receptivity that we become the space in which God may be born.

But that does not mean that humans are really passive in the physical sense. After all, we are speaking of the attitude with which we perform our works. If we put ourselves at the centre, we prevent the encounter and God cannot become fecund in us. If we risk losing ourselves in God, he becomes the power of our actions. This not passivity but rather a dialogical dynamics, in which our birth in God is also God's birth in us. By freeing ourselves in God the Other brings us to the matrix of our being, which in its receptiveness is the matrix of God himself. Eckhart gives this divine birth a trinitarian character by comparing the ground of a human being with the ground in which the Father begets his eternal Word. In the same way human beings, in this receptive state, become one with Jesus, who, in his singularity, is the reflection of divine light. Thus human beings in their virginity share in that divine life in which God is born to himself and pours forth into himself.

²⁴ See ERIK A. PANZIG, *Geläzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Leipzig 2005.

The dialogical structure we have outlined should make us wary of interpreting the virgin's unfettered state as a kind of indifference to all that befalls us. We are not free when everything is all the same to us and nothing touches our love. That may have been the Stoics' ascetic ideal, but it is not Eckhart's. As noted already, he in fact warns against overly rigorous ascetic practices, since these keep humans imprisoned within themselves. Asceticism should be practised discriminately. Only then will the exercises free us for God. The same applies to the virgin's unfettered state, which – as is evident in the Gospel about Martha – is directed to encounter. Hence it is not a question of whether we may attach ourselves to something or someone, but whether in our attachment we are prepared to let ourselves be exposed by the divine light. That is the distinction between our attachment to attributes and our attachment to God who, being the source of everything, is not to be trapped in these attributes. Thus the image of the virgin wife does not convey a state but a perpetually recurring process in human beings when, in abandoning their own images, they lose themselves in God.

IX. GOD IS THE CREATIVE GROUND OF OUR BEING

Elsewhere I have declared that there is a power in the soul which touches neither time nor flesh, flowing from the spirit, remaining in the spirit, altogether spiritual. In this power, God is ever verdant and flowering in all the joy and all the glory that He is in Himself. *There* is such heartfelt delight, such inconceivably deep joy as none can fully tell of, for in this power the eternal Father is ever begetting His eternal Son without pause, in such wise that this power jointly begets the Father's Son and itself, this self-same Son, in the sole power of the Father. Suppose a man owned a whole kingdom or all the goods of this world; then suppose he gave it up purely for God's sake, and became one of the poorest of the poor who ever lived on earth, and that God then gave him as much suffering as He ever imposed on any man, and that he bore all this to his dying day, and that God then gave him one fleeting glimpse of how He is in this power — that man's joy would be so great that all this suffering and poverty would still be insignificant. Yea, though God were never to vouchsafe him any further taste of heaven than this, he would yet be all too richly rewarded for all that he had ever endured, for God is in this power as in the eternal Now. If a man's spirit were always united with God in this power, he would not age. For the Now in which God made the first man and the Now in which the last man shall cease to be, and the Now I speak in, all are the same in God and there is but one Now.

Observe, this man dwells in one light with God, having no suffering and no sequence of time, but one equal eternity. This man is bereft of wonderment and all things are in him in their essence. Therefore nothing new comes to him from future things nor any accident, for he dwells in the Now, ever new and without intermission. Such is the divine sovereignty dwelling in this power.²⁵

Just as humans live by a Life that they can neither grasp nor comprehend – after all, they are not their own cause – so their essential ground as a reality of encounter is inconceivable to them. That is why we can only receive ourselves from the hands of the Other. In this context Eckhart speaks of a divine power in the soul. He is not the only one to do so. Many other mystical writers have spoken in similar vein – albeit often using different images – about the divine mystery in human beings.²⁶ At all events, they are all images – which we can

²⁵ DW: 1, 32,1-35,3 (Pr. 2): Ich hân ouch mê gesprochen, daz ein kraft in der sêle ist, diu berüeret niht zît noch vleisch; si vliuzet ûz dem geiste und blîbet in dem geiste und ist zemâle geistlich. In dirre kraft ist got alzemâle grüenende und blüejende in aller der vröude und in aller der êre, daz er in im selber ist. Dâ ist alsô herzenlîchiu vröude und alsô unbegrîfelîchiu grôze vröude, daz dâ nieman volle abe gesprechen kan. Wan der êwige vater gebirt sinen êwigen sun in dirre kraft âne underlâz, alsô daz disiu kraft mitgebernde ist den sun des vaters und sich selber den selben sun in der einiger kraft des vaters. Hæte ein mensche ein ganzez künicrîche oder allez daz guot von ertrîche und lieze daz lûterlîche durch got und würde der ermosten menschen einer, der ûf ertrîche iener lebet, und gæbe im denne got alsô vil ze lîdenne, als er ie menschen gegap, und lite er allez diz unz an sinen tôt und gæbe im denne got einen blik ze einen mâle ze schouwenne, wie er in dirre kraft ist: sîn vröude würde alsô grôz, daz alles diss lîdens und armüetes wære nochdenne ze kleine. Jâ, engæbe im joch got her nâch niemer mê himelrîches, er hæte nochdenne alze grôzen lôn enpfangen umbe allez, daz er ie geleit; wan got ist in dirre kraft als in dem êwigen nû. Wære der geist alle zît mit gote vereinet in dirre kraft, der mensche enmôhte niht alten; wan daz nû, dâ got den êrsten menschen inne machete, und daz nû, dâ der leste mensche inne sol vergân, und daz nû, dâ ich inne sprîche, diu sint glîch in gote und enist niht dan éin nû. Nû sehet, dirre mensche wonet in éinem liehte mit gote; dar umbe enist in im noch lîden noch volgen sunder ein glîchiu êwicheit. Disem menschen ist in der wârheit wunder abe genomen, und alliu dinc stânt weselîche in im. Dar umbe enpfæhet er niht niuwes von künftigen dîngen noch von keinem zuovalle, wan er wonet in einem nû alle zît niuwe âne underlâz. Alsolfîchiu götlichiu hêrschaft ist in dirre kraft.

²⁶ Mystical writers use all manner of images (L. REYPPENS, AME (son fond, ses puissances et sa structure d'après les mystiques), *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 1 (1937) p. 433-469) to indicate this: the extreme tip of the soul or *acies mentis* (Augustine), *apex spiritus* or *supremus affectivae apex* (Hugh of Balma, *acumen mentis* (Hugh of St Victor), *apex mentis seu synderesis scintilla* (Bonaventure), *die scherpfe des geistes* (Eckhart) or *la fine pointe de l'âme* (French mystic). Many mystics also call it a small spark of the soul (Bernard, Mechtild of Magdeburg, Eckhart, etc.). It is also called a hut, the centre, the citadel, the ground or soil, or the apex. Many names are given to this 'something in the soul', which nonetheless remains essentially ineffable and nameless. It is a light (*ein*

appropriate in the course of time – indicating that the *essence* of a human being has no defined structure but is dialogical. In this regard the Judaeo-Christian tradition refers to humans as the image of God. Just as God cannot be captured in any image, so every image falls short of human beings. What is important is that the distinction between icon and an-iconicity relates to an absolute division between the intermediateness of our creaturely condition and God's immediate reality. Thus Eckhart refers to a power in the soul flowing from the spirit, yet remaining in the spirit and being totally spiritual. By this he means that this power is qualitatively different and can in no way be captured in creaturely reality. That does not mean that Eckhart's view is dualistic, setting up spirit in opposition to body. His concern is with people's openness to themselves, being the space in which the Other emerges as their innermost source. Hence every attempt to take our lives into our own hands is to the detriment of the reality of encounter which, beyond all images, constitutes the ground of our humanity.

To Eckhart God's incarnation is not a historical event that once happened in time, but a process that constantly repeats itself in the Now of our existence. This is evident at a physical/material level. After all, there is no creaturely being that exists outside the Creator. But at a mental/spiritual level it is another story, for here we must first come to realise that this is so. It does not mean that lack of such realisation demolishes this inner reality. On the contrary, it is an ontological reality that – prior to human manipulation – was given with our existence. The ground of our being is the power of God himself, in which the eternal Father begets his Son without pause. The next sentence appears to emphasise that this is a perpetually recurring movement of God. Just as Father and Son are born to each other in the immediacy of reciprocity, so God's power is located in an abyss of

Lieht, Eckhart), i.e. an intellectual power in the soul that is both one and simple, like God himself. It is the human soul in its mystical receptiveness to God. It is the point where God touches humans in their very being and where humans can touch God without turning from themselves in manifold knowledge that juxtaposes impressions in time and space. This is also the bedrock of immediate knowledge of God, in which God is perceived directly in a unitary experience that transcends all multiplicity and differentiation. As a natural capacity it is a point within a human being, a 'something in the soul', but in actual fact is more like a dynamic event in which humans continually enter into a relationship with God. Cf. HEIN BLOMMESTIJN, *Découverte de soi-même ou quête de Dieu: l'itinéraire de soi en Dieu chez Maître Eckhart*, in: *Studies in Spirituality*, 1/1991/1, 75-95.; MEISTER ECKHART, *Werke I*, Frankfurt am Main 1993, commentary by Niklaus Largier, 763-771.

reciprocity in which Father and Son have totally lost themselves in each other. With this image Eckhart tries to indicate that God is on the one hand immutable in his eternal Now, but on the other, as the source of all creaturely reality in space and time, is a constantly flowing dynamics. To Eckhart these logically irreconcilable realities are simultaneously true. Put differently, the immediate reality of God that exists outside time and space is beyond our creaturely existence. To Eckhart this immediate reality that eludes our objective grasp is more real than our mediated creaturely existence, because as its origin it constitutes its inner core. Thus he writes that the uttermost destitution and suffering that can befall a person in this world is as nothing compared to one glimpse of the intimacy in which we see ourselves in this divine power by which we have been living for all eternity. The hyperbolic language stresses the puniness of the human perspective that, imprisoned in its creatureliness, cannot peer beyond its own limits. Only when we dare let ourselves be exposed by the divine light, knowing that it is only thus that we can truly come to life, does it become the power we live by, beyond our own controlling agency.

X. GOD'S ANNIHILATING ACTION

There is another power, immaterial too, flowing from the spirit, remaining in the spirit, altogether spiritual. In this power God is fiery, aglow with all His riches, with all His sweetness and all His bliss. Truly, in *this* power there is such great joy, such vast unmeasured bliss that none can tell of it or reveal it fully. Yet I declare that if ever there were a single man who in intellectual vision and in truth should glimpse for a moment the bliss and the joy therein, then all his sufferings and all God intended that he should suffer would be a trifle, a mere nothing to him — in fact I declare it would be pure joy and comfort to him.²⁷

²⁷ DW: 1, 35,4-36,7 (Pr. 2): Noch ein kraft ist, diu ist ouch unlîplich; si vliuzet ûz dem geiste und blîbet in dem geiste und ist zemâle geistlich. In dirre kraft ist got âne underlâz glimmende und brinnende mit aller sîner rîcheit, mit aller sîner suezicheit und mit aller sîner wunne. Wærlîche, in dirre kraft ist alsô grôziu vröude und alsô grôziu, unmæzigiu wunne, daz nieman vollen dar abe gesprechen noch geoffenbâren kan. Ich spriche aber: wære ein einic mensche, der hie inne schouwete vernünftliche in der wârheit einen ougenblik die wunne und die vröude, diu dar inne ist: allez daz er gelîden möhte und daz got von im geliten wolte hân, daz wære im allez kleine und joch nihtes niht; ich spriche noch mê: ez wære im alzemâle ein vröude und ein gemach.

In parallel terms Eckhart indicates that there is another power in the soul that can likewise be identified with God. Whereas the first power was God verdant and flowering (*grüende und blüejende*), this divine power is fiery and glowing (*glimmende und brinnende*) in the soul. This power, too, is altogether spiritual, hence expressive of an immediacy that refuses to be pinned down to a 'something' in our creaturely existence that can be perceived by our senses or apprehended by the tools of our logic. Thus the distinction Eckhart is making does not relate to the power itself, but to the way in which it is active in us. God, who manifests himself in his singularity as power or transforming dynamics, acts in human beings in diverse ways. But the definitions do not really help us to differentiate between the two powers. The only connecting link is the manner in which they are described. Hence we can say that God's presence in us is creative (*grüende und blüejende*) on the one hand, and annihilating (*glimmende und brinnende*) on the other. The image of begetting that is focal in the first power is absent from the description of the second. Instead the operative image is that of fire or heat. In mystical literature this image usually refers to human transformation through love. Just as the cherubim and seraphim are a reflection of the fire of divine love, in which they are consumed through all eternity, so humans who lose themselves in God become one with this fire that devours and consumes everything they could call their own. To Eckhart the annihilating and the unifying dynamics of God are two sides of the same coin, for it is the annihilation that unites us with God. That is why Eckhart describes the annihilation – despite the painful accompanying process – in terms of great joy and immeasurable bliss. The annihilation frees us from ourselves and lets us live, in our nakedness, directly by God's love. This liberation outweighs any suffering that may befall us in our lives.

Despite the highly speculative nature of the discourse on the two powers of the soul, Eckhart seeks to stress that as human beings we relate directly to a divine reality that in its immediacy is ahead of us in everything. On the one hand it encompasses our entire lives, being the reality of our creaturely reality. On the other it is, in its unfathomability, an abyss of reciprocity that demolishes us to the ground in the light of its truth. This stripping of all that we consider our own brings us to the virginal ground of our being, where we participate in space and time in the creative power of love that is God.

XI. DISCERNMENT OF SUFFERING

This brings Eckhart to the question of discernment. For how do we tell the difference between an attitude in which we ourselves are centre stage and this exposure in God? It should be clear that the question is not confined to a particular period in our lives, but confronts us time and again in ever new forms. After all, God – the reality of encounter – forever eludes us. To Eckhart the answer to the question about discernment lies in the extent to which suffering has a hold on us. If you suffer for yourself, it is hard to bear. But if you suffer for God, the burden is light.

If you would know for certain whether your suffering is your own or God's then you can know by this: If you suffer for yourself, in whatever way, that suffering hurts and is hard to bear. But if you suffer for God and God alone, your suffering does not hurt and is not hard to bear, for God bears the load. In very truth, if there were a man willing to suffer purely for God's sake and for God alone, then although he were suddenly called upon to bear all the suffering that all men have ever endured, the collective sufferings of all the world, it would not hurt him or bear him down, for God would bear the burden. If they put a hundredweight²⁸ burden on my neck and another were to bear it on my neck, I would as willingly bear a hundred pounds as one, for it would not burden me or cause me pain. In brief, whatever a man suffers for God and God alone, He makes light and pleasant.²⁹

Looking at the structure of the sermon, the theme of suffering seems to come out of the blue. After all, up to that point the dominant

²⁸ The Middle German word 'zentener' derives from Middle Latin 'centenarius'.

²⁹ *DW*: 1, 36,8-38,7 (Pr. 2): Wilt dû rehte wizzen, ob dîn lîden dîn sî oder gotes, daz solt dû her an merken: lîdest dû umbe dîn selbes willen, in welher wîse daz ist, daz lîden tuot dir wê und ist dir swære ze tragenne. Lîdest dû aber umbe got und got aleine, daz lîden entuot dir niht wê und ist dir ouch niht swære, wan got treit den last. Mit guoter wârheit! Wære ein mensche, der lîden wolte durch got und lûterliche got aleine, und viele allez daz lîden ûf in zemâle daz alle menschen ie geliten und daz al diu werlt hât gemeinlich, daz entæte im niht wê noch enwære im ouch niht swære, wan got der trûege den last. Der mir einen zentener leite ûf mînen hals und in denne ein ander trûege ûf mînen halse, als liep leite ich hundert ûf als einen, wan ez enwære mir niht swære noch entæte mir ouch niht wê. Kürzliche gesprochen: swaz der mensche lîdet durch got und got aleine, daz machet im got lîhte und sîeze, als ich sprach in dem beginne, dâ mite wir under predige begunden: "Jêsus der gienc ûf in ein bûrgelîn und wart empfangen von einer juncvrouwen, diu ein wîp was". War umbe? Daz muoste sîn von nôt, daz sie ein juncvrouwe was und ouch ein wîp. Nû hân ich iu geseit, daz Jêsus empfangen wart; ich enhân iu aber niht geseit, waz daz bûrgelîn sî, alsô als ich nû dar abe sprechen wil.

theme had been joy. Those who realise that they live wholly by God's power are totally filled with this knowledge and cannot contain their joy. The figure of speech that Eckhart uses here is a contrasting parallelism. Those who have truly seen themselves in God know that all the suffering that befalls them in life is as nothing compared with this exposure that reveals the blindness of our own perspective. Thus Eckhart tries to remove the sting from suffering, so we can face it honestly. Not that Eckhart wants to deny the reality of suffering. He merely wants us not to fear it. For it is the fear of suffering that makes us flee into the projections of our own images.

The discerning question about the pain of suffering shows us that the spiritual way lies in the field of tension between human goals and God's action, which embraces us from within. The two are in fragile equilibrium. On the one hand we can only follow the way by making a move ourselves. On the other hand any move requires fundamental openness to the Other who appeals and embraces us in our endeavour. That is why the spiritual way does not lie in material exercises but in the structure of encounter that they expose. A major constructive element is that we are up against our limits and in this sense are frustrated in our own ego structure. For however much we may want to, we cannot bring about the encounter. Concentration on our own activity may even be counterproductive, in that it ties us to the self rather than freeing us from it. This intimate link between the *skopos* (working goal) and *telos* (ultimate goal) of our works shows how hard it is to discern objectively between suffering for ourselves and suffering for God. After all, they are not separate issues but a field of tension created by the very encounter with God. For by the light of truth we realise that ultimately our works are not for ourselves but for God, who transforms us from within. This exposure is at once painful and sweet. It is painful, because from our perspective every encounter violates our individuality. In the encounter we realise not only that all our intellectual images effectively screen us from the naked reality that is in God, but also that in ourselves we are nothing. At the same time the exposure is sweet, because it is God's union with us from beyond. In it we live by God's own power that speaks to us directly in everything.

To Eckhart suffering arising from ourselves pertains to self-will. For as long we ourselves and our own goals are focal, we suffer when they are frustrated. This applies both to goals that affect our personal happiness such as material wealth, health, recognition and the like, and more idealistic goals like peace, solidarity, love for others, et cetera. Either way we are projecting our own wishes and desires on

reality and they make us suffer when they are not fulfilled. Such suffering is always hard, because it infringes on our patterns of expectation. At the same time, from the perspective of the spiritual way such suffering is necessary, since only the abrogation of our own perspective can put us in touch with our receptiveness that lies hidden behind it.

In contrast to suffering arising from our drive to organise our own reality there is suffering for God and God alone. As noted above, the difference is not objective but lies in a change of perspective. As long as we remain imprisoned in ourselves we suffer from anything that encroaches on our own perspective. Exposed in God, we no longer demand that reality has to meet our stringent requirements but it becomes the face of God himself that addresses us directly in everything. In this non-grasping attitude we are united with God beyond ourselves and participate in the abyss of reciprocity that God is in himself. A crucial aspect of this surrender is the relinquishment of all self-interest. For when we realise that God is equally close to us in everything, everything, whatever it means to us personally, becomes a space for encountering him. In this regard Eckhart speaks of suffering that no longer causes pain because God is the one who bears it. That does not mean that in such union we have retreated into imperviousness. On the contrary, relinquishment of self-interest makes us all the more sensitive to others, who are no longer viewed in terms of their aspects or attributes but in their divine being. Suffering for God and God alone is marked by simplicity. Because in that union we are no longer focused on ourselves and our own position, we are free at last to view reality in God's light. Thus suffering for God does not entail a foreign will. We suffer not because God wills it, but because in our surrender we obey the voice of our divine being beyond ourselves, a voice that addresses us in everything. Put differently: in the surrender of union we live through the eyes of the Other who is born in our being. To Eckhart such immediate life in God that lies hidden behind our urge for manifestation is the unfathomable reality of our existence and those who are aware of this 'treasure' know that nothing can outweigh this intimacy that is the naked truth of our lives.

In expounding the divine powers of the soul and the discerning question about suffering Eckhart shows why human beings – when it comes to encountering the divine – have to be both virgin and wife. After all, to him the soul is where we touch God. It is not the antithesis of our bodily life but its unfathomable centre. For that reason it is insulated from the objectivising images of our intellect and can only be active in us if we are prepared to relinquish our own reality. The

image of virginity expresses the ontological fact that before all else we live through God and in that sense are purely receptive. The image of the wife, on the other hand, indicates the human capacity to have ourselves exposed by this divine dynamics. The guideline here is the discernment about suffering. For the more we surrender ourselves to God, the more we realise that our birthplace does not lie in ourselves or our own will but in the Other who looks at us from within our being.

XII. THE UNFATHOMABLE CENTRE OF THE SOUL

As I said in the beginning, in the opening words of this sermon: 'Jesus went up into a citadel and was received by a virgin who was a wife.' Why? It had to be so, that she was a virgin *and a* wife. Now I have told you that Jesus was received, but I have not yet told you what the citadel is, as I shall now proceed to do.

I have sometimes said that there is a power in the soul which alone is free. Sometimes I have called it the guardian of the spirit, sometimes I have called it a light of the spirit, sometimes I have said that it is a little spark. But now I say that it is neither *this* nor *that*; and yet it is a *something* that is more exalted over 'this' and 'that' than are the heavens above the earth. So now I shall name it in nobler fashion than I ever did before, and yet it disowns the nobler name and mode, for it transcends them. It is free of all names and void of all forms, entirely exempt and free, as God is exempt and free in Himself. It is as completely one and simple as God is one and simple, so that no man can in any way glimpse it. This same power of which I have spoken, wherein God ever blooms and is verdant in all His Godhead, and the spirit in God, in this same power God ever bears His only-begotten Son as truly as in Himself, for verily He dwells in this power; and the spirit gives birth with the Father to the same only-begotten Son, and to itself as the self-same Son, and is itself the self-same Son in this light, and is the Truth. If you could know with my heart, you would understand, for it is true, and Truth itself declares it.³⁰

³⁰ DW: 1, 39,1-41,7 (Pr. 2): Ich hân underwîlen gesprochen, ez sî ein kraft in dem geiste, diu sî aleine vrî. Underwîlen hân ich gesprochen, ez sî ein huote des geistes; underwîlen hân ich gesprochen, ez sî ein lieht des geistes; underwîlen hân ich gesprochen, ez sî ein vûnkeln. Ich spriche aber nû: ez enist weder diz noch daz; nochdenne ist ez ein waz, daz ist hœher boben diz und daz dan der himel ob der erde. Dar umbe nenne ich ez nû in einer edelerr wîse dan ich ez ie genante, und ez lougent der edelkeit und der wîse und ist dar enboben. Ez ist von allen namen vrî und von allen

Eckhart distinguishes between God as he has been in himself throughout eternity and the creative, transforming dynamics of God manifested in time and space. God, immutable in himself,³¹ is simultaneously – being the source – the dynamic element of the reality created in time and space. The earlier part of the sermon deals primarily with this divine dynamics that operates as a transforming power in the soul. In the concluding part he concentrates on the essence of this power, which, beyond its transforming dynamics, withdraws from the reality of existence. In other words, God is the reality of encounter and as such is always beyond creaturely reality. Eckhart relates this to the image of the citadel or citadel town (*bürgelîn*), to which Jesus ascends in the Lucan verse under discussion. There is a place in the soul where we are directly touched by God. That point is the unfathomable centre of the soul where God is born as a power in the soul. Other images used to convey this are ‘guardian of the spirit’ (*ein huote des geistes*), ‘light of the spirit’ (*ein lichte des geistes*) and ‘little spark’ (*vüinkelîn*). These images all express the point where humans touch God. At the same time we have to let go of the images, because this point of contact is beyond everything, hence cannot be objectified into something that can be grasped or apprehended by the tools of human logic. Here Eckhart speaks of something that is ‘neither this nor that’ (*weder diz noch daz*). The citadel of the soul, being the point of encounter with God’s immediate reality, is exalted above the reality of existence. To stress that this distinction is qualitative he uses the image of heaven and earth. Just as we cannot reach the heavens by climbing a mountain, so the distinction between the mediated reality of existence and God’s immediate reality is qualitative. The same applies to terms like ‘noble’ and ‘wise’, which, whilst seeking to convey the qualitative difference, fail to say anything positive about this reality that, in its immediacy,

formen blöz, ledic und vrî zemâle, als got ledic und vrî ist in im selber. Ez ist sô gar ein und einvaltic, als got ein und einvaltic ist, daz man mit dekeiner wise dar zuo geluogen mac. Diu selbe kraft, dar abe ich gesprochen hân, dâ got inne ist blüejende und grüejende mit aller sîner gotheit und der geist in gote, in dirre selber kraft ist der vater gebernde sînen eingebornen sun als gewæhrliche als in im selber, wan er wærlîche lebet in dirre kraft, und der geist gebirt mit dem vater den selben eingebornen sun und sich selber den selben sun und ist der selbe sun in disem liehte und ist diu wârheit. Møhet ir gemerken mit mînem herzen, ir verstüendet wol, waz ich sprichet, wan ez ist wâr und diu wârheit sprichet ez selbe.

³¹ It might be better to refer to a reality that transcends the dichotomy of mutability and immutability.

eludes the objectifying eye. Despite the impossibility of describing such an ever elusive, all surpassing perspective in human language, Eckhart persists in depicting it in words and images. But he warns the reader. Nothing that he writes here can be captured in objects. We are not to hang on to these images, as though they could render immediate reality tangible. They are rather meant to conduct us into a reality that, beyond images, is the abyss of God himself.

The field of tension between effability and ineffability makes Eckhart evolve a play on words that is designed to detach us from the stringent laws of our own logic. For it is that logic which imprisons us in the images of our discursiveness, cutting us off from the immediate action of God who is the real source of our knowledge. Thus Eckhart refers to the point of contact in the soul as absolutely 'exempt': it is 'free of all names and void of all forms, entirely exempt and free, as God is exempt and free in Himself'. In phrasing it thus he seems to ascribe exemption not only to the receptiveness of the soul, but also to God. We have dwelt at length on the need to be free of all images in order to receive God. As the reality of encounter, after all, God is always beyond everything we consider to be ours and can only be encountered by breaking down the images. But now God's very being is described as a naked void, free from every kind of conditioning. God has neither form nor mode and cannot be captured in any name. In that sense Eckhart calls God one and simple. Although God is the sustaining ground of everything in tempo-spatial reality, he is not reducible to 'something' in that reality and must therefore be regarded as a non-something. Yet despite this absolute divide between God and humans there is no question of distance, for the intimacy of the exposure makes us realise that God always lingers beyond our individuality.

But Eckhart does not stop there. He not only describes God as a reality beyond all images, but also indicates that God is a power that grips us from the centre of our souls and transforms us. Beyond our own images this inner power puts us in touch with God as the immediacy we live by. At the same time it makes us realise that God in himself is an abyss of reciprocity. In this context Eckhart uses the image of Father and Son, who are born in each other and, being creative power, are expressive of God's being. At the same time the various persons in the image are identical with each other and cannot be separated objectively. As a single reality God *is* Father, Son and the creative power generated by their encounter. Hence in order to grasp this image we have to let go of it. Eckhart does not want to speculate about the pre-existence of Father and Son, but seeks to

verbalise the dialogical reality within God himself.³² Thus God is not just the immediacy of our life, but in that immediacy also the never ending dynamics in which God eternally loses himself in himself as if in the eyes of the Other. Here Eckhart is up against the limits of language, because speech can never escape the images of our mediated existence. He therefore invokes a kind of knowledge that is not mediated by the senses but springs directly from the heart. This knowledge is participatory, for according to Eckhart we only get to know God in the immediacy of reciprocity. There, hidden from ourselves, we live by God, our innermost being, and come to know him as a boundless sea of reciprocity that permits no retroflexion to ourselves.

XIII. THE NOTHINGNESS OF GOD

Now pay attention! So one and simple is this citadel in the soul, elevated above all modes, of which I speak and which I mean, that that noble power I mentioned is not worthy even for an instant to cast a single glance into this citadel; nor is that other power I spoke of, in which God burns and glows with all His riches and all His joy, able to cast a single glance inside; so truly one and simple is this citadel, so mode- and power-transcending is this solitary One, that neither power nor mode can gaze into it, nor even God Himself! In very truth and as God lives! God Himself never looks in there for one instant, in so far as He exists in modes and in the properties of His persons. This should be well noted: this One Alone lacks all mode and property. And therefore, for God to see inside it would cost Him all His divine names and personal properties: all these He must leave outside, should He ever look in there. But only in so far as He is one and indivisible, without mode or properties, [can He do this]: in that sense He is neither Father, Son nor Holy Ghost, and yet is a Something which is neither this nor that.³³

³² Cf. REINER MANSTETTEN, Meister Eckharts Stellingnahme zu Predigt 2: *Intravit Iesus in quoddam castellum* im Kölner Häresieprozess. Ein Essay über WSahrheit und Nachvollzug, in *Meister Eckhart: Lebensstationen – Redesituationen*, Berlin 1997, 282-283.

³³ DW: 1, 42,1-44,2 (Pr. 2): Sehet, nû merket! Alsô ein und einvaltic ist diz bürgelîn boben alle wîse, dâ von ich iu sage und daz ich meine, in der sêle, daz disiu edele kraft, von der ich gesprochen hân, niht des wirdic ist, daz si iemer ze einem einigen mâle einen ougenblik geluoge in diz bürgelîn und ouch diu ander kraft, dâ ich von sprach, dâ got ist inne glimmende und brinnende mit aller sîner rîcheit und mit aller sîner wunne, diu engetar ouch niemer mê dar în geluogen; sô rehte ein und einvaltic ist diz bürgelîn, und sô enboben alle wîse und alle krefte ist diz einic ein, daz im niemer kraft

For the third time Eckhart calls on his readers to pay attention. As in the previous instances, he refers back to the biblical passage on which he is commenting (Lk 10:38). The first time, he emphasised that when encountering God human beings should be virginal, free and untrammelled by the images of their minds. Only then are they truly receptive to God. But that is not enough. Hence the second call was that we should become wives. Just as wives have the capacity to be fruitful, so human beings generally have the capacity to let God bear fruit within them. In the third and final call Eckhart, with reference to the image of the citadel, impresses on us that God is essentially one. Just as the citadel's walls enclose an empty space, so when it comes to the soul we must distinguish between the effect of God as a power within us and his essence, which is the eternal matrix of that power beyond time and space. This impalpable centre is the uncreated ground of God himself. No distinction can ever penetrate it and every mode falls away. Even the image of a triune God cannot exist in this oneness, inasmuch as it entails persons who are distinguished in terms of different 'properties'. Not that Eckhart denies the image of the trinity per se, but he wants to secure God as a reality of encounter. God can only be encountered as Other, so we have to leave behind even the image of a triune God in order to grasp the reality that it expresses. Here Eckhart repeats the term 'properties', this time in contradistinction to God's indivisible essence. To the extent that we still want to conceive of God, one way or another, in terms of his aspects, we reduce him to the reality of existing things and we cut off our minds from the immediate reality, the cause that constitutes the impalpable inside of our existence.³⁴

Eckhart goes further in that his image of the citadel also indicates that not only humans but also God himself cannot gaze into his indivisible essence. This daring proposition shows that we should

noch wîse zuo geluogen mac noch got selber. Mit guoter wârheit und alsô wærlîche, als daz got lebet! Got selber luoget dâ niemer in einen ougenblik und geluogete noch nie dar in, als verre als er sich habende ist nâch wîse und uf eigenschaft sîner persônen. Diz ist guot ze merkenne, wan diz einic ein ist sunder wîse und sunder eigenschaft. Und dar umbe: sol got iemer dar in geluogen, ez muoz in kosten alle sîne gôtliche namen und sîne persônliche eigenschaft; daz muoz er alzemâle hie vor lâzen, sol er iemer mê dar in geluogen. Sunder als er ist einvaltîc ein, âne alle wîse und eigenschaft: dâ enist er vater noch sun noch heiliger geist in disem sinne und ist doch ein waz, daz enist noch diz noch daz.

³⁴ REINER MANSTETTEN, Meister Eckharts Stellingnahme zu Predigt 2: *Intravit Iesus in quoddam castellum* im Kölner Häresieprozess. Ein Essay über WSahrheit und Nachvollzug, in *Meister Eckhart: Lebensstationen – Redesituationen*, Berlin 1997, 291.

distinguish between God who, as the cause of creaturely reality, is beyond all existing things in his oneness and his creative power that keeps everything in existence. Thus it is a matter not of powerlessness but of ontological impossibility. God cannot gaze into himself because any form of reflexivity irrevocably implies division, which would destroy God's intrinsic oneness. Thus the image of the citadel refers to the absolute gulf between that which is caused and the cause (mediated and immediate). The two must never be confused, because they represent the ontological principle that vouchsafes God as a reality of encounter. Returning to the image of the trinity, it means that, while Eckhart does not deny it, he is critical of any interpretation that detracts from the indivisibility of God's being. After all, as the cause of all that exists God is without modes and properties. Hence the trinity can only be understood in terms of the negation which secures his immediate reality. The fact that God, the cause, is not the same as that which is caused does not mean that he has withdrawn from the created world. God supports existence and thus constitutes the inside of our reality. In the foregoing quotation, then, Eckhart explicitly indicates that in his capacity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – hence in the various properties of his persons – God can be active in our lives. But when it comes to the reality that forms the ground of his activity, quite apart from all this, Eckhart stresses his oneness. In this oneness not even the divine persons can glance inwards, because there all distinctive attributes fall away. In this sense no name is appropriate for God – the immediacy of temporally and spatially created reality – and he is neither Father, Son nor Spirit, because as the cause of all that exists he can in no way be objectified into something we can grasp or take hold of.

Although Eckhart seems to be raising an abstract theological issue way above the heads of his unsophisticated public, he considers it a vital matter for our inner life. For whether it concerns God, ourselves, others or the world around us, as humans we always tend to imprison ourselves in the images of our own reality. In the process we exchange human reality for an absolute and become blind to God who, beyond our images, constitutes the other side of reality. As long as we remain attached to the attributes of something or someone, we remain trapped in a multiplicity of externals. Only a fully bared face can receive God as he is, without modes or properties. Hence in order to live by God, beyond themselves, humans must leave behind all objectifying images that they use in an attempt to incorporate reality into themselves. Again the image of the citadel into which God cannot possibly gaze refers to the absolute boundary between the mediated

and the immediate. Just as God in his oneness does not permit any retroreflection into himself lest he cease to be God, so humans in the immediacy of union cannot tolerate any image, because any form of reflexivity such as distance – distinction – destroys the immediacy of reciprocity.

XIV. LIVING BY THE ONENESS OF GOD'S COUNTENANCE

See, as He is thus one and simple, so He can enter that One that I here call the citadel of the soul, but in no other mode can He get in: only thus does He enter and dwell therein. In *this* part the soul is the same as God and not otherwise. What I tell you is true: I call the Truth as a witness and offer my soul as pledge.³⁵

In his spiritual anthropology Eckhart distinguishes between God who makes himself felt as activity or power in human beings and the place where this power is born in them. His image of the citadel (*bürgelîn*) represents this point of contact with God. In the soul is a place where God is utterly one. Neither humans nor God can gaze into it, because in its immediacy it withdraws itself from the world of existing things. Although Eckhart is in fact saying that as a reality of encounter this point of contact with God remains obscure to us and we can perceive him only in his effects, his activity, he considers it vitally important that we should be aware of the distinction. However important it is to allow God to transform us on our spiritual journey, his activity does not coincide with his indivisible essence. Hence Eckhart wants to extricate us from this fixation as well so that, freed from it, we will realise that our entire being lives by an immediacy which, qua immediacy, constitutes the undivided inside of our existence. To Eckhart this means that the mediated reality of creaturely existence is the outside of a life that in its totality refers to this immediate reality.³⁶ In themselves humans are Nothing and their entire beings are suspended in God's being. It is at this point of our

³⁵ DW: 1, 44,3-44,7 (Pr. 2): Sehet, alsus als er ein ist und einvaltic, alsô kumet er in daz ein, daz ich dâ heize ein bürgelîn in der sêle, und anders kumet er enkeine wîse dar in; sunder alsô kumet er dar in und ist dâ inne. Mit dem teile ist diu sêle gote glîch und anders niht. Daz ich iu geseit hân, daz ist wâr; des setze ich iu die wârheit ze einem geziugen und mîne sêle einem pfande.

³⁶ Cf. ERIK A. PANZIG, *Gelâzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Leipzig 2005, 218.

Nothingness – what Eckhart calls the citadel of our soul – that we are like God.

Eckhart concludes his sermon with the customary blessing:

That we may be such a citadel to which Jesus may ascend and be received to abide eternally in us in such wise as I have said, may God help us to this! Amen.³⁷

True to the verse that he is commenting on, Eckhart leaves the initiative to Jesus. After all, it is he who ascends to the citadel (*bürgelîn*), and thus to the centre of the soul. Eckhart explicitly points out that in the process humans are at the receiving end, so the entire theme of his sermon must be viewed in that light. To Eckhart it is, above all, an ontological reality that is concomitant with our creaturely existence, for as human beings we are purely receptive and in everything we live directly by the Other. And it is this ontological reality that has to be brought to our consciousness. Thus the sermon is mystagogic in character.³⁸ The images of the virgin, the wife and the citadel of the soul all seek to make us realise that our creaturely reality is a receiving reality that does not exist in itself. This tension opens up space for life as a dialogic reality, for what applies at the physical, material level epitomises life as a whole. The spiritual way is depicted as a process in which we let the Other expose ever deeper levels of ourselves in light of the truth. From the human perspective this transformation is an annihilation that detaches us from our clinging to everything that God is not. All this Eckhart indicates by means of the term ‘attachment’ in the sense of property (*eigenschaft*). Property attaches us to someone or something when we seek to make it a means to our own ends and thus cut it off from its divine roots. In the same way property attaches us to God when the relationship is instrumental. As long as we still want something from God, and thus evade the confrontation with the reality that he is, we are fleeing from his unfathomable countenance that looks at us in everything. Hence the term ‘property’ should be seen as a distinction that makes us aware at ever deepening levels of the images of our own projections. Ultimately this process of exposure brings us to the naked space of God himself in which we realise, beyond our images, that God is the other side of

³⁷ DW: 1, 45,1-45,3 (Pr. 2): Daz wir alsus sîn ein bürgelîn, in dem Jêsus ûfginge und werde empfangen und êwiclîche in uns blîbe in der wîse, als ich gesprochen hân, des helfe und got. Âmen.

³⁸ Cf. Reiner Manstetten, *ibid.* 293

our mediate existence. In this regard Eckhart speaks of the citadel of the soul. Inside us there is a 'place' where God grasps us directly. In its indivisible oneness this place is devoid of all images.³⁹ As a place of encounter it is the birthplace of what Eckhart calls divine power. This immediacy remains hidden from objectifying eyes – in other texts Eckhart calls it 'Nothingness'.⁴⁰ We participate in that Nothingness of immediacy when, stripped of ourselves and our own images, we become pure receptivity (*juncvrouwe*) and no longer make any distinction between ourselves as we are and God, who in his Nothingness is the birthplace of our being. Thus Eckhart's image of the citadel stresses the dialogical nature of human beings that vanished in the indivisible countenance of the Other, comes to life in the Other. Here we get to know God not as an extrinsic object but as the hidden inside of the dynamics by which we live directly.

³⁹ Cf. ERIK A. PANZIG, *Gelâzenheit und abegescheidenheit, Eine Einführung in das theologische Denken des Meister Eckhart*, Leipzig 2005, 264.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 172.

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JESUS E A TRADIÇÃO SAPIENCIAL

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Quando dizemos “Tradição Sapiencial”, alguns pensam nos livros que na Septuaginta e na Vulgata receberam o nome de “Livros Sapienciais”. Na Bíblia Hebraica a nomenclatura é outra. Uma rígida separação entre livros históricos, sapienciais e proféticos pode enganar. No concreto da história tudo existe misturado.

Uma outra dificuldade na identificação da “Tradição Sapiencial” vem da história da exegese. O livro de G. von Rad, “*A História da Salvação*” marcou época na metade do século passado. Sua síntese genial focalizava os livros históricos e proféticos, mas não integrou os livros ditos *Sapienciais*. Ele deve ter percebido a omissão, pois no fim de sua vida escreveu o livro “*Sabedoria em Israel*”. Mesmo assim, faltou a síntese. Sabedoria e Profecia, continuaram bastante separadas na análise que fazíamos da história.

Nos últimos anos a exegese está fazendo grande progresso no estudo da literatura sapiencial, e a análise do uso da tradição sapiencial no NT está ajudando a compreender bem melhor a cristologia dos primeiros cristãos.

Nossa reflexão sobre “Jesus e a Tradição Sapiencial” terá três partes e um pequeno suplemento. A 1ª parte tenta definir o que entendemos por “Tradição Sapiencial”. A 2ª parte descreve a evolução da Tradição Sapiencial até à chegada do Novo Testamento e a sua influência na prática de Jesus. A 3ª parte procura oferecer um resumo de como Jesus se situava dentro da Tradição Sapiencial. O suplemento traz um resumo de como os primeiros cristãos identificaram Jesus como a sabedoria personificada de Deus.¹

¹ Levou muito tempo para fazer este estudo sobre Jesus e a Tradição Sapiencial. Li vários livros e artigos e fui lembrando de outros que já tinha lido no passado. Não lembro de todos os títulos. A síntese foi se fazendo aos poucos. Ao longo do artigo cito os livros da Bíblia. Os livros que mais me ajudaram foram os de Milton Schwantes e de Gilberto Gorgulho e Ana Fora Anderson.

I. O QUE ENTENDEMOS POR TRADIÇÃO SAPIENCIAL

A origem da sabedoria

“A origem da sabedoria se perde no tempo. Ela é como a fonte antiga: sua água é sempre nova. É como o espelho: nele todos olham e se reconhecem. Antes de Abraão ser chamado, já existia a sabedoria, pois já existiam a luta em defesa da vida, a cultura popular, os costumes, a lenta descoberta das leis da natureza e dos valores da vida, os provérbios”².

Ao longo da história, a tradição sapiencial foi nascendo da luta pela sobrevivência e da atenta observação da vida nos seus vários setores: (1) na família em casa; (2) no trabalho do **campo** e na natureza; (3) na **praça** da cidade junto do portão, onde ficava o tribunal da justiça e onde se fazia a feira; (4) na sociedade com seu governo e suas organizações, cujo centro era o **palácio** do rei; (5) na religião com suas práticas e ritos que permeavam a vida e convergiam para o **Templo**. É nestes ambientes que estavam os focos geradores, onde se concentrava o esforço da sabedoria:

1. **Casa:** família, clã, tribo, corpo, saúde, educação, amor, ...
2. **Campo:** trabalho, plantio, animais, estações, tempo, natureza, ...
3. **Portão:** justiça, comércio, cidade, praça, feira, roda, processo, ...
4. **Palácio:** governo, organização, côrte, exército, conflitos, ...
5. **Templo:** religião, culto, Deus, oração, romaria, promessas, ...

Nestes setores da vida nasciam as gotas dos provérbios como expressão das descobertas feitas na multiforme luta pela sobrevivência, a saber: na produção de alimentos, na descoberta dos remédios, no confronto constante com a natureza, na educação dos filhos, na transmissão dos valores, na convivência social, na compra e venda dos produtos, na luta pela justiça contra a exploração injusta, no governo do povo, na prática da religião. Aos poucos, os provérbios foram evoluindo e se juntando para formar o grande rio da sabedoria que percorre a Bíblia e a vida, até hoje.

Resumindo, podemos dizer que a sabedoria, na sua origem, nasce da preocupação básica de *todo ser humano* com a preservação e defesa da vida. Ela apresenta as seguintes características:

- ajuda o povo a sobreviver e não se deixar derrubar pelos problemas.

² Palavra-Vida. CRB, “*Sabedoria e Poesia do Povo de Deus*”, Projeto Palavra-Vida, 4º volume, Publicações CRB, 1993, p. 24.

- faz conhecer a natureza e suas leis, para que sirvam à vida.
- capacita para a vida: não cria dependência, mas faz descobrir.
- organiza a vida: ato criador, que defende contra o caos ameaçador.
- é anônima: reflete a experiência do grupo; é a voz do povo.
- é realista: fruto do bom senso e do respeito ao próprio povo.
- é crítica: ensina a desconfiar e a ter consciência certa.
- é ecumênica: internacional e inter-confessional na sua origem.
- é conservadora: conserva o que é bom para a vida do povo.

Nestas características transparece uma *ambivalência* que marca a natureza da Sabedoria desde a sua raiz: *de um lado*, existe nela o desejo de conhecer as coisas por experiência, de nomeá-las, de organizá-las e de controlá-las em defesa da vida; *de outro lado*, existe nela o desejo de resistir a tudo que possa ameaçar a vida, desejo de autonomia e de liberdade de quem não se deixa dominar nem quer ser dominado. É um único e mesmo desejo com estes dois aspectos aparentemente contraditórios entre si, que geram uma tensão permanente no interior da própria sabedoria.

Esta ambivalência interna marca a evolução da tradição sapiencial ao longo da história do povo de Deus, tanto nas suas formas de *expressão literária* como nas suas formas de *atuação histórica*. Ela será uma chave importante para compreendermos e avaliarmos “*O Relacionamento entre Jesus e a Tradição Sapiencial*”, que é o tema que nos foi proposto.

A evolução da sabedoria nas suas formas de expressão literária

Na origem está o provérbio que reflete o ambiente da *Casa* e da *Tribo*. Ao longo da história, a Sabedoria foi crescendo e evoluindo, ultrapassando de várias maneiras a sua modesta origem caseira e tribal:

1. Ultrapassa o âmbito da formulação do simples **provérbio** e chega a produzir tratados e longas reflexões. como o livro de Jó, Qohelet e Sabedoria.
2. Ultrapassa o âmbito da **família** e do **clã** e entra no âmbito da nação e do Estado. A palavra **reim** tem o duplo sentido de (1) ser rei e (2) aconselhar, orientar. Surge uma identificação da sabedoria com a Monarquia. O Rei Salomão aparece como o grande sábio, autor de milhares de provérbios, capaz de dar nome a todas as coisas (2Rs 3,12; 5,9-13). A ele se atribuem livros sapienciais que foram escritos mais de 500 anos depois da morte dele. O relacionamento das pessoas com o rei é uma

preocupação constante nos Provérbios (Prov 25-29) e no livro da Sabedoria (Sb 6,1-18).

3. Ultrapassa o âmbito da **nação** e da **raça** e se preocupa com os problemas que afligem a vida humana como tal, independentemente de nação, raça, geografia ou religião. Por exemplo, o livro de Jó. O livro dos Provérbios traz sentenças dos sábios do Egito (Prv 22,17 a 24,22; 31,1-9).
4. Ultrapassa o âmbito da **prática** e produz uma teoria sobre si mesma, como transparece no livro dos Provérbios (Prov 8,12-21), no Eclesiástico (Eclo 24,1-8) e no livro da Sabedoria (7,21-8,1).
5. Ultrapassa o **presente** e investiga o passado como o lugar no qual se manifesta a sabedoria divina. Exemplo disso são o Eclesiástico (Eclo 44,1 a 50,29), o livro da Sabedoria (Sb 10,1 a 19,22).
6. Ultrapassa o **criado** e chega a ser uma irradiação do próprio Criador, anterior à criação, conselheira de Deus na obra da criação (Prov 8,22-31; Eclo 24,9-17).
7. No ponto final desta evolução, a Sabedoria aparece identificada como Mulher, símbolo da Sabedoria Divina, que distribui os seus dons e convida a todos para saborear os seus frutos (Prov 31,10-31; 8,32-36; 9,1-6).

Resumindo a tradição sapiencial sobre a Sabedoria

Ao longo dos séculos, a reflexão dos sábios foi investigando não só o presente mas também a história do povo no passado e a própria criação como lugares da manifestação da Sabedoria (Eclo 44,1 a 50,29; Sb 10,1 a 19,22). Foi produzindo uma teoria sobre si mesma (Prov 8,12-21; 8,30-36; Eclo 24,1-8; Sb 7,21-8,1) e chegou a descobrir e a experimentar Deus como origem e destino da sabedoria. Em consequência, criação, vida e história, tudo tornou-se o palco da manifestação da sabedoria divina.

A Sabedoria chegou a ser vista como uma irradiação do próprio Criador, anterior à criação, conselheira de Deus na obra da criação (Prov 8,22-31; Eclo 24,9-17). Tornou-se sinônimo do Espírito Divino que enche o universo (Sb 1,6-7; 8,1). Ela esteve presente como mestra de obras na criação do universo (Prov 8,30) e na história da salvação (Eclo 44 a 50). A lei de Deus é vista pelos sábios como a manifestação máxima da sabedoria (Sab). É através da observância fiel da lei de Deus que o ser humano se apropria da Sabedoria.

No fase final desta longa evolução, desde o provérbio até a quase divinização da sabedoria preexistente, a Sabedoria aparece

identificada como Mulher, símbolo da Sabedoria Divina, que distribui os seus dons e convida a todos para saborear dos seus frutos (Prov 31,10-31; 8,32-36; 9,1-6). O livro dos Provérbios traz o elogio da mulher sábia que refaz e organiza a casa e promove a todos que vivem dentro da casa (Prov 31,10-29). Apresentada como Mulher, ela convida a todos a vir aprender com ela a sabedoria e a carregar o jugo da sabedoria que traz vida (Prov 8,1-11; 9,1-6; Eclo 51,25). Casa, Mulher e Sabedoria, as três pilastras que sustentam a convivência humana. O mesmo convite encontramos nos livros proféticos (Is 55,1-3).

A ambivalência da sabedoria e da profecia

- A ambivalência que afeta a sabedoria

Ao longo desta lenta evolução, a ambivalência escondida na semente foi aparecendo no fruto. O resultado final, registrado nos livros da Bíblia, mostra uma sabedoria que produz gente conservadora e gente aberta; gente do sistema e gente subversiva; gente rígida, legalista, doutor da lei e gente espontânea, rebelde, criativa e criadora. Produz Jó e os amigos de Jó. Não se trata tanto de grupos ou partidos bem distintos, separados uns dos outros, mas mais de tendências que, por vezes, existem misturadas até nas próprias pessoas e nos grupos.

De um lado, a sabedoria aparece ligada ao rei que aconselha, coordena, governa, ataca e defende. Ela encontra sua expressão nas escolas dos sábios, que colecionam, organizam e sistematizam a sabedoria do povo (Prov 25,1; 1Rs 5,9-13; Sab 7,15-21). São eles que fizeram a redação final da Torá. O *Sábio* se torna *Doutor da lei*, *conservador* dos valores do passado, precursor dos escribas e fariseus. Em alguns deles, ser sábio vira status e classe separada do povo, que chama o povo de ignorante (Jo 7,49).

Do outro lado, a sabedoria aparece como um impulso criativo que, sem parar, surge de dentro do povo para enfrentar os problemas da sobrevivência; cria sempre novas formas de luta em defesa da vida, criticando-se a si mesma e às suas formas de expressão já superadas pela própria vida; produz alargamento do horizonte e aprofunda os problemas humanos; atinge a raiz do sistema dominante e o critica radicalmente. O *Sábio* se torna *Profeta*, sem o rótulo da profecia. Jesus é um deles. Ele agradece a Deus por Ele estar revelando sua sabedoria aos pequenos e escondê-la aos “sábios e entendidos” (Mt 11,25-26).

- A ambivalência que afeta a profecia

Uma ambivalência semelhante afeta a profecia. Havia profetas que não assumiam sua identidade como profeta e diziam: “Eu não sou profeta!” (Am 7,14; Zc 13,5), ou que criticavam os profetas, culpando-os pelo desastre nacional da destruição de Jerusalém (Jr 23,33-40; Lam 2,14; Ez 13,1-13.16; Zc 13,2-6). Havia profetas que apoiavam a monarquia (2Sm 7,4-16; 2Cr 18,12; Jr 28,1-4) e outros que a criticavam (1Rs 18,16-18; 21,17-24). Havia profetas que apoiavam o culto e estimulavam a reconstrução do templo (Ag 1,2-11), e outros que criticavam o Templo, condenavam o culto e anunciavam a sua destruição (Jr 7,1-15; Am 5,21-25; Is 1,10-15).

Desde o início da monarquia (1000 aC), até o fim do exílio da Babilônia (587-538), os profetas faziam parte da história de Israel. Eles eram a consciência falante do povo de Deus. Depois do exílio, se dizia: “Não existem mais profetas” (Sl 74,9; cf Dn 3,38). Chegaram a dividir a história em dois períodos: o período em que havia profetas, e o período “em que já não havia mais profetas” (1Mc 9,27). Falava-se dos *antigos profetas* (Zac 1,4; 7,7). Coisa do passado! Tinham até feito uma lista que já parecia completa: *doze profetas* (Eclo 49,10), e passaram a usar a palavra *profetizar* para os tocadores de instrumentos musicais nas celebrações litúrgicas (1Crôn 25,1.3).

Durante os 400 anos do período dos reis, eles tiveram seus profetas. Durante mais ou menos 500 anos, desde o exílio até João Batista, ficaram quase sem profetas (1Mc 9,27) e viviam à espera do profeta anunciado por Moisés (Dt 18,15-18), que lhes haveria de explicar as coisas (cf. 1Mc 4,46; 14,41). Ao menos, esta era a impressão do povo. Na realidade, o espírito profético continuava bem ativo no meio do povo, sem o rótulo de profecia, mas sob outras formas e aparências.

- A causa da ambivalência da *Profecia* como da *Sabedoria*

Três fatores ligados entre si contribuíram para esta dupla ambivalência, tanto da sabedoria como da profecia: (1) a política desastrosa dos reis, (2) a mudança radical da conjuntura nacional e internacional, e (3) a busca em direções opostas para reconstruir em novas bases a identidade como povo de Deus.

1. A política desastrosa dos reis, tanto de Israel como de Judá, apoiada e orientada por profetas, levou à destruição dos dois reinos. O cativo na Babilônia foi o colapso total de tudo que tinha sido a história oficial desde os tempos de Davi. Os sinais tradicionais da presença de Deus se desintegraram: Templo, Monarquia, Posse da terra.

Esta experiência trágica criou uma resistência contra a profecia, como se percebe em vários textos de Jeremias (Jr 23,9-40; 29,8-9) e Zacarias (Zac 1,4; 7,7). Alguns chegaram a pensar: “já não há mais profetas” (Sl 74,9). No livro dos Macabeus se diz: “Vamos esperar até que apareça algum profeta para nos orientar” (cf. 1Mc 4,46 14,41).

2. Os impérios sucessivos (babilônico, persa, helenista) significaram uma mudança radical na conjuntura nacional e internacional. Eles destruíram o sistema sócio-político das pequenas monarquias do Médio Oriente. Todos ficaram sob o domínio do poder estrangeiro. Já não eram Estado nem Nação, mas apenas comunidades étnicas, sem independência política, sem exército, sem rei, dispersas num império multi-cultural e multi-racial. Nesta situação, era impossível imaginar alguém das aldeias da Palestina atuar como profeta ou profetisa no *estilo antigo* de Amós, Miquéias ou Hulda (2Rs 22,14-20). Um camponês da Palestina já não teria nenhuma possibilidade de cobrar a observância da Lei de Deus, seja do imperador da Babilônia ou da Pérsia, seja dos governantes helenistas ou romanos. O império tinha outros deuses e outras leis! Já não era possível a profecia no estilo tradicional. Por isso, muitos achavam: “Já não existem mais profetas!” (Sl 74,9)

3. A desintegração das instituições (templo, monarquia e posse da terra) levou a uma busca sem precedentes para reconstruir em novas bases a identidade como povo de Deus. Apareceram quatro tendências misturadas entre si, mais ou menos contemporâneas:

- a) A maioria silenciosa dos que adotavam os deuses do império. É a ausência da busca ou a busca fora da Tradição do povo. O que mais transparece nos escritos daquela época é a denúncia do perigo dos ídolos (Is 44,9-20; Bar 6,1-72; Sl 115,4-8).
- b) O grupo de Zorobabel e Josué. Eles queriam restaurar o passado. Consideravam a época dos Reis como o modelo a ser imitado. Foram eles que logo voltaram para a Palestina, quando Ciro permitiu o retorno (Esd 2,2; 3,2).
- c) Os discípulos e as discípulas de Isaías. Eles procuravam animar o povo exilado na fé de que Javé, o Deus do povo, continuava presente no meio deles, lá mesmo no cativo (cf. Is 40,6-11.27-31; 41,8-14; 43,1-5; etc). E eles se perguntavam: “O que será que Deus nos quer ensinar por meio desta tragédia?” Eles reliam o passado em busca de uma luz que os ajudasse a redescobrir a presença de Deus naquela terrível ausência. Muitos episódios narrados nos livros ditos históricos têm aqui a sua origem.

- d) Depois do cativeiro, lá mesmo na Babilônia, apareceu e cresceu o grupo de Neemias e Esdras, no qual predominavam os escribas e as pessoas de origem sacerdotal. Eles achavam que deviam aceitar o jugo do rei estrangeiro, colaborar com ele (Br 2,21.24; Jr 27,6-8.12.17; 42,10-11) e, ao mesmo tempo, manter a consciência de povo de Deus, como povo distinto, separado dos outros povos. Por isso insistiam na observância da lei de Deus (Esd 7,26; Ne 8,1-6; 10,29-30) e na pureza da raça (Esd 9,1-2). Eles não insistiam no retorno de todos para a Palestina, mas sim na reconstrução do Templo e da cidade de Jerusalém como símbolo universal para unir os judeus dispersos (Ne 2,1-8).

Depois do cativeiro, o grupo da maioria silenciosa diluiu-se no império. O da independência política e do retorno ao passado desapareceu. Provavelmente, foi eliminado pelo império ou foi absorvido pelo grupo de Esdras e Neemias (cf Ne 7,6-7). A experiência dos discípulos e discípulas de Isaías continuou viva, animando o povo, mas como força subterrânea. Era um movimento de base, que não chegou a ter um reconhecimento oficial. O projeto do grupo de Neemias e Esdras tornou-se a proposta oficial hegemônica. Muitos deles tinham adquirido bons empregos e posições vantajosas na nova pátria, como transparece nas entrelinhas de vários escritos daquele tempo (Ne 2,1-9; Esd 7,11-26; Tb 1,12; Es 2,16; 6,10-11; Dn 3,97).

É neste período *sem reis e sem profetas*, que a *profecia* encontra novas formas de expressão. E é no bojo destas novas expressões da profecia *sem o rótulo da profecia*, que cresce e se desenvolve a Tradição Sapiencial. A partir do cativeiro, as duas realidades, profecia e sabedoria, crescem juntas, misturadas entre si.

Neste longo período pos-exílico, o enfoque básico da Sabedoria voltou a ser o ambiente caseiro e tribal, tendo no seu centro a presença e a atuação da mulher: símbolo da sabedoria. Fiorenza diz: “A função do rei como mensageiro da vontade de Deus, executor da justiça divina, representante do domínio universal de Deus, conselheiro obrigatório e garantia da ordem cósmica, agora será executada pela Divina Sabedoria representada como mulher”³.

A partir da época de Esdras, 398 aC até 165 aC, época dos Macabeus, durante mais de 200 anos, não temos mais nenhuma informação histórica direta. O que temos deste longo período são escritos, cuja

³ Fiorenza página 162.

data exata não conhecemos, mas que nos deixam entrever o que estava sendo vivido pelo povo na base, por exemplo: Jó, Qohelet, Cântico, Rute, e outros. Eles ajudam a perceber como se desenvolveu a Tradição Sapiencial nas suas formas históricas de atuação.

II. A EVOLUÇÃO DA TRADIÇÃO SAPIENCIAL NAS SUAS FORMAS HISTÓRICAS DE ATUAÇÃO, E A SUA INFLUÊNCIA NA PRÁTICA DE JESUS

Como dissemos, na raiz da Sabedoria existe uma ambivalência: *de um lado*, o desejo de dar nome às coisas, de controlar e organizar os acontecimentos; *de outro lado*, o desejo de liberdade que resiste a tudo que amarra e enquadra. Esta ambivalência no interior da própria sabedoria foi se manifestando em formas bem concretas ao longo da história, que vamos analisar de perto.

O desejo de dar nome e de controlar

O desejo de dar nome, de organizar e de controlar as coisas para não perder o que já foi conquistado predominou na linha de Neemias e Esdras e obteve a hegemonia. Em 445, isto é, quase 100 anos depois do fim do cativeiro, Neemias, ministro do rei da Pérsia, consegue a licença temporária para, em nome do rei, ir a Jerusalém, reorganizar o povo ao redor do Templo e reconstruir as muralhas da cidade (Ne 2,4-9; 3,38). Doze anos depois, ele volta para a Pérsia e retoma o seu emprego em Suza, capital do império (Ne 2,6; 13,6). Em 398, também com o apoio do rei da Pérsia, o *escriba* Esdras da tribo sacerdotal (Esd 7,1-5) dá continuidade à obra de Neemias (Esd 5,1 a 6,22). Ele consegue o privilégio para o povo judeu poder viver segundo a Lei de seu Deus sem atender às exigências da religião dos ídolos. O rei Artaxerxes chegou a dizer a Esdras: “Quem não obedecer **à lei do seu Deus que é a lei do rei**, será castigado rigorosamente com morte ou exílio, multa ou prisão” (Esd 7,26). A partir de Neemias e Esdras, *Altar e Trono* se uniram de novo, só que agora já não é mais o rei mas sim a *observância da Lei* que se tornou o instrumento para manter a união. Mas a lei de quem: de Deus ou do Rei?

A proposta de Neemias e Esdras carregava em seu bojo uma contradição, expressa na frase “*a lei do seu Deus é a lei do rei*” (Esd 7,26). Uns identificavam a obediência a Deus com a observância da lei do Rei. Outros faziam o contrário. Identificavam a obediência ao Rei com a observância da lei de Deus. De um lado, a fidelidade à *lei do rei* trazia consigo abertura e barganha frente ao poder político e econômico.

De outro lado, a fidelidade à *lei de Deus* trazia consigo isolamento e separação do povo de Deus frente às outras religiões e culturas. Desta ambigüidade inicial nasceram dois partidos que se tornaram inimigos irreconciliáveis, mas ambos irmãos, filhos da mesma contradição original, os dois lutando pelo controle e pelo poder sobre o povo.

Os que insistiam na **observância da lei do Rei** conseguiram a liderança política e econômica e, sem nenhuma sensibilidade para com a religiosidade do povo, impunham aos outros tudo que vinha do império, inclusive a cultura grega e as expressões do culto imperial. Isto chegou ao auge na época dos Macabeus com a imposição de jogos olímpicos, ginásio, uniformes, associações, construção das cidades, comércio, dinheiro e a compra da função sacerdotal (2Mac 4,12-14; 1Mac 1,11-15; 2Mac 4,23-24). Eles deram origem aos saduceus e à elite sacerdotal. Alguns deles eram escribas, doutores da lei. Foram eles que, pela sua política absurda, provocaram a revolta dos Macabeus e, quase 200 anos depois, se reuniram para acabar com Jesus e com tantos outros movimentos de base (Jo 11,47-53; cf. At 5,34-37).

Os que insistiam na **observância da lei de Deus**. Eles conseguiram a liderança religiosa e cultural e tinham grande influência sobre a consciência do povo. Eles deram origem aos fariseus e a outros movimentos de resistência como os zelotes e os essênios. Entre eles também havia escribas e doutores da lei. Para defender o povo contra a agressão da elite econômica e política e ajudá-lo a manter sua identidade como povo eleito de Deus, eles se fecharam na pureza da raça e na observância das leis, o que levou a um isolamento fundamentalista entre as nações, à expulsão das mulheres estrangeiras (Esd 10,1-44) e aos massacres realizados por Judas Macabeu (2Mac 12,15-16.19.23.26.28).

Estes dois grupos nascidos da proposta de Neemias e Esdras, tanto os saduceus e a elite sacerdotal, como os fariseus, os zelotes e os essênios, ambos representam aquele aspecto da tradição sapiencial que busca o controle e o poder, cada um a seu modo. A luta entre os dois era tanta no começo dos anos 60 antes de Cristo, que chamaram os romanos para estabelecer a paz. O outro lado, isto é, o desejo de resistir a tudo que amarra e enquadra, continuou vivo em outras formas históricas de atuação na linha profético-sapiencial.

Na época de Jesus continuava a mesma ambivalência que marca a Sabedoria desde a sua origem: o lado conservador de dar nome, de controlar e de dominar, e o lado criativo de resistir para não ser dominado e enquadrado. A pergunta central é esta: como Jesus se insere na Tradição Sapiencial do seu povo? Com qual dos grupos, tendências ou movimentos ele se identifica?

A resistência profético-sapiencial que se prolonga na prática de Jesus

1. O novo ponto de partida: o retorno à *Casa* e a nova imagem de Deus (Isaías 40-66)

A desintegração dos valores que haviam sustentado o povo na época da monarquia, criou uma conjuntura totalmente nova, diferente. No cativeiro lá na Babilônia, o único espaço de uma certa autonomia e liberdade que ainda sobrava para o povo era o espaço familiar: o pai, a mãe, o marido, a esposa, um irmão ou irmã, o mundo pequeno da família, a “casa”. Todo o resto que antes fazia parte da vida já não existia: a posse da terra, o templo, as peregrinações, o culto, o sacrifício, o sacerdócio, a monarquia, o rei. Nada disso tinha sobrado. O ambiente caseiro, a **Casa**, e a necessidade de resistir e de vencer na vida ocupavam, novamente, um lugar central, como na época dos Juizes, anterior à monarquia. Foi uma retomada mais ou menos consciente dos valores do tempo dos Juizes, anterior à monarquia. Tanto assim que Godolias recomeçou a reorganização do povo em Masfa (Jer 40,6-8;12), onde tinha vivido Samuel, o último Juiz (1Sam 7,5-7.16; 10,17). Jerusalém, a antiga capital da monarquia, deixou de existir para eles.

Foi neste espaço reduzido e enfraquecido da família, da comunidade, da “*casa*”, que renasce o esforço da Tradição Sapiencial, tendo como raiz uma nova experiência de Deus e da vida. A imagem de Deus, transmitida pelos discípulos e discípulas de Isaías, reflete este ambiente familiar da **Casa**. Deus é apresentado como **Pai** (Is 63,16; 64,7), como **Mãe** (Is 46,3; 49,15-16; 66,12-13), como **Marido** (Is 54,4-5; 62,5), como parente próximo (*goêl* ou **irmão mais velho**) (Is 41,14; 43,1). Javé, o Deus que antes estava ligado ao Templo, ao culto oficial, ao sacerdócio, ao clero, à Monarquia, agora está perto deles, “em casa”; casa pequena, quebrada e, humanamente falando, sem futuro, mas **Casa**, e não *Templo*. Não insistiram nas imagens religiosas tradicionais, mas sim usaram imagens novas tiradas da vida familiar e comunitária. Eles *humanizaram a imagem de Deus e sacralizaram a vida, a família, a pequena comunidade, como o espaço do reencontro com Deus*. Aqui está a raiz que vai animar a resistência profético-sapiencial. Profecia e Sabedoria se confundem nos escritos da resistência popular deste período.

Ao longo destes séculos, sobretudo depois da vinda de Esdras em 398, a resistência iniciada pelos discípulos e discípulas de Isaías, tornou-se um movimento quase subterrâneo que manifestava sua presença nas novelas populares (Rute, Ester, Judite, Jonas), na literatura dos sábios (Jó, Eclesiastes e trechos de Provérbios, Eclesiástico e Sabe-

doria), nas celebrações e romarias (muitos Salmos), no movimento apocalíptico (Daniel), na arte popular (Cântico dos Cânticos).

Vejamos de perto algumas características desta resistência profético-sapiencial que vai ecoar pelos quatro séculos até à chegada do Novo Testamento e vai encontrar o seu prolongamento na atuação de Jesus! Como nos discípulos de Isaías, também em Jesus, a raiz da sua atuação é a nova experiência de Deus como Pai/Mãe. Este é o novo ponto de partida e o critério que o leva a reler tudo, a assumir atitudes novas e a criticar formas fossilizadas e alienadas da religião do seu povo.

2. A reconstrução do relacionamento humano na convivência diária (Qohelet)

A solução proposta por Esdras e Neemias, em vez de reconstruir a convivência humana, contribuía para miná-la ainda mais, tanto por parte da elite sacerdotal que promovia a abertura para o império, como por parte dos escribas que se fechavam na observância estrita da lei e na pureza da raça.

Qohelet oferece critérios para o povo poder adquirir uma consciência mais crítica frente às várias tendências da época. Com palavras diferentes, ele repete, sem cessar, do começo ao fim: “Tudo é vaidade!”, miragem, ilusão! Parece um estribilho que sempre volta, *vinte e nove vezes!* (Qo 1,2.14.17; 2,1.11.15.17.19.21.23.26; 3,19; 4,4.8.16; 5,9.15.19; 6,2.9.12; 7,6.15; 8,10.14; 9,9; 11,8.10; 12,8). Ele critica tanto a sede de riqueza da elite (Qo 2,1-16; 5,9-16) e a sua mania de correr atrás das novidades do império (Qo 1,10-11), quanto o fechamento dos escribas com a sua pretensa justiça e com seu sentimento de gente privilegiada por Deus (Qo 7,15-16).

Por meio de um outro estribilho, que vai surgindo ao longo das páginas do seu livro e que, com palavras diferentes, é repetido *sete vezes*, Qohelet aponta uma saída que pode ser resumida da seguinte maneira: “Nada há de melhor para o ser humano do que alegrar-se, comer e beber, desfrutar o fruto do trabalho e gozar a vida com a esposa amada, pois tudo isto vem da mão de Deus” (cf. Qo 2,24-25; 3,12-15; 3,22; 5,17-19; 7,13-14; 8,15; 9,7-10). Qohelet convida o povo a reencontrar o fundamento da existência na vida em comunidade, na família, no trabalho honesto e na fé em Deus. Todo o resto, que não contribui para a reconstrução das relações primárias neste núcleo básico e caseiro da convivência humana é *vaidade*, perda de tempo, corrida atrás do vento, miragem, ilusão.

A preocupação básica de Jesus vai no mesmo sentido: refazer as relações humanas nas aldeias e pequenas cidades da Galiléia. Numa

época em que a religião oficial insistia no espaço sagrado do Templo e nas coisas ligadas ao culto oficial, Jesus recupera a dimensão caseira da fé. É impressionante verificar como nos evangelhos o ambiente da **Casa** exercia um papel central na vida e na atividade de Jesus. Quando se fala em *casa*, não se trata só da casa de tijolos ou de pedra, nem só da família pequena, mas também e sobretudo do clã, da comunidade. Até à idade de trinta anos, Jesus viveu no ambiente comunitário e caseiro lá em Nazaré. Durante os três anos que andou pela Galiléia ele entrava e vivia nas *casas* do povo. Entrou na *casa* de Pedro (Mt 8,14), de Mateus (Mt 9,10), de Jairo (Mt 9,23), de Simão o fariseu (Lc 7,36), de Simão o leproso (Mc 14,3), de Zaqueu (Lc 19,5). O oficial reconhece: “Não sou digno de que entres em minha *casa*” (Mt 8,8). E o povo procurava Jesus na *casa* dele (Mt 9,28; Mc 1,33; 2,1; 3,20). Quando ia a Jerusalém, Jesus parava em Betânia na *casa* de Marta, Maria e Lázaro (Jo 11,3.5.45; 12,2). No envio dos discípulos e discipulas a missão deles é entrar nas *casas* do povo e levar a paz (Mt 10,12-14; Mc 6,10; Lc 10,1-9).

Jesus recupera a dimensão sagrada e festiva da *casa*. Ele, sua mãe e todos os discípulos participam da festa de casamento em Caná (Jo 2,1-2). Jesus aceita convite para almoçar e jantar nas casas do povo: de Simão o leproso (Mc 14,3), de Simão o fariseu (Lc 7,36), de Marta e Maria (Jo 12,2), de um outro fariseu (Lc 11,37; 14,12). É na sala superior da *casa* de um amigo que Jesus celebrou a última páscoa com seus amigos (Mt 26,18-19). Envia os discípulos e discipulas para reconstruir o clã nas aldeias da Galiléia nas quatro bases da vida comunitária: hospitalidade, partilha, comunhão de mesa e acolhida aos excluídos (Lc 10,1-9). Depois da ressurreição, Jesus entrou em *casa* com os dois discípulos em Emaús e foi reconhecido por eles no gesto tão caseiro da fração do pão (Lc 24,29-30). Os primeiros cristãos imitam Jesus e recuperam a dimensão sagrada e festiva da *casa*. Lucas diz que eles “partiam o pão nas *casas*, tomando o alimento com alegria e simplicidade de coração” (At 2,26). O apóstolo Paulo favorece e estimula a criação de igrejas domésticas.

3. Crítica radical à manipulação da imagem de Deus (Jó)

O livro de Jó ajuda a perceber como a imagem que as pessoas têm de Deus repercute na organização econômica, social, política e religiosa da sociedade. O ensino oficial dos sábios, amigos de Jó, dizia: “Sofrimento e pobreza são castigo de Deus” (cf. Jó 4,7; 8,1-4). Esta maneira de representar o relacionamento entre Deus e o ser humano beneficiava a elite e dava aos pobres um complexo de culpa

e de inferioridade. O livro de Jó verbaliza a tensão que estava nascendo entre o ensino oficial da elite e a incipiente consciência rebelde dos sofreadores.

O livro de Jó nos dá uma imagem concreta do método dos sábios: uns raciocinando a partir da tradição dos séculos, querendo manter a ordem conquistada, e outros raciocinando a partir da experiência dolorosa da vida, denunciando a dominação. Jó representa os sofreadores, cuja consciência estava começando a se rebelar. Os três amigos representam a visão tradicional, que eles defendem com unhas e dentes. A cabeça de Jó, formada pelo catecismo da tradição dominante, dizia: “Você sofre e é pobre porque é pecador! Deus o está castigando!” Mas o coração, a consciência, lhe dizia: “Deus é injusto comigo! Não pequei! Quero brigar com ele para me defender”. Jó critica os três amigos, que identificavam a presença de Deus com o nível econômico das pessoas: “Vocês usam mentiras e injustiças para defender a Deus!” (Jó 13,7). “Vocês são capazes de sortear um órfão e vender seu próprio amigo!” (Jó 7,27).

Na frase final Jó se dirige a Deus e diz: “*Eu te conhecia só de ouvir falar de Ti, mas agora meus olhos te viram. Por isso me retrato e me arrependo sobre pó e cinza*” (Jó 42,4-6). Jó descobriu que a sua luta não era contra Deus, mas sim contra aquela imagem de Deus que falsificava a consciência das pessoas e destruía a convivência humana. É a rebeldia profética da tradição sapiencial que não quer ser enquadrada.

Como Jó, Jesus age e raciocina a partir de uma nova experiência de Deus que é Pai. Na boca de Jesus a imagem de Deus como Pai não representa o patriarcalismo nem o machismo da época. Nela Jesus expressa a origem da sua identidade, a raiz da sua missão e a fonte do seu relacionamento consigo mesmo, com os outros e com Deus. Em Jesus, a imagem do Pai, Abba, acentua a fraternidade, a igualdade e a ternura que devem existir entre nós, seres humanos. O mistério de Deus, expresso na imagem do Pai, é tão grande que ultrapassa até a própria imagem do pai e deixou Jesus, o filho, no escuro no momento de morrer: “Meu Deus, por que me abandonaste?” (Mc 15,34).

A recusa de qualquer tentativa de manipular Deus em seu próprio favor transparece nas respostas de Jesus ao diabo que lhe propunha usar em próprio benefício sua condição de messias: “A Escritura diz: Não só de pão vive o homem, mas de toda palavra que sai da boca de Deus” (Mt 4,4). “A Escritura também diz: Não tente o Senhor seu Deus” (Mt 4,7). “Vá embora, Satanás, porque a Escritura diz: Você adorará ao Senhor seu Deus e somente a ele servirá” (Mt 4,10). A experiência de que Deus ultrapassa tudo aquilo que podemos imaginar a respeito de Deus dava a Jesus uma liberdade muito

grande frente às estruturas e leis, tradições e costumes da religião do seu tempo.

Nunca ninguém pode pretender dominar Deus por meio destas práticas. Deus é maior. Por isso mesmo, como Jó aos olhos dos três amigos, assim Jesus aos olhos dos escribas e fariseus, era um homem sem Deus (Jo 9,16), contrário ao Templo e à Lei de Deus (Mt 26,61).

4. Resistir contra a marginalização e exclusão da mulher (Cântico, Rute)

No relato sobre a manifestação da Sabedoria Divina na história do povo de Deus (Eclo 44-50), o autor do livro do Eclesiástico ignorou as mulheres. Só conservou os nomes dos homens. Quando ele fala da mulher, manifesta um certo desprezo (Eclo 25,13); e quando diz coisas boas sobre ela, é a partir do ponto de vista do homem (Eclo 26,1-2.13; 36,21-27). Porém, quando fala da Sabedoria Divina, ele a personifica e a elogia sob a figura de uma mulher (Eclo 4,11-19; 14,20-15,10; 24,1-29).

Estas duas tendências, marginalização e valorização da mulher, aparecem em todo o Antigo Testamento, mas sobretudo no período depois do cativeiro. Na mesma medida em que crescia a exclusão da mulher, cresciam a sua resistência e valorização. Vários livros registram esta resistência e valorização progressivas.

No Cântico dos Cânticos, a mulher aparece como pessoa independente que, para poder encontrar o seu amado, enfrenta os guardas da cidade (Ct 3,1-4; 5,2-8), o rival que a persegue (Ct 8,11-12), e os irmãos que querem protegê-la (Ct 8,8-10). No livro de Rute, duas mulheres pobres, ambas viúvas sem futuro, das quais uma estrangeira, estão na origem da reconstrução do povo. São elas que tomam as iniciativas para reconquistar os direitos perdidos e para fazer observar a lei do resgate (Rt 2,20; 3,1-6). É de uma estrangeira que nasce o avô do messias (Rt 4,11.17). Judite, mulher de um povoado imaginário da Samaria, contesta a decisão tomada pelos anciãos e sacerdotes (Jdt 8,11-17). Sozinha, ela enfrenta o exército inimigo e consegue derrotar o general Holofernes, cortando-lhe a cabeça (Jdt 8,32-34; 13,6-10). Ester é a mulher que se engaja na luta pela sobrevivência do povo (Est4,8-17). O mesmo valor de resistência encontramos nas primeiras páginas da Bíblia, escritas depois do cativeiro, onde se afirma a igualdade do homem e da mulher como imagem de Deus (Gn 1,27).

Nestes livros a mulher aparece não tanto como mãe e esposa, mas muito mais como mulher que sabe usar sua dignidade e beleza para lutar pelos direitos dos pobres e assim defender a Aliança do povo. E

ela luta não a favor do Templo, nem a favor de leis abstratas, mas sim a favor da vida do povo.

Jesus soube acolher a resistência das mulheres. A moça *prostituída* que teve a coragem de desafiar as normas da sociedade e da religião, é acolhida e defendida por Jesus contra o fariseus (Lc 7,36-50). A mulher *encurvada* é acolhida por Jesus como filha de Abraão contra o dirigente da sinagoga (Lc 13,10-17). A mulher considerada *impura* que teve a coragem de meter-se no meio da multidão, é acolhida sem censura e curada (Mc 5,25-34). A Samaritana, desprezada como *herética*, é a primeira pessoa a receber o segredo de que Jesus é o Messias (Jo 4,26). A mulher *estrangeira* de Tiro e Sidônia, que ajudou Jesus a alargar sua missão, é atendida por ele (Mc 7, 24-30). As *mães com filhos pequenos* que enfrentam os discípulos são acolhidas e abençoadas por Jesus (Mt 19,13-15; Mc 10,13-16). As mulheres, que desafiaram o poder e ficaram perto da cruz de Jesus (Mt 27,55-56.61), foram as primeiras a experimentar a presença de Jesus ressuscitado (Mt 28,9-10). Maria Madalena, considerada *possessa*, mas curada por Jesus (Lc 8,2) recebeu a *ordem* de transmitir a Boa Nova da ressurreição aos apóstolos (Jo 20,16-18). As mulheres fazem parte da comunidade de discípulos que se forma ao redor de Jesus (Lc 8,1-3; Mc 15,40-41).

Comparando as atitudes de Jesus com a resistência profético-sapiencial, deu para perceber como é profunda a identificação de Jesus com este lado criativo da Tradição Sapiencial. É a marca que o caracteriza. Ele é o sábio que virou profeta. Vou tentar resumir em sete pontos a prática sapiencial de Jesus.

III. A PRÁTICA DE JESUS: SUA ATITUDE SAPIENCIAL

Sua atitude frente aos fariseus e escribas, os “sábios”

Nas discussões de Jesus com os fariseus e escribas, aparece bem concretamente a tensão que nasce da ambivalência inerente à natureza da sabedoria. De um lado, os fariseus e os escribas que controlam e dominam; do outro lado, Jesus que resiste e liberta. Pela sua maneira de argumentar Jesus revela que conhecia o método dos sábios e que dele se serve na discussão com os doutores.

Sua maneira de ensinar e transmitir conhecimento

Jesus ensinava por meio de parábolas. Ele tinha uma capacidade enorme de encontrar imagens simples para comparar as coisas de Deus com as coisas da vida do povo. Isto supõe duas coisas: estar por dentro

das coisas da vida, e estar por dentro das coisas de Deus, do Reino de Deus. Ele compara as coisas de Deus, que não são tão evidentes, com as coisas da vida que o povo conhece e experimenta na sua luta pela sobrevivência. A parábola provoca as pessoas a pensar. É uma forma participativa de ensinar; de educar. Não faz saber, mas faz descobrir. Ela leva a pessoa a refletir sobre a sua própria experiência, e faz com que esta experiência a leve a descobrir que Deus está presente na vida. A parábola muda os olhos, faz da pessoa uma observadora crítica da realidade.

Sua atitude frente à Lei de Deus

Na maneira de usar, interpretar e aplicar a Sagrada Escritura Jesus tem uma atitude que revela grande *familiaridade* com a Bíblia, surpreendente *liberdade* e, ao mesmo tempo, uma *fidelidade* radical (Mt 5,17-19). Ele não se fecha na letra, mas busca o sentido do espírito. Ele reconduz a Lei à sua origem, para que as pessoas percebam qual o seu objetivo, a saber, a prática do amor (Mt 7,12; Mc 12,29-31), e critica os que “invalidam a Palavra de Deus pela tradição que transmitem” (Mc 7,13). Aos que identificavam a vontade de Deus com a letra da Lei, ele dizia: “*Antigamente foi dito, mas eu digo*”, e por seis vezes, teve a coragem de modificar a letra da lei antiga para evitar que as pessoas se fechassem na letra e esquecessem o objetivo último que é a prática do amor (Mt 5,21-22.27-28.31-34.38-39.43-44).

Sua atitude frente às práticas e tradições religiosas

Em tudo que ensina e faz, Jesus não permite que as tradições humanas, mesmo impostas em nome de Deus pelas autoridades religiosas, desviem o povo da verdadeira experiência de Deus e da vida. Ele mostra grande liberdade frente aos costumes religiosos da época: esmola (Mt 6,1-4), formas de rezar (Mt 6,5-15), jejum (Mt 6,16-18), práticas da pureza legal (Mc 7,1-23), observância do sábado (Mc 2,23-28), comunhão de mesa com pagãos e pecadores (Mc 2,15-17), expulsão de demônios (Mc 3,22-30), Templo (Mc 11,15-17). Ele chegou a anunciar a destruição do Templo (Mc 13,1-2) e a dizer que Deus pode ser adorado em qualquer lugar contanto que seja em espírito e verdade (Jo 4, 21-24).

Sua atitude frente às pessoas de outra raça e religião

Jesus reconhece a sabedoria nos que não são “sábios” e agradece a Deus por Ele revelar a sabedoria do Reino aos pequenos e escondê-la aos sábios e entendidos (Mt 11,25-26). Ele não se fecha dentro da

sua raça nem dentro da sua religião. Como a própria sabedoria, ele é ecumênico e sabe reconhecer as coisas boas que existem nas pessoas de outra raça e religião. Ele acolhe lições da parte deles: da Cananéia (Mt 15,27-28), da Samaritana (Jo 4,31-38) e até dos Romanos (Mt 8,5-13). Jesus tem a atitude do *discípulo*, que não absolutiza seu próprio pensamento. O segundo cântico do Servo de Isaías é um auto-retrato de Jesus (Is 50,4-9).

Sua atitude frente ao povo, sobretudo frente aos pobres

Bondade, ternura e simplicidade são a característica do jeito com que Jesus acolhia as pessoas: o velho Zaqueu (Lc 19,1-10), as mães com crianças (Mt 19,13-14), o leproso que grita à beira da estrada (Mt 8,2; Mc 1,40-41), o paralítico de 38 anos (Jo 5,5-9), o cego de nascimento na praça do templo (Jo 9,1-13), a mulher curvada na sinagoga (Lc 13,10-13), a viúva de Naim (Lc 7,11-17), as crianças em todo canto (Mt 21,15-16), e tantas e tantas outras pessoas. É o contrário da atitude dos fariseus e escribas chamavam o povo de ignorante e maldito e achavam que o povo não tinha nada para ensinar a eles (Jo 7,48-49; 9,34)

Sua experiência de Deus lhe dá um novo olhar para rever tudo

Todas estas atitudes de Jesus para com todas as pessoas que entravam em contato com ele, eram uma revelação da experiência de Deus que o animava por dentro, Deus ternura, Deus pai e mãe, Deus bondade. Assim ele ia quebrando na cabeça e no coração do povo a imagem patriarcal e machista de um Deus severo e distante. Por de trás de todas estas atitudes está uma experiência de Deus e da vida em aberto contraste com a concepção de Deus que se expressava nas atitudes e na estrutura religiosa oficial da época. Jesus é um leigo sábio que não estudou na escola oficial. Mesmo assim o povo reconhece que nele existe sabedoria (Mc 6,2). O povo ficava impressionado com o jeito que Jesus tinha de ensinar: “Um novo ensinamento! Dado com autoridade! Diferente dos escribas!” (Mc 1,22.27). Esta era a novidade da Boa Nova do Reino trazida por Jesus, diferente dos doutores que ensinavam que o Reino só viria como fruto da observância da lei. Jesus diz: “O Reino já está presente no meio de vocês!” (Lc 17,21).

É nesta prática de Jesus que se prolonga e desabrocha a resistência profético sapiencial que já vinha desde o cativoiro. Aqui está o eixo da ligação entre Jesus de Nazaré e a Tradição Sapiencial. Aqui, de certo modo, termina o assunto que me foi pedido para aprofundar e expor. Mas penso que vale a pena fazer algumas considerações com-

plementares sobre como, depois da morte e ressurreição de Jesus, os primeiros cristãos, usando os textos do AT sobre a Sabedoria, procuravam interpretar a identidade de Jesus como a revelação da Sabedoria Divina.

IV. SUPLEMENTO: JESUS COMO SABEDORIA DE DEUS

Jesus conviveu só três anos com os discípulos e as discípulas. Três anos é muito pouco. Após a sua paixão, morte e ressurreição, começou, da parte das comunidades, todo um esforço para entender quem foi este Jesus. Uma das principais fontes, onde os primeiros cristãos buscavam luz e inspiração para desvendar o mistério de Deus em Jesus eram precisamente as reflexões da tradição sapiencial sobre a sabedoria.

Sintetizando em cinco pontos as reflexões dos sábios sobre a sabedoria: (1) sua identificação com o Espírito de Deus (Sb 7,22-8,1), (2) sua existência anterior à criação (Prov 8,22-26; Eclo 24,9), (3) sua presença em todas as criaturas (Eclo 42,15 a 43,33), (4) sua encarnação em Israel (Eclo 24,8; Sl 132,13-14), (5) sua identificação com a figura de uma mulher (Prov 31,10-11; 8,32-36; 9,1-6; Eclo 7,19).

A identificação de Jesus como Sabedoria de Deus pelos primeiros cristãos tem três aspectos. 1) Associação implícita entre Jesus e a Sabedoria, visível nos evangelhos; 2) Associação explícita entre Jesus e a Sabedoria, nas primeiras cartas de Paulo; 3) Identificação entre Jesus e a Sabedoria, nas cartas posteriores.

Associação implícita

Na descrição da atividade de Jesus transparece, aqui e acolá, a associação de Jesus com a Sabedoria de Deus: Jesus age como a sabedoria no Antigo Testamento. Por exemplo, Jesus diz: “Eu te louvo, Pai, Senhor do céu e da terra, porque escondeste essas coisas aos sábios e inteligentes, e as revelaste aos pequeninos. Sim, Pai, porque assim foi do teu agrado. Meu Pai entregou tudo a mim. Ninguém conhece o Filho, a não ser o Pai, e ninguém conhece o Pai, a não ser o Filho e aquele a quem o Filho quiser revelar” (Mt 11,15-27). Nesta prece de Jesus são evocados textos sapienciais como Provérbios 8,22-36, Eclesiástico 24,3-9.19-20 e Sabedoria 8,3-4; 9,9-18.

O mesmo pode ser afirmado (1) do convite que Jesus dirige aos pobres (Mt 11,28-30). Neste convite de Jesus são evocados textos sapienciais como Eclesiástico 51,26. (2) do convite que Jesus dirige ao

povo no último dia da festa (Jo 7,37-39). Nesta proclamação de Jesus são evocados textos sapiências como Eclesiástico 51,25-26. (3) da afirmação e que Jesus dirige à Samaritana (Jo 4,13-14; cf. Jo 6,35). Nessas palavras de Jesus à Samaritana são evocados textos sapienciais como Provérbios 9,5 e Eclesiástico 24,29;

Associação explícita

A associação torna-se explícita nas cartas de Paulo. Ele mesmo, Paulo, viveu um conflito muito forte entre a sabedoria humana e a sabedoria de Deus. Na evangelização dos coríntios, ele não quis basear-se na sabedoria humana, mas só na cruz de Cristo, escândalo para os judeus e loucura para os gregos, mas para nós expressão da sabedoria e do poder de Deus.

Em Corinto, Paulo não fez discursos de alta sabedoria como em Atenas (At 17,22-31). Em Atenas usou a linguagem elevada da oratória e da sabedoria humana, e fracassou. Em Corinto fez o contrário. Usou uma linguagem “sem o prestígio da oratória ou da sabedoria” (1Cor 2,1). Alguns da comunidade de Corinto não gostaram desse jeito simples de Paulo apresentar a mensagem. Paulo devia ter falado com mais sabedoria, para que as autoridades da cidade, “os príncipes deste mundo”, pudessem perceber a mensagem. Paulo diz que usou sabedoria, sim, mas uma sabedoria diferente que não é dos “príncipes deste mundo”. Paulo responde: “Na realidade, é aos maduros na fé que falamos de uma sabedoria que não foi dada por este mundo, nem pelas autoridades passageiras deste mundo. Ensinamos uma coisa misteriosa e escondida: a sabedoria de Deus, aquela que ele projetou desde o princípio do mundo para nos levar à sua glória. Nenhuma autoridade do mundo conheceu tal sabedoria, pois se a tivessem conhecido não teriam crucificado o Senhor da glória” (1Cor 2,6-10).

Nesta afirmação Paulo associa os textos da Tradição sapiencial sobre a Sabedoria com Jesus. Não se trata de uma identificação, mas de uma manifestação daquela sabedoria que agora chega até nós através de tudo que aconteceu em Jesus.

Identificação

Nas cartas e escritos posteriores, já não é só uma associação entre Jesus e a Sabedoria de Deus, mas transparece claramente que, para o autor da carta, Jesus é a própria sabedoria. É manifestação da multiforme sabedoria de Deus (Ef 3,10). Jesus é a sabedoria de Deus (1Cor 1,24).

Diz a carta aos Colossenses: “Ele é a imagem do Deus invisível, o Primogênito, anterior a qualquer criatura; porque nele foram criadas todas as coisas, tanto as celestes como as terrestres, as visíveis como as invisíveis: tronos, soberanias, principados e autoridades. Tudo foi criado por meio dele e para ele. Ele existe antes de todas as coisas, e tudo nele subsiste” (Col 1,15-17). Esta afirmação evoca o texto dos Provérbios: “Javé me produziu como primeiro fruto de sua obra, no começo de seus feitos mais antigos. Fui estabelecida desde a eternidade, desde o princípio, antes que a terra começasse a existir. Fui gerada quando o oceano ainda não existia, e antes que existissem as fontes de água. Fui gerada antes que as montanhas e colinas fossem implantadas, quando Javé ainda não tinha feito a terra e a erva, nem os primeiros elementos do mundo. Quando ele fixava o céu e traçava a abóbada sobre o oceano, eu aí estava. Eu me achava presente quando ele condensava as nuvens no alto e fixava as fontes do oceano; quando punha um limite para o mar, de modo que as águas não ultrapassassem a praia; e também quando assentava os fundamentos da terra. Eu estava junto com ele, como mestre-de-obras. Eu era o seu encanto todos os dias, e brincava o tempo todo em sua presença; brincava na superfície da terra, e me deliciava com a humanidade” (Prov 8,22-31). Cf. Sb 7,26; Sab 1,7; Eclo 43,27). A mesma identificação transparece na carta aos Hebreus (Hb 1,1-4 comparado com Sab 7,21-8,1) e no prólogo do evangelho de João.

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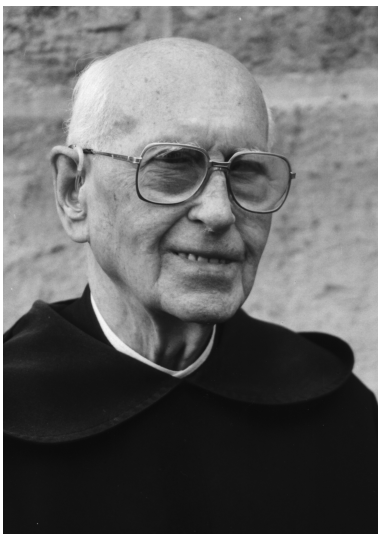
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IN MEMORIAM

P. ADALBERT DECKERT, O.CARM., (1913-2008): RÜCKBLICK AUF LEBEN UND WERK



The years around 1950 have brought a period of a growing historical interest within the Carmelite Order. More than a decade before the Vatican Council called all religious orders to search for their “sound traditions” (Perfectae Caritatis, 2) the Dutch Province founded the Nederlandsch Carmelitaansch Historisch Instituut in 1945 as well as Prior General Kilian Lynch founded the Institutum Carmelitanum in 1951. On sides of the Discalced Carmelites, the first volume of the new critical edition of Teresa of Avila’s works appeared in the same year 1951. Father Adalbert Deckert represents this growing historical interest within

the Upper German Province. He was born in 1913, entered the order in 1932, received his doctorate in 1950 and was appointed member of the Institutum Carmelitanum in 1958.

His edition of the provincial chapters 1421-1529 (n. 28) started the new series “Archivum Historicum Carmelitanum”. He gained just as great merits in setting up the provincial archives since 1961 as in researching into Carmelite history in Germany.

The scientific work Father Adalbert pursued for more than 50 years brought a valuable contribution to the new start of carmelite historiography in the 20th century.

“Die Geschichtsschreibung des Karmel trat nach dem Konzil von Trient in eine neue Epoche, die nicht immer frei von Polemik, Übertreibungen oder Einseitigkeiten war. Bisweilen mangelte es ihr

am kritischen Sinn, um zwischen historischen und symbolischen Aussagen zu unterscheiden. Sie läßt sich gewissermaßen als barock beschreiben: einerseits reich an Einzelheiten und phantasiereichen Schilderungen, die die mittelalterlichen Quellen nachbereiteten, andererseits aber verlor sie den Sinn und die Perspektive für die Spiritualität, die den Vätern zu eigen war. ... Die Verhältnisse änderten sich mit dem Neubeginn, den das 20. Jahrhundert brachte. Das veränderte kulturelle Klima und eine neue wissenschaftliche Sensibilität sind zu Kennzeichen dessen Geschichtsschreibung geworden und ermöglichen aussichtsreiche Weiterentwicklungen.”¹

P. Adalbert Deckert, dem sich die folgenden Zeilen zuwenden, hat zu diesem von Giovanni Grosso skizzierten Neubeginn in der Geschichtsschreibung des 20. Jh. nicht unbedeutend beigetragen. Der Darstellung seines literarischen Schaffens und dessen Rezeption soll die der Stationen seines Lebens vorangehen.

P. Adalbert wurde als Johann Franz Deckert am 13. April 1913 in Hirschfeld/Ofr. geboren. Nach dem Besuch des Karmelitenseminars Marianum und des Alten Gymnasiums in Bamberg trat er 1932 als Abiturient in den Orden ein. Nach dem Noviziat in Straubing legte er 1933 Profeß ab. Von 1933-1937 studierte er an der phil.-theol. Hochschule in Bamberg. Am 31. Januar 1937 weihte ihn Erzbischof Jakobus von Hauck im Bamberger Dom zum Priester. Dem folgte alsbald der Einsatz in Bad Reichenhall: von September 1937 bis Oktober 1940 als Seelsorger in St. Ägidius sowie seit November 1940 als Kaplan und Lazarettseelsorger bei St. Nikolaus. Im Juli 1944 wechselte P. Adalbert nach Straubing und wurde Kirchenrektor von Frauenhofen (Pfarrei Perkam). Im September 1946 kehrte P. Adalbert nach Bamberg zurück, um mit dem Wintersemester 1946/47 das Geschichtsstudium am Institut für fränkische Landesgeschichte der Universität Erlangen aufzunehmen. Am 25. März 1950 wurde er zum Dr. phil. promoviert. Thema seiner Dissertation war “Das ehemalige Karmelitenkloster zu Bamberg in der Au”. Als Klerikermagister und Provinzialassistent übte er wichtige Aufgaben in der Ordensprovinz aus. Als er am 7. Oktober 1952 zum Provinzial der Oberdeutschen Karmelitenprovinz gewählt wurde, war er mit 39 Jahren der damals jüngste Provinzial im Orden. In den sechs Jahren seiner Amtszeit wurde im Provinzkommissariat Brasilien die Gründung der Schule Nossa Senhora do Carmo in Paranavai vorgenommen und die des

¹ G. Grosso, *Storiografia Carmelitana*, in: E. Boaga O.Carm. - L. Borriello OCD (Hg.), *Dizionario Carmelitano*, Rom, Città Nuova, 2008, 865-869, hier 867f.

Konventes Graciosa vorbereitet. Gleichzeitig arbeitete P. Adalbert an seiner zweiten Monographie "Die Oberdeutsche Provinz der Karmeliten nach den Akten ihrer Kapitel von 1421 bis 1529". Unter seinen Werken fand dieses die breiteste Rezeption sowohl inner- wie außerhalb des Ordens und eröffnete die neubegründete Reihe "Archivum Historicum Carmelitanum" des Institutum Carmelitanum in Rom. General Kilian Lynch hatte dieses Institut 1951 mit der Zielsetzung ins Leben gerufen, daß der Orden sich seines historischen und spirituellen Erbes stärker bewußt würde und dieses sich selbst und anderen erschließe.² Ähnliche Überlegungen waren auch außerhalb Roms im Schwange und hatten in der Niederländischen Provinz bereits 1945 zur Gründung des "Nederlandsch Carmelitaansch Historisch Instituut" ebenso wie in der Oberdeutschen Provinz zum Promotionsstudium P. Adalberts beigetragen.³ Es kam der Grundlegung historischen Forschens in dieser Provinz sehr zugute, daß P. Adalbert während der folgenden Jahre an demselben Ort Bamberg verblieb, auch nachdem er nach seiner Amtszeit als Provinzial von General Kilian Lynch am 15. November 1958 zum Mitglied des Institutum Carmelitanum ernannt worden war. Kaum ein Kloster im Orden kann auf eine so ungebrochene Kontinuität zurückblicken wie der Karmel in Straubing, der 1968 sein 600-jähriges Bestehen feierte. Als P. Adalbert im Mai 1961 die Leitung des Provinzarchives übernahm, bot ihm dies die Gelegenheit, seine große Straubinger Jubiläumschronik samt der Ausstellung im Karmelitenkloster vorzubereiten. Die gute Zusammenarbeit mit dem Historischen Verein für Straubing und Umgebung, die sich im Zusammenhang dieses Jubiläums ergab, und die Erschließung weiterer Quellen zur Provinzgeschichte zeigen sich in der Folge als die beiden Wurzeln, aus denen dann während der Jahre von 1988-1996 der "Schematismus der Oberdeutschen Karmelitenprovinz von 1650 bis zur Säkularisation im Jahre 1802. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der beiden Klöster Straubing und Abensberg" erwachsen konnte. P. Adalbert bearbeitete die Gebiete seines Interesses konti-

² Gründungsschreiben Kilian Lynchs vom 24. November 1951, in: *Vinculum Ordinis Carmelitarum*, 2 (1951), 428-431. In einen vergleichbaren Horizont fügt sich aufseiten des Teresianischen Karmel wohl auch die Erarbeitung der neuen kritischen Ausgabe der Werke Teresas von Avila, deren erster Band in demselben Jahr 1951 erschien: *Santa Teresa de Jesús, Obras completas. Edición preparada por Efrén de la Madre de Dios OCD*. Madrid, La Editorial Católica, Vol. 1, 1951 (Biblioteca de autores cristianos 74).

³ Rudolf van Dijk, *Zestig jaar Nederlands Carmelitaans Instituut. 1945 - 30 november - 2005*, in: *Trajecta*, 14 (2005), 418-423.

nuierlich und über Jahrzehnte hinweg: so im Blick auf den Aufbau des Provinzarchives, auf den eben genannten Schematismus, den er zusammen mit P. Matthäus Höslner erstellt hat, und so auch bei dem letzten großen Werk, das dasselbe Bearbeiterpaar herausgegeben hat, die "Acta des Karmelitenprovinzials Andreas Stoß (1534-1538)".

P. Adalbert verstand sich in seinem Wirken auch immer als Seelsorger. Von 1958 bis 2004 war er Direktor des III. Ordens in Bamberg. In den Jahren 1946/47 und 1952/53 wirkte er als Seelsorger in Gundelsheim und von 1958 bzw. 1967 bis 1993 hielt er regelmäßig den Sonntagsgottesdienst in Weipelsdorf und Trosdorf (Pfarrei Bischberg).

Die insgesamt 24 Referate, die er von 1971-1982 bei den Karmelitanischen Besinnungstagen hielt, erschlossen dem interessierten Publikum Fragen aus der Geschichte und Spiritualität des Karmel über die eigene Ordensprovinz hinaus. Der Bamberger Erzbischof Dr. Elmar Maria Kredel würdigte die seelsorgerlichen Verdienste P. Adalberts, indem er ihm im Dezember 1982 den Titel eines Geistlichen Rates verlieh.

Kennzeichen der karmelitanischen Präsenz im deutschen Sprachraum ist nicht zuletzt das Bewußtsein einer provinzi- und ordenszweigübergreifenden Zusammengehörigkeit, das sich seit den frühen Jahrzehnten des 20. Jh. auf wissenschaftlicher Ebene darstellt. Zu nennen ist hier die "Geschichte des Karmelitenordens" des P. Redemptus vom Kreuz Weninger OCD 1914, die Beiträge "Karmeliten" im Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche von 1933 bzw. 1960 sowie das große Gemeinschaftswerk zur 750-Jahr-Feier der Karmelregel, für das P. Adalbert zusammen mit P. Otho Werl OCD 1959 verantwortlich zeichnete.⁴ Diese Tradition der Zusammenarbeit setzte 1981 die

⁴ P. Redemptus vom Kreuz Weninger OCD hat seiner *Geschichte des Karmelitenordens*, Linz, Verlag "Skapulier", 1914, eigens einen vierten Teil über den Karmel in Deutschland und Österreich angefügt, der über die französische Originalausgabe (André de Sainte-Marie OCD, *L'Ordre de Notre Dame du Mont-Carmel*, Bruges, Verbeke-Loys & Cie., 1910) hinausgeht. Den von Redemptus Weninger OCD und Ambrosius Hofmeister OCD in der ersten Auflage des LThK praktizierten Ansatz, die beiden Zweige des Karmel als einzige Ordensfamilie darzustellen (R. Weninger - A. Hofmeister, *Karmeliten*, in: Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Freiburg i. Brsg., Herder, 1. Auflage 1933, Bd. V 839-846), hat Gondulf Mesters OCarm in der zweiten Auflage des LThK fortgeführt (G. Mesters, *Karmeliten*, in: Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Freiburg i. Brsg., Herder, 2. Auflage 1960, Bd. V 1366-1372). Die Jubiläumsschrift zur 750-Jahr-Feier der Karmelregel entstand als deutsch-niederländisches Unternehmen von vier Karmelprovinzen und erschien als Adalbert Deckert OCarm. - Otho Merl OCD (Bearb.), *Karmel. Gesetz und Geheimnis*, Köln, Wienand, 1959.

Übersetzung des ersten Bandes der englischsprachigen Ordensgeschichte Joachim Smets fort.⁵

Schon bevor das Konzilsdekret "Perfectae Caritatis" den Ordensleuten auftrag, nach den gesunden Traditionen ihrer Geschichte und Spiritualität zu suchen, hat P. Adalbert den Weg von der "barocken" zu einer "neuen" Geschichtsschreibung im Sinne des obigen Eingangszitates eingeschlagen. Er hat sich dabei nicht nur wissenschaftliche Anerkennung, sondern auch die Wertschätzung seiner Mitbrüder erworben. Sie werden ihm ein ehrendes Gedenken bewahren.

P. ADALBERT DECKERT O.CARM. (1913-2008): BIBLIOGRAPHIE

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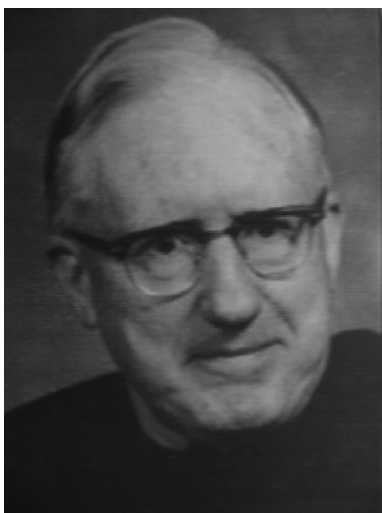
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MATTHÄUS HÖSLER O.CARM.
STEPHAN PANZER O.CARM.

P. EAMON (RICHARD) CARROLL, O.CARM., (1921-2008)



P. Eamon (Richard) Carroll, della provincia americana del Purissimo Cuore di Maria e già membro dell'Institutum Carmelitanum (1951-55, 1986-1991), è deceduto il 15 novembre del 2008 presso il Carmelo di Mission Valley in Nokomis, Florida, dove era residente dal 2002.

Nato il 23 settembre 1921 a Chicago, Illinois, era entrato fin da giovane nel 1935 tra i Carmelitani. Concluso il seminario preparatorio a Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, compì l'anno di prova nel noviziato di New Baltimore, Pennsylvania e professò i voti religiosi il 15 agosto 1940, cambiando il nome di battesimo Richard in quello di Eamon. Seguirono gli studi di filosofia e di teologia al Mount Carmel College di Niagara Falls e al Whitefriars Hall di Washington, DC e l'ordinazione sacerdotale l'8 giugno 1946 nella chiesa parrocchiale di S. Chiara a Chicago. Impegnato subito nell'insegnamento della Carmel High School di Chicago, contemporaneamente si dedicava a studi linguistici di tedesco, greco, ebraico e polacco presso l'università di Chicago.

Nel 1949 viene mandato dai Superiori al Collegio Internazionale S. Alberto di Roma per completare i suoi studi con il dottorato in teologia, che consegnerà nel 1951 presso la Pontificia Università Gregoriana. Il suo soggiorno romano durerà fino al 1955, impegnato nell'insegnamento di patrologia e mariologia nello studio generale dell'Ordine, e perché uno dei primi membri dell'Institutum Carmelitanum creato nel 1951 dal priore generale Kiliano Lynch come ente scientifico e di ricerca di tutto l'Ordine. Inoltre p. Carroll trovava anche il tempo per dare corsi addizionali di lingua greca al Pontificio Istituto Orientale. Un secondo prolungato soggiorno romano di P. Carroll avvenne dall'ottobre 1990 al giugno 1991, per insegnamento nella sede romana dell'Università di Loyola.

Dopo il rientro in provincia nel 1955, ha dedicato tutta la sua vita all'insegnamento e alla ricerca soprattutto in campo mariologico, in cui è in breve divenuto un punto di riferimento importante anche a livello internazionale.

Ampio è stato così il suo contributo nel mondo accademico cattolico americano, con insegnamento in varie scuole dell'Ordine in Chicago e Washington e in alcune università cattoliche, tra cui l'Università Cattolica d'America a Washington, DC, la Loyola University di Chicago, e l'Università di Dayton, Ohio.

Presidente dal 1957 dell'Associazione Mariologica Americana e dal 1965 della Società Americana di Teologia Cattolica, ha anche lavorato molto per l'Istituto Internazionale di Ricerca Mariologica dell'Università di Dayton. È stato poi anche uno dei soci fondatori della Società Ecumenica della Beata Vergine Maria (ESBVM) e consulente per il percorso iconografico mariano all'interno del santuario nazionale dell'Immacolata Concezione a Washington, DC.

Divenuto professore emerito, ha continuato il suo servizio presso la Loyola University di Chicago fino al 2002, quando si è ritirato al Carmelo di Mount Valley di Nokomis, continuando a scrivere tener conferenze dentro i limiti imposti dalle sue condizioni di salute.

Molto si è dedicato il p. Carroll alla mariologia, attraverso pubblicazioni di studi, conferenze ed altri contributi. Nella rinascita di attenzione alla Scapolare mariano carmelitano negli anni '50 p. Carroll è intervenuto molte volte con conferenze, scritti ed opuscoli intesi a sottolineare le dimensioni teologiche di tale devozione popolare ed aiutando ad approfondirle convenientemente. Parallelamente si è interessato a varie tematiche mariane dell'epoca medievale dell'Ordine, ed agli autori mariani, tra cui Arnaldo Bostio, che fu oggetto della sua tesi di laurea nel 1951 e sul quale è ripetutamente ritornato in studi e saggi seguenti.

Ma l'interesse di p. Carroll per la mariologia va ben oltre i confini del Carmelo. In primo luogo è da sottolineare il prezioso servizio d'informazione ai teologi statunitensi sugli sviluppi della mariologia con riferimento speciale alle celebrazioni periodiche dei congressi internazionali mariologici e di quanto operato annualmente in campo mariologico nei vari continenti. L'insieme dei suoi rapporti, raccolti annualmente nella rubrica intitolata *A Survey of Recent Mariology* della rivista *Marian Studies*, offre una visione panoramica di tutta la mariologia del secolo XX.

Nel 1971 Carroll ha realizzato una serie di conferenze sulla Vergine santissima in 57 diocesi di trenta Stati dell'Unione, e per questo a volte è stato detto il "Laurentin" statunitense. Infine i

contributi da lui offerti con relazioni ai Congressi mariologici internazionali e con altri scritti su riviste specializzate, vertono sulle tematiche riguardanti l'Immacolata Concezione e l'Assunzione, gli aspetti mariani del magistero pontificio, la mediazione delle grazie e la regalità di Maria, il luogo di Maria nel dialogo ecumenico, da lui illustrato in un notevole saggio in occasione del trentesimo anniversario di due fondamentali documenti del Concilio Vaticano II (*Lumen gentium* e *Unitatis reintegratio*), nel quale egli parla del futuro dell'unità dei cristiani attraverso la devozione alla Vergine Madre di Dio. Negli ultimi anni ha anche rivolto speciale attenzione al tema di Maria nella comunione dei Santi. Su questo tema egli era già intervenuto nel 1966 in occasione della riunione annuale dell'Associazione Teologica Americana.

Infine è da ricordare la sua ampia attività di divulgazione della teologia e della spiritualità mariana, attraverso articoli su riviste religiose e popolari. A lui si deve la nota lettera pastorale *Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith* (1988), della Conferenza Episcopale degli Stati Uniti d'America.

Un elenco delle sue pubblicazioni fino al 2000 è pubblicato, a cura di J. Smet e D. Buggert, in *Mother, Behold Your Son*, Essays in Honor of Eamon R. Carroll, O. Carm., ed. D. W. Buggert, L. P. Rogge, M: J. Wastag, The Carmelite Institute, Washington DC, 2001, 407-440.

EMANUELE BOAGA, O.CARM.

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BIOGRAPHIA

WILSON, CHRISTOPHER, (ed.), *The Heirs of St. Teresa of Ávila: Defenders and Disseminators of the Founding Mother's Legacy*. Carmelite Studies, Volume IX. 2006, pp. xvii, 140. ICS Publications, Institute of Carmelite Studies, Washington D.C., U.S.A. (www.icspublications.org) & Institutum Carmelitanum (<http://carmelites.info/institutum/>), Roma, Italia. ISBN 0-935216-40-5. \$12.95.

This book, which is ninth in a series of 'Carmelite Studies' from the Institute of Carmelite Studies (ICS) in Washington D.C., is the fruit of a symposium held at Georgetown University in 2004. Seven essays by different contributors bring us closer to Teresa of Jesus (of Avila) by engaging with various important collaborators, or assessing her impact on those who admired her, both contemporaries and later followers. Incidentally, some of these studies show Teresa in action in areas of special interest today.

The first essay deals with Maria de San Jose Salazar, described as "Teresa's difficult daughter". Alison Weber's account of Maria shows us Teresa as educator, with the delicate task of forming someone for the kind of leadership in keeping with her ideals for her reform. Weber notes some frustration as Maria was not so pliable as Teresa would have wished. Nevertheless, by abiding by her own principles of gentleness and patience, Teresa influenced Maria till in her turn she endorsed the *Madre's* teachings in her own.

Mujica's essay on Teresa's vow of obedience to Father Gracian shows a clear appreciation of the balance between freedom of conscience and the spiritual freedom of being in a relationship of dependence based on trust, far removed from subservience. The flexibility of this relationship allows for Teresa to exercise the role of formator, again trying to develop the gifts of her superior/disciple to meet the needs of the growth of her reform. She was, by necessity, adept at getting the best out of her not-quite-ideal collaborators.

Ana of Saint-Augustine, the subject of the next essay, shows a kind of family likeness to her spiritual Mother, as though the graces and rare experiences of the Discalced founder are to be expected in her daughters. This expectation is an indicator of what different generations prize as norms of "holiness". Those favoured in the seventeenth century differ, perhaps, from those that would be favoured today.

The account of Ana of Saint-Bartholomew, which follows next, has special interest as a case history of the difficulties of “inculturation” when transposing a well-established way of religious life from one culture to another: in this case from Spain to France. Kavanaugh portrays sympathetically the dilemma of the docile Ana trapped, as it were, in obedience to one whom she felt did not understand the work of St. Teresa as well as she did herself, a contrast between the humble Spanish Carmelite and the sophisticated French Oratorian. (Perhaps it might be permitted to add that Berulle’s participation in the early days of Carmel in France take on a more humane and benevolent tone when told from the perspective of some of the early French Carmelites – a point which might deserve scholarly discussion at a future date).

The fifth essay shows Ana of Saint-Bartholomew again, this time in contradistinction to Ana of Jesus: two favoured daughters of Teresa, who perpetuated her heritage in complementary ways. In this essay the volume’s editor, Christopher Wilson, bases his approach on the artistic representations in the Netherlands of these two great Carmelites. One picks up, in a discreet way, that there were strong differences of approach between these two women, which is reflected by the way contemporary art attributes to each of them key differences aimed at validating the claims of each to a primacy of witness to Teresa. There is surely much to learn from these differences between notable and exemplary Carmelites: relationships, even between the undoubtedly holy, could also have a very human touch.

The sixth essay by Jodi Bilinkoff on “Those touched by Teresa” might perhaps be trying to survey too wide a field for any meaningful appraisal, though it certainly indicates the far-reaching effects of Teresa’s writings fairly rapidly after her death. Bilinkoff singles out pious women and their spiritual guides, but it is well known that the circle of readers was far wider.

The final essay, comparing devotion to St. Joseph in the spirituality of St. Teresa and St. Francis de Sales, might at first sight also appear as a rather arbitrary comparison, until one remembers the great importance of the support that the Bishop of Geneva gave to the Teresian Reform, and his involvement in the introduction of the Order into France. He obviously felt a deep spiritual affinity to the Spanish Carmelite, and the place St. Joseph held in each of their lives underwent a slow maturation in both cases, making it deep, tender, and totally trustful.

Taken as a whole, the essays in this series shed light on many aspects of the rich Teresian heritage. They possibly speak more fully to those who are already familiar with it, but it is to be hoped they will also encourage newer readers to broaden their approach, alerting them to nuances and facets in the varied tapestry of this truly great woman.

SR. MARY OF SAINT-PHILIP REIDY, O.C.D.
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HAGIOGRAPHIA

MOSLEY, JOANNE, *Edith Stein, Woman of Prayer*. 2004, pp. x, 162. Gracewing, 2 Southern Avenue, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 0QF. ISBN 0-85244-596-2. £9.99.

This is an introduction to the life and thought of Edith Stein. As the title indicates, it focuses on her prayer life and reflections on prayer, an aspect which is especially emphasised in the second part of the book. The first part outlines the life of Edith Stein, stressing her upbringing in an observant Jewish family, her relationship with her siblings and early approach to religion. Mosley highlights her studies in Göttingen, the university city in which Husserl, the father of phenomenology, lectured, and which represented the vanguard of philosophical investigation at the time. As Mosley explains, neither Edith Stein's Jewish upbringing nor her philosophical studies went to waste upon conversion to Christianity, rather they helped to shape her spiritual path, facilitating her conversion. For in Edith Stein's own words, she converted in the wake of studying philosophy. Conversely, her philosophy is enriched by her new life as a Catholic convert. The intersection between philosophy and theology in the life of Edith Stein is a constant theme in the book.

The first part anticipates the subtitle, describing an early desire on the part of Edith Stein to enter religious life, countered by her spiritual directors on account of the success she enjoyed in international Catholic conference circuits. This desire was initially only partly fulfilled during the several years spent teaching at a school run by Dominican nuns. The author notes the intensity of Edith Stein's prayer life even before entering Carmel, while sharing her life with Dominicans and during intensive spiritual retreats.

The second part of this work deals with personal models of prayer. The first is Jesus, and the relationship is drawn between prayer and the Eucharist. The following chapter is devoted to Mary as model of motherhood and religious life simultaneously. Old Testament saints such as Queen Esther and the prophet Elijah provide models of prayer and intercession that are particularly close to Carmelite spirituality. Other figures drawn from the Carmelite family include St. Teresa of Avila, whose biography prompted Edith Stein's conversion, and St. John of the Cross.

It is noteworthy that a recurrent theme in the book is Edith Stein's views on the feminine vocation within the Church, and her own role as a woman in the Church. This, as the author mentions, had been an early preoccupation in her reflections about the education of women in preparation for a professional life. The education of women was a subject on which Edith Stein lectured and wrote extensively. After entering Carmel, as a cloistered nun, she stressed the highest vocation of woman to be a spiritual mother and spouse of Christ. Mary

is the ideal of womanhood as both mother and spouse of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit.

This a compelling introduction to the life and works of Edith Stein, written in an accessible style for those who wish to become acquainted with her spirituality and thought.

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POSSELT, TERESIA RENATA, *Edith Stein: The Life of a Philosopher and Carmelite*, (eds.) Susanne M. Batzdorff, Josephine Koeppel & John Sullivan. 2005, pp. xix, 372. ICS Publications, 2131 Lincoln Road NE, Washington DC 20002-1151, USA (www.icspublications.org). ISBN 0-935216-36-7. \$15.95.

This is a fresh English translation of the very first biography of Edith Stein, Saint Teresa Benedicta a Cruce, written in 1947 by her novice mistress and later prioress of the Cologne Carmel, Sister Teresia Renata of the Holy Spirit (Teresia Renata Posselt), and first published in Germany in 1948. The original appears here in a revised edition, translated and edited by Edith Stein's niece Susanne Batzdorff, as well as Sister Josephine Koeppel of the Carmel of Elysburg, Pennsylvania, and the Rev. Dr. John Sullivan, Chairman of the Institute of Carmelite Studies, in collaboration with Maria Amata Neyer, of the Cologne Carmel, who also contributes the Foreword.

This biography describes the most important moments in the life of Edith Stein: her upbringing in a Jewish family in Prussia, her disengagement from religion as a teenager; the study of philosophy under Husserl in Göttingen, which paved the way for her conversion to Catholicism and active lecturing as a philosopher. Her entry into the Cologne Carmel is eloquently portrayed. We learn about Edith Stein's flight from Nazi persecution and death at the gas chambers shortly after arriving at Auschwitz.

Written by a fellow Carmelite who knew her well from the Cologne Carmel, and as the first testimony of Edith Stein's life, beatified in Cologne in 1987 and canonized in Rome in 1998, it remains a fundamental first hand account. Since this work was composed from memory and without the original documents, some of the missing information is supplied or corrected by the editors.

The work presents an array of narrators through letters written or received by Edith Stein. Chapter 4, 'My first semester in Göttingen', is an autobiographical account of Edith Stein's first semester in Göttingen, and describes her new acquaintances in the university town as she moved about its philosophical circles.

As the title indicates, the book focuses on the saint's philosophical and religious interests and pursuits. In philosophy her study of contemporary and medieval currents is highlighted, in particular phenomenology as taught by

Husserl, and later the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas after her conversion to Catholicism aged thirty, upon reading the *Life* of St. Teresa of Avila.

Naturally, in addition to these philosophical interests, phenomenology under the influence of Husserl and St. Thomas Aquinas, the book accompanies her spiritual development upon conversion to Catholicism; her thorough study of Catholic theology, her early attraction to monastic life, the desire to become a Carmelite and subsequent entry into Carmel. Edith Stein's acceptance into the monastery coincides with the rise to power of the National Socialist party and the start of persecutions against the Jews. The key philosophical and religious moments are clearly portrayed and explained, without overlooking cultural and political aspects.

The strong personality and holiness of the philosopher and Carmelite clearly emerges from this biography. In particular, her acceptance to follow the fate of her fellow Jews, in spite of early attempts to escape Nazi persecution, is eloquently highlighted.

This biography will be an important element in the field of Edith Stein studies.

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VITA SPIRITUALIS

BERND JASPERT, *Mönchtum und Protestantismus. Probleme und Wege der Forschung seit 1877. Band 3. Von Karlmann Beyschlag bis Martin Tetz.* Si tratta del Supplemento delle REGULAE BENEDICTI STUDIA, vol. 19, Eos Verlag, Erzabtei St. Ottilien, 2007. ISBN 978-3-8306-7286-9.

Dopo la stampa del secondo volume di "Monachesimo e Protestantismo", l'autore di questo presente studio, il prof Dr. Bernd Jaspert, raccoglie ed interpreta i problemi e i racconti di autori protestanti del secolo scorso (dal 1953 fino al 1979), con la scelta delle opere importanti scritte in lingua tedesca. Tra gli ultimi capitoli di questo suo libro egli espone uno studio bibliografico sulla Regola di San Benedetto e sulle conseguenze dell'incontro dei protestanti con essa, mostrando infatti l'influsso sulla scelta e accettazione del monachesimo da parte dei non cattolici cristiani. La sua esposizione fa conoscere le fonti e soprattutto gli studi, cioè l'ampia letteratura, nata soprattutto in lingua tedesca. Nel suo profondo lavoro Bernd Jaspert ritiene opportuno di riportare anche Karl Rahner (con tutte le sue opere complete) e altri scrittori.

L'esposizione di Bernd Jaspert sul Monachesimo, che spera di venir accettata e presa come esempio per fare una vita consacrata di tutti cristiani, basandosi sulla fondazione di monasteri, si appoggia in gran parte alla Regola

di San Benedetto. È molto importante per arrivare a una buona ricerca da parte dell'ecumenismo. Questa realtà venne già ricordata dal Card. Walter Kasper nelle sue informazioni sul cristianesimo, fatte a Roma, il 23 novembre 2007. Senz'altro può essere possibile pensare che negli studi dell'ecumenismo è necessario basarsi anche sul Monachesimo dei Protestanti, perché così si realizza un punto essenziale di tutta la vita del cristianesimo.

Per questo motivo, gli studi e la presentazione degli autori, nominati e interpretati nel presente libro di Bernd Jaspert, possono essere di grande valore per considerare il dialogo ecumenico. In questo senso vanno letti ed interpretati i singoli capitoli che mostrano come i Protestanti non si sono allontanati dai grandi santi medioevali della Chiesa (specialmente Francesco d'Assisi), e si sono anche appoggiati a loro per riuscire a interpretare completamente la Bibbia. In questo senso non si può escludere nella Chiesa protestante la consapevole missione evangelica che consente un dialogo interreligioso. Non si può dimenticare che proprio il desiderio è lo slancio di una vita caratteristica del monachesimo, derivata dal desiderio di partecipare all'amore di Dio. Ciò va fatto da tutti i cattolici, per rivolgersi sempre a Cristo, in intima esperienza del vero cristianesimo.

Il capitolo I del libro, composto da Karlmann Beyschlag, riporta il suo desiderio di imitazione di Cristo con un appoggio a Francesco di Assisi e indicando come anche Lutero ha conosciuto la sua fondamentale Predica (*Bergpredigt*). Con la sua esperienza mistica sono nati scritti sul monachesimo, e con la sua interpretazione della mistica, ritenuta anche come forma legittima della pietà protestante, egli ha fatto vedere che così si può entrare nel monachesimo.

Il secondo studio è di Bernhard Lohse (capitolo II). È fatto sul monachesimo, con il ricordo di numerosi articoli, che presentano le origini di vita eremitica. Vengono interpretate le intenzioni, anche critiche di Lutero, e la sua riforma. Il lavoro contiene però preziose informazioni per arrivare alla conoscenza dell'origine e dello sviluppo del monachesimo, il quale va considerato "come legittimo cammino della vita anche dei protestanti".

Segue un interessante studio di Gottfried Maron (capitolo III) con racconti e recensioni sulla letteratura di Ignazio di Loyola e con recensioni, fatte in senso ecumenico, senza evitare un rapporto con Roma e la Chiesa cattolica. Tenne in considerazione il rapporto tra Ignazio e Lutero mostrando Ignazio come "mistico", uomo "tecnico dell'anima", e Lutero come "teologo". Ambedue importanti per il cammino indicato da Cristo per tutti cristiani. La sua conoscenza a Ignazio è molto importante per tutti.

Alcuni scritti e studi sul Monachesimo, che si incontrano in Hans-Oskar Weber (capitolo IV), direttore della tecnica Università di Clausthal, che dopo anni di lavori alla Biblioteca di Göttingen intese darsi a un'esposizione storica alla vita monastica, senza rendere presente anche i pregiudizi protestanti. Con questa dedizione espone un argomento, già nato nell'antico cristianesimo, sul sentirsi lontano dal mondo. Ciò spiega che nel lavoro di Weber appare anche una ripresa del Monachesimo cattolico, indicando la posizione di Giovanni

Cassiano (in tre scritti). Egli sottolinea che “Monachesimo è vita secondo il Vangelo, è vita secondo la dottrina e l’esistenza degli Apostoli”.

Negli studi della teologia protestante, la dottoressa Fairy von Lilienfeld (capitolo V), in cui si incontra già il desiderio di arrivare a buoni rapporti tra la Chiesa evangelica e cattolica, prevalgono testi anche sul Monachesimo ortodosso, da lei indicato il “grande complesso della vita ortodossa”. Si incontra una preziosa descrizione sull’Oriente ortodosso, ma appoggiato a San Benedetto. È molto interessante e utile di conoscere tutte le descrizioni della pratica monastica, del Medioevo e nei suoi passati, in cui, con elementi essenziali, “nacque davvero il monachesimo protestante”. Oltre a questa realtà, l’autrice riporta anche San Basilio e i Padri monastici. Per conoscere l’origine dei monasteri femminili dei protestanti, è proprio questo capitolo che ci dona una perfetta conoscenza. In più, si nota in lei l’impegno di darsi al dialogo ecumenico e in seguito ad incontrarsi con persone della Chiesa ortodossa.

Su “Conventi evangelici”, esistenti in diversi paesi già nel sec. XVI, parla Nicolaus Heutger (capitolo VI), desiderando mostrare la via monastica come verità piacevole a Dio. I monaci non sono persone inutili nel mondo. Anche se da parte del popolo vengono talvolta rifiutate, dalla parte di Dio vengono stimati. Certo, il suo particolare pensiero mostrato sulle fondazioni e sulle opere e attività dei monaci (103 lavori), come è avvenuto fin dal Medioevo, è un prezioso aiuto per tutti i cristiani che desiderano avere una buona conoscenza sulla storia del monachesimo non si deve dimenticare che Benedettini e Cistercensi erano per lui stimati e presi come “oggetti necessari ed esemplari per arrivare alla conoscenza del monachesimo”.

Importanti studi sull’ascesi, sul monachesimo e sulla storia religiosa vengono offerti dal teologo protestante Georg Kretschmar (capitolo VII). Espone le forme essenziali degli elementi e della struttura del monachesimo, dall’inizio della storia cristiana fino ai tempi del secolo scorso. Sottolinea che si deve avere conoscenze sull’importanza della storia del monachesimo nello sviluppo del cristianesimo. Dopo il suo caratteristico lavoro si incontra nel libro anche Wilhelm Schneemelcher (capitolo VIII), attaccato al servizio diaconico nella Chiesa antica, studiando pensieri sull’origine del Monachesimo in Egitto, considerato già nel sec. IV esistente come ermetismo e anche come vita simile ai gruppi di anacoreti e cenobiti. La loro forma di una vita religiosa era derivata dal cristianesimo, come sequela del “vincitore Cristo che ha annunciato al mondo la salvezza di Dio”. Il poter continuare con un dialogo ecumenico si esprime in Schneemelcher con la sua amicizia con teologi greci e ortodossi.

Anche Rudolf Lorenz (capitolo IX) ha contribuito ad una buona pratica moderna con i suoi lavori che presentano l’inizio e l’antico periodo del Monachesimo. Ha studiato anche sul libro di G. Turbessi, sulla storia del Monachesimo in Italia, dall’origine alla fine del Medioevo, ritenendo importante conoscere in Germania opere italiane, per presentare le diverse forme dell’esistenza dei monaci (dal sec. I al VI). Fece anche due studi sulla “Vita Antonii”, ritenuta molto importante come esempio della vita eremitica. In più, egli offre una preziosa presentazione con le date e con i fatti sul monachesimo

degli anni antichi, tenendo presente soprattutto i paesi del mondo orientale e mostrandolo come “movimento per un cristianesimo decisivo”.

Anche Peter Nagel (capitolo X) non deve essere dimenticato per le sue posizioni circa la vita ascetica nella Chiesa antica e circa i motivi della vita religiosa, come imitazione di Cristo e come anticipazione della vita eterna, facendo così la “vita degli Angeli”. Tutto ciò è motivato con la vita monastica. Con una tale esposizione l'autore offre una profonda introduzione nella vita cristiana antica e sottolinea che “nella Chiesa antica il Monachesimo è diventato uno dei fondamenti che sono rimasti nella Chiesa cattolica fino ad oggi”. I suoi lavori sono importanti per conoscere in ordine gli scritti antichi e per comprendere “le origini del Monachesimo”.

Un particolare interesse dei Protestanti per Francesco d'Assisi è la base di uno degli studi anche di Kurt Victor Selge (capitolo XI), utile per entrare in un Monachesimo significativo. Tutto serve in un certo senso per descrivere anche la nuova vita protestante, e ciò spiega che egli riprende l'esempio di Gioacchino da Fiore, intendendolo come “mistico apocalittico”, di cui “l'orizzonte dei pensieri è legato anche alla Chiesa e alla fede cattolica dei suoi tempi, con la prospettiva del futuro”. Interessante è la sua presentazione di Gioacchino come “teologo della teologia monastica”, tutto in servizio dell'esistenza cristiana. Ciò spiega anche il suo aver esposto *L'Opera omnia* di Gioacchino.

Di Selge esistono anche otto articoli sul Monachesimo, specialmente ricordando Francesco d'Assisi e Gioacchino di Fiore, per offrire ai protestanti una nuova e preziosa interpretazione. Una lettura dei suoi studi attesta anche ai cristiani cattolici che il Protestantesimo non ha escluso gli autori santi e le loro opere. Anche nei tempi moderni ciò non viene allontanato come una specie di ritorno al Medioevo, motivo per cui non si può allontanare un rapporto tra Protestantesimo e Monachesimo.

Il capitolo che segue ha un carattere biografico. È scritto da Bernd Jasper (capitolo XII), il suo racconto è pieno di esperienze monastiche e attesta il suo impegno di essersi donato anche a Roma allo studio sulla Regola Benedettina. Dopo alcune domande importanti comincia a dedicarsi a una storica e completa conoscenza del monachesimo, come esiste nel Protestantesimo. I suoi ricordi su lavori degli anni passati e tutte le sue esposizioni di studi, nominati e interpretati brevemente, danno un particolare interesse a questo capitolo: Tutto fa comprendere che in Jasper incontriamo questo grande impegno di mostrare il rapporto del Protestantesimo con il Monachesimo cattolico.

Georg Günter Blum (capitolo XIII) si era messo a scrivere un libro su *Rabbula d'Edessa*, il vescovo della Siria (350-435/6) che apparteneva alla evangelica fraternità di Michael e alla società degli amici di mistica cristiana. È un interessante racconto sulla gioventù, sulla conversione e sulla vita ascetica di Rabbula. Blum mostra il suo cambiamento dall'esistenza eremitica alla vita monastica in cui appartiene l'aver preso l'esempio della vita di Sant'Antonio. Rabbula ha lasciato precisazioni sulla Regola monastica, di cui Blum si

ricorda nel presente articolo, creando così il fondamento per una nuova conoscenza di Rabbula.

Nello studio seguente si incontra un teologo protestante, Gert Windelborn (capitolo XIV), che nel secolo scorso si è dato ad affermare la Riforma anche politicamente nella Diocesi tedesca, per affermare buoni progressi di apprezzare la Regola monastica. Ha ripreso Francesco d'Assisi, Bernardo di Chiaravalle, Gioacchino di Fiore, scrivendo tre libri che vanno apprezzati per il loro lavoro monastico. Un prezioso studio su santi cristiani del Medioevo viene esposto (capitolo XV) da Martin Tetz, autore di una ottima esposizione su Atanasio d'Alessandria. Si è dedicato anche a un studio su "Inizio del Monachesimo", risolvendo anche problemi eventualmente esistenti, mostrando il significato del rapporto tra "Ascetica e mistica", attestando la storia iniziale del Monachesimo.

Alla fine di questo libro, Bernd Jaspert ha ritenuto necessario dare una precisa indicazione sulle Abbreviazioni, usate in genere e anche negli scritti particolari (pp. 696-697), e si è dedicato a riportare in ordine alfabetico un ampio Elenco delle Fonti e della Letteratura (pp. 698-795). Infine ha riportato un Registro, un elenco dei nomi e anche degli Argomenti da cercare, e in più un elenco dei Luoghi e dei Testi biblici citati (pp. 796-859). Tutti ciò è molto utile per arrivare a una profonda e anche nuova conoscenza circa gli inizi e i tempi medioevali del Monachesimo.

In questo ottimo lavoro di Bernd Jaspert esiste, assieme con la storia del Monachesimo, una precisa teologia spirituale. Non è solo un'interpretazione delle caratteristiche esclusive del Protestantesimo, ma intende una vera e profonda presentazione del cristianesimo, come oggi è necessario per tutti. Per questo il presente libro è molto significativo, anche per essere conosciuto e interpretato da cattolici e ortodossi. Per questo una lettura delle pagine interessanti può servire nelle attuali ricerche dell'Ecumenismo, anche una traduzione italiana potrebbe dare concrete informazioni.

Certamente, un giudizio di questo ottimo e particolare libro merita di venir riconosciuto anche da papa Benedetto XVI, come egli ha fatto con il volume precedente del lavoro di Jaspert, e va considerato e interpretato, nel senso di una vera spiritualità di comunione. Bisogna leggere e interpretare tutto questo lavoro, accettando la sua identità come prezioso studio cristiano. Ciò ci eviterebbe che "ogni nostro sforzo sfocerebbe in un arido e vuoto attivismo", come ha detto il Card. Kasper. E non si deve dimenticare l'Enciclica *Ut unum sint*, del 1995 che ci propone un arricchimento interiore e reciproco, con un dialogo teologico che ci indica la via per aprirci al futuro di un solo cristianesimo. Per renderlo più facile e veramente possibile ci mostra la convinzione di Bernd Jaspert presentata in questo libro. Così, con questo libro si arriva a vivere con fede e con accettazione del Monachesimo in tutta la Chiesa.

BLOMMESTIJN, HEIN, *et al* (eds.) with the help of Wendy Litjens, *Seeing the Seeker – Explorations in the Discipline of Spirituality: A Festschrift for Kees Waaijman on the occasion of his 65th birthday*. Titus Brandsma Institute – Studies in Spirituality, Supplement 19. 2008, pp. viii, 687. Peeters, Bondgenotenlaan 153, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium (www.peeters-leuven.be). ISBN 978-90-429-2163-4. € 85.00.

This handsome volume is a fitting tribute to Professor Kees Waaijman, O.Carm., on the occasion of his 65th birthday. It constitutes a timely and well deserved recognition of his monumental contribution to the academic study of spirituality. For forty years the Titus Brandsma Institute has nurtured and been graced by Waaijman's scholarly work and he in turn has inspired or been part of a whole new generation of researchers and scholars, eleven of whom feature in this collection. Appreciation for Kees Waaijman's contribution to the scientific study of spirituality is warmly expressed by fellow scholars and colleagues from eleven different countries and five continents. The predominance of voices from the Netherlands is understandable among these, notably: Hein Blommestijn, Jos Huls, Elizabeth Hense, Toine van den Hoogen, Charles Caspers, Fritz Mertens, Peter Nissen and Huub Welzen. Because of the excellence and variety of the material, I am selfish enough to wish that all articles were written in English to maximise my full enjoyment of this work.

The forty essays displayed here are divided, albeit unevenly, into seven categories. Some overlapping occurs which demonstrates the need for a broad canvas to showcase the multifaceted nature of the evolving discipline of Spirituality today. Categories represented include: Foundations, Biblical Spirituality, History, Modern devotion, Currents trends, Mysticism and Mystagogy. The styles of writing range from scientific empirical to contemplative mystical with a strong mystagogical emphasis throughout. There is something for everyone: from a study of Burn-out (Mertens and Blommestijn) and its implication for spirituality to a discernible engagement with embodiment issues with emphasis on the need for spirituality in the field of medical care. When it comes to mystical content, it is understandable (and gratifying) that a high concentration of Carmelite riches prevails.

One might be surprised at finding among the contents a delightful Middle-Dutch miracle play of Mary (Teule) which can be proved to have Arabic roots. The world-wide phenomenon which witnesses to a raising to consciousness of mystical awareness is evident in a number of essays. Celia Kourie's seminal essay makes the important point that 'mystical consciousness can be a meeting-place for the encounter between east and west; and can contribute in so many diverse ways 'to the many-faceted splendour of the Ultimate...' (p. 620).

There is much to be learned from traditions not our own: from Calvinist (Jochemson), Islamic (Mercado) and Hindu Christian (Vineeth) spiritualities. These can evoke mutual understanding and respect while proffering

undeniable enrichment and fresh insight into one's own tradition. Having recently attended a Spiritual Directors' Conference in the Netherlands, I was interested to learn how Calvinist Spirituality helps one understand the Dutch temperament better; a fact which confirms the contextual nature of all spirituality. An exploration of metaphors central to Islamic Spirituality is of enormous interest since we learn that themes such as 'the Desert', 'the Guide' and 'the Path' are common landmarks in the three Semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and emphasise a common heritage.

With a volume of this size and scope, the reviewer is tempted to pick and choose, focussing on what is of immediate interest. There are three recommendations I would make as reviewer. There is first and foremost an important introductory biographical tribute made by Professor Peter Nissen to Kees Waaijman which recounts how this prodigious talent has evolved and was fostered over the years. Thanks to Wendy Litgens there is a complete bibliography of his writings. The way is paved, therefore for a full length biography and analysis of Waaijman's work. Secondly there is huge scope for the scholar who is interested in areas of research in the field of Biblical spirituality, interspirituality, spirituality in the field of medicine and care for the sick, as well as in the doctor-patient relationship (Post and Bouwer). Specialist areas, such as spirituality and the city (Sheldrake) are given scholarly treatment and tribute paid to the great work of Michel de Certeau, a modern pioneer of 'finding God in all things'.

With the growing need for a spiritual focus in people's lives today, the twin topics of discernment and spiritual direction attract attention. Greater nuance must be applied when these topics are studied in and through the life of St Thérèse. In her case a distinction is made between direct communication from God, evidenced in her divinely inspired 'Little Way', and her own practice of discernment in the direction of her novices. Distinctions exemplified in the saint's life are carefully addressed through the painstaking scholarship of Chris O'Donnell, O.Carm., who wisely concludes that while spiritual guidance and discernment can be taught and practised, room must be left for 'that extra which God may provide by way of charism' (p. 354). It is interesting to read O'Donnell side by side with Wil Derkse who links the practice of discernment in Ignatius and Benedict. Both saints offer a framework for 'seeking God and following Christ'.

The practice of Ignatian discernment is one way while the cultivation of Benedict's twelve step ladder to humility and wisdom to choose 'the garden of a blessed life' is another. Both practices, though closely allied, reflect the unique temperaments of their authors. The findings of Janet Ruffing's qualitative research based on the narratives of contemporary people, some of whom suffer mental disintegration, point to the phenomenon of hearing voices today. Such states may indicate genuine mystical phenomena and indicate 'the in-break of the Divine' in people's lives. The hearer is guided towards reflection and discernment; proof that competent spiritual direction is a much needed spiritual practice today.

Although the Bible has always been a source of spirituality, the discipline of Biblical Spirituality is relatively recent as evidenced in the separate contributions of Lombaard, de Villiers and Welzen. These three contributions warrant careful study by students of Spirituality since they demonstrate how Waaijman's hermeneutic research methodology can be applied to 'a spiritual reading of Biblical and mystical texts'. Authentic Biblical Spirituality has the transformation of the reader at heart. The effectiveness of the word of God in the Lucan corpus causes the reader's heart 'to burn'. The liberating, transformative love of the Revelation of John holds the firm conviction that spirituality is 'not a method of literary analysis but of appropriation'. Lombaard, writing from a South African perspective, proposes a possible four-stranded working model for the discipline of Biblical Spirituality. He believes ultimately that Scripturally speaking, history does not have the final word but it is when histories meet that faith happens; when there is an overlap between the text of Scripture and the substance of people's live. The Holy Spirit is truly at work when a fragment of text touches a fragment of life experience.

Carmelus readers in particular will find in Donna Ursuto's essay on 'Carmelite Spirituality Today' a compelling call to live as people 'on fire with God's love', 'to turn every place into a Carmel' and live everywhere as contemplative community in today's spiritually thirsty world. Several rich contributions in the field of contemplative mystical prayer (with multiple references to the Carmelite mystics) will facilitate this process. Since it is love which gives real access to God, Bernard McGinn takes up the challenge of relating human and divine *eros*. Mystical love of God indicates that human *eros* 'could be, in some way at least, a metaphor for and even a participation in the divine *eros* that creates and redeems the world' (p. 230).

Keith Egan, T.O.Carm., and Kevin Culligan, O.C.D., masterfully explore the roles of divine and human love in the mystical journeys toward union in John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila respectively. Again and again the role of *eros* is accentuated in contemplative prayer, with a perennial return to the *Song of Songs* as its seminal text. For Egan, the integration of *agape* and *eros*, 'two fundamental forms of love', have far-reaching effects for Christian theology and spirituality. His exploration of *eros* in John of the Cross's 'Dark Night', with its 'unmistakeable erotic story line', ends with the admonition that our ultimate testing will be in love, a love that retains its human *eros*. Culligan shows how an intense and even intoxicating joy in the Beloved engenders a strong desire to serve, hence the reference in his must-read essay recounting 'Martha and Mary Working Together'. In the tradition of John of Saint-Samson and the Russian pilgrim depicted in *The Way of the Pilgrim*, Hein Blommestijn, O.Carm., introduces and explains the purifying power of aspiring prayer, which is the secret of praying always. 'Aspiring, we are no longer ourselves, but we become Himself'; such prayer is transformative (p. 558).

On a more analytic note, Rob Faesan upholds the radical humanism of the Christian mystic which seems to have upset the totalitarian 'applecart' of the Later Middle Ages and caused ecclesial conflict. 'When the human person

is essentially an “individual”, then he or she can be easily considered an interchangeable unit in the socio-economic fabric’, whereas when the vision of the human person is theocentric as upheld by the mystics, he/she is capable of union in a love encounter with God, which renders the person irreplaceable. The discipline of Spirituality cries out for this kind of anthropology which has Hadewijch, Eckhart and Ruusbroec among its exponents. It is an anthropology however, which can and should be expressed in contemporary language, integrating contemporary findings from the human sciences as has already been done in Pittsburgh, U.S.A., by another great Dutch national, Adrian van Kaam, CSSp. The authentic individuality of the mystic has the constant search for God at heart, as Nissen masterfully points out in his Carthusian-based ‘topography of solitude’ which may be simultaneously a ‘solitary paradise of love’ and ‘a battleground of stern struggle’. Though many of these articles come under the category of ‘History of Spirituality’, they have a strong mystagogical thrust and directive.

This volume indeed, merits a review for each section of its contents. While the manner in which I have selected some articles over others may seem unfair, I cannot, given my obvious limitations, do full justice to all of its contents. This assessment is at least a beginning; a first reading of some wonderful material inspired by and evidencing a growing expertise in the field of Spirituality. I congratulate Kees Waaijman on his coming of age. Having recently met him in his home country, I can confidently wish him many further years of fruitful scholarship. *Ad Multos Annos!*

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EUNICE DOS SANTOS; *La morte mistica in san Paolo della Croce*, Città Nuova, Roma 2007, pp. 172, ISBN 978-88-311-73366-0. € 14.00

Il presente studio sulla vita spirituale e mistica di San Paolo della Croce (1694 - 1775) è un prezioso lavoro, fatto da una consacrata laica e dottoressa in teologia (Roma, Teresianum). È un libro non completamente nuovo, ma interessante e informativo per molte persone cristiane, come valido aiuto per poter godere l'esempio della vita e l'insegnamento di questo Maestro di spiritualità. Su Paolo della Croce, infatti, esistono altri studi, tutti ancora fatti nel secolo scorso. Per questo, egli è stato promosso da Giovanni Paolo II, come un esempio di una particolare vita laica, in cui emerge il modello di *sequela Christi*. Paolo della Croce ha condotto una vita completamente consacrata a Dio, una vita laica di completo abbandono alla volontà divina con la disposizione ad accettare l'esperienza della morte mistica, da lui identificata con la morte di S. Giovanni della Croce.

Il presente libro ci introduce a Paolo della Croce, nato a Ovada (AL), il 3 gennaio 1694, con il nome secolare Paolo Danei, e morto a Roma, il 18 ottobre 1775. Già all'età di 19 anni intraprese una via di perfezione evangelica.

Iniziò suo cammino intimamente spirituale godendo di fenomeni e grazie straordinarie. Non gli mancarono “visioni intellettuali”, ma non si manifestarono come invito a scegliere una vita monastica. Per lui invece nacque la decisione di fondare una famiglia religiosa, destinata a fare perpetua memoria della passione di Gesù, e a promuoverla così tra i fedeli. Godendo grandi esperienze spirituali, Paolo della Croce si dedicò con tutta la sua esistenza agli affari della fondazione della nuova congregazione, alla predicazione di missioni popolari, ad esercizi spirituali, e alla direzione spirituale di religiosi e laici.

La sua attività spirituale avvenne nella difficile situazione del secolo XVIII a motivo di lotte politiche e di critiche religiose. Ciò spiega il suo voler arrivare a una nuova fondazione, per realizzare con essa la vita cristiana, sperando di superare le crisi del tempo e di poter costruire la rinascita della spiritualità. Era l'epoca, infatti, in cui si sentiva il bisogno di “un cristianesimo sicuro”, e proprio Paolo della Croce si era dedicato ad un “ardore apostolico”, raggiungendo il suo massimo splendore con le sue predicazioni popolari.

Tutte queste sue intenzioni vengono espone nella parte I del libro: *L'ambiente storico e religioso di Paolo della Croce*. Nel suo secolo XVIII egli “si presentò come uno dei più austeri asceti e instancabile missionario”, con un generoso impegno di una “mistica equilibrata”, accettata e vissuta da un laico cristiano.

La parte II contiene uno studio su: *L'itinerario spirituale di Paolo della Croce*, sulla sua vita di preghiera, di consacrazione, sul combattimento spirituale, sull'unione mistica trasformante e sul mistico matrimonio con Cristo. “La passione di Cristo è un mare di amore e di dolore”, una grande grazia di giubilo e anche di patire. Ciò creò in lui una “vita moriente”, il cammino per vivere in intima unione con Cristo.

Tutto questo è la base della parte III su: *Il trattato della morte mistica*. Come maestro, Paolo della Croce ha lasciato il Manoscritto sulla morte mistica, sulle sue condizioni e su alcuni temi dottrinali da lui trattati (nominati anche nella *Scheda biografica*).

Si tratta quindi di un libro molto interessante che fa comprendere Paolo della Croce nella sua esistenza di “morte mistica, ovvero olocausto di vero spirito di un'anima religiosa”.

GIOVANNA DELLA CROCE, O.C.D.

VINCENZO NOJA, Meditazioni mariane, e altri scritti mistici, Editrice Ancilla, 31015 Consegliano TV, 2004, pp. 304, ISBN 978-88-88609-44-7.

Con la presente pubblicazione l'autore si è servito delle opere di *François Pollien (Certosino francese)* che ha lasciato buoni studi anche su *Maria, L'Immacolata e La Madre dei dolori*, per dare un ampio studio sulla devozione e mistica mariana, che esiste nell'Ordine dei Certosini fin dal Medioevo, certamente solo con pochissime esposizioni prima dell'Ottocento, in cui il p. Pollien. ha presentato la marianità nella spiritualità del suo Ordine.

Infatti, le Lettere di san Bruno e di altri autori del XI e del XII secolo non entrano nella tradizionale atmosfera della letteratura spirituale, ma non dimenticano di trovare nella loro esistenza i segni di una materna presenza della Madonna. Lo sottolinea l'immagine, riportata nel presente libro, che mostra san Bruno in ginocchio davanti alla Santa Vergine Maria, mentre si trovava nella Serra in Calabria. Ciò spiega anche che un'immagine di Maria esisteva sempre nelle chiese e nei conventi certosini, e specialmente in ciascuna delle loro celle, come motivo di devozione e di predilezione a Maria, come Madre e ispiratrice. Ciò sottolinea le parole di p. Pollien, presentate da Vincenzo Noja nel Preambolo del libro:

“Come il Certosino per mezzo dell'Ufficio canonico si tiene unito a Dio, allo stesso modo si conserva nell'intimità di Maria per mezzo dell'Ufficio di Lei, presentandole in nome della Chiesa omaggi e preghiere con tanta frequenza”, (Vita contemplativa, p. 97).

Questa constatazione di Vincenzo Noja mostra che p. Pollien fu un grande devoto e appassionato della Madonna. Per questo si comprende la sua intenzione di riportare nei suoi libri i testi mariani più importanti e caratteristici della sua vita certosina. La scelta di Vincenzo Noja afferma i valori autentici e le caratteristiche della sua esperienza spirituale durante gli anni passati nella vita monastica. Tutto viene ben esposto da p. Pollien, maestro di vita interiore, che ha passato, la vita nella Grande Certosa presso Grenoble e negli ultimi anni, nella Certosa di Serra in Calabria. Ciò spiega perché uno dei suoi libri ha addirittura il titolo: *Grandeurs mariales - études dans l'Ave Maria*.

I testi scelti da Vincenzo Noja sono stati corretti, rivisti e anche commentati, non basandosi solo sulle prime edizioni antiche, e nemmeno su i testi già pubblicati in italiano. Prevale la sua intenzione di presentare il valore meditativo e anche mistico delle riflessioni ed esposizioni di p. Pollien. Questo carattere del suo elenco appare in tre parti: La prima: **MEDIATAZIONI MARIANE**, la seconda: **LA RICERCA DI DIO E LA PRATICA SPIRITUALE**, e la terza: **IL SILENZIO**.

La prima parte comincia con il Magnificat, che si innalza mentre si eleva l'*Exultavit*, Seguono le *Contemplazioni sull'Ave Maria*: Il saluto angelico, il tenere Maria benedetta fra le donne, la Santa Madre di Dio che prega per noi, adesso e nell'ora della nostra morte (11 capitoli). La seconda parte contiene una scelta di pagine e testi di p. Pollien sul nostro cammino verso Dio, per arrivare all'intimità divina e al matrimonio spirituale. (7 capitoli).

Anche la terza parte del libro è di carattere diverso. Si tratta delle *Meditazioni sul silenzio* per mostrare l'impegno dei monaci certosini a vivere con grande importanza per poter arrivare a una concreta esperienza spirituale ed esistenziale nella loro vita religiosa. Il silenzio crea l'atmosfera dell'anima. Non è soltanto la divina garanzia della preghiera. È invece “il significato divino che noi dobbiamo cercare ostinatamente, al fine di farne la guida della nostra condotta”.

La seconda e la terza parte di questo libro non entrano nella spiegazione della Meditazione mariana, ma riportano “Scritti mistici” sull'atteggiamento

interiore e spirituale, sempre indispensabile per poter aprirsi all'intervento della Madonna e per vivere con una devota meditazione dei misteri di Maria.

Il lavoro di Vincenzo Noja è quindi una bellissima esposizione sulla spiritualità certosina. Riportando gli studi e scritti di p. Pollien, che sono anche un riprendere delle Lettere di san Bruno e di altri autori certosini, si incontra la testimonianza di valori autentici di una concreta esperienza spirituale dei Certosini, squisitamente culturali e documentari. Per questo, il libro apre orizzonti nuovi della spiritualità certosina. La lettura del libro è per questo di grande valore anche per tutti i cristiani di oggi, non semplicemente perché si incontrano gli studi medioevali e quelli del secolo scorso dei Certosini, ma anche attraverso le interpretazioni e gli approfondimenti spirituali di p. Pollien. Così la lettura di questo nuovo libro ha un particolare significato per conoscere le origini della spiritualità certosina e per poter arrivare ad una vita spirituale di oggi che si appoggia sui loro valori tradizionali, messi in luce per costruire nel lettore un dolce cammino, in cui non si dischiudono gli orizzonti di una nuova conoscenza della Devozione mariana e della vita spirituale del Medioevo, come è nell'Ordine certosino.

GIOVANNA DELLA CROCE, O.C.D.

MCCORMACK, MARY, O.C.D., *Upon This Mountain: Prayer in the Carmelite Tradition*. 2009, pp. 76. Teresian Press, Carmelite Priory, Boars Hill, Oxford, OX1 5HB, United Kingdom (www.carmelite.org.uk). ISBN 978-0-947916-09-1. £ 4.00.

This book, whilst not an academic study, is nevertheless worthy of notice in *Carmelus* since it expands upon a study course on 'Prayer in the Carmelite Tradition' written by the author and her prioress at Notting Hill Carmel in London, offered as part of the Carmelite Institute of Britain & Ireland's Adult Education Diploma in Carmelite Studies (www.cibi.ie). The scholarly apparatus of the book is minimal, but quotations are given appropriate citation within the text or as footnotes. The book is also noteworthy in terms of Carmelite publishing, as one of the first offerings of the recently revived Teresian Press, based at the Discalced Carmelite Priory at Boars Hill near Oxford, and the appended list of forthcoming titles is enticing.

This succinct book (just 76 pages) offers an excellent overview of prayer in the Carmelite tradition. The boast on the back cover's blurb that 'In a few short chapters, this profound book says everything' is not far from the truth, given the limited scope of a popular-level publication.

Even in a broad introduction to the subject of prayer in the Carmelite tradition there are some disappointing omissions (at least from the perspective of a lay Carmelite of the 'Ancient Observance'). The 'Carmelite tradition' is here interpreted almost exclusively as Teresian, and whilst no one could doubt the pre-eminence of Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross as experts in the life of prayer, the three hundred years of Carmelite life preceding them, including the injunctions on prayer in the *Rule of Saint Albert*, receive only

brief reference. Nevertheless, such omissions do not detract from the immense value of this small book, the early pages of which give good consideration to the importance of praying with Scripture in the Carmelite tradition, both in *Lectio Divina* and the Divine Office. Liturgical prayer is also upheld as a great source of spiritual nourishment during periods of dryness in private prayer. References after Teresa and John are again exclusively Discalced (Thérèse of Lisieux, Elizabeth of the Trinity, and Edith Stein) where points might well have been illustrated by the likes of Mary Magdalene de'Pazzi or Titus Brandsma, but this book goes well beyond partisan distinctions and has something truly valuable to contribute to the spiritual growth of all branches of the Carmelite Family.

Given the emphasis upon Teresa and John, a reader coming to this subject anew might have appreciated a little more biographical information on the reformers, but again this is not a serious omission and too much detail in a survey of this sort is to be avoided. A particular strength of the book is the way that the author weaves the insights of the great figures of Carmel with practical experience from her own life as a Carmelite nun for over forty years.

Such a personal perspective is, of course, reminiscent of the dynamic of Carmelite prayer, which is essentially an interactive relationship with a God 'whom we know loves us' rather than a strict 'method' of prayer, and Sr. Mary captures this wonderfully in the opening chapter:

Those who turn to the Carmelite saints for guidance in prayer have often become confused by the multiplicity of books and methods and may be wondering if there is a Carmelite approach that would make the exercise easier and more fruitful. Or they may be troubled because prayer, formerly a source of peace and comfort, has become difficult and unrewarding, and they fear they have gone astray. It can come as a surprise that neither of the two recognised authorities on prayer, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, advocates a particular method. In all their writings, Teresa says very little, and John even less, about how to spend the time of prayer. Rather, they go to the heart of what prayer is all about: exposure to the reality of a self-surrendering God. They indicate some basic requirements in our way of living, if the encounter is to be authentic, and they chart the path of growing intimacy, leading to full union with God.

Such a simple and direct summary of the dynamic of prayer in the Carmelite tradition will be invaluable to those who have heard of Carmel's wisdom, or a caricature of it, but know little of its reality. It is not the only occasion on which Sr. Mary is able to debunk popular misconceptions about Carmel's spirituality, and as such this book would serve as a particularly valuable resource in initial (and indeed ongoing) formation.

The second chapter on 'Prayer as Relationship' begins (I believe accurately) that 'The most attractive aspect of Carmelite spirituality for people of today is probably the special emphasis on prayer experienced as intimate relationship with God' (p. 31). This leads the author to consider the masks and roles individuals adopt to conceal their sense of 'darkness, pain and insecurity', and how such 'poses' can be projected to make false human

constructions about the nature of God. The explanation of the disturbing yet vital place of silence in breaking down the barriers between 'the *real* person that I am and the *real* God that he is' (p. 32) will encourage many to embark on this difficult journey (even if it fails to challenge the construction of God as male). In a non-threatening way Sr. Mary transposes the insights of psychology to explain the dynamics and experiences typical of a soul committed to prayer. The metaphors of the spiritual journey – including John of the Cross's image of the praying person as a burning log and Christ as the apparently hidden lover – are presented in language that can the reader can clearly grasp, without loss of poetic effect.

The third chapter, 'Into Stillness', encourages the person of faith to pray just as they find themselves before God, in a moment of self-awareness, an awareness that accepts a certainly inability to express oneself and a gradual surrender that lets God take control. The chapter's final section on 'Praying through distractions' will undoubtedly resonate with many readers and the author's wise words will encourage them: 'very many people undervalue their prayer, disparaging it at the very point where it no longer offers any obstacle to direct encounter with God. If all we can do at the time of prayer is just to *be* there, then we must be content to sit there and just *be*. In that place, at that moment, God shares with us the divine name, 'I AM'.' (p. 50).

The fourth chapter, on 'The Apostolate of Contemplation', opens with the essential point that 'All prayer is apostolic'. Citing images from Carmel's three Doctors of the Church, the author demonstrates how 'The fruit of contemplative prayer is a heart that widens to a universal embrace' (p. 62). 'Contemplation' and 'meditation' are perhaps not always clearly distinguished in the book, but the salutary point is made very strongly that 'As our union with God deepens, we know ourselves to be one with all that is God's. We are brought to identify more and more fully with the needs and sufferings, hopes and strivings of the Church and the whole world.' (p. 55). This echo of Vatican II needs to be repeated to God's people today. The sense of prayer as being in itself an act of service to a needy Church and World is one which no doubt stems from the author's own experience and perspective as an enclosed religious; Carmelite friars (other than John of the Cross) and laity are not referred to as such in the book, but will no doubt find many of its insights pertinent to their vocations as well.

The epilogue, entitled 'Carmel as Garden-Land', is a reprint of an article that appeared some time ago in *Mount Carmel* magazine; whilst it does not flow inevitably from the previous chapters in terms of subject, aesthetically it makes a beautiful conclusion to a book that ought easily to find a place on the bookshelves of every Carmelite individual and community in the English-speaking world, and which will hopefully be translated into many other tongues.

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Université de Lausanne, La Suisse

LIBRI AD CONSILIUM COMMENTARIORUM MISSI

CARDOSO SOBRINHO, José, O.Carm., *Questions and answers on the priestly celibacy*, 2005, pp. 98. Archbishop's Secretariate Av. Rui Barbosa, 409 – Graças 52011-040 Recife PE, Brazil. (Telephone: +55 (81) 3421-3158, e-mail: aor@hotmail.com.br).

DENOHOE, LIVINUS, O.C.D., *The Prayer of the Holy Family*, 2008, pp. 115. Carmelite Book Service, Discalced Carmelite Priory, Boars Hill, Oxford, OX1 5HB, United Kingdom. (www.carmelite.org.uk). £ 7.00.

ÉLISABETH DE LA TRINITÉ, O.C.D., *Chaque dimanche est une aurore: 52 Méditations d'Élisabeth*. Choies et présentées par Conrad De Meester, 2005, pp. 146. Carmel Edit, 23 Kasteellaan, B-9220 Moerzeke, Belgique. (Fax 052 48.10.92, laurent.elisabeth@scarlet.be). ISBN 90-80904-24-4. € 12.

FERRER ARELLANO, JOAQUÍN, *San José nuestro padre y señor: La trinidad de la tierra, Teología y espiritualidad josefina*, 2007, pp. 364. Editorial Arca de la Alianza A.C. 48 06670 Herrera Duque (Ba), y/o Paseo de la Habana 68, 28036, Madrid. (Teléfonos: +34 (91) 656 85 71 982, fax: +34 (91) 924 650 982). ISBN 84-611005-7-3.

GUERRERO PÉREZ-ACEDO, IRENE, O.C.D., "Voy a la luz, al amor, a la vida..." (los últimos días de Elisabeth), 2009, pp. 122. Editorial de Espiritualidad, Triana, 9 – 28016, Madrid. (www.editorialdeespiritualidad.com). ISBN 978-84-7068-347-3.

VELASCO BAYÓN, BALBINO, O.Carm., *Anex: El palacio de Pedro "El Cruel" en el contexto histórico de Cuéllar*, 2008, pp. 182. Cámara Oficial de Comercio e Industria de Segovia, Segovia.

VELASCO BAYÓN, BALBINO, O.Carm., *Cuéllar*, Cuéllar, 2008, pp. 55. Editorial Mediterráneo-Meral Ediciones, S.L., C/ Río Miño, 15 – 28669 Boadilla del Monte (Madrid). ISBN Obra completa: 84-933979-1-1, ISBN Volumen 11: 978-84-935685-4-2.

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Example: JOACHIM SMET, *The Carmelites. A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Volume 1, *Ca. 1200 until the Council of Trent*, Revised Edition, Darien-Ill., Carmelite Spiritual Center, 1988, 29.

When the same author is cited again in the immediately succeeding note, use *Ibid.* (and page).

Example:

a) JOACHIM SMET, *The Carmelites. A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Volume 1, *Ca. 1200 until the Council of Trent*, Revised Edition, Darien-Ill., Carmelite Spiritual Center, 1988, 29.

b) *Ibid.*, 31.

If the same author is again cited after one or more intervening notes, please give a brief reference indicating author name, main title, (volume, if necessary), page.

Example: J. SMET, *The Carmelites*, vol. 1, 35.

When the note refers to a periodical, please give author name and surname(s), title of article in italics, name of periodical in italics preceded by “in”, volume and other information, year in parenthesis, page.

Example: GREGORIO NOVAK, *L'alleanza veneto-serba nel secolo XIV*, in *Archivio veneto-tridentino*, 8 (1925), 29.

When a note refers to an internet site, please indicate the site, its URL, and the date of access.

Example:

La Santa Sede, http://www.vatican.va/news_services/or/or_eng/text.html#3, 16 April 2008.

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5. Articles in English, Italian and Spanish should be accompanied by a summary (abstract); articles in French, German, or Portuguese should be accompanied by a summary in either English, Italian, or Spanish.

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Cuando el mismo autor es citado en la nota inmediatamente sucesiva, se escribe solamente: *Ibid.* y página/-as. Ejemplo:

- a) JOACHIM SMET, *The Carmelites. A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Volume 1, *Ca. 1200 until the council of Trent*, Revised Edition, Darien-Ill., Carmelite Spiritual Center, 1988, 29.
- b) *Ibid.*, 31.

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b) *Ibid.*, 31.

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