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# STELLA MARIS

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carmelitani in Italia nel secolo XIII. Note  
di ricerca**

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# STELLA MARIS

## Rivista web annuale di Ricerca

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# Editoriale

*di Kuba Walczak, O.Carm*

È probabilmente un'esperienza abbastanza comune sentire il tempo che passa molto velocemente. Le ore, i giorni e i mesi successivi passano sorprendentemente in fretta. È trascorso più di un anno dall'ultimo numero e l'impressione è che sia passato soltanto qualche mese. Nell'editoriale del numero precedente ho scritto della guerra in Ucraina. Purtroppo non è cambiato nulla a questo proposito. La guerra è ancora in corso, ma vale la pena ricordare che non è l'unico luogo al mondo in cui è in corso un conflitto armato. Negli ultimi anni si è prestata molta attenzione al cambiamento climatico, a ciò che stiamo facendo al mondo in cui viviamo. Confido che il nostro livello di consapevolezza, sensibilità e responsabilità in materia non potrà che aumentare. Tuttavia, è caratteristico del clima o di altri fenomeni simili il fatto che richiedano tempo. Qui, invece, dove abbiamo a che fare con le armi, una mossa irresponsabile in una frazione di secondo può porre fine all'esistenza, se non di tutti noi che viviamo sulla Terra, certamente di una parte significativa di noi. Pertanto, continuiamo a pregare per la pace nel mondo e per la cessazione di tutti i conflitti armati, in modo da poter rendere questo mondo più amichevole e fraterno.

Presentiamo il quarto numero della pubblicazione annuale del nostro Collegio "Stella Maris" e vi invitiamo cordialmente a leggere gli articoli che vi abbiamo proposto.

Giovanni Grosso, storico e presidente dell'Institutum Carmelitanum, svelerà un altro aspetto legato alla storia del nostro Ordine. Nel suo articolo affronta il tema del trasferimento dei carmelitani italiani nelle città nei primi tempi di vita del Carmelo.

Per la prima volta, e crediamo non l'ultima, presentiamo un articolo di Richard Green della Provincia inglese. Richard ha compiuto i suoi studi teologici a Roma presso l'Università Gregoriana. Attualmente sta proseguendo i suoi studi in Inghilterra. È anche dottore in scienze fisiche. Nel suo articolo, presenta la sua riflessione su un'opera spirituale intitolata "La nube della non-conoscenza".

Inoltre, per la prima volta, e ancora crediamo non l'ultima, proponiamo un articolo di un nostro confratello dello Zimbabwe della Provincia irlandese: Rangarirai Mutanga. Rangarirai sta attualmente completando il primo anno di licenza all'Università Gregoriana di Roma presso l'Istituto di Spiritualità. Il suo articolo offre una riflessione sui consigli evangelici di obbedienza, castità e povertà di fronte a cambiamenti come l'edonismo, l'ateismo e il secolarismo che vediamo nel mondo circostante.

Gli ultimi due articoli sono una continuazione del numero precedente della nostra rivista. In esso abbiamo offerto una lettura delle tesi di laurea dei nostri confratelli Mario Cadena del Messico e Sonny Wibisono dell'Indonesia. Voglio solo ricordare che Mario ha scritto la sua licenza nella teologia biblica sulla misericordia divina e l'ingratitude da parte degli Israeliti nella luce del libro di Osea 11, 1-4 presso l'Università Pontificia del Messico. Sonny invece analizza il fenomeno della luce divina nelle diverse religioni.

È la nostra speranza che ciò che proponiamo da leggere e presentiamo in questo numero della "Stella Maris" sia interessante e ben accolto.



# Insedimenti carmelitani in Italia nel secolo XIII. Note di ricerca

di Giovanni Grosso, O.Carm

La questione dell'inurbamento dei mendicanti e la loro distribuzione nel territorio cittadino ha già una ricca bibliografia, almeno per quanto riguarda i Francescani e, in misura minore, gli altri Ordini.<sup>1</sup> Assai poco si è fatto per i Carmelitani e praticamente nulla o quasi per quanto riguarda i conventi italiani.<sup>2</sup> Questo studio è un tentativo iniziale di colmare la lacuna, seppure in maniera non esaustiva né con la pretesa di dire l'ultima parola sulla questione.

## LOCA IN HEREMIS

La *Vitae formula* tratta del luogo in cui era ubicato l'eremo del Carmelo e della sua configurazione in quattro punti, nell'indirizzo, quando Alberto si rivolge al «fratello B. e agli eremiti che dimorano presso la fonte» (*Regola* 1); poi nei punti 6 e 8, dove si parla delle celle e della proibizione di mutare “luogo” senza permesso;<sup>3</sup> infine trattando della costruzione dell'oratorio in mezzo alle celle (*Regola* 14).

Davvero pochi riferimenti e del tutto generici, se non fosse per l'accento alla “Fonte” che, sappiamo da altre testimonianze, era detta “di Elia”.<sup>4</sup> D'altra parte, non c'era motivo di dare altre indicazioni a un gruppo che inizialmente, con ogni probabilità, non pensava affatto ad alcun tipo di espansione, mentre conosceva perfettamente il luogo dell'insediamento primitivo scelto possibilmente dopo il 1192, al termine della terza

<sup>1</sup> Si vedano in proposito gli ottimi studi di U. KÖPF, *Ubicazione delle case religiose*, in *Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione (DIP)*, a cura di G. Pelliccia e G. Rocca, vol. IX, Roma 1997, 1402-1433 e L. CARBONARA, *Urbanistica*, in *ibidem*, 1612-1624; le due voci sono ricche di riferimenti bibliografici appropriati.

<sup>2</sup> Segnaliamo alcuni studi sui conventi carmelitani, che però in genere non hanno come principale obiettivo lo studio dei fenomeni di urbanizzazione e ubicazione: K. EGAN, *Medieval Carmelite House England and Wales*, in *Carmelus*, 16 (1969), 142-226; P. O'DWYER, *The Irish Carmelites*, Dublin 1968; B. VELASCO BAYÓN, *Historia del Carmelo Español*, vol. I, Roma 1990; E. BOAGA, *Origine ed evoluzione dei Carmelitani in Francia dal 1235 al 1317*, in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum* 42 (1991), 91-109; R. COPSEY, *Dating Scottish Carmelite Foundations*, in *Innes Review* 49, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 41-65 (poi ripubblicato in *Carmel in Britain. Studies on the early History of the Carmelite Order*, vol. III *The Hermits from Mount Carmel*, ed. R. COPSEY, Faversham (Kent)-Rome 2004, 135-162 con il titolo: *Foundation Dates of the Scottish Carmelites Houses*; in *Carmel in Britain. Essays on the Medieval English Carmelite Province*, vol. I *People and Places*, ed. P. FITZGERALD-LOMBARD, Rome 1992 sono stati ripubblicati alcuni articoli di cui sopra assieme ad altri nuovi. Vanno inoltre segnalati i due volumi A. JACOBS, *Monasticon Carmelitanum Neerlandicum. Historisch repertorium van de kloosters van de Orde der Broeders en Zusters van O.L. Vrouw van de berg Karmel (13<sup>de</sup> eeuw-1940)*, Heerlen 2011; *Monasticon Carmelitanum. Die Klöster des Karmelitenordens (O.Carm.) in Deutschland von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Hrsg. von E. KLUETING, S. PANZAR, A. SCHOLTEN, Münster 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Cfr C. CICONETTI, *La Regola del Carmelo. Origine – Natura – Significato*, 2<sup>a</sup> edizione rivista e aumentata, Roma 2019, 575-576.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. JACQUES DE VITRY, *Historia Ierosolymitana seu Orientalis*, ed. De Sandoli, III, 318-321; 322-323, citato in E. BOAGA, *Nello spirito e nella virtù di Elia. Antologia di documenti e sussidi*, Roma 1990, p. 234; cfr anche E. FRIEDMAN, *I primi Carmelitani del Monte Carmelo*, Roma 1987, p. 148 (originale: *The Latin Hermits of Mount Carmel. A Study on Carmelite origins*, Rome 1979).



crociata, quando al Regno di Gerusalemme erano rimasti il golfo di Haifa e il Carmelo, difesi da una serie di fortificazioni.<sup>5</sup>

Dalla storia però sappiamo che la migrazione dall'eremo primitivo e la conseguente fondazione di nuovi conventi avvenne forse già solo una ventina anni dopo aver ricevuto la *Vitae formula*. Dobbiamo sviscerare con maggiore attenzione i racconti antichi per comprendere come siano andate realmente le cose. Per il momento possiamo dire che a un certo momento la crescita numerica del gruppo, la pressione turca sul brandello di regno franco rimasto, forse il richiamo dei patri lidi, o chissà quante altre motivazioni, spinsero i Carmelitani a decidere per la migrazione verso occidente. In genere si pensa a questo evento come a una fuga,<sup>6</sup> ma può anche essersi trattato di un modo per espandere l'esperienza iniziale e dividerla in contesti differenti. Non va esclusa un'influenza dovuta alla crescita del numero dei presbiteri,<sup>7</sup> dunque al sorgere della volontà di «sibi et proximis Deo propitio ad salutem proficere», come dirà qualche anno più tardi Innocenzo IV (1243-54).<sup>8</sup>

Certamente già prima del 1247, anno in cui il capitolo generale chiese al papa Innocenzo IV la conferma della *Vitae formula*,<sup>9</sup> esistevano diversi insediamenti in occidente oltre a quelli in Terra Santa compresa l'isola di Cipro: per lo meno tre conventi in Sicilia, due o tre in Inghilterra, altri due in Provenza, probabilmente Valenciennes nell'attuale Belgio, Pisa e forse Roma sulla penisola italiana. Ciò significa anche un discreto numero di frati, visto che non è pensabile una presenza di soli due o tre per convento.

L'espansione creò senza dubbio una serie di questioni, prima fra tutte la scelta in luoghi non propriamente eremitici. I revisori domenicani incaricati da Innocenzo IV di correggere e mitigare la *Vitae formula*, Hughes de St. Cher († 1263) e Guglielmo vescovo di Tartus in Siria (vescovo dal 1243 al 1263), vi aggiunsero un punto specifico su questo:

«Potete fissare la vostra abitazione nella solitudine o dove vi saranno offerti luoghi [*loca*<sup>10</sup>] adatti e convenienti al vostro modo di vita religiosa, secondo che sembrerà opportuno al Priore e ai fratelli.

Inoltre, tenendo conto della situazione del luogo in cui avete deciso di stabilirvi, ognuno di voi abbia una propria cella separata ...» (*Regola*, 5-6).

Di per sé questa norma non escludeva affatto gli eremi, che continuarono ad esserci e in qualche caso anche ad essere scelti ancora, ma apriva alla possibilità di *loca* scelti, o accettati, in siti non propriamente eremitici.

Inoltre, i revisori aggiunsero un punto a riguardo del refettorio, segno ulteriore della necessità di riorganizzare gli insediamenti in modo conforme alle differenti situazioni, pur

<sup>5</sup> Cf. S. RUNCIMAN, *Storia delle Crociate*, Einaudi, Torino, 1966.

<sup>6</sup> Questa lettura negativa – motivata anche dall'interpretazione del *propositum* come *solatium perpetuum*, ossia come servizio alla Terrasanta per tutta la vita – dovette giocare un ruolo non indifferente nella discussione, come suggerisce WILLIAM OF SANDWICH, *Chronicon de multiplicatione religiosorum Carmelitarum*, ed. G. WESSELS, in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, 3 (1914-16), 302-315. Si veda anche G. GROSSO, *La dimensione contemplativa nella Chronica di William of Sandwich*, in *Atti del Seminario Interdisciplinare di Studio sulla dimensione contemplativa nel Carmelo*, Roma, 3-6 novembre 2010 (in corso di pubblicazione).

<sup>7</sup> Gregorio IX già nel 1229 aveva concesso al priore del Carmelo la possibilità di assolvere dalla scomunica coloro che si erano allontanati dall'eremo per farsi ordinare senza i dovuti permessi (GREGORIUS IX, *Providi more* (1229), in *Bullarium Carmelitanum* I, ed. E. Monsignano, Romae, 1715, 4 (da ora: *Bull. Carm.*, I); cfr C. CICCONE, *La Regola...*, 294.

<sup>8</sup> INNOCENTIUS IV, *Paganorum Incursus* (1245), in *Bull. Carm.*, I, 8; cfr C. CICCONE, *La Regola...*, 312-313.

<sup>9</sup> INNOCENTIUS IV, *Quae honorem Conditoris* (1247), in *Bull. Carm.*, I, 8-11; cfr C. CICCONE, *La Regola...*, 327-331.

<sup>10</sup> Sul termine *locum/loca in heremis* cfr C. CICCONE, *La Regola...*, 226-243; 381; 391; sulla possibilità di scelta dei *loca* come indicatore della scelta tra la vita eremitica e mendicante cfr 435e 439.



mantenendo caratteristiche comuni, esigenza, questa, dovuta proprio al moltiplicarsi dei luoghi che tuttavia dovevano mantenere una certa uniformità e riconoscibilità:

«Inoltre questo avvenga in modo che possiate mangiare in un refettorio comune quanto vi sarà distribuito, ascoltando insieme, dove si può realizzare senza difficoltà, qualche brano della sacra Scrittura» (*Regola*, 7).<sup>11</sup>

I luoghi, dunque, potevano essere “offerti” agli eremiti Carmelitani, il che comportava la necessità di adattarsi a situazioni non sempre perfettamente rispondenti alle esigenze di un eremo. Si conosce ad esempio il caso della casa di Londra, donata da sir Richard Grey di Codnor († 1250 ca.), oppure la casa di Parigi, voluta nel 1254 da Luigi IX († 1270).<sup>12</sup>

Occorre fare attenzione alla polemica sollevata – ma di fatto non raccolta dai frati – da Nicola il Francese (1266-71), la cui *Sagitta ignea* può apparire come attacco all'eccessiva urbanizzazione dei Carmelitani, mentre costituisce piuttosto un richiamo deciso e forte ad una corretta, ben motivata e soprattutto ben preparata attuazione della dimensione apostolica dei frati.<sup>13</sup> L'invettiva di Nicola non ebbe seguito nell'Ordine, ma certamente non perché si disprezzasse la dimensione eremitica: basterebbe considerare l'onore tributato ad altri priori generali, Pierre de Millaud (1277-94), Raymond de l'Isle (1294-97) e Giovanni de Alerio (1321-30), i quali si ritirarono in un eremo per finire i loro giorni, dopo aver rinunciato al loro ufficio. Come mai lo stesso onore non viene riconosciuto a Nicola, che aveva compiuto lo stesso gesto? Probabilmente ci sfugge qualche particolare, di cui non siamo a conoscenza, ma resta il fatto che la figura e l'opera di Nicola restarono sepolte tra le carte senza avere grande diffusione tra i frati.

## I CONVENTI ITALIANI

Siamo abbastanza informati sulle vicende di diversi conventi italiani, per alcuni dei quali conosciamo con precisione la data di fondazione, mentre di altri un'indicazione cronologica si può arguire dalla successione negli elenchi redatti in seguito.<sup>14</sup> Riportiamo in modo

<sup>11</sup> Sulla *communis refectio* e la lettura della Sacra Scrittura durante i pasti cfr C. CICONETTI, *La Regola...*, 383-385.

<sup>12</sup> Cfr J. SMET, *I Carmelitani. Storia dell'Ordine del Carmelo*, I: *Dal 1200 ca. al Concilio di Trento*, Roma 1989 (originale in inglese: *The Carmelites. A History of the Brothers of our Lady of Mount Carmel*, vol. I, 2 ed., Darien Ill., 1985), 59-60. Sir Richard Grey aveva introdotto i Carmelitani nel Kent, ad Aylesford, nel 1242, mentre nello stesso anno sir William Vescy aveva fondato Hulne Priory presso Alnwick, nel Northumberland (cfr. *ibidem*, 30).

<sup>13</sup> Si veda A. STARING (ed.), *Nicolai prioris generalis Ordinis Carmelitarum Ignea Sagitta*, in *Carmelus* 9 (1962), 237-307 (per il testo 271-307); C. CICONETTI in *Le désert et le Carmel*, Bourges 1993 e R. COPSEY, *The "Ignea sagitta" and its Readership a Re-Evaluation*, in *Carmelus* 46 (1999), 164-173, ripubblicato in *Carmel in Britain...*, III, 17-28; K. ALBAN, *The "Ignea Sagitta" and the Second Council of Lyons*, in *The Carmelite Rule(1207-2007)*, Proceedings of the Lisieux Conference – 4-7 July 2005, edd. E. XAVIER GOMES, P. MACMAHON, S. NOLAN, V. MOSCA, Rome 2008, 91-112. Si veda anche quanto dice in proposito C. CICONETTI, *La Regola...*, 443-471, in particolare l'exkursus «Lecture “riduttive” della “Quae honorem”» (457-466) e «Proposta di spiegazione del rimprovero di Nicolò Gallico» (469-471).

<sup>14</sup> Cfr L. SAGGI, *Storia dell'Ordine Carmelitano*, vol. I, *pro manuscripto*, Roma 1962-63, 55-65; J. SMET, *I Carmelitani...*, AMBROGIO DI S. TERESA, *Monasticon Carmelitarum*, in *Analecta O.C.D.*, 22 (1950), incompiuto. A. CANAL, *Italia Carmelitana*, I-IV, con la collaborazione di A. MARTINO, Pisa-Bologna 1988-1992; E. BOAGA, *I Carmelitani*, in *Monasteri e conventi in Lombardia. Ricerca e documentazione dalle origini al 1500*, a cura del Gruppo artistico «Taccuino democratico», Milano 1983, 86-97 (con schede sui conventi di Pavia, Milano, Brescia e San Felice del Benaco); IDEM, *Cartine Storico-Geografiche dei Conventi e Monasteri della Provincia, anni 1256?-1958*, in *Conventi e Monasteri delle Provincia Romana dei Carmelitani attraverso i secoli*, Roma 1959. Altre informazioni sono state ricevute per cortesia di E. Boaga, consultando lo schedario dei conventi italiani.



schematico gli elenchi dei conventi italiani fondati nel XIII secolo, divisi per provincia; seguiamo la presentazione proposta da Ludovico Saggi. Se l'anno di fondazione è sconosciuto, viene omesso, ma si segue la precedenza presentata da elenchi più tardivi:

Provincia di Sicilia  
 (nell'isola)  
 Messina ca. 1238  
 Lentini  
 Catania 1238-48  
 Nicosia ca. 1249  
 Palermo 1250  
 Trapani 1250  
 Marsala  
 Sciacca  
 Agrigento  
 Licata  
 Piazza Armerina (?)  
 (in Puglia, Calabria, Napoli)  
 Capua  
 Napoli prima del 1269  
 Brindisi (?)  
 Grottaminarda (?)  
 Provincia Tuscia-Romana  
 Pisa, Barbaricina 1249, trasferito dentro le mura nel 1325  
 Siena 1256  
 Firenze prima del 1267  
 Lucca 1284  
 Viterbo 1285  
 Roma, San Giuliano prima del 1289<sup>15</sup>  
 Pistoia 1291  
 Prato 1294  
 Montecatini 1294  
 Perugia prima del 1297  
 Roma, San Martino ai Monti 1299  
 Orvieto  
 Provincia di Lombardia  
 Genova ca. 1258  
 Bologna, in Campo Mercato ca. 1260, poi trasferito in San Martino nel 1293  
 Milano 1267  
 Asti 1269  
 Alessandria  
 Parma 1273  
 Vercelli 1275  
 Piacenza ca. 1275  
 Pavia prima del 1284  
 Venezia 1286

<sup>15</sup> Tuttavia, qualcuno parla del 1235, mentre il Lezana sostiene addirittura che la fondazione del convento vada fatta risalire a sant'Angelo di Gerusalemme, durante il suo soggiorno romano, dunque intorno al 1219: I.B. DE LEZANA, *Annales sacri er eliani ordinis b.mae Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmeli*, IV, Romae 1656, 230; cfr L. SAGGI, *S. Angelo di Sicilia. Studio sulla vita, devozione, folklore*, Roma 1962, 259-260 e idem, *Provinciae carmelitanae in Italia usque ad capitulum generale Astense 1472*, in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, 17 (1952), 158. Ma si parla anche di un coinvolgimento del Santo anche per i conventi di Messina, Palermo e Brindisi: cfr L. SAGGI, *S. Angelo di Sicilia*, 257-158; 260-266.





Padova 1292

Ferrara 1295

Cremona 1298

Un primo esame degli elenchi suggerisce alcune riflessioni sui criteri di scelta.<sup>16</sup>

Prima di tutto va detto che dei 177 conventi fondati nel XIII secolo quelli italiani assommano a 40, dunque a poco meno di un quarto. Tenendo conto che nelle tre province insistenti sul territorio dell'attuale Francia – Provenza, Francia e Aquitania – i conventi fondati nello stesso periodo furono 57, si arguisce una presenza francese e italiana di una discreta consistenza tra le prime generazioni di Carmelitani, benché dovesse essere anche notevole il peso di elementi tedeschi e anglosassoni, almeno per quanto riguarda la leadership iniziale del gruppo.<sup>17</sup>

Si può fare una seconda considerazione sulla distribuzione geografica: la diffusione in Sicilia è sicuramente maggiore che nel Regno *citra pharum* e i conventi siciliani sono quasi tutti precedenti a quelli peninsulari; in Toscana sono più diffusi che nello Stato della Chiesa, mentre la distribuzione nella provincia di Lombardia appare più omogenea.

In terzo luogo, è interessante notare che nella maggior parte vengono scelti luoghi presso o nelle capitali, nei capoluoghi e nei principali centri di riferimento della zona, in genere si tratta di città sedi di diocesi, o dei principali centri commerciali e universitari. Si tratta di una tendenza già verificata e studiata per la Francia, i cui 57 conventi divisi in furono aperti precisamente secondo questa logica: la maggior parte di essi sono situati in centri urbani, in cui si concentrava la presenza della cattedra diocesana, del mercato e dell'università.<sup>18</sup> Queste scelte vanno interpretate come espressione della volontà d'inserirsi appieno nel tessuto ecclesiale e urbano, aprendosi alla possibilità di esercitare il ministero nella *ecclesia propria* aperta al culto pubblico.<sup>19</sup> Non è da escludere la speranza vocazionale, favorita dall'inserimento nelle università e nel contesto cittadino, a quel tempo certamente i principali bacini di provenienza delle giovani leve delle *religiones novae*. Anche in questo si coglie a prima vista l'inserimento dei Carmelitani nel gruppo dei frati mendicanti, visto che si tratta di una tendenza comune a tutti i nuovi gruppi. A questo proposito, molte considerazioni fatte a proposito dei Francescani, degli Agostiniani o dei Servi di Maria si adattano perfettamente anche al caso dei Carmelitani. A differenza dei Domenicani, i quali si stabiliscono nei principali centri urbani quasi dall'inizio – certamente tra gli anni '20 e '30 del XIII secolo – e vi costruiscono grandi complessi conventuali, i Francescani e gli altri ordini a vocazione eremitica, preferiscono stabilirsi in piccoli edifici posti fuori città. Per i Francescani è già attestata la pratica di costruire o accettare conventi posti lungo le principali vie di comunicazione a circa una giornata di cammino l'uno dall'altro, uso che diventerà comune vista la praticità che consentiva ai frati l'itineranza senza dover restare fuori convento. In ogni modo, è ormai accertato che una costante della politica fondazionale dei mendicanti fu proprio la scelta di seguire le vie di comunicazione commerciale per scegliere, ove era possibile, luoghi nei centri posti lungo di esse. Inoltre, di solito vanno considerati altri due fattori: la donazione o concessione di aree edificabili e conseguentemente il rapporto con le autorità ecclesiali e cittadine. I frati ricevevano in dono

<sup>16</sup> Per le questioni relative all'urbanizzazione dei frati mendicanti e alla collocazione dei loro conventi si vedano oltre ai riferimenti indicati nella nota 1: L. PELLEGRINI, *Insediamenti francescani nell'Italia del Duecento*, Roma 1984 e IDEM, "Che sono queste novità?" *Le religiones novae in Italia meridionale, secoli XIII e XIV*, Napoli 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Nel primo secolo i priori del Monte Carmelo, che solo dal 1247 in poi si possono chiamare a pieno titolo priori generali, furono: NOMI.

<sup>18</sup> Cfr E. BOAGA, *Origine ed evoluzione dei Carmelitani in Francia dal 1235 al 1317*, in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum* 42 (1991), 91-109.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr, tra l'altro, C. CICONETTI, *La Regola...*, 362-373; G. GROSSO, "Formula vitae" e Regola: interventi pontifici, riconoscimenti, approvazione, mitigazioni, in *The Carmelite Rule...*, 411-432, in particolare su questo punto: 422.



o in eredità da privati o dalle stesse autorità comunali edifici vuoti da riadattare a conventi, oppure – e questo sembra essere il caso che riguarda più frequentemente i Carmelitani – ricevevano la concessione di stabilirsi e costruire chiesa e convento in aree libere, di solito in zone di nuova urbanizzazione. Non dimentichiamo che le città europee – e l'Italia fu in ciò all'avanguardia – si svilupparono grandemente tra la metà del XII e la metà del XIV secolo, per la forte pressione demografica e un crescente urbanesimo. Non meraviglia dunque la presenza abbastanza comune – benché non esclusiva – dei mendicanti nelle zone di espansione urbana soprattutto nei pressi delle porte della seconda cinta muraria delle città medievali. È ovvio che, in questo senso, occorre tener presenti le differenze morfologiche delle diverse città e la loro collocazione geografica, che spesso coincidono con situazioni amministrative e politiche assai differenti tra loro.

Il fenomeno degli insediamenti urbani, inoltre, va considerato nel suo insieme, dalla prima fondazione fino alla collocazione nel sito definitivo che, di solito, coincide con quello giunto fino a noi. Sarebbe un errore storico perciò fermarsi a considerare solo il primo sito, spesso accettato in vista di un possibile prossimo trasferimento all'interno delle mura. Così pure sarebbe miope dimenticare che la compagine urbana aveva una sua configurazione consolidata, in cui era impossibile pensare a nuovi insediamenti su siti già occupati in precedenza. I Carmelitani, d'altra parte, giungevano a bussare alle porte delle città per ultimi, quando altri ordini mendicanti più grandi si erano già stabiliti nei centri cittadini. In questo senso va considerata anche l'articolazione delle presenze sia dal punto di vista pastorale che economico: nel 1265, Clemente IV stabilì una distanza minima di 300 canne (ca. 500 m.) tra i diversi conventi mendicanti, proprio per evitare penose, inutili e controproducenti contese per i *termini*.<sup>20</sup> Per tutte queste ragioni, dunque, occorre tener presente che la presenza nelle periferie o in aree vicine ai mercati, va compresa nei termini di libertà degli spazi e non solo di una scelta mirata.

#### ALCUNI ESEMPI

La storia di ogni convento offre indicazioni interessanti sui criteri di scelta e la loro effettiva attuazione; l'esame di alcuni casi può aiutarci a comprendere meglio le diverse tipologie di fondazione. Ci soffermeremo su alcuni conventi italiani, peraltro già studiati, alcuni dei quali hanno visto la dislocazione da un primitivo sito solitario, fuori dei centri abitati e più o meno lontano da essi, a un secondo luogo situato all'interno delle mura cittadine, come nei casi di Messina e Pisa, altri invece sono nati in aree libere presso la nuova cerchia di mura o ai margini della città in espansione, e si tratta dei conventi di Roma, Napoli, Firenze e Bologna; infine ne esamineremo uno, l'Annunziata di Trapani, che è nato e restato per lungo tempo fuori città.

##### 1. Dall'eremo alla città

Il primo insediamento carmelitano in Occidente va cercato a Messina, dove i frati giunsero dal Carmelo probabilmente nel 1238 e si stabilirono presso il torrente San Michele, a un paio di miglia dalla città.<sup>21</sup> Questo convento sarebbe stato devoluto dai frati, primo dei quali il priore provinciale di Sicilia, fra' Riccardo, alla terziaria Frisa in cambio del pagamento delle 43 once necessarie a pagare il proprietario del nuovo luogo di residenza dei frati.<sup>22</sup> Questi, infatti, si erano già spostati verso il mare, presso due torri, o

<sup>20</sup> Cfr *Bullarium romanum*, editio Taurinensis, III, 759, citato in C. CICONETTI, *La Regola...*, 484.

<sup>21</sup> Per le notizie sui vari insediamenti in Messina si veda C. NICOTRA, *Il Carmelo messinese. Tradizione e Storia*, Messina (1974).

<sup>22</sup> Cfr la copia dell'atto notarile dell'8 settembre 1263 in C. NICOTRA, *Il Carmelo messinese...*, 310-314, Doc. n. 2.



mulini a vento vicino alla “vigna del Santo Sepolcro”, in un terreno di proprietà di Pietro Pavia. Lo stesso rogito del 1263 esplicita le motivazioni per lo spostamento: l’eccessiva lontananza del luogo del primo insediamento dalla città – circa tre chilometri – che rendeva difficoltosa la questua e dunque il mantenimento della comunità, ma anche la possibilità di visita da parte dei fedeli «pro salute animarum eorum»; a ciò si aggiunge la poca salubrità dell’aria, ma questa nota va presa con molto discernimento, visto che si tratta di una specie di luogo comune usato ogniqualvolta si decideva o si chiedeva di cambiar luogo. Fu in questo secondo convento, presso le torri, che Nicola “il Francese” avrebbe convocato il capitolo del 1267.

Ancora una volta viene invocata l’insalubrità del luogo, infestato dalla malaria, esposto ai venti e alle frequenti incursioni di eserciti e pirati – ma spesso queste due categorie si confondevano tra loro – e i frati ottennero di potersi spostare in città nel 1292, nelle vicinanze della cattedrale, autorizzati anche dal pontefice Nicolò IV (1288-92).<sup>23</sup> Proprio la vicinanza con la chiesa madre fu alla base della controversia che oppose i frati ai canonici della cattedrale: il suono delle campane e le funzioni dei religiosi disturbavano quelle dei canonici. Fu con tutta probabilità proprio mentre durava questa controversia e mentre era vacante la sede vescovile che Alberto di Trapani, presente in Messina, propiziò il “miracolo del vacelluzzo”, nel 1301.<sup>24</sup> Nel 1304 i buoni uffici del neo eletto vescovo Guidotto d’Abbiategrosso permisero una composizione della faccenda: i frati si sarebbero potuti fermare fino al successivo mese di ottobre, ma dopo si sarebbero dovuti trasferire, sotto pena del pagamento di 100 once d’oro.<sup>25</sup> I Carmelitani quindi si trasferirono così in San Cataldo, che il papa Benedetto XI aveva loro concesso,<sup>26</sup> dove rimasero fino al terremoto del 1783.

Il secondo convento italiano di cui abbiamo notizie certe è quello di Pisa.<sup>27</sup> Il 3 marzo 1349, fra’ Ugo e fra’ Folco delegati del priore del Monte Carmelo, Goffredo, ricevette in dono due appezzamenti di terreno di circa venti staia (più di un ettaro), nella località Cafaggio in Barbaricina, fuori della città di Pisa.<sup>28</sup> I frati iniziarono subito a costruirvi un eremo. L’anno dopo il capitolo metropolitano concesse loro di costruire una chiesetta dedicata a santa Margherita, presso la cappella di Sant’Apollinare in Barbaricina.<sup>29</sup> I frati s’impegnarono nello stesso momento a non esercitare nessun diritto parrocchiale e a donare annualmente allo stesso capitolo metropolitano un cero di due libbre. I frati, tuttavia, oltre ad aver ricevuto ben presto (insieme alle altre chiese carmelitane) lo statuto di “chiesa propria” da Alessandro IV (1256-61),<sup>30</sup> ottennero anche da papa Urbano IV (1261-64), il 1 dicembre 1261, il diritto di sepoltura<sup>31</sup> e il 27 maggio 1272 l’arcivescovo Federico Visconti permise la costruzione di una nuova chiesa nella vicina cappella di Santa Sofia del Tempio,

<sup>23</sup> Una copia della bolla si trova in Palermo, Biblioteca Comunale, Mss. Qq. H.10, 138.

<sup>24</sup> Si veda in proposito F. BURGARELLA, *Sant’Alberto degli Abbati nella Sicilia del suo tempo*, in *Atti del Convegno in occasione del VII Centenario del “Transito al Cielo” di Alberto degli Abbati, Un Santo vivo nel cuore della nostra gente* (Trapani 8-9-10 maggio 2006), a cura di E. CASTORO e V. LA VIA COLLI, Roma (2006), 44.

<sup>25</sup> Cfr la copia dell’atto dell’11 aprile 1304 in C. NICOTRA, *Il Carmelo messinese...*, 317-318, Doc. n. 4. Cfr anche F. BURGARELLA, *Sant’Alberto degli Abbati...*, 47. Guidotto d’Abbiategrosso fu il vescovo che procedette alla presunta canonizzazione vescovile di sant’Alberto: cfr *ibidem*, 46-48.

<sup>26</sup> Cfr la copia della bolla *Religionis vestrae* (Perugia, 19 maggio 1304) in C. NICOTRA, *Il Carmelo messinese...*, 318-319, Doc. n. 5.

<sup>27</sup> Cfr P. CAIOLI, *Il “Carmino” di Pisa*, in *Carmelus* 3 (1956), 107-137; A. A. CANAL, *Carmine/Carmelitani e Carmelitane a Pisa*, Pisa (1987); M. L. CECCARELLI LEMUT e F. PAGLIARA, *La chiesa di S. Maria del Carmine*, Pisa 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr l’atto di donazione in P. CAIOLI, *Il “Carmino” di Pisa*, 138-139.

<sup>29</sup> Cfr *Ibidem*, 141-142.

<sup>30</sup> Bolle *Speciali gratia*, dell’8 e 25 marzo 1261, in *Bull. Carm.*, I, 20, 23; cfr anche G. GROSSO, “*Formula vitae*” e *Regola...*, 422.

<sup>31</sup> Bolla *Devotionis vestrae*, in *Bull. Carm.*, I, 25-26.



stavolta dotata di diritti pastorali: nonostante la nuova chiesa fosse dedicata alla Ss.ma Trinità, la chiesa fu denominata popolarmente Santa Maria del Carmelo.<sup>32</sup>

Fin qui le vicende somigliano a quelle di altre città: i Carmelitani si adattarono a vivere nella periferia della città, o meglio nei sobborghi. Nel secondo decennio del XIV secolo, però, chiesero e ottennero da papa Giovanni XXII (1316-34) di potersi trasferire all'interno delle mura. Fu così che nel 1325 iniziò la costruzione della chiesa e del convento, situati presso San Verano in Kinseca – attuale Corso Italia – e, il 5 luglio 1328, il convento di Barbaricina fu ceduto alle monache Benedettine.<sup>33</sup> Terminava così il lungo percorso di ingresso dei Carmelitani nella città e nell'arcidiocesi di Pisa. Il nuovo convento fu costruito secondo la consueta struttura mendicante, con la chiesa e il chiostro a fare da cerniera tra il convento e la città.

## 2. In periferia

Sono, invece, avvolte nella leggenda le origini del convento di San Giuliano, prima presenza carmelitana in Roma: non sappiamo infatti l'anno preciso in cui i frati del Carmelo giunsero a Roma.<sup>34</sup> Alcuni storici antichi parlano di una possibile fondazione del convento di San Giuliano da parte di sant'Angelo,<sup>35</sup> ma se ciò resta relegato tra le leggende, certo è che la chiesa, probabilmente costruita o ricostruita dagli stessi Carmelitani, già esisteva prima del 1289.<sup>36</sup> Era detta “ai Trofei di Mario” ed era situata non lontano dalla parrocchia di San Vito, in un'area presso l'attuale piazza Vittorio Emanuele, alla fine dell'attuale Via dello Statuto. Il convento non fu mai particolarmente grande e, inizialmente era situato ai margini della città, trovandosi a poche decine di metri dall'Arco di Gallieno, una delle porte delle mura Aureliane. Il convento appartenne alla provincia Romana fino al 1783, quando venne ceduto assieme alla chiesa ai padri Redentoristi, che li persero al momento dell'incameramento napoleonico (1798-1810); infine fu abbattuto, dopo altri passaggi di mano, verso il 1874.

Probabilmente su richiesta degli stessi frati, che desideravano avere un convento all'interno delle mura, il papa Bonifacio VIII (1294-1303) concesse ai Carmelitani la chiesa e l'annesso monastero di San Martino ai Monti, perché assumessero la cura della parrocchia e a condizione che vi erigessero una casa di studio per i giovani in formazione.<sup>37</sup> Il convento fu anche sede di alcuni priori generali nel XVI secolo e poi vi risedettero Giovanni Antonio Filippini († 1657) e Paolo di sant'Ignazio († 1704). Vi furono anche celebrati diversi capitoli generali (1492, 1513, 1564, 1580, 1598).

La presenza dei Carmelitani a Napoli è legata alla devozione all'immagine della Vergine detta la “Bruna”.<sup>38</sup> Si tratta di una fondazione avvenuta attorno al 1250, comunque prima del 1268, presso il Campo Moricino, vicino al mare e ancora fuori città a quel tempo, ma soggetto in quegli stessi anni ad una rapida espansione urbana, per cui nello spazio antistante la chiesa si stabilì il mercato anche per la vicinanza con il porto. Vi era già una chiesetta dedicata a san Nicola, nella cui cripta era custodita un'immagine della Vergine, che veniva detta “di san Luca” e più tardi si disse portata dai Carmelitani stessi dalla Terra Santa.

<sup>32</sup> Cfr P. CAIOLI, *Il “Carmino” di Pisa*, 142.

<sup>33</sup> Sul trasferimento in città cfr P. CAIOLI, *Il “Carmino” di Pisa*, 124-125.

<sup>34</sup> Per Roma cfr E. BOAGA, *Roma carmelitana*, in Commissione mista O. Carm. – O.C.D. per il Giubileo 2000, *Roma Carmelitana. Un pellegrinaggio fra le memorie carmelitane della Città Eterna*, Roma 2000, 25-32.

<sup>35</sup> Cfr L. SAGGI, *S. Angelo di Sicilia. Studio sulla vita, devozione, folklore*, Roma 1962, 259-260.

<sup>36</sup> Cfr L. SAGGI, *Provinciae Carmelitanæ in Italia usque ad capitulum generalem Astense 1472*, in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum* 17 (1952), 158.

<sup>37</sup> BONIFACIUS VIII, bolla *Oblata nobis* (1299), in *Bull. Carm.*, I, 52.

<sup>38</sup> Cfr (E. BOAGA), *La “Bruna” e il Carmine di Napoli. Fede – Storia – Arte*, 2ª ed. aggiornata, Napoli 2001.



La più antica notizia dei Carmelitani è legata all'esecuzione nell'antistante piazza del mercato di Corradino di Hohenstaufen, o di Svevia, lo sfortunato nipote del grande Federico II chiamato in Italia dai Ghibellini, i quali avrebbero voluto riconsegnargli il Regno di Napoli che il papa aveva intanto concesso in feudo a Carlo d'Angiò. Corradino fu sconfitto, il 23 agosto 1268, nella battaglia di Tagliacozzo, venne catturato e condotto a Napoli, dove, il 29 ottobre, fu decapitato assieme al cugino Federico d'Austria. I corpi dei due sfortunati giovani, dopo aver ricevuto una sepoltura nel luogo stesso dell'esecuzione, furono esumati e sepolti con onore nella chiesa vicina.

Il successivo 27 giugno 1270, il re Carlo I d'Angiò concesse ai frati un terreno di 800 canne quadrate perché vi costruissero una nuova chiesa e un convento adeguato alle loro necessità. I lavori si svolsero tra il 1283 e la fine del secolo, durante il priorato di fra' Ruggero, e finì con l'inglobare l'antica chiesetta di San Nicola. La nuova chiesa in forme gotiche, dotata di molti legati in suffragio – tra cui quello per l'“imperator Corradino” –, fu dedicata all'Assunta, la cui pala fu posta sull'altar maggiore, mentre la “Bruna” restò nella cripta fino al 1500, anno del celebre pellegrinaggio giubilare a Roma.

A Firenze i Carmelitani si stabilirono in un'area che sarebbe stata chiamata Piazza del Carmine, in una zona periferica della città in rapida espansione che sarebbe divenuto il borgo di San Frediano.<sup>39</sup> La prima attestazione è nel testamento di Monna Agnese (o Avegnente) dei Vernaccia, la quale lasciava, con strumento rogato il 30 aprile 1267, al priore provinciale dei Carmelitani, fra' Matteo, un terreno e 150 fiorini per la costruzione di una chiesa e di un convento.<sup>40</sup> Il terreno fu poi ampliato da successive donazioni ed eredità. La chiesa, iniziata nel 1268, sarebbe stata poi più volte abbellita e migliorata, fino alla ricostruzione quasi completa a seguito dell'incendio del 1771.<sup>41</sup>

Benché i Carmelitani arrivino per ultimi, la loro collocazione nel contesto cittadino s'inserisce appieno nel quadro degli insediamenti mendicanti. I loro conventi infatti sono tutti esterni alla cerchia di mura del 1173-75, che racchiudeva anche i borghi cresciuti fuori dell'antica cerchia di mura e “di là d'Arno”, sulla riva sinistra del fiume cioè. I Domenicani si stabilirono nel 1221 a Santa Maria Novella, i Francescani tra il 1221 e il 1228 a Santa Croce, i Servi di Maria all'Annunziata nel 1250, anno in cui fondarono anche i Frati Saccati. Gli Eremiti di Sant'Agostino, giunti ugualmente nel 1250, si stabilirono a Santo Spirito all'interno delle mura. Nel 1258 e ancora nel 1284, questa volta sotto la guida di Arnolfo di Cambio, dovettero essere costruite due nuove cinte murarie. Quando, dunque, giunsero i Carmelitani la nuova struttura ecclesiale, con il Duomo al centro e le grandi chiese dei Mendicanti a fargli da corona, era già sostanzialmente completa, tanto che alla fine del XIII secolo le chiese vengono “rifondate” con il contributo di ingenti somme raccolte tra i benefattori, in genere famiglie dell'emergente nobiltà mercantile e bancaria, e l'impiego di maestranze altamente qualificate e artisti di fama. Anche il Carmine divenne, come le altre chiese dei mendicanti, un punto di riferimento religioso, sociale, urbano e civile per la popolazione della zona. La formazione della piazza antistante la chiesa, nel 1317, sancì questa funzione pubblica rappresentata, tra l'altro, dall'immagine mariana, detta “Madonna del Popolo”, che vi si venerava.

Il caso di Bologna è leggermente differente.<sup>42</sup> I frati giunsero in città tra il 1240 e il 1260, quando si stabilirono in Campo del Mercato, nel convento detto di “Santa Maria del

<sup>39</sup> Per il convento di Firenze si veda E. BOAGA, *I Carmelitani a Firenze. Origine e sviluppo di una presenza nei secoli XIII e XIV. La Famiglia Corsini*, in *Sant'Andrea Corsini Carmelitano Vescovo di Fiesole. VII Centenario della nascita 1301-2001*, Firenze 2004, 31-40.

<sup>40</sup> L'originale è in ASFI, Fondo Diplomatico del Carmine, n. 44.

<sup>41</sup> L'atto di fondazione della chiesa, firmato dal vescovo Giovanni de' Mangiadori è del 30 giugno 1268: in ASFI, Fondo Diplomatico del Carmine, n. 46.

<sup>42</sup> Cfr tra l'altro A. A. CANAL, *Il Carmelo a Bologna*, s.l. e s.a. (ma Bologna 1994); più recente è E. SECONDIN – G. RONCHI, *Basilica di San Martino Maggiore in Bologna. Santuario della Madonna del Carmine*, Bologna 2010.



Carmelo”, presso la chiesa di San Nicolò del Mercato.<sup>43</sup> Dopo un certo tempo i frati iniziarono ad officiare anche la chiesa di Sant’Andrea dell’Aposa:<sup>44</sup> si trattava di un avvicinamento a quello che sarebbe diventato il luogo definitivo. Il 7 marzo 1293, infatti, il vescovo Ottaviano Ubaldini concesse ai Carmelitani la chiesa di San Martino dell’Aposa con l’obbligo di assumere la cura parrocchiale e dell’annesso ospedale.<sup>45</sup> Con la chiesa venivano consegnati ai frati anche i locali adiacenti. Il primo parroco carmelitano fu fr. Giovanni Pergami, sindaco del priore: la comunità per un certo tempo continuò a risiedere nel convento di Santa Maria del Carmine, da dove i frati si spostarono nel 1306, se non più tardi, nel 1308, quando furono iniziati i lavori di ampliamento della chiesa e dell’annesso convento.<sup>46</sup> La chiesa di San Martino era un edificio in stile romanico, costruito nel 1217 sul sito di un antico tempio del V secolo dedicato a Marte.<sup>47</sup> Si accedeva alla chiesa, più piccola dell’attuale basilica, da un ponticello in legno gettato sul torrente Aposa, che ancora scorreva a cielo aperto. La ricostruzione comportò l’ampliamento dell’edificio e la copertura del torrente, che ancora scorre sotto la facciata e la prima campata delle tre navate. Il convento invece inglobò gli antichi locali, situati sul lato sinistro della piazza, e si estese nel tempo fino a comprendere l’intero isolato. Nel 1321 il convento divenne *studium generale*,<sup>48</sup> che dal 1405 al 1411 – durante lo Scisma d’Occidente – sostituì lo *studium* di Parigi per i Carmelitani dell’obbedienza romana.<sup>49</sup> Intorno alla metà del XV secolo, si tentò più volte di introdurre la riforma finché nel 1465 il vicario generale dei Mantovani e provinciale di Bologna, fr. Guglielmo de Fonte, impose l’osservanza regolare;<sup>50</sup> i Mantovani presero possesso definitivo e completo del convento il 7 maggio 1473.<sup>51</sup>

### 3. Fuori città

La fondazione del convento e del Santuario della Madonna a Trapani è frutto degli interessi e della devozione della famiglia Abbate, concretata nella determinazione e nella capacità del più santo dei suoi membri: Alberto († 1307). Il santuario e il convento, infatti, sorsero in una “senia”, un orto extraurbano, di proprietà di Perna Abbate, zia del Santo, che l’aveva ricevuta in eredità da un altro nipote, Palmerio, il quale l’aveva ereditata dal Notar Ribaldo, marito di Perna, il quale aveva a sua volta acquistato la terra da Enrico

<sup>43</sup> Oggi Campo Mercato corrisponde a piazza 8 Agosto; il sito preciso era tra via Capo di Lucca e vicolo della Conca (via Inerio). Per queste notizie si vedano le note personali di A. MARTINO, *Bologna – Convento di S. Maria del Monte Carmelo dei Frati Carmelitani in Campo del Mercato. Religiosi e laici Carmelitani*, Nocera Umbra agosto 1997 e anche *Basilica di S. Martino Maggiore. Santuario della Madonna del Carmine. Via Guglielmo Oberdan, 25 – Bologna*, con il contributo della Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna, Bologna 2000, 20.

<sup>44</sup> Cfr. E. SECONDIN – G. RONCHI, *Basilica di San Martino Maggiore...*, 20: la chiesa si trovava in vicolo San Pietro, oggi via Mentana, e fu demolita nel 1666.

<sup>45</sup> ASBO, Fondo Comune Governo, Miscellanea di Atti concernenti Enti Ecclesiastici, copia notarile del 19 gennaio 1319 del Rogito del notaio Michele di Tommaso del 7 marzo 1293. L’originale doveva trovarsi in ASBO, Fondo S. Martino, busta 3484, n. 10, ma già Ludovico Saggi non lo trovò al suo posto (cfr L. SAGGI, *La Congregazione Mantovana dei Carmelitani sino alla morte del b. Battista Spagnoli (1516)*, Roma 1954, 184 n. 94).

<sup>46</sup> Sul trasferimento di veda A. MARTINO, *Bologna – Convento di S. Maria del Monte Carmelo...*, *passim*: a p. 7 afferma: «Sommessamente vorremmo indicare l’anno 1306 come data dell’abbandono dell’antico convento originario». Sull’ampliamento della chiesa cfr E. SECONDIN – G. RONCHI, *Basilica di San Martino Maggiore...*, 36-37.

<sup>47</sup> Cfr E. SECONDIN – G. RONCHI, *Basilica di San Martino Maggiore...*, 36.

<sup>48</sup> Capitolo di Montpellier 1287: *Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Fratrum B. V. Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, I, ed. G. WESSELS, Romae 1912, 22, (da ora ACG).

<sup>49</sup> Cfr ACG, I, 131, 134.

<sup>50</sup> Cfr L. SAGGI, *La Congregazione Mantovana...*, 186 n. 98.

<sup>51</sup> ASBO, Fondo notarile, Graziano Grassi, Serie 7/4, Rogito 7 maggio 1473.



Abbate.<sup>52</sup> Un bel giro di titoli di proprietà, di cui conosciamo i dettagli dai documenti notarili ancora esistenti.<sup>53</sup> La motivazione principale di questi passaggi di proprietà era quella di mantenere comunque il controllo del patrimonio familiare, anche a fronte dei continui cambiamenti nel governo dell'isola, dove si succedettero nel giro di una cinquantina d'anni gli svevi, gli angioini e gli aragonesi. D'altra parte, in questo gioco s'inserisce la personalità di Alberto, il quale opera come regista della complessa azione patrimoniale.

La presenza dei Carmelitani a Trapani presso la chiesa dell'Annunziata viene attestata da un documento, tardivo e di dubbia autenticità, già nel 1250.<sup>54</sup> Comunque, non può essere spostata oltre il decennio successivo. Inoltre, in questo caso i frati sono rimasti legati al santuario dell'Annunziata in maniera continuativa, anche quando più tardi, nel 1592, fu fondato il convento in città, presso la Porta Felice. Questo convento cittadino funzionava, in realtà, come grancia del convento dell'Annunziata, per l'alloggio in città e infermeria.<sup>55</sup>

Il convento e il santuario di Trapani sono un tipico esempio di fondazione legata al patronato familiare, mediato tra l'altro da un membro illustre divenuto frate. La collocazione esterna alla città non fu determinata prevalentemente da una scelta eremitica dei frati, quanto dall'interesse della famiglia Abbate, che intendeva mantenere il controllo di alcune proprietà. La chiesa, che presto accolse l'immagine marmorea della Vergine, divenne meta di pellegrinaggio dalla città e assurse al rango di santuario cittadino, ruolo da sempre riconosciuto e confermato più volte, anche in mezzo a polemiche di vario genere.

## CONCLUSIONE

Al termine di questa breve, sommaria disamina possiamo tentare una sintesi degli elementi principali e soprattutto comuni alle varie situazioni.

Innanzitutto, va rilevato che la collocazione dei conventi fu solo inizialmente esterna alle città e già negli anni '60 del XIII secolo la tendenza fu quella, comune un po' a tutti gli altri ordini mendicanti di costruire conventi in aree periferiche in corso di urbanizzazione: ai casi indicati si possono aggiungere quelli di Siena (1256), Milano (1267), Venezia (1286). Inoltre, va detto che i primissimi eremi fondati in occidente erano tutti in prossimità di porti di una certa importanza, come Messina (ca. 1238), Aylesford (1242) non troppo distante dall'estuario del Tamigi, Hulne (1242) a poche miglia dalla costa orientale del Northumberland, Les Aygalades (1244) presso Marsiglia, Pisa (1249).

La vicinanza con i mercati fu probabilmente, più che una scelta, una necessità dettata dalla struttura urbana, che andava articolandosi. Tuttavia, la prossimità del mercato, con la conseguenza dunque del passaggio di numerose persone, era, assieme alla presenza della sede vescovile, una delle ragioni privilegiate dai mendicanti per stabilirsi nelle città. È, infatti, ormai dimostrato che le fondazioni dei mendicanti avvennero prevalentemente presso o in centri importanti dal punto di vista ecclesiale (venivano privilegiate le città sede di diocesi), demografico (si trattava di centri in forte espansione), commerciale (sedi di mercati) e culturale (sedi di università). Gli atti di fondazione e le bolle pontificie pertinenti

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<sup>52</sup> Cfr il già citato F. BURGARELLA, *Sant'Alberto degli Abbati nella Sicilia del suo tempo*, in *Atti del Convegno in occasione del VII Centenario del "Transito al Cielo" di Alberto degli Abbati, Un Santo vivo nel cuore della nostra gente* (Trapani 8-9-10 maggio 2006), a cura di E. CASTORO e V. LA VIA COLLI, Roma (2006), 15-51; è lo stesso testo, con alcune aggiunte, precedentemente pubblicato in *Carmelus* 53 (2006) fasc. 1, 131-156.

<sup>53</sup> Sono stati editi da L. SCIASCIA, *I cammelli e le rose. Gli Abbate di Trapani da Federico II a Martino il Vecchio*, in *Mediterraneo Medievale. Scritti in onore di F. Giunta*, III, Soveria Mannelli 1989, 1205ss.

<sup>54</sup> Cfr F. BURGARELLA, *Sant'Alberto degli Abbati...*, 40 n. 65.

<sup>55</sup> Cfr M. VITELLA, *Presenza e luoghi di culto di S. Alberto nelle sue città: Trapani, Erice, Messina*, in *Atti del convegno...*, 99-91.



a tali fondazioni spesso indicano le motivazioni apportate, che corrispondono a questi criteri:

«- di ordine economico, per garantire con la questua la possibilità della sopravvivenza. Così nelle fondazioni sono presenti e si seguono criteri demografici ed economici quali la grandezza e l'importanza della città.

- di ordine pastorale, per la creazione della struttura tipica dei mendicanti inserita nella visione pastorale e nella riforma della Chiesa.

- di ordine culturale, per l'accesso alle università, con risposta alla vivacità intellettuale dell'epoca.

A volte queste motivazioni appaiono tra di loro unite, altre volte predomina l'una o l'altra».<sup>56</sup>

Per quanto riguarda il criterio culturale, probabilmente almeno per l'Italia occorre studiare se abbia costituito sempre una motivazione per la scelta, oppure se al contrario la presenza dei mendicanti e dei loro *studia* abbia piuttosto provocato la fondazione delle università. Se si eccettua il caso di Bologna, dove l'*Alma Mater* già esisteva da tempo e dove però la facoltà di teologia fu fondata, nel 1364, proprio con l'intervento del Carmelitano Piertommaso,<sup>57</sup> in genere le altre università italiane nacquero nel XIV secolo con l'apporto decisivo degli *studia generalia* presenti nelle varie città.

Un altro aspetto interessante e ancora non sufficientemente studiato, per quanto riguarda il Carmelo, riguarda la struttura architettonica delle fondazioni all'interno delle mura, la quale, risponde in genere, a un medesimo modello. Si tratta di chiese a navata unica, aperte sulla piazza, con un chiostro, ugualmente accessibile dalla piazza e dalla chiesa, che costituisce una cerniera naturale tra città e convento. Spesso queste chiese, costruite secondo una struttura tipica delle costruzioni dei mendicanti,<sup>58</sup> avevano anche una porta laterale, da cui si poteva accedere in modo discreto, attivando tra l'altro una dinamica simbolica fortemente carica di intensità dal punto di vista antropologico.

La presenza in zone popolari va compresa però nella giusta maniera: le città medievali erano molto più promiscue di quanto non lo siano diventate in seguito, non possedendo di norma quelle divisioni in quartieri ricchi e poveri, ai quali siamo abituati dal tempo della rivoluzione industriale in poi. Quando i Carmelitani si sono insediati nelle città italiane, queste erano costituite da una distribuzione della popolazione a macchie di leopardo, per cui accanto al palazzo nobile potevano convivere la casa-magazzino del mercante o la casa-bottega dell'artigiano, a un passo dal tugurio del salariato. Certamente occorrerebbe distinguere meglio tra le diverse regioni italiane, in quanto un comune toscano o lombardo avevano una struttura differente da una città pugliese o siciliana; comunque nel XIII secolo la mentalità feudale, per cui le varie cellule raccolgono in sé tutti gli strati sociali e si dividono in maniera "verticale" più che "orizzontale", era ancora abbastanza diffusa in modo uniforme.

Resta comunque ancora molto lavoro da fare per dare piena luce a questo aspetto della storia del Carmelo. In particolare, si tratta di individuare quanta più documentazione possibile, inoltre di definire per ogni fondazione il tipo di sito, se questo sia stato donato o scelto direttamente dai frati, se la città in cui si stabilirono fosse sede di diocesi, se vi era un mercato e se i frati abbiano scelto di stabilirsi nelle sue vicinanze, se e quando vi fu fondata

<sup>56</sup> E. BOAGA, *I Carmelitani a Firenze...*, 33.

<sup>57</sup> Cfr R. RUSSO, *Pier Tommaso*, in *Diz. Carm.*, pp., 660-661; J. SMET (ed.), *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas by Philippe de Mézières*, Rome 1954 (ristampa anastatica: Roma 2016); e G. HENSCHEN, *The Bollandist Dossier (1643) on St Peter Thomas O.Carm.*, P. MULLINS (ed.), Rome 2018. Piertommaso agì in quell'occasione assieme al confratello fr. Tommaso da Padova e altri sette maestri di altri ordini: cf. E. SECONDIN – G. RONCHI, *Basilica di San Martino Maggiore...*, 24.

<sup>58</sup> Cfr L. BARBAGLIA, *Architettura dei mendicanti*, in *DIP*, V (1973), 1190-1212; si veda anche E. Boaga, *L'architettura dei carmelitani*, in *Fons et culmen vitae carmelitanae*, Proceedings of the Carmelite Liturgical Seminar. S. Felice del Benaco 13 – 16 June 2006, Roma 2007, 195-206.





l'università e se a tale fondazione abbiano partecipato i Carmelitani e in quale misura. Inoltre, occorre verificare se ci sia stata una "politica" fondazionale; se, per esempio, siano state seguite le direttrici commerciali, le vie di comunicazione, quale fosse la distanza tra un convento e l'altro e se questa era regolare, se, infine, ci sia una correlazione tra i siti scelti e le vie di comunicazione, cioè se i luoghi avessero una particolare importanza per la regione e per i collegamenti con altre zone. È interessante, in proposito, notare che l'espansione in Italia abbia seguito la direttrice sud-nord, da Messina verso Pisa e da questi due poli si sia poi estesa nella penisola verso nord, est e sudest. Il caso del convento di Venezia è emblematico in tal senso: esso fu fondato certamente prima del 1286, ma non si sa né da parte di chi, né da dove provenissero i frati.<sup>59</sup>

Un altro campo d'indagine, come si è appena visto, riguarda l'architettura e l'urbanistica. Per quanto attiene a questi due aspetti, allo stato attuale della ricerca, sembra doversi pensare a una funzione di "cerniera" delle chiese e delle loro pertinenze (sacrestia, chiostro, sagrato-piazza) tra il convento vero e proprio, che con la sua clausura garantiva la tranquillità dell'osservanza regolare ai frati, e la città, che riconosceva nella chiesa un luogo di vita sociale imprescindibile per la mentalità medievale.

Possiamo concludere, per ora, che la collocazione all'interno delle mura cittadine, spesso nate assieme ai conventi stessi, e in zone di grande traffico umano rispondeva all'esigenza di «sibi et proximis proficere»,<sup>60</sup> che aveva spinto anche i Carmelitani ad allontanarsi dalla radice monastica della propria condizione eremitica originale per abbracciare lo stile mendicante più rispondente alle esigenze del momento, alle domande della Chiesa e del mondo del tempo.

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<sup>59</sup> Cfr F. TRENTINI, *Essere altrove. Diaspora e immagini nella Venezia dei Carmini*, Milano 2019, 27-28. Anche a Venezia il sito scelto dai Carmelitani fu nell'isola di Dorsoduro, in un'area di recente urbanizzazione, abitata in prevalenza da pescatori e piccoli artigiani.

<sup>60</sup> GREGORIUS IX, *Providi more* (1229), in *Bull. Carm.*, I, 4.



# The Cloud of Unknowing

*di Richard Green, O.Carm*

*The Cloud of Unknowing*<sup>1</sup> is a book of spiritual advice written in Middle English by an anonymous author towards the end of the 14th century. This was during a golden period for English religious writing, which resulted in a number of works still read today. Writings by Walter Hilton (d.1396) and Richard Rolle (d.1349) have been translated into modern English and are available in the Classics of Western Spirituality series.<sup>2</sup> Two female religious authors of the time are even better known, and have had a wide influence. Julian of Norwich (c.1342–after 1416) was an anchoress who wrote two accounts of the revelations that she experienced.<sup>3</sup> Margery Kempe (c.1373–c.1440) was a married woman, who had many mystical experiences and travelled widely, even making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. She dictated the story of her life in a book which was rediscovered by chance in the 1930s, and has since enjoyed great popularity.<sup>4</sup>

The author of *The Cloud* lived in this context of religious fervour and hunger for spiritual experience. Little is known about his life. From the details of his dialect he is thought to have come from the East Midlands of England. The blessing with which he closes the book implies that he was a priest. He is often thought to have been a Carthusian monk, due to the solitary lifestyle that he promotes and the close association of the manuscript tradition of his works with monasteries of that order.

*The Cloud* takes its title from an image the author uses to underline the impossibility of knowing God through reason. There is a cloud which prevents the contemplative from seeing God directly: “. . . you will find only a darkness, and as it were a cloud of unknowing, you do not know what, except that you feel in your will a naked purpose towards God” (3). He describes an apophatic experience of God, with nothing concrete to cling to.<sup>5</sup> It is worth interrogating both of the images used here, to try to understand what they might have meant in his context. When the author speaks of darkness, he draws his image from his own reality, from a time without electric lighting. Darkness is a barrier to knowledge, but not an absolute one: we can imagine him sitting, aware of the presence of another person in the room, conscious of their movements.

Similarly, the image of the cloud comes out of his experience as a man from the East Midlands. The cloud present between the contemplative and God is like one between us and the sun on an overcast day — as the UK Meteorological Office puts it: “a featureless, dark layer which is capable of producing drizzle.” It prevents us from seeing the sun directly, it blocks off the bright cleanness of a sunny day and stops much of the warmth of the sun from reaching us. Yet, we are still aware of the sun: even the mungeyest day with low grey cloud covering the whole sky can’t be mistaken for night-time.<sup>6</sup> This well describes the experience of God that the *Cloud*-author is discussing, one of awareness but an absence

<sup>1</sup> *The Cloud of Unknowing*, A.C. SPEARING (tr.), 2001.

<sup>2</sup> *The Scale of Perfection*, WALTER HILTON, 1990; *Richard Rolle: The English Works*, RICHARD ROLLE, 1988.

<sup>3</sup> *Revelations of Divine Love*, JULIAN OF NORWICH, ELIZABETH SPEARING (tr.), 1998.

<sup>4</sup> *The Book of Margery Kempe*, MARGERIE KEMPE, B.A. WINDEATT (tr.), 2000.

<sup>5</sup> An apophatic theology is one that recognises human language and thought as being unable to properly describe or fully understand God.

<sup>6</sup> Mungey: moist, damp, close (East Midlands dialect). *The Lost Words*, ROBERT MACFARLANE, 2017.



of detail, clarity and sharp lines. Descriptions of God are necessarily vague and lacking in precision. God is permanently out of the reach of human knowledge, and can only be grasped by love.

In the *Cloud*, the author is writing for a specific audience. He wants readers in tune with his way of thinking, who will be able to understand him, those who “have undertaken truly and without reservation to be a perfect follower of Christ” (Prologue), and he appeals to all others to put the book aside — in fact, throughout the book he is constantly alert to the dangers posed by misunderstanding. He assumes that the reader is already engaged in a solitary form of life (1), and spends little time attempting to convince the reader of the benefits of contemplation, clearly taking this motivation for granted. This is not true for humility though, in which he does encourage us, and he also urges a single-minded attitude: “Your whole life must now always consist of desire, if you are to make progress on the level of perfection. . . .” (2).

For this progress, the prospective contemplative must genuinely be seeking the purest possible understanding of God, not any gifts or other good things to be gained from him. This is analogous to the way Bernard of Clairvaux categorises motivations in his *On Loving God*,<sup>7</sup> where the third gradation of his four types of love is “Loving God for God’s sake”. This also involves a forgetfulness of any other gains to be made, but there is a crucial difference: for Bernard, there is a further, higher type of love that involves “Loving Man for God’s sake”. This is a connection with God through loving the things that God loves: the awareness of the image of God in oneself and in other people, that leads to loving them, simply because they are loved by God. This element is entirely absent from the *Cloud*: references to other people are scarce (apart from a good spiritual advisor), other people being regarded almost purely as distractions from the spiritual life. We can see this as an artefact of the author’s solitary way of life: the atmosphere of the book is very different to that of, say, Teresa of Avila, whose writings draw from an experience so deeply nourished by the reality of community life.

In beginning contemplation, the *Cloud*-author tells us to push away all thoughts of created things, placing a “cloud of forgetting” below us, so that we are not only unconscious of all created things, but also “all they do and all their attributes”. The author holds that any thoughts of these things unavoidably form a barrier between us and God (5). He takes this view to an extreme, denying any value to thoughts of “the saints and angels in heaven”, or even Mary herself. This is a very strong contrast to the religious culture of his time, which was saturated with visual images, and laid such stress on the cult of the saints.<sup>8</sup> He goes even further than this, encouraging his readers to not even think of “God’s kindness or excellence . . . or even the joys of heaven” (5). In one sense, this is a straightforward reminder of the need for a pure love of God, not motivated by the hope of reward. However on another level, it is slightly troubling, implying that God’s being is somehow separable from God’s actions.

The role that Jesus plays in the *Cloud* is interesting and difficult to characterise. On the one hand, the author is sceptical about the value of meditating on the events of Jesus’ life, even his Passion. He outlines his ideas on this in chapter 12, which opens with the need to “beat continually on this cloud of unknowing that is between you and your God with a sharp dart of longing love.” He considers this activity to be far more important than meditation on the Passion.

But the author’s view isn’t anything as simple as rejecting the importance of Jesus’ physical nature and incarnation. We can see this since it lies embedded within an extended consideration (chapters 16-23) of Jesus’ visit to the house of Martha and Mary and the role

<sup>7</sup> *On Loving God*, BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, ROBERT WALTON (tr.), 1995.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, *The Late Medieval English Church*, G.W. BERNARD, 2012.



of Mary Magdalene in the gospels.<sup>9</sup> The author speaks of the love that Mary Magdalene showed towards Jesus, and uses that as a model. He looks at Jesus' praise of Mary of Bethany for having chosen "the better part", and sees her too as a model for contemplatives. So it is clear that he sees careful reading of the Gospels, and meditating on their contents as a praiseworthy and valuable thing to do, but not as actual contemplation.

The way to resolve this seeming contradiction appears much later in the book, where the author outlines his underlying model of the make-up of the human person (63-67). Here he divides the mental operations (he uses the word *mynde*, which Spearing translates as consciousness) into two primary faculties, reason and will, and two secondary ones, the imagination and sense perception. For him, reason is "the faculty by which we separate bad from good" and make evaluative operations. When we read scripture, and involve ourselves in trying to understand its message, it is this faculty that is being engaged. In contrast, he sees the will as the faculty "by which we love God, desire God and finally rest in God with complete joy and consent" (64). We can now understand the *Cloud*-author's view of contemplation much more clearly. He sees it as an act of the will, and sees the other faculties as providing distractions. In general, the use of reason is to be encouraged, since it provides information about God's work, helps us to understand what God has done for us and provides motivation. He does not recommend the contemplative to refrain from this permanently, but only during the "work of contemplation", which he sees as a relatively brief process (38).

Similarly, his idea of placing a "cloud of forgetting" between the contemplative and all created beings does not end in an indifference to humanity. He describes the virtue of charity as a combination of loving God for himself and loving one's enemies, so that "All seem his friends and none his enemies, so that for him all those who torment him and cause him distress on earth are his particular friends. . . ." (24).

Contemplation is a complicated dynamic act for the *Cloud*-author, in which both the human and divine sides are important, and it is never quite clear who has the initiative.

On the one hand, it seems as though God should be taking the initiative. This is the more doctrinal answer, and there is plenty of evidence throughout the book to support it. God has called the contemplative to this way of life (7), and the author is clear that salvation comes only "through virtue of Christ's Passion" (25). In chapter 29, he discusses the rapidity with which some people who have been habitual sinners can make progress in contemplation, through "a merciful miracle of our Lord, who thus grants his special grace to arouse the whole world's wonder." Two chapters later, he speaks of how the way to forget created things is something "learned from God by experience", and reiterates this in chapter 34, saying that "without God's work, no saint or angel can think of desiring [contemplation]."

However, despite these examples, and others beside, our author places great importance on the human side of contemplation. This seems to involve more than just preparing ourselves to be receptive to God. Instead he talks of the contemplative as having a positive role in the process. He speaks of the work involved in forgetting all other created beings as needing many attempts and much labour, even though it can only be done by grace. He frequently uses images of effort and hard work. For example, at the beginning of chapter 9 (I have emphasised each of these images with italics):

And so the sharp stirring of your understanding, which keeps on thrusting itself on you when you *apply yourself* to this *blind work* of contemplation, must always be *forced down*; and unless you *force it down*, it will force you down. . .

In the end though, he tries to strike a balance between these two tendencies: both God

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<sup>9</sup> As was common at the time, the *Cloud*-author conflates the figures of Mary of Magdala and Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus.



and the contemplative are involved in this process. This is most clear when he speaks of his own experience of contemplation as desire of something that he does not know (34). He advises us to submit to God's transformation "simply be the wood and let it be the carpenter". All the effort that he speaks of is activity needed to retain an attitude of passivity in front of God. Later, he speaks of the need to show patience, and to wait for the will of God (46) and the work necessary to maintain this attentive waiting.

This complicated relationship between God and the contemplative contrasts with the clear, vivid images used by his contemporary Julian of Norwich. Julian's God is "courteous", and "condescends" to give her the visions that she describes and interprets in her writings. For her, the initiative clearly lies with God, and she sees herself as purely a recipient, not a partner in the exchange.

The *Cloud* needs to be looked at within its context, and interpreted as a document written for a readership whose faith had been formed within that context. Understanding this can help to illuminate some of the strongly apophatic attitudes taken by the author. His opposition to any role for the physical and the bodily within the spiritual life needs to be balanced against the widespread medieval spirituality which placed great emphasis on physicality. There was a cultural focus on images of saints and of the life of Jesus in churches, on the practice of pilgrimage, on the great programme of renewing church buildings that was taking place at the time in his native East Midlands.<sup>10</sup> His emphasis on solitude is opposed to the crowded sociality of the medieval towns, and the guild system, which gathered people together so much in their spiritual life.<sup>11</sup> One very curious aspect of this attitude is the total absence of liturgy from his worldview. There is no mention of the Mass, of the Eucharist, of the recitation of Psalms in either a positive or a negative sense.

Finally, I wish to contrast this with another contemplative writing which was growing in popularity at the time, the *Ignea Sagitta* by Nicholas of Narbonne. Nicholas was writing to reprimand his fellow Carmelites for their attachment to life in towns and cities and their neglect of contemplation. He describes the distractions associated with the noise and busyness of a medieval town as obstacles, but shows a much more balanced and less dualistic attitude towards the bodily and the created when he speaks of his ideal view of eremitical life. Here, he speaks of the contemplative hearing birdsong as hymns of praise to God, and of the way that the fertility of the land can recall God's creativity.<sup>12</sup> Nicholas has a more positive view of the physical world than that present in the *Cloud*. His more sacramental attitude sees that the physical may sometimes be a signpost for the spiritual, so that the connection between the exterior and the interior man need not always be negative, but the experience of creation moves "the interior man to give praise to the Creator".

The *Cloud*-author's heavily apophatic attitude was opposed to the cataphatic excess of medieval Christianity, in a way that refused to acknowledge the value of the bodily and the physical. His was an entirely inward route to God, but he does not view this as the right route for everyone. For him God cannot be known by reason, but only by love. But if we follow his recommendations, if we cut ourselves off from the knowledge of God's loving acts towards us, how can we ever know that love?

<sup>10</sup> *Churches in the Landscape*, RICHARD MORRIS, 1997.

<sup>11</sup> *The Late Medieval English Church*, G.W. BERNARD, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> *Ignea Sagitta*, NICHOLAS THE FRENCHMAN, BEDE EDWARDS (tr.), 1985, p.50-51.



# Christian Spirituality and the Evangelical Counsels in Consecrated Life

*di Rangarirai Mutanga, O.Carm*

## Introduction

Consecrated life has had considerable contribution to the witnessing to the need to answer God's call to live a life of holiness. Yet it has not been immune from negative criticisms from within the Church as well as from without. With rising secularism, hedonism and atheism, militant and passive, some people are questioning the relevance of Christianity let alone religious life. The challenging contemporary situation has dampened the faith of some people. There increasingly arise the need to offer a credible example of how to radically live the Christian life. One of the ways of doing so is through consecrated life. As such there arises a greater need to re-visit and re-enlighten again the essence of consecrated life. The clarification of the constant elements of its theologico-spiritual nature equips one with appreciation of the depth of the solid and living witness that consecrated persons are called to bear in their own lives. All people are called to embark on this journey but not necessarily as consecrated people who profess the evangelical counsels. As such spiritual advancement and conscious gospel-inspired efforts towards union with God in holiness is the message that consecrated life proclaims to the world. Without understanding the underlying theology of consecrated life, there is a risk of expecting what is not expected from it, or at worse, not valuing it for what it really is and thus missing the message proclaimed. There is need to re-visit and appreciate the spirituality expressed through the evangelical counsels. As such, the objective of this paper is to explore consecrated life and try and discover how it brings out, in active and living witness, the depth of Christian spirituality at least as it is understood under the banner of Catholic theology. The paper begins by briefly looking at the nature of Christian spirituality before exploring the way consecrated life seeks to make a dynamic living of Christian spirituality.

## Christian Spirituality

Christian spirituality holds a central position in Christian life. But what is Christian spirituality? In his book *Christian Spirituality*, Alister E. McGrath gives a basic definition of Christian spirituality: 'Christian spirituality concerns the quest for a fulfilled and authentic Christian existence, involving the bringing together of the fundamental ideas of Christianity and the whole experience of living on the basis of and within the scope of the Christian faith'<sup>1</sup>. In other words, Christian spirituality encompasses the way in which individuals or groups strive to concretize their relationship and experience of the presence of the living God<sup>2</sup>.

Christian spirituality stems from the relationship of love that God has for all humanity from the beginning of creation. By creating man in his image and likeness, *imago Dei* (Gn

<sup>1</sup> A.E. MCGRATH, *Christian Spirituality*, 2

<sup>2</sup> A.E. MCGRATH, *Christian Spirituality*, 3; T. CARSON – J. CERRITO, ed., *New Catholic Encyclopaedia*, no. 13. 433



1,27), God aimed to establish a relationship of love with his people. In a logical sense, being created in the *imago Dei* necessarily points to an establishment of a relationship: 'If human beings exist in the "image of God," it follows that a potential for a relationship exists between individual human beings and God'<sup>3</sup>. This relationship was marred by man's sins but God, in his merciful love continuously called man to repentance and holiness (2 Cr 7,14; Ez. 18,32; Joel 2,13; Is 55,7). Through the establishment of covenants and through the words of the prophet down through the Old Testament times, God never ceased to call his children back to communion with him. Gradually he revealed himself as a loving God who relates with his people in a relationship described in marital terms (Eze 16, 8-14, 59-60; Is 54,5; Ger 31,32). From this it becomes clear that God loved his people collectively, and he also called each individual soul to communion with him, an expected a response to this love in faith and obedience<sup>4</sup>. Clearly God's desire for communion with souls is ingrained in the history of salvation.

Turning to the New Testament, the pivotal point to note is that the New Testament brings about the fulfilment of the law in Jesus Christ<sup>5</sup>. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, true God and true man<sup>6</sup>, is the Word who became flesh (Jn 1:14), and it is through him that humanity is brought to communion with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. In *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition* Jordan Aumann describes communion more clearly:

Christ is the realization and the fulfilment of all that has been promised and signified by the word and action of God in the history of salvation from Adam to the last of the prophets. Christ is, therefore, the embodiment of authentic spirituality and, quite logically, from our point of view the spiritual life must be a participation in the "mystery of Christ." Consequently, Christ is for all times – yesterday, today and forever – and any attempt to construct a spirituality that is more "more contemporary" or "more up-to-date" is purely an illusion<sup>7</sup>.

The explanation above clearly shows that Christian spirituality is more authentic if it seeks to be faithful to the person of Christ as revealed in the Word of God.

Describing the role of Christ in bringing up souls to the level of relating with God, Aumann further explains:

The very mystery of the Word made flesh indicates to us how we are able to participate in the mystery of Christ. The Word condescended to "humanize" himself, so to speak, by assuming human nature, but in so doing, he elevated that nature to the supernatural order by "divinizing" it through its union with the divine Person<sup>8</sup>.

This act of elevation to the supernatural order enables humanity to participate in the life that Christ shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit<sup>9</sup>, and its genesis is from the sacrament of baptism through which individuals participate in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ<sup>10</sup>. The participation in the life of the Trinity is the essence of Christian spirituality; it is through union with the Son that a relationship of love with the Father is made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit<sup>11</sup>.

It is vital to note, from what has been discussed above, that spiritual life is a life-long journey towards union with God. And, since this discussion involves consecrated life in the

<sup>3</sup> A.E. MCGRATH, *Christian Spirituality*, 41

<sup>4</sup> J. AUMANN, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*, 9

<sup>5</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 578

<sup>6</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 464-69; *Ibid.*, 480-82

<sup>7</sup> J. AUMANN, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*, 10

<sup>8</sup> J. AUMANN, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*, 11

<sup>9</sup> J.-H. NICOLAS, *Catholic Dogmatic Theology: A Synthesis. Book 1: On the Trinitarian Mystery of God.*, 369

<sup>10</sup> J. AUMANN, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*, 11; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 168; *Ibid.*, 265; *Ibid.*, 537

<sup>11</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 234



Catholic Church, it is important to add one more definition that brings a Catholic understanding of what has been discussed above. William Resier gives a Catholic definition of spirituality: “Spirituality” refers to the unfolding, day by day, of that fundamental decision to become or remain a Christian which we make at baptism, repeat at confirmation, and renew each time we receive the eucharist<sup>12</sup>.

From such understanding of Christian spirituality, it is clear that the relationship with God calls for repentance, forgiveness and transformation of individual human life so that life is lived in holiness (Mt. 3,1-12; 5,48; Mc 1,15). In other words, Christian spirituality makes a clear demand for the transformation on human way of living. God’s injunction that all should be perfect after him resound through the whole spirituality enterprise: It is ‘a dynamic revolution, a law of constant progress in one’s relationship with God’<sup>13</sup>. It is a journey for every believer in Christ and along this journey the Church, his body, is a necessary institution.

God calls all people to communion with him and people respond to his call through living the spiritual life. In the Church, there are different ways of responding to God and of embarking on this spiritual quest for union with him. Consecrated life, through the living of the evangelical counsels, is one of the ways through which certain individuals respond in a more radical way to the call to communion with the Father, through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit: ‘Though all Christians are called to practise the evangelical counsels in their own way, within this general vocation, religious attend to it while following Christ in a special way’<sup>14</sup>. Having established an understanding of Christian spirituality, focus is shifted to consecrated life and its spirituality is explored.

### Nature and Spirituality of Consecrated Life

Consecrated life, which involves the profession of the evangelical counsels of obedience, poverty and chastity, stems from baptism and desires to live the Christian life in a more radical way. In *Vita Consecrata*, Pope John Paul II describes consecrated life in a brief and clear way:

In the Church’s tradition religious profession is considered to be a special and fruitful deepening of the consecration received at baptism, inasmuch as it is the means through which the close union with Christ already began in Baptism develops in the gift of a fuller, more explicit and authentic configuration to him through the profession of evangelical counsels. This further consecration, however, differs in a special way from baptismal consecration, of which it is not a necessary consequence. In fact, those reborn in Christ are called to live out, with the strength which is the Spirit’s gift, the chastity appropriate for their state of life, obedience to God and to the Church, and a reasonable detachment from material possessions: for all are called to holiness which is the perfection of love<sup>15</sup>.

From this understanding, it stands clear that the way of consecrated life is a more radical way of coming to communion with the Father by following and serving Christ in the Church which is his body and has strong inspiration from the Gospel. Joseph Xavier, in his article *Call of Evangelical Counsels*, explains: ‘this form of Christian life is all about the Gospel and it draws inspiration from it’<sup>16</sup>. This is made effectively possible by the contemplative dimension inherent in consecrated life<sup>17</sup>.

What makes consecrated life unique is the profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience for the sake of the Kingdom of God<sup>18</sup>. Since these three

<sup>12</sup> W. REISER, *Looking for a God to Pray to: Christian Spirituality in Transition*, 2

<sup>13</sup> J. AUMANN, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition*, 14

<sup>14</sup> J. XAVIER, «Call of Evangelical Counsels», 249

<sup>15</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 30

<sup>16</sup> J. XAVIER, «Call of Evangelical Counsels», 249

<sup>17</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 17; *Ibid.*, 72; *Ibid.*, 79; P. PAUL VI, «Perfectae Caritatis», 5

<sup>18</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Evangelica Testificatio», 8; *Ibid.*, 10





evangelical counsels are key features of consecrated life<sup>19</sup>, it logically means the spirituality of consecrated life is hinged upon these three counsels. As such, it is important to discuss each of them and bring out the underlying spirituality.

### Obedience

Christian spirituality involves a life of obedience to the Father in imitation of Christ who was obedient to the Father even unto death (Fil 2,5-8). Evangelical obedience follows in the same steps more radically as it involves sacrificing one's own freedom and choosing the true freedom that comes from Christ whose true freedom was to do the will of the Father (Gv 3,4; 6,38; Eb 10,5.7)<sup>20</sup>. Evangelical obedience is lived in discerning the will of God individually as well as a community<sup>21</sup>. As such, through living in obedience of the Father under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the possibility of advancing along the spiritual journey and living a fully-surrendered life is thus made possible. All this is directed to living a life of union with God in love. The Carmelite Constitutions explain this point more eloquently:

It involves a constant and profound process of transformation in order to internalise the will of God which is always creative and life-giving, so that we may not only freely choose to act in accordance with the divine commandments, but being purified we may adhere more and more fully to the God who loves us<sup>22</sup>.

Christian spirituality involves the witnessing dimension. Evangelical obedience, being one of the radical ways of living Christian spirituality, will not be without the witnessing dimension. By living evangelical obedience, consecrated persons challenge the distorted notions of obedience and freedom that the world is constantly presenting. It challenges people to always base their decisions and mode of life on listening the Word of God and discerning his will so as to be his instruments in the transformation of individuals and communities as well as the structures that affect human life in all its aspects<sup>23</sup>. If there is communal discernment and conformity to the will of God, humanity will then live in harmony and the structures of the kingdom of God are established among the people of God, and they too will have the freedom to live Christian spirituality without crushing hindrances.

From the explanation above, it is clear that the ultimate aim of obedience is not a mere observation of set down rules and statutes, or is it merely to cultivate oneness in community. Although these are important, they are means to an end, and the end is union with God in love through obedient abandonment to his will.

### Poverty

With regards to Christian spirituality, detachment from certain attachments is indispensable. Christ himself asked this of his disciples (Mt. 10,37-39; 19,27; Mc 10, 21; Lc 12,15; 8,24-34)<sup>24</sup>. In the same vein evangelical poverty is taken in imitation of the poor Christ who, though he was rich, became poor to enrich us with his poverty.<sup>25</sup> As they imitate Christ in his poverty, consecrated persons seek to detach from worldly possessions so as to be attached to God and to accept his plan for the salvation of souls.<sup>26</sup> In their quest to imitate the poor Christ, consecrated persons are able to practice self-abnegation in humility so as to eradicate self-centeredness and egotism through their earthly pilgrimage.

<sup>19</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church.*, 915

<sup>20</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 22; J. XAVIER, «Call of Evangelical Counsels», 248

<sup>21</sup> «The Carmelite Constitutions», 48

<sup>22</sup> «The Carmelite Constitutions», 49

<sup>23</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Evangelica Testificatio», 24; P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 22; *Ibid.*, 62; *Ibid.*, 91

<sup>24</sup> J. XAVIER, «Call of Evangelical Counsels», 247

<sup>25</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Perfectae Caritatis», 13

<sup>26</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 22



This in turn opens their hearts and eyes to see and feel with the eyes and heart of Christ in the sick, the weak and in those who are poor not by any choice of their own: 'evangelical poverty impels a follower of Christ into practical solidarity with those for whom poverty is not a matter of virtue but the condition of life and situation exacted on them by society'<sup>27</sup>. Regarding the same point Pope Francis in his *Address to the International Union of Superiors* brings the point against the evils of self-centred hearts:

Poverty teaches solidarity, sharing and charity, and is also expressed in moderation and joy in the essential, to put us on guard against material idols that obscure the real meaning of life. A poverty learned with the humble, the poor, the sick and all those who are on the existential outskirts of life. A theoretical poverty is no use to us. Poverty is learned by touching the flesh of the poor Christ, in the humble, in the poor, in the sick and in children<sup>28</sup>.

By living evangelical poverty, consecrated people preach against the unjust structures in the society and encourage the transformation of hearts<sup>29</sup>. The purpose of all this is to aid union with God through self-emptying and divorce from earthly attachments so as to be readily available to God's transforming love<sup>30</sup>. Living evangelical poverty should ultimately lead to union with God in love, and this is the goal of Christian spirituality.

### Chastity

The evangelical vow of chastity is taken with the view of imitating Christ in his chastity so as to be more closely united with him. As is the case with marriage, or even more so, consecrated chastity mirrors more perfectly the union that exists between Christ and his bride, the Church: 'consecrated chastity evokes this union [between Christ and his Church] in a more immediate way and brings that surpassing excellence to which all human love should tend'<sup>31</sup>. So evangelical chastity is professed in view of striving to love God more fully and loving others with the love that comes from experiencing the love of God (Mc 12,29-31). Embracing chastity is an expression of the desire to own and interiorize the pure love for God and seeking union with him, as is explained more clearly in *Vita Consecrata*:

The chastity of celibates and virgins, as a manifestation of dedication to God with an undivided heart (1Cor 7: 32-34), is a reflection of the infinite love which links the three Divine Persons in the mysteries of the depths of life of the Trinity, the love to which the Incarnate Word bears witness even to the point of giving his life, the love "poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Rom 5:5), which evokes a response of total love for God and the brethren<sup>32</sup>.

Consecrated chastity frees one to have an undivided focus in advancing in the love of God and his people; it is a gift that God gives in love and for the sake of love:

The chastity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:12) which religious profess should be counted an outstanding gift of grace. It frees the heart of man in a unique fashion (cf. 1 Cor. 7:32-35) so that it may be more inflamed with love for God and for all men<sup>33</sup>.

As a form of witness, evangelical chastity presents before the world a living example of how to strive for holiness to which all have been chosen and called (Ef 1,4; 1Pt 1,15-16; 2Tm 1,9). The contemporary world is increasingly moving away from modesty. Social media is enormously fuelling hypersexual behaviour<sup>34</sup> in people, especially the youths, with the

<sup>27</sup> J. XAVIER, «Call of Evangelical Counsels», 252-253

<sup>28</sup> P. FRANCIS, «The Address», 1

<sup>29</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 36

<sup>30</sup> «The Carmelite Constitutions», 56

<sup>31</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Evangelica Testificatio», 13

<sup>32</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 21

<sup>33</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Perfectae Caritatis», 12

<sup>34</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Evangelica Testificatio», 13.



consequences being rampant immorality, marriage and family breakdowns only to mention a few. Chastity comes in as a counter-witness to all this, and presents living examples of how all people, whatever their state in life, can and should embark on the way towards holiness<sup>35</sup>. What evangelical chastity effectively does is to show humanity that, albeit human weakness, cooperation with the grace of God can enable it to advance in the quest for union with him in holiness. Regarding this, Pope John Paul II explained:

The reply of consecrated life is above all in the *joyful living of perfect chastity*, as a witness to the power of God's love manifested in the weakness of the human condition. The consecrated person attests that what many have believed impossible becomes, with the Lord's grace, possible and truly liberating. Yes, in Christ it is possible to love God with all one's heart, putting him above every other love, and thus to love every creature with the freedom of God. This testimony is more necessary than ever today, because it is so little understood by our world<sup>36</sup>.

Chastity is thus a visible witness of God's call to holiness and a living example of how people should be committed to striving to attain it with the help of God's grace in union with Christ. In *Evangelica Testificatio* of Pope Paul VI this point is also expressed more clearly:

Chastity is decisively positive, it witnesses to preferential love for the Lord and symbolizes in the most eminent and absolute way the mystery of the union of the Mystical Body with its Head, the union of the Bride with her eternal Bridegroom. Finally, it reaches, transforms and imbues with a mysterious likeness to Christ man's being in its most hidden depths<sup>37</sup>.

Since Christian spirituality aims at deepening one's experience of God's love through imitating Christ in his virtues, including being chaste, it becomes clear how evangelical chastity is a more radical way of striving to make this a reality.

### Synthesis

This discussion can be brought down to a few key points which are worth repeating. Christian spirituality, lived dynamically through the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience is another way of living Christian spirituality. The evangelical counsels are as a way of responding to God's call to holiness and offers those called to such life an opportunity to freely devote themselves to working for the kingdom of God thus coming to union of love with him. Each of the evangelical counsels aims to foster this spiritual union with the Father through Jesus Christ in the working of the Holy Spirit. Each of the evangelical counsels offers a witness to all God's people to listen and discern God's will for their lives as individual and as communities/families, to detach from the controlling power of worldly material possessions and to attach themselves to the love of God, as well as to live a life of chastity.

It is important, however, to note that the evangelical counsels do not work in isolation. The fact that they are professed together points to the unity of the usefulness that they each have along the spiritual journey; it is one spiritual journey and not three. Living prayerfully the values they hold leads to a more intimate, selfless union with God and a selfless life of service to others especially the marginalised of the society. And this is clearer way of living the Gospel in this present world: 'It is one of the practical ways of being a missionary in the modern world. That is to say, it has an important witnessing value'<sup>38</sup>.

In the *Year of Consecrated Life* (30 November 2014-2 Feb 2016), Pope Francis, led the whole Church in re-looking and appreciating the life and witness that consecrated life gives

<sup>35</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church.*, 2348-2350

<sup>36</sup> P. JOHN PAUL, «Vita Consecrata», 88

<sup>37</sup> P. PAUL VI, «Evangelica Testificatio», 13

<sup>38</sup> J. XAVIER, «Call of Evangelical Counsels», 250



in the midst of the Church and the world. Inviting consecrated people to wake up the world, he exhorted them to go back to the sources of their charisms and re-vitalise the spirit of their founders, applying it to this present world<sup>39</sup>. Common to all groups of consecrated people is the desire to come into communion with the Lord and to experience his presence through prayer, community and service. Although there are different expressions or charisms, the necessity of embarking on the spiritual journey of life looms very large. Without spirituality, any action that is done by consecrated people, and equally by all Christians, degenerate into mere social service, devoid of the spirit of Christ.

The world needs people who pray. Through the evangelical counsels, consecrated life in the Church gives a good example of such through the presence of the contemplative dimension that is found in it<sup>40</sup>. The world needs people who transform the world by translating or joining their contemplation to service or mission. Consecrated persons are aided to do this more effectively through their faithful living of the evangelical counsels. In all this interplay between contemplation and service, it is important to note that the objective is the same objective that Christian spirituality has in one's soul as well as in other people's souls, that is, coming to the union of love with the Father, through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Church. From this flows the desire to establish structures that favour human dignity through challenging and unjust and unholy social and political structures and systems that drain dignity of the people of God.

As new challenges such as secularism, hedonism and relativism prop up in different forms and intensities in today's world, one can appreciate the work the Church is doing in aiding spiritual growth of its people. Yes, the Church may be growing in the developing countries resulting in increasing numbers of members joining consecrated life, but more needs to be done especially in developed countries to increase and aid spiritual growth of individuals and communities. Christians who deepen their spirituality have a powerful capacity to transform the world to be a better place. The same need goes to all people especially powerful and influential Christians; these have power to effect decisions that aid the dignity of the people of God. And they can effectively do so if they aim at the same values that consecrated people preach through the evangelical counsels. If all Christians from all walks of life focus on faithfully living their spirituality, the world will surely become a better place, and the presence of the Lord will be better felt.

### Conclusion

This paper has explored Christian spirituality and how the goal of Christian spirituality is more radically expressed and lived in consecrated life. The discussion has explained the importance of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience in aiding union with God in love as well as in giving witness to the gospel-inspired values in the world. The proposition that is given is that all Christians in all states of life should be assisted more to understand and live, proper to their state of life, the same values that the evangelical counsels highlight. For such to be effective, the continual deepening of spiritual life in people's hearts should be done in all places by those with the charism of caring for souls. This is a growing and an ever-urgent need especially as many evils besiege the Church and the world.

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<sup>39</sup> P. FRANCIS, «Apostolic Letter to all Consecrated People», 1-2

<sup>40</sup> D. WATKINS, «Pope at Audience»



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# La Misericordia de YHWH y la ingratitud de su hijo-pueblo en Oseas 11,1-4 (Capítulo 2)

di Mario Cadena, O.Carm

“El mayor dolor es no poder dar amor a quien se ama”, porque el amor no es correspondido<sup>1</sup>. En el capítulo anterior se estudió la formación del libro profético que nos ocupa, mientras que en este apartado se analizan los siguientes puntos de la “exégesis”: crítica textual, crítica literaria, análisis filológico, análisis sintáctico, análisis semántico, estructura del texto y género literario, con la finalidad de ver el texto de Os 11,1-4 en su sentido original.

## 2. Exégesis<sup>2</sup>.

Luis Alonso Schökel comenta que la exégesis es un acercamiento al texto, en el cual es fundamental la explicación de dicho escrito, según su sentido original; un trabajo histórico-crítico<sup>3</sup>. Por ello, desde el itinerario exegético consiste en ir del texto a su ambiente y a su origen para volver luego al texto; una sucesión de lectura sincrónica-diacrónica-sincrónica.

El texto elegido para este estudio es Os 11,1-4, presentado en versión hebrea para llegar posteriormente a la traducción castellana. Se analizará el texto a partir del método histórico crítico y desde la historia de las tradiciones<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Pensamiento de Thiago de Mello. Cf. Leonardo BOFF, Rose Marie MURARO, *Femenino y Masculino, Una nueva conciencia para el encuentro de las diferencias*, Trotta, Madrid, 2002, 52.

<sup>2</sup> La palabra exégesis tiene su origen en el verbo griego exegesis (poner la palabra en escrito griego). Esta palabra griega está compuesta de ek + ago, cuya combinación significa “guiar”. El sentido literal del verbo encontrado en el léxico griego incluye significados tales como “guiar” y “mostrar el camino”. Por lo ende, se muestra la explicación, interpretación. Cf. Diccionario: Real Academia española, (edición 22º, tomo 5, 2001), 689.

El uso predominante de “exégesis” ha estado relacionado con la Biblia. Denomina un campo de investigación que ha sido y es muy prominente en los estudios teológicos. Cf. Roberth L. THOMAS, *Introducción a la Exégesis*, 1987, 9-12.

El método gramático – histórico de la exégesis es un estudio designado a descubrir el significado de un texto que es dictado por los principios de la gramática y los hechos de la historia. Este es el método por el cual otros libros son interpretados. Busca encontrar el significado que los autores de las Escrituras intentaron transmitir y el significado comprendido por los receptores. Cf. *Ibidem*, 23.

Cf. <http://www.stblima.org/griego/THOMAS%20ITE%20Spanish%20corregido%20Carballosa.pdf> (02.01.21).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Luis Alonso SCHÖKEL, *Apuntes de Hermenéutica (Estructuras y procesos. Serie Religión)*, Trotta, Madrid 1994, 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. TARCISO GAITÁN, «Métodos de interpretación de la Biblia, Cuestiones teológicas», vol. 33, n. 79 (Medellín, enero-junio 2006), 163-164.

También comenta Cristóbal Sevilla Jiménez lo siguiente: se hace todo lo posible, por medio de este método histórico, saber cuál es el origen de la profecía bíblica, algo que para un exegeta o biblista puede ser muy importante en un primer momento para explicar el origen del movimiento profético. Puesto que al adentrarnos en los libros proféticos y comprendemos su teología en el contexto, nos podemos dar cuenta que el Antiguo Testamento muestra un gran interés en señalar las relaciones del profeta de YHWH. Cf. Cristóbal SEVILLA JIMÉNEZ, «Está escrito en los profetas: Serán todos discípulos de Dios» *El Instituto Teológico San Fulgencio y el Profesorado del Seminario, Scripta Fulgentina*, Vol. 29, n. 57-58, (2019), 209-221.



El Método histórico crítico (MHC) es un conjunto sistemático de procedimientos que permite una aproximación objetiva en determinada búsqueda. Como tal, es transmisible y controlable, comprensible e imitable. Se llama “histórico” puesto que comprende el sentido original de los textos bíblicos, además se requiere conocer el contexto en el cual fueron escritos. Es crítico en cuanto que establece distinciones y con base en ellas, trata de juzgar sobre los diversos aspectos del texto, asociados con la historia de la época de composición relacionada con escritos contemporáneos, así como del contenido con la realidad extra textual. Es decir, con el MHC se busca explicar cada texto a partir de sus presupuestos y de entender su sentido original<sup>5</sup>.

### Texto de Oseas 11,1-4

<sup>1</sup> כִּי נָעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַהֲבָהוּ וּמִמְצָרִים קָרָאתִי לְבָנִי:

<sup>2</sup> קָרָאוּ לָהֶם בֶּן הַלֶּכֶוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם לְבָעֲלִים יִזְבְּחוּ וּלְפִסְלִים יִקְטְרוּן:

<sup>3</sup> וְאַנְכִי תַרְגְּלֹתַי לְאַפְרַיִם קָחֶם עַל-זִרְעוֹתָיו וְלֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי רַפְאֵתִים:

<sup>4</sup> בַּחֲבִלֵי אָדָם אֲמַשְׁכֶּם בַּעֲבֹתוֹת אֲהַבָּה וְאַהֲיָה לָהֶם כַּמְרִימֵי עֵל עַל לְחֵייהֶם וְאַט אֲלִיו אֹכִיל:

#### 2.1 Crítica textual

La crítica textual es una rama de la erudición textual, la filología y la crítica literaria que se ocupa de la identificación de variantes textuales en manuscritos o libros impresos. Los escribas pueden hacer alteraciones al copiar los manuscritos. Dada una copia del manuscrito, varias o muchas copias, pero no el documento original, la crítica textual podría tratar de reconstruir el texto original lo más cercano posible. El objetivo de la crítica textual es una mejor comprensión de la creación y transmisión histórica de textos. Este entendimiento puede llevar a la producción de una “edición crítica” que contiene un texto de estudio académico<sup>6</sup>. Es decir, la crítica textual es la disciplina que, basada en sus propios métodos y recogiendo la experiencia de varios siglos, pretende fijar un texto, generalmente literario, tal y como salió de las manos de su autor, depurándolo de las imperfecciones y errores, así como de los aciertos que en dicho texto acumularon la intervención de los hombres y el paso del tiempo<sup>7</sup>.

Por ello, esta crítica textual, desde el área bíblica, se refiere a los manuscritos antiguos, es decir, los textos originales (manuscritos bíblicos<sup>8</sup>), los comentarios y las concordancias para dicha investigación. Con el objetivo de reconstruir lo más fielmente posible el texto original. Reconstruyendo ante todo la historia de la transmisión del texto (códices más autorizados,

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Cf. [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cr%C3%ADtica\\_textual](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cr%C3%ADtica_textual) (13.02.21).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Gaspar MOROCHO GAYO, *Sobre Crítica Textual y disciplinas afines*, 117. Interclassica.um.es (13.02.21).

<sup>8</sup> El Antiguo Testamento hebreo ha llegado hasta nosotros en manuscritos en su inmensa mayoría de épocas relativamente tardías (siglo X o posteriores), debido en parte a las destrucciones de bibliotecas producidas por los avatares de la historia del pueblo judío y, muy especialmente, por preceptos religiosos del judaísmo: la Sagrada Escritura hebrea debe ser leída en mss. impecables, sin deterioro ni deficiencia alguna; los manuscritos gastados por el uso o incorrectos con respecto al modelo oficial deben ser sustituidos por otros nuevos y correctos. El respeto religioso hacia la Sagrada Escritura obligaba a que dichos manuscritos desechados pasaran primero a una especie de almacén de la sinagoga, llamado *geniza*, que una vez lleno, su contenido era llevado al cementerio judío y enterrado con honras fúnebres. Los manuscritos hebreos del Antiguo Testamento deben ser divididos en estos dos grupos: Rollos (el rollo es la más antigua forma del libro, y así se nos ofrecen los más antiguos manuscritos hebreos del A.T.) y Códices (son lo que no tienen uso litúrgico. La forma del código, mucho más práctica y cómoda, se inventó en el s. I d.C., aunque el rollo continuó usándose esporádicamente. Los códices bíblicos hebreos tienen para la crítica textual una importancia mucho mayor que los rollos, pues en ellos se usan los signos inventados por los masoretas para indicar la vocalización y la acentuación del texto).

Cf. <https://rsanzcarrera2.wordpress.com/2012/07/17/manuscritos-biblicos-hebreos/> (02.01.21).



las versiones más antiguas, las citas). Por eso, con la crítica textual, se hará todo lo posible (debido a lo que anteriormente se ha comentado, de que el texto de Oseas, es uno de los textos más adulterados-corrompidos) de que dicho pasaje bíblico haya sido del todo respetado en cuanto texto sagrado. Que en el presente caso se refiere a los versículos uno al cuatro del presente trabajo.

Los problemas textuales en Oseas son incomparables en el Antiguo Testamento. El texto masorético (TM), representado por el Códice de Leningrado, que sirvió de base para BHK y BHS, y el Códice de Alepo<sup>9</sup>, están corrompidos textualmente por todas las cuentas y tienen una multitud de errores de escritura. Es decir, se encuentran muchas variantes en el texto del profeta Oseas. Además, existen variantes en este libro; por ejemplo, está la tradición textual y la calidad de la traducción de los LXX y las primeras recensiones griegas; en algunos lugares son inferiores al TM, pero en otros, conservan una mejor lectura.

*With corruption in both the Hebrew and the Greek, results become very uncertain; so, while the examination of the text of the LXX, involves a special investigation of itself, a few cases of interest may be noticed here<sup>10</sup>.*

Ejemplo de esto se tienen algunas palabras que no son del todo claras: niño o joven, padre o madre, entre otros. De las que se ha hecho mención anteriormente y algunas otras se analizarán, sobre todo contenidas en notas de pie de página de este segundo capítulo. Ahora veamos el texto de Oseas desde la perspectiva de la crítica textual. Es decir, desde esta definición los pasos serán los siguientes:

**כִּי נַעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶהְבֵּהוּ וּמִמְצָרִים קָרָאתִי לְבָנִי:**<sup>1</sup>

La versión de los LXX traduce del hebreo כִּי con la partícula ὅτι, razón causal *porque*. La Vulgata latina lo traduce como causal<sup>11</sup> *quia*<sup>12</sup>. Por lo cual, la traducción al castellano es *porque*. Pero puede leerse también temporal *cuando*; pero es mejor el sentido temporal, pues el amor de Dios está desde cuando Israel era niño hasta la actualidad.

En Os 11,1 del hebreo tenemos לְבָנִי “al hijo de mi” (TM) que los LXX traducen como τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ “a los hijos de él”. La Vulgata traduce filium meum “mi hijo”<sup>13</sup>. El TM conserva לְבָנִי como el original, debido a la evidencia interna, por lo cual es más apropiado para el contexto<sup>14</sup>. Por ende, en castellano es “a mi hijo”.

El versículo uno queda así:

**כִּי נַעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶהְבֵּהוּ וּמִמְצָרִים קָרָאתִי לְבָנִי:**<sup>1</sup>

Ahora se analizara el siguiente versículo:

**כִּדְבַר קָרָאוּ לָהֶם בֶּן הַלְכוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם לְבַעֲלֵים יִזְבְּחוּ וּלְפָסִלִים יִקְטְרוּ:**<sup>2</sup>

<sup>9</sup> El Códex de Aleppo es el más antiguo y completo manuscrito del Tanaj. BHK (Biblia hebraica de Kittel). BHS (Biblia hebraica stuttgartensia).

<sup>10</sup> Con la corrupción tanto en el hebreo como en el griego, los resultados se vuelven muy inciertos; así mientras que el examen del texto de los LXX implica una especial investigación de sí misma, aquí se pueden observar algunos casos de interés (traducción mía). Cf. GAYLARD H. PATTERSON, *The Septuagint of Hosea Compared with the Masoretic Text*, 191-200. www.journals.uchicago.edu > doi > pdf. (07.02.21).

<sup>11</sup> *Because*. Dando una ‘razón por la que’. Cf. Andrew A. MACINTOSH, *Hosea*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1997, 439.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*, 439.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, Edition Funditus Renovata, V edición, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart 1997, 1004.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.





En Os 11,2 el TM se lee קראו tiempo perfecto Qal, tercera persona plural de “llamar”, el cual se traduce como “llamaron”. En cambio los LXX lo traducen como καθώς μετεκάλεσα, leyendo כְּקָדַי (partícula modal “como”, más verbo קָדַי, Qal primera persona del singular de “llamé”) “como llamé yo”. Como también se lee en la versión Siriaca. Los editores de la Biblia hebrea proponen leer בְּדִן קָדַי (partícula que indica lo que es suficiente, lo necesario, el límite, lo que corresponde<sup>15</sup>, más verbo קָדַי, Qal primera persona singular de “llamé”). Lo cual se traduce “tanto lo llamé”. Considerando que la mejor opción es la que nos dan los editores “tanto lo llamé”, puesto que se refiere al Señor que está llamando a su hijo.

Asimismo, en el TM se lee מִפְּנֵיהֶם “de ellos”, preposición מִ más sustantivo plural masculino, más sufijo masculino de tercera persona plural, haciendo referencia a los profetas “cuanto más les llamaban, más se apartaban de mí”. Lo mismo lo hace la Vulgata<sup>16</sup> y el TM. Sin embargo, los LXX lo traducen: εκ προσώπου μου αυτοί, “de mi faz ellos”. Los editores de la Biblia hebrea proponen leer מִפְּנֵי הֵם (preposición “de”, más sustantivo, masculino, plural “rostros”, más pronombre personal, masculino, plural “ellos”). Lo cual se traduce “de mi rostro ellos”. Ha de considerarse que la mejor traducción es “cuanto más los llamaba, más se alejaban de mí”<sup>17</sup>, ya que se capta mejor la traducción al castellano, es decir, es más apropiado para el contexto. Considero que la mejor opción es la que nos da el TM. Lo cual significa que al recapitular la única variante es la primera palabra.

Además, Andrew Macintosh ve diferencias entre el TM y los LXX, puesto que observa la necesidad de interpretar el TM, aparentemente oscuro, en el contexto del versículo anterior en lugar de un texto que difiere del TM<sup>18</sup>.

El versículo segundo queda de esta manera:

קְרָאוּ לָהֶם בֶּן הַלְכוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם לְבָעֲלִים יִזְבְּחוּ וְלִפְסָלִים יִקְטְרוּ: <sup>2</sup>

Ahora se analizara el siguiente versículo:

וְאֶנְכִי תִרְגְּלֹתִי לְאֶפְרַיִם קָחֵם עַל-יְרוּעֹתָיו וְלֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי רָפְאֵתִים: <sup>3</sup>

En Os 11,3 el TM es קָחֵם (Qal, perfecto, tercera masculino, singular, con sufijo de tercera masculino plural) Lo cual se traduce: “él tomó a ellos/él los tomo”. Que los LXX traducen como ανέλαβον αὐτόν, “tomé a él”, equivale al hebreo תָּ לָקַח תָּ (verbo tomar en Qal infinitivo con sufijo de tercera persona, singular “tomarlo/agarrarlo”). La versión Siriaca al igual que el Targum lee wqblt ‘nwn, reflejan el término hebreo וְאֶנְכִי קָחֵם (conjunción “y” más verbo en Nif’al, forma alternativa, masculino o femenino, primera persona, singular) equivale “y seré tomado”. La versión Vulgata traduce como “portabam eos”, la cual se traduce como “los llevaba a ellos”<sup>19</sup>. Los editores<sup>20</sup> de la Biblia hebrea proponen leer וְאֶנְכִי קָחֵם (conjunción “y”, más verbo לָקַח en Qal, primera persona, singular de “agarrar o tomar”, más sufijo masculino, tercera persona, singular), lo cual se traduce “yo lo tomé o yo lo agarré”. Considero la opción que dan los editores de la Biblia, como la más apropiada a la hora de traducir el texto “yo lo tomé”.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Víctor MARÍTNÉZ, Diccionario Arameo-Español-Hebreo, (Silvio CAJIAO ed.), Bogotá, 2004, 280.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Andrew A. MACINTOSH, Hosea, 441.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Biblia Hebrea Stuttgartensia, 1004.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Andrew A. MACINTOSH, Hosea, 441.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Andrew A. MACINTOSH, Hosea, 445.

<sup>20</sup> En pocos códices manuscritos: SD en el museo de Londres y el códice Wadi Natrun. Cf. Biblia Hebrea Stuttgartensia.



Acerca de la segunda palabra, en el TM זרועתיו (sustantivo femenino dual, con sufijo de tercera masculino, singular) se traduce “los brazos de él, sus brazos”<sup>21</sup> La versión Siriaca y en la Vulgata se lee זרועתי (sustantivo, femenino, plural, con sufijo de primera persona, masculino, singular). Lo cual traducen “mis brazos”. Considero que la mejor opción es la que nos da el TM.

El versículo tercero quedara así:

3 וְאֹנְכֵי תְרִגְלָתִי לְאֶפְרַיִם קָחָם עַל-זְרוּעֹתַי וְלֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי רַפְאֵתִים:

Ahora se analizara el cuarto versículo:

4 בְּחִבְלֵי אָדָם אֲמַשְׁכֶּם בְּעֵבְתוֹת אֶהְבֶּה וְאֶהְיֶה לָהֶם כְּמִרְיָמִי עַל לְחִיָּהֶם וְאַט אֶלְיוֹ אוֹכִיל:

El aparato crítico de la Biblia hebraica (TM) presenta la palabra אָדָם como una palabra corrompida. Los editores de la Biblia proponen leer אַמָּת “fidelidad” o חֶסֶד “fidelidad o misericordia”. El sustantivo אָדָם tradicionalmente se relaciona con “hombre”, que se traduce literalmente o de forma metafórica como ‘cuerdas-lazos humanos’. Aunque esta expresión la traducen como lazos de fidelidad. Considero que la opción más adecuada es del TM.

El TM על כְּמִרְיָמִי (preposición ‘como’, más -verbo- hifil, participio, masculino, plural ‘quien levanta’, más estado constructo, más sustantivo, masculino, singular ‘yugo’). Cuya traducción al castellano es “como quien levanta un yugo”. De igual modo el aparato crítico da la opción עוֹל כְּמִרְיָמִי (preposición ‘como’, más sustantivo, femenino, singular ‘rebeldía’, más sustantivo masculino, singular ‘niño’).<sup>22</sup> Lo cual se traduce “como rebeldía del niño”. Desde mi punto de vista, prefiero tomar la primera palabra que nos presenta el TM (כְּמִרְיָמִי) y la segunda palabra que nos presenta el aparato crítico de la Biblia (עוֹל); resultando: עוֹל כְּמִרְיָמִי, cuya traducción es “levantar a un niño”.

En el texto TM aparece עַל לְחִיָּהֶם (preposición ‘sobre’, más sustantivo, masculino, singular ‘quijada’, más sufijo de tercera, masculino plural) traducido “a sus mejillas o sobre sus mejillas”. Los editores de la Biblia hebraica proponen leer לְחִיָּי (sustantivo, masculino, singular ‘quijada, mandíbula’, más sufijo de tercera persona, masculino, singular), que se traduce “su quijada, mejilla”. Prefiero tomar la opción del TM, ya que es más adecuada para la traducción “sobre sus mejillas”.

El versículo cuarto queda de la siguiente manera:

4 בְּחִבְלֵי אָדָם אֲמַשְׁכֶּם בְּעֵבְתוֹת אֶהְבֶּה וְאֶהְיֶה לָהֶם כְּמִרְיָמִי עַל לְחִיָּהֶם וְאַט אֶלְיוֹ אוֹכִיל:

Además, entre los vv. 4-5 la lectura del TM es (v. 4) וְאַט אֶלְיוֹ אוֹכִיל (v5) אֶל-יָשׁוּב לֹא “me incliné hacia él, alimenté. No volverá a tierra de Egipto.”

Por ende, tenemos en la crítica textual de Os 11,1-4 algunas palabras que suelen provocar inconsistencias a la hora en que se hicieron las traducciones, en su momento. Lo cual se confirma, que el texto de Oseas es uno de los más corrompidos a la hora de traducir. Por ejemplo, Os 11,4 en la parte siguiente וְאַט אֶלְיוֹ אוֹכִיל (y me incliné a él alimenté), los LXX lo traducen como και ἐπιβλέψομαι πρὸς αὐτόν, δυντήσομαι αὐτῷ (‘y me contemplé junto a él, soy fuerte con él’) la forma peculiar pudo haber engañado al traductor e incluso si proviene de אוֹכִיל (hifil, imperfecto, primera persona indefinida, singular, lo cual se

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 1004.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.



traduce “alimenté”), se esperaría un objeto en la oración. Este dicho remite que el texto es inconsistente<sup>23</sup>. Otro ejemplo está la forma en cómo hace la traducción los LXX de la partícula כִּי con frecuencia se traduce ὅτι y διότι ‘porque, ya que’<sup>24</sup>, posteriormente, a un negativo de ἀλλά ‘sino’<sup>25</sup>.

Por lo cual el texto es de la siguiente manera:

כִּי נָעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִהְבֵּהוּ וּמִמִּצְרַיִם קָרָאתִי לְבָנִי: <sup>1</sup>  
 כְּדִן קָרָאוּ לָהֶם בְּזוֹ הַלְכוֹ מִפְּנֵיהֶם לְבַעֲלִים יִזְבְּחוּ וּלְפִסְלִים יִקְטְרוּ: <sup>2</sup>  
 וְאֲנִי תַרְגְּלֹתִי לְאֶפְרַיִם קָחֵם עַל-זְרוּעֹתָיו וְלֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי רִפְּאִתִּים: <sup>3</sup>  
 בְּחִבְלֵי אָדָם אָמַשְׁכֶּם בְּעֵבְתוֹת אֶהְבֶּה וְאִהְיֶה לָּהֶם כְּמָרִימִי עַל עַל לְחִיָּהֶם וְאֵט אֶלְיוֹ אוֹכִיל: <sup>4</sup>

v. 1: Cuando Israel era niño lo amé, y de Egipto llamé a mí hijo.

v. 2: Cuanto más los llamaba, más se alejaban de mí; ofrecían sacrificios a los baales y ofrecieron incienso a las estatuas.

v. 3: Yo mismo enseñé a Efraín a caminar, yo lo tomé obre sus brazos, pero ellos no supieron que yo los cuidaba.

v. 4: Con cuerdas humanas los atraje, con lazos de amor, y fui para ellos como quien levanta a un niño sobre sus mejillas y me incliné hacia él para darle de comer.

## 2.2 Crítica literaria

La crítica literaria consiste en el análisis valorativo de las obras tales como novelas, cuentos, poemas, entre otros. El concepto suele utilizarse con referencia al artículo periodístico o el discurso mediático que se lleva a cabo sobre una de estas obras, destacando sus aspectos positivos y sus características negativas, según la opinión del crítico en cuestión<sup>26</sup>.

Desde este enfoque de la crítica literaria, en Os 11,1-4 hay opiniones de diversos autores. Entre estas críticas está, por ejemplo, cuando no se sabe si la figura antropológica que utiliza el profeta, es padre o madre cuando se refiera a YHWH: amor por su hijo Israel, expresado con las imágenes de la ternura Paterna y Materna<sup>27</sup>. Además, la maternidad y la paternidad no se identifican simplemente con la procreación biológica, puesto que “nacido de” no es sinónimo de “hijo de”<sup>28</sup>.

Hay que tener presente que hay ciertos antropomorfismos en la misma Biblia, cuando en la metáfora del amor de Dios, se hace referencia al amor entre hombre y mujer. Basta leer el Cantar de los Cantares<sup>29</sup>. Asimismo, se comentó en el capítulo primero de este trabajo, que el libro del profeta Oseas es uno de los más corrompidos, ya que el texto se halla mal conservado y numerosas frases hay que traducirlas basándose en hipótesis<sup>30</sup>. Razón por la cual, hay varias versiones a la hora de traducir el texto Sagrado, en forma particular a lo que concierne al análisis del presente trabajo.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. GAYLARD H. PATTERSON, *the septuagintext of Hosea compared with themassoretic text*, 212.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. José M. PABÓN S. DE URBINA, *Diccionario bilingüe, manual griego clásico-español*, Larouse, Barcelona, 2018, 27 y 154.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. GAYLARD H. PATTERSON, *the septuagintext of Hosea compared with themassoretic text*, 204.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. <https://definicion.de/critica-literaria/> (02.01.21).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Oseas”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecueménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Antonio CARRIERO, *El Vocabulario del Papa Francisco, 50 grandes periodistas y escritores*, Editorial Salesiana, Lima 2016, 34.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Leonardo BOFF, Rosa M. MURARO, *Femenino y Masculino*, 184-189.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Nueva Biblia Española, *Profetas*, Comentario II, 864.



Referente al estilo del escrito, como tal no cambian el sentido de dicho texto. Por ejemplo, en el versículo cuatro, de este capítulo once de Oseas, algunos opinan que se trata de llevar a un niño a la mejilla, en oposición al trato amable de una bestia de carga<sup>31</sup>.

A pesar de las diferencias que puede haber en el texto del profeta Oseas, dicho escrito es homogéneo, como nos comenta Roland Murphy<sup>32</sup>.

Asimismo, estos primeros cuatro versículos del análisis que se está desarrollando, en esta crítica literaria se observa, en el texto, que hay referencias al pasado del pueblo de Israel, citando implícitamente a los libros de Dt, Ex, entre otros. Que se desarrollará más en el área de la crítica histórica, como se verá en el capítulo siguiente, dándole una adaptación al escrito del profeta<sup>33</sup>.

Por lo cual, el capítulo once de Oseas es una pieza central, ya que es un resumen conciso de los caminos de YHWH con los seres humanos como cualquier parte de las Escrituras<sup>34</sup>. Utilizando la analogía YHWH es Padre/Madre, Israel-Efraín un hijo.

### 2.2.1 Análisis filológico

Luis Alonso Schökel afirma que la filología quiere ser un instrumento de precisión, a su vez, sirve para comprender, para precisar lo que dice el texto y no renunciar al análisis filológico, si se quiere penetrar en el texto<sup>35</sup>.

Por ello, el estudio de los textos, a través de los que se intenta reconstruir de manera fiel, considerando el sentido original de éstos, con el respaldo de la cultura que en ellos subyace. Por eso, la filología bíblica, asociada a la filología clásica y también la filología hebrea, en virtud de la historia del texto sagrado. Estas distinciones se vinculan a la disciplina hermenéutica<sup>36</sup>. Por lo que en este apartado se procurará realizar una reconstrucción lo más fiel, acompañado del aparato crítico, como se ha hecho anteriormente, desde la Biblia hebraica en Os 11,1-4:

Os 11,1		
palabra	morfología	significado
כִּי	Conjunción causal	Porque-ya que, <b>cuando</b>
נֶעַר	Sustantivo, masculino, singular	Joven-adolescente-niño,
יִשְׂרָאֵל	Nombre propio	Israel
וְ	conjunción	y
אֶהְבֵּהוּ	Qal, 1ª masculino, singular, más sufijo 1 masculino singular	Lo amé
וְ	conjunción	y
מִ	preposición	desde
מִצְרַיִם	Nombre propio	Egipto
קָרָאתִי	Qal, perfecto 1ª persona singular.	llamé
לְ	Preposición	A – para.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Cristóbal SEVILLA JIMÉNEZ, *El Desierto en el Profeta Oseas*, Navarra, 2006, 109.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Dennis J. MCCARTHY y Roland E. MURPHY, "Oseas", *Nuevo Comentario Bíblico: San Jerónimo: Antiguo Testamento*, 331.

<sup>33</sup> The first section (vv. 1-4) recounts in parental imagery Israel's past history and God's role in it. Cf. <http://www.criovoice.org/lectionary/YearC/Cproper13ot.html> (14.01.21).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Luís Alonso Schökel, *Apuntes de Hermenéutica*, 31.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. <https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filolog%C3%ADa> (08.01.21).



בְּנִי	Sustantivo, masculino, singular, con sufijo de 1 <sup>a</sup> persona singular.	Mi hijo.
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v. 1: Cuando Israel era niño lo amé, y de Egipto llamé a mi hijo.

Os 11,2		
palabra	morfología	significado
כִּדְנִי קָרָאֵוּ	partícula que indica lo que es suficiente, lo necesario, el límite, lo que corresponde <sup>77</sup> , más verbo קָרָא , Qal primera persona singular de “llamé”.	Tanto llamé.
לָהֶם	Preposición con sufijo de 3 <sup>a</sup> masculino plural	A ellos
בְּזוֹ	adverbio	Pero, así
הֵלְכוּ	Qal perfecto, 3 <sup>a</sup> persona desconocido, plural	Se fueron
מִ	Preposición	De
פְּנֵיהֶם	Sustantivo, masculino, plural con sufijo de 3 <sup>a</sup> masculino plural	la presencia de ellos
לְ	preposición	a
בְּעֲלִים	Sustantivo, masculino, plural, absoluto	baales
זִבְּחוּ	Pi'el, imperfecto, 3 <sup>a</sup> masculino plural	Sacrificaron
וְ	conjunción	y
לְ	preposición	a
פְּסֻלִים	Sustantivo, masculino, plural, absoluto	Las imágenes
יִקְטְרוּן	Pi'el, imperfecto, 3 <sup>a</sup> masculino plural	Quemaron incienso

v. 2: Cuanto más los llamaba, más se alejaban de mí; ofrecían sacrificios a los baales y ofrecieron incienso a las estatuas.

Os 11,3		
palabra	morfología	significado
אֲנִי	Pronombre personal, 1 <sup>a</sup> persona desconocido singular	yo
אֶנְכִּי	Qal, Perfecto, 1 <sup>a</sup> persona desconocido, singular	Enseñe a andar
לְ	Preposición	a
אֶפְרַיִם	Nombre propio, desconocido, singular	Efraín



	absoluto	
קָחַם	Conjunción “y”, más verbo לקח en Qal, primera persona, singular de “agarrar o tomar”, más sufijo masculino, tercera persona, singular.	Y yo lo tomé
עַל-	Preposición	De/por
זְרֻעֵתָיו	Sustantivo femenino dual, con sufijo 3ª masculino, singular.	Su brazos.
וְ	conjunción	pero
לֹא	Partícula negativa - adverbio	no
וַיִּדְעוּ	Qal perfecto, 3ª persona desconocido, plural	Percibieron, supieron
כִּי	conjunción	que
וַיִּרְפָּאֵתֵם	Qal perfecto, 1ª persona desconocido, singular con sufijo 3ª masculino, plural	(yo) los cuidaba

v. 3: y Yo enseñé a caminar a Efraín, lo tomé sobre sus brazos, pero ellos no supieron que yo los cuidaba.

Os 11,4		
palabra	morfología	significado
בְּ	Preposición	con
חַבְלֵי	Sustantivo, masculino, plural, constructo	Cuerdas de.
אָדָם	Sustantivo, masculino, singular	Hombre
אִמְשָׁכֶם	Qal imperfecto, 1ª persona desconocida, con sufijo masculino plural	Los atraje
בְּ	Preposición	con
עֲבֹתוֹת	Sustantivo, femenino, plural, constructo	Lazos-cuerdas de
אַהֲבָה	Sustantivo, femenino, singular, absoluto	amor
וְ	conjunción	y
אֶהְיֶה	Qal imperfecto, 1ª persona desconocida	fui
לָהֶם	Preposición con sufijo 3ª masculino plural	Para ellos
כִּי	Preposición	como
מְרַיְמִי	Participio, hifil, desconocido, masculino	Quien levanta-alza



	plural, constructo	
על	Sustantivo, masculino, singular	niño
על	Preposición	Sobre
לְחִיָּהֶם	Sustantivo, masculino, dual, absoluto pronominal, con sufijo 3ª masculino plural	Sus mejillas
וְ	Conjunción	y
אָט	Hifil, imperfecto, 1ª persona desconocida, singular	Me incliné
אֵלָיו	Preposición pronominal, con sufijo 3ª masculino singular	A -hacia- él
אוֹכֵל	Hifil, imperfecto, 1ª persona desconocida, singular.	alimenté

v. 4: con cuerdas de humanas los atraje, con lazos de amor y fui para ellos como quien levanta un niño sobre sus mejillas y me incliné hacia él para darle de comer.

### 2.2.2 Análisis sintáctico

La definición más tradicional, didáctica y breve, en la oración es “conjunto de palabras que expresa un juicio con sentido completo y autonomía sintáctica”<sup>37</sup>. Cuya finalidad consiste en destacar la oración, práctica o pragmáticamente, el fragmento más pequeño del discurso que comunica una idea completa y posee autonomía e independencia. Es decir, podría sacarse del contexto y seguir comunicando. Esto es, revelar con palabras el contenido de una proposición lógica, un mandato, una petición, una pregunta o acto ilocutivo o de habla, que incluya algún tipo de predicado o desarrollo sintáctico estructurado de sentido completo, por ejemplo ‘ese profesor ha enseñado bien las matemáticas a sus alumnos’<sup>38</sup>.

El término compuesto por la preposición συν “conjunto” y por el sustantivo derivado de la raíz del verbo ταξις “disponer, poner”. La cual, esta palabra equivale a σύνταξις “composición”.

Además, este análisis sintáctico se concentra en la estructura de la frase y en la función que los elementos singulares de esta estructura asumen en el conjunto. Estudiando las relaciones que se establecen entre las distintas proposiciones, de manera particular en la relación de tipo paratáctico<sup>39</sup>, es decir, las frases se subordinan a una principal.

En lo concerniente al presente capítulo de la tesis, se trata de buscar las características lingüísticas del texto, la relación de elementos y las consecuencias de dicha relación. Tomando en consideración el léxico utilizado en dicho texto de Os 11,1-4. Haciendo uso de términos claves y la repetición de éstos. Se analizarán ciertas formas verbales, de concatenación, cohesión, estilo, figuras literarias, entre otros. Para definir el posible esquema narrativo estructural que subyace en el escrito-texto. Con el objetivo de

<sup>37</sup> Cf. [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/An%C3%A1lisis\\_sint%C3%A1ctico\\_\(ling%C3%BC%C3%ADstica\)](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/An%C3%A1lisis_sint%C3%A1ctico_(ling%C3%BC%C3%ADstica)) (02.01.21).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *Ibíd.*

<sup>39</sup> Acto de colocar lado con lado. Es decir, coordinación o yuxtaposición oracionales. Cf. *Diccionario: Real Academia española*, 1140.



familiarizarse con las palabras y sus combinaciones relacionales, estructurales, que han producido el texto final<sup>40</sup>.

Por lo cual, el análisis sintáctico de Os 11,1-4, constituye la primera referencia indispensable para comprender la distribución y la delimitación de la información, gracias a que es posible determinar el significado y la función de nuestro texto.

El texto sigue un estilo histórico narrativo<sup>41</sup> empleando la mayor parte de los verbos en perfecto Qal, puesto que estos verbos indican acciones ya terminadas. Se debe de considerar que algunos verbos están en imperfecto Qal, cuya acción se prolonga en el tiempo<sup>42</sup>. Con frecuencia con movimiento hacia la meta. Usualmente esta forma es usada para la acción presente y futura.

Ejemplos en perfecto Qal<sup>43</sup>:

קָרָאתָ	llamé
וְאַהֲבָה	enamoré
וְיִלְפָסוּלִים	ofrecieron
תִּרְגְּלִתִּי	enseñé
יָדְעוּ	conocieron -percibieron

En referencia al sentido temporal<sup>44</sup> “cuando” כִּי<sup>45</sup> es un adverbio de frecuencia imprecisa<sup>46</sup>, cuyo caso, ayuda a interpretar la frase como un todo que se refiere a la

<sup>40</sup> Cf. [https://kupdf.net/download/lectura-pragmalinguistica-de-la-biblia-mora-pazpdf\\_599ae386dc0d60f25853a1f6\\_pdf\\_02.01.21](https://kupdf.net/download/lectura-pragmalinguistica-de-la-biblia-mora-pazpdf_599ae386dc0d60f25853a1f6_pdf_02.01.21).

<sup>41</sup> El discurso narrativo: queda claro que la función principal de la cadena de wayyiqtol es el desarrollo del discurso narrativo, generalmente en prosa, puesto que la poesía suele ser menos propicia a tener un carácter narrativo. A pesar de ello, no hay ninguna razón para pensar en poesía, por lo menos en poesía profética, no se puedan dar secciones narrativas cuya forma principal sea wayyiqtol, como hemos visto en los ejemplos que hasta aquí han sido presentados. También nos hemos dado cuenta de que la estilística poética exige ciertas adaptaciones formales e impone un desarrollo de la acción no lineal.

Tras yiqtol. Además de los esquemas de qatal, otros esquemas sintácticos aparecen con frecuencia como antecedentes de las oraciones de wayyiqtol. En cinco ocasiones wayyiqtol aparece tras una oración con algún esquema de yiqtol. El esquema es Os 11,4/2 x-yiqtol1 -x3 Æwayyiqtol1 -x3 Æw-x3 -yiqtol1. P.158. Solamente en Os 11,4 se mantiene la oración con yiqtol, aunque como antecedente de una cadena de wayyiqtol de tres elementos.

El resto de los casos de wayyiqtol aislado en relación con otros esquemas sintácticos no mencionados hasta aquí son muy particulares y en varios casos el aparato crítico los corrige a w-yiqto l240. Sí merece la pena mencionar dos casos en que la oración de wayyiqtol va precedida de ON. En Os 11,1/2 wayyiqtol es la apódosis en un esquema de prótasisapódosis. La prótasis es la ON introducida por la partícula KY: Os 11,1/2: “Cuando Israel era joven, yo lo amé.” Cf. Alverio NICCACCI, Sintaxis del Hebreo Bíblico, Verbo Divino, Estella, 2017, 161. Esquema de la cadena de Qatal. Cf. Francisco Javier, DEL BARCO DEL BARCO, Tesis doctoral, Sintaxis Verbal en los Profetas Menores Preexílicos, Facultad de filosofía, Madrid, 2001, 147-189. <https://revistas.comillas.edu/index.php/estudioscelesiasticos/article/view/10641>. (13.01.21).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Paul JOÛN - Takamitsu MURAOKA, Gramática del Hebreo Bíblico, Verbo Divino, Estella, 2006, 130-134.

<sup>43</sup> Qal, la más común y básica de todas las formas. Denota una acción simple o un estado de ser. No existe una causa o especificación implicada. Cf. Paul JOÛN - Takamitsu MURAOKA, Gramática del Hebreo Bíblico, 127.

<sup>44</sup> 85La partícula más usada con qatal es כִּי. Esta partícula puede ser considerada como de valor “universal” por su abundante uso y sus variadas funciones. No es específicamente una partícula de subordinación, pues en algunas ocasiones, sobre todo usada a principio de versículo, se utiliza como partícula deíctica (el origen del término es el griego clásico: δειξίς: ‘exhibición, demostración, o referencia’) sin otra función específica. A pesar de ello, puede decirse que la función principal de כִּי es introducir oraciones o segmentos textuales causales. Os 11,3/1: w-x-qatal. Esto quiere decir que esta estructura se usa en la poesía profética preferiblemente en el segundo hemistiquio. En todos los casos en que esto ocurre, excepto en Os 11,3, la estructura w-x-qatal está en paralelismo con la oración precedente. Así pues, queda de manifiesto que una de las funciones más importantes que ejerce el esquema w-x-qatal es la expresión de una estructura paralela a la anterior en el





formación y disciplina aplicada al pueblo elegido desde su infancia, que introduce el sentido del amor del Padre/Madre (cf. Dt 8,5). Por ende, la partícula **וְ** al principio del capítulo once, tiene la función de introducir oraciones o segmentos textuales causales tales como: porque, ya que, entre otros; comenta Francisco del Barco del Barco, en su tesis doctoral<sup>47</sup>.

Asimismo, el pronombre **אֲנִי** “yo”, de carácter enfático, hace un contraste con el sujeto de la tercera persona, plural, del versículo tres<sup>48</sup>.

### 2.2.3 Análisis semántico<sup>49</sup>

La semántica es parte de la lingüística que estudia el significado de las palabras y de sus formas gramaticales, esto es, se ocupa de las significaciones de las palabras. Esta ciencia estudia las diversas relaciones de las palabras con los objetos designados por ellas, pues se ocupa de averiguar de qué modo y según cuáles leyes las palabras se aplican a los objetos.

Por ello, con el apoyo de la semántica se verán las relaciones entre expresiones de un lenguaje<sup>50</sup> y los objetos a los cuales se refieren dichas expresiones<sup>51</sup>.

Hans Georg Gadamer comenta que la semántica parece describir el campo lingüístico desde fuera, por la observación, pues el análisis semántico, en parte, consiste en disolver la apariencia de singularidad que produce un signo verbal aislado, mostrando la expresión verbal individual como algo intransferible y no intercambiable. Por eso, la mayoría de las expresiones de un mismo pensamiento de las palabras que designan la misma cosa, admite quizá desde la perspectiva de la mera designación y denominación de algo. Es decir, la semántica es una teoría de la significación, particularmente de los signos verbales<sup>52</sup>.

Por eso, desde la semántica se analizan las relaciones entre las pequeñas unidades lingüísticas<sup>53</sup> y los objetos por estar designados, se describen las relaciones entre expresión y contenido (con sus respectivos significados). Así que la semántica aporta una descripción en el nivel de los significados de las palabras o grupos de éstas y del papel de las categorías y sus combinaciones en el significado de la oración-frase.

En el análisis del escrito de Os 11,1-4 contiene los elementos claves, los cuales son:

discurso. Por ende, el uso de *qatal* con partícula que inicia la oración está muy extendido, y su uso en oraciones subordinadas ha sido analizado. Pero el uso de partículas, como el caso estudiado, **וְ**, al inicio de la oración no se relaciona solamente con las oraciones subordinadas; muchas partículas no subordinantes aparecen encabezando oraciones con *qatal*, en la mayoría de los casos iniciando secciones textuales. Cf. Francisco Del Barco del Barco, Tesis doctoral, *Sintaxis Verbal en los Profetas Menores Preexílicos*, 181-192.

<sup>45</sup> Oración temporal. Alviero NICCACCI, *Sintaxis del Hebreo Bíblico*, 119. **וְ** + *Qatal* + x – (A) *Wayyiqatal*, p. 128. Oración bimembre, Cf. *Ibidem*, 163.

<sup>46</sup> Real Academia Española, nueva gramática básica de la lengua española, Bogotá, 2011, 139-140.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Francisco Del Barco del Barco, Tesis doctoral, *Sintaxis Verbal en los Profetas Menores Preexílicos*, 181-192.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Andrew A. MACINTOSH, *Hosea*, 434-436.

<sup>49</sup> La semántica puede ser científica (factual), formal (que se ocupa de las relaciones entre los lenguajes formales y los modelos que se utilizan para interpretarlos -que es el caso que nos interesa en este análisis en Oseas 11,1-4) y filosófica (se ocupa de construir una teoría general del significado y de los conceptos relacionados con el de significado). Cf. Miguel Angel QUINTANILLA, *Breve Diccionario filosófico*, Verbo Divino, Estella 1991, 241.

<sup>50</sup> El lenguaje no es un medio más que la conciencia utiliza para comunicarse con el mundo, como es el caso del *logos* que los capacita para informarse mutuamente. Pues hablar es hablar a alguien. Como es el caso del escrito profético: YHWH nos comunica un mensaje por medio de Oseas, en especial en Os 11,1-4. Cf. Hans Georg GADAMER, *Verdad y Método*, Sígueme, Salamanca 2012, 145-150.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. José María TERRICABRAS, “Semantica”, *Diccionario de Filosofía*, Tomo IV (q-z), Ariel, Barcelona 1998, 3215-3217.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Hans Georg GADAMER, *Verdad y Método*, Sígueme, Salamanca, 2012, 171-179.

<sup>53</sup> Detrás del campo de investigación que analiza la constitución lingüística de un texto como un todo y destaca su estructura semántica. Por ello, el lenguaje apunta siempre más allá de sí mismo y de lo que dice explícitamente. Cf. Hans GADAMER, *Verdad y Método*, 174-175.



<sup>1</sup> כִּי נָעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶהְבֵּהוּ וּמִמִּצְרַיִם קָרָאתִי לְבְנִי:

v. 1. Cuando Israel era niño lo amé, y de Egipto llamé a mi hijo.

La כִּי en algunas ocasiones, usada al principio del capítulo once, se utiliza como partícula deíctica, como ya se ha desarrollado anteriormente<sup>54</sup>. Esto es, puede leerse también temporal “cuando”; pero es mejor el sentido temporal, pues el amor de Dios está desde cuando Israel era niño hasta la actualidad.

El concepto בְּנִי “mi hijo”<sup>55</sup>, alude a la luz de Ex 4, 21-22, Dios llama a Israel “mi hijo”<sup>56</sup>, donde YHWH juega el papel de maestro, educador y enfermero. La dependencia de un infante con un adulto y la implicación personal del adulto con un niño se expresan aquí en términos de verbos electorales “amado” y “llamado” (Os 11,1-2)<sup>57</sup>.

De igual manera, en el próximo Oriente antiguo se daba a los personajes principales una ascendencia divina, no parece necesario el trasfondo sobre el que se deba interpretar dicha expresión. Sino que, el contexto nos presenta a YHWH educando a Israel con un énfasis especial en el amor con que lo llevaba a cabo. Por lo cual, esta presentación refleja la costumbre de llamar padre al sabio que educaba a sus discípulos<sup>58</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> קָרָאוּ לָהֶם בֶּן הַלְכוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם לְבַעֲלִים יִזְבְּחוּ וּלְפִסְלִים יִקְטְרוּ:

v. 2: Cuanto más los llamaba, más se alejaban de mí; ofrecían sacrificios a los baales y ofrecieron incienso a las estatuas.

הַלְכוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם לְבַעֲלִים es una denuncia que hace YHWH, aludiendo a la atracción suscitada por el culto a los baales o por la cultura superior a Canaán. Además, el verbo קָרָאוּ “llamé”, lectura procedente de los LXX es μετεκάλεσα. Si la lectura que presenta el TM “ellos llamaron” fuera correcta, entonces aludieron al culto a los baales<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> וְאֲנִי תַרְגְּלֹתִי לְאֶפְרַיִם קָחַם עַל-זְרוּעֹתָיו וְלֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי רִפְּאתִים:

v. 3: Yo mismo enseñé a Efraín a caminar, yo lo tomé sobre sus brazos, pero ellos no supieron que yo los cuidaba.

El verbo רִפָּא “cuidarlo y curarlo”, hace referencia a quien los salvó de Egipto (TM v. 3b)<sup>60</sup>.

El propósito de YHWH es sanar, redimir y liberar de la situación, a fin de que cese el sufrimiento deshumanizador<sup>61</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> בְּחַבְלֵי אָדָם אֲמַשְׁכֶּם בְּעַבְתוֹת אֶהְבֶּה וְאֶהְיֶה לָהֶם כְּמִרְיָמִי עַל עַל לְחִיהֶם וְאַט אֶלְיוּ אוֹכִיל:

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Francisco Del Barco del Barco, Tesis doctoral, *Sintaxis Verbal en los Profetas Menores Preexílicos*, 181-192. De igual modo, nos comenta Macintosh: “understand the conjunction in a causal sense connecting the phrase with what has been said in 10.15”. Esto en castellano: “entender la conjunción en un sentido causal conectando la frase con lo que se ha dicho en Os 10,15”. Cf. Andrew A. MACINTOSH, *Hosea*, 436.

<sup>55</sup> El profeta, por su parte, nos conduce a la niñez del pueblo, para constatar ya su temprana infidelidad idolátrica (en el contexto de la salida de Egipto, se trata de la adoración del becerro de oro) (Ex 32). Cf. Santiago GUIJARRO OPORTO y Miguel SALVADOR GARCÍA, “Oseas”, *Comentario al Antiguo Testamento II*, Verbo Divino, Estella, 1997, 316.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Oseas”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecuménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. R. J. RAJA, “YHWH: Motherly Father-Fatherly Mother?” *Vaibarai* 4 (1999), 5-22. [biblicalstudent.wordpress.com > tag \(07.01.21\)](http://biblicalstudent.wordpress.com/tag/07.01.21/).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Dennis J. MCCARTHY y Roland E. MURPHY, “Oseas”, *Nuevo Comentario Bíblico: San Jerónimo: Antiguo Testamento*, 346.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Elizabeth A. JOHNSON, *La Búsqueda del Dios vivo, Trazar las fronteras de la teología de Dios*, Sal Terrae, Santander, 2016, 103.



v. 4: Con cuerdas humanas los atraje, con lazos de amor, y fui para ellos como quien levanta a un niño sobre sus mejillas y me incliné hacia él para darle de comer.

El significado אָדָם בְּחַבְלֵי “con lazos de amor”, se refiere a que YHWH atrae a su pueblo “con lazos humanos, con vínculos de amor”, no con vínculos de autoridad<sup>62</sup>.

El verbo מִשָּׁךְ “atraer” tiene un amplio campo semántico a la hora de traducir, que expresan la prolongación de la actividad humana o animal. Pero cuando este verbo se expresa con sentimientos, tiene un significado más abstracto de continuidad o permanencia que del sentimiento expresado. El significado de dicho verbo, en Oseas, es en el sentido de lo que YHWH hace para mantener a Israel cercano a Él, evitando su dispersión, pese al alejamiento del pueblo. Él estaba presente, pero su presencia no estaba claramente comprendida por el pueblo<sup>63</sup>. Por eso, YHWH atrae con vínculo de amor y no con vínculo de autoridad<sup>64</sup>, como ya se mencionó antes, pero con otra perspectiva del exégeta.

Por ende, desde este campo semántico se pueden observar los diferentes ecos que hay en ciertas palabras, las cuales suele aludir al contexto histórico de Israel. Lo mismo se ve como YHWH hace todo lo posible, sin imponerse, por atraer a su pueblo.

#### 2.2.4 Estructura del texto<sup>65</sup>

En la siguiente estructura del libro del profeta Oseas, vemos la esperanza por medio de los oráculos. En Os 11,1-4 YHWH es descrito como el fiel Padre/Madre que se preocupa; además que Dios es el paciente, que se preocupa por enseñar al hijo rebelde/caprichoso e ingrato, Israel. Y aunque YHWH recurre a la disciplina, hacia su hijo, Él tendrá siempre compasión y ternura por su pueblo<sup>66</sup>.

Además, se ha mencionado acerca del estado deficiente<sup>67</sup> del texto masorético, pues ha sido difícil abordarlo, en cuanto que hay pasajes ininteligibles y es preciso recurrir a las versiones para reconstruir una posible lectura original satisfactoria. La traducción de los LXX ha sido construida sobre un texto muy deteriorado, debido a esto es necesario acudir a las exigencias del contexto y de la métrica para rastrear el posible sentido original<sup>68</sup>. De igual manera, en la parte poética, los incisos y esticos<sup>69</sup> están desplazados. Con un estilo temperamental afectivo y emocional<sup>70</sup>. Es lógico encontrar expresiones afectivas que dominan la frase y en estos versículos se percibe la visión crítica del pasado; la historia de Israel en relación a YHWH es una larga serie de infidelidades<sup>71</sup>.

En los vv. 1-9, del capítulo once del libro de Oseas, YHWH recuerda tres momentos sucesivos de sus relaciones con Israel-Efraín, su amor por su hijo Israel, expresado con las imágenes de la ternura Paterna y Materna (cf. vv. 1-4); el inevitable sufrimiento de Israel

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “OSEAS”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecuménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Cristóbal SEVILLA JIMÉNEZ, *El Desierto en el Profeta Oseas*, 116.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Oseas”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecuménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>65</sup> Sobre este sub capítulo, de la estructura del texto, se ha desarrollado en el capítulo primero de esta tesina titulada “aspectos preliminares”.

<sup>66</sup> Que dicho pueblo, el profeta Oseas usa la analogía de niño-joven como ya se ha mencionado con anterioridad.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Serafín DE AUSEJO, “Oseas”, *Diccionario de la Biblia*, Herder, Barcelona, 2000, 1379.

<sup>68</sup> Como ya se ha estado haciendo en la investigación de dicha tesina en Os 11,1-4.

<sup>69</sup> Adjetivo perteneciente o relativo a la percepción acerca de la belleza. Placer estético.

<sup>70</sup> YHWH ama a su pueblo -Israel- con amor paternal/maternal, pero éste le ha respondido ingratamente (cf. Os 11,1-4). Cf. Xabier PIKAZA IBARRONDO, “Oseas”, *Diccionario de la Biblia, Historia y Palabra*, Verbo Divino, Estella 2008, 740-741.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Xabier PIKAZA IBARRONDO, “Oseas”, *Gran Diccionario de la Biblia*, Verbo Divino, Estella 2015, 1816.



debido a sus malas decisiones (cf. vv. 5-7); y la angustia divina que al final se muestra en misericordia (cf. vv. 8-9)<sup>72</sup>.

La llamada de Israel desde Egipto como un hijo (cf. Os 11,1), con alusión al Éxodo (cf. Ex 4,21-22), supone dicha llamada por parte de Dios y se opone a la de “otros” (cf. Os 11,2 “baales e ídolos”) que atraen a Israel. A pesar de estas infidelidades, por parte del hijo, Israel, YHWH enseña a caminar a su pueblo, tomándolo en sus brazos para cuidarlo y curarlo<sup>73</sup> (cf. Os 11,3), además se inclina hacia él para alimentarlo (cf. Os 11,4)<sup>74</sup>.

### 2.3 Género literario

Poesía profética con discurso predicativo<sup>75</sup>.

El lenguaje profético caracterizado como emocional e imaginativo, de dicción concreta, movimientos rítmicos y forma artística, marcan su estilo como poético.

Los textos proféticos clásicos, marcadamente poéticos, poseen una musicalidad que se escapa de la métrica estricta y se basa en la cadencia de las frases y la repetición de ciertos elementos, quedan textos impresos como prosa que parecen requerir una lectura rítmica de verso y hay varios textos proféticos que se podrían leer y traducir como verso libre o prosa rítmica<sup>76</sup>.

Las características de la poesía profética resaltan la anticipación hechos o acciones hacia el futuro, por lo que no cabe duda de que el discurso predictivo es uno de los más importantes en los profetas menores preexílicos. Este tipo de discurso está expresado por la cadena de weqatal, según las características formales de éstas, se distingue por forma indicativa, es decir, por su aparente “objetividad” en los hechos referidos y por la secuencialidad que es propia de las cadenas de weqatal y wayyiqtol, generalmente llamadas “formas secuenciales”<sup>77</sup>.

Las secciones de 0-qatal, presentan una información pasada, relevante para el mensaje en ese momento de la comunicación; hechos pasados que se convierten en discurso narrativo cuando se da la secuencia qatal/wayyiqtol<sup>78</sup>.

Cuando 0-qatal aparece al inicio, el texto presenta elementos suficientes que establecen la ruptura con el segmento anterior y la cohesión con la sección a la que pertenece. Su función principal, sea cual sea el tipo de discurso en el que aparezca, es la presentación de hechos o situaciones pasadas, mencionadas con anterioridad en el texto (información recuperada), aparecidas por primera vez, pero conocidas por la audiencia y relevantes para el hilo principal del discurso. Ejemplo de esto en Os 11,1<sup>79</sup>.

La poesía profética tiene como propósito comunicar un mensaje especial de YHWH a su pueblo. También es un medio común para criticar la desigualdad y la injusticia social. Los profetas recurrieron a la poesía para cuestionar las decisiones políticas y para poner al descubierto hechos reprobables perpetrados en la comunidad cultiva o religiosa<sup>80</sup>.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Oseas”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecuménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>73</sup> Con las imágenes de cuidarlo, curarlo, etc., las desarrollaré entro subcapítulo.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Oseas”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecuménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Horacio SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Oseas”, *Comentario Bíblico Internacional Comentario Católico y Ecuménico para el s. XXI*, 1021.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Rosanna RION, *El profetismo en la obra literaria de T. S. Eliot*, tesis doctoral, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Universita Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, 2006. (02.01.21).

Cf. <https://www.tesisenred.net/bitstream/handle/10803/7433/tsrt1de1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Francisco, DEL BARCO DEL BARCO, *Tesis doctoral, Sintaxis Verbal en los Profetas Menores Preexílicos*, 255-264.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Lynell ZOGBO y Ernst WENDLAND, *La Poesía del Antiguo Testamento, Pautas para su traducción, Guía práctica para sus traductores*.



En cuanto a la profecía bíblica en Oseas concerniente en el presente trabajo, es uno de los textos bíblicos difíciles al abordarlo en cuanto a su naturaleza emocional y poética, dicho escrito tiene la forma de expresión elegida en verso. G. Hatav hace eco de la opinión de R. Longacre en la que postula “there are non-narrative texts, such as prophetic discourse, which behave similarly to narratives in having sequential vs. non-sequential material”<sup>81</sup>.

Si existen algunos puntos en común con la narrativa, no debe ser extremadamente difícil el análisis de la sintaxis verbal en la profecía bíblica. La profecía, además, presenta unas particularidades que la hacen muy atractiva, como es el caso del texto profético, específicamente en Os 11,1-4. La referencia temporal es bastante importante, el profeta sitúa en el tiempo los hechos pasados y los que están por venir.

En este punto, se encuentra el contacto con la narrativa, hechos pasados o futuros que presentan esquemas de secuencialidad o no secuencialidad semejantes a los de la narrativa. El profeta actúa de modo similar como se ha visto en estos versículos del texto a analizar. Todos ellos buscan una respuesta de su público, una reacción y por esa razón se sirven de la variedad a la hora de articular su discurso. Transitan de las necesidades que deseen transmitir, de una narración a un discurso exhortativo y de éste a uno predictivo. Esto debe ser tomado en consideración cuando se analiza el uso de las formas verbales, pues cada tipo de discurso se caracteriza por utilizar éstas y no otras<sup>82</sup>.

Se trata de un nuevo poema<sup>83</sup> de amor de tipo paternal/maternal. Pues dicha poesía profética tiene el propósito de comunicar el mensaje de YHWH al pueblo<sup>84</sup>. Con la siguiente estructura:

<https://mercaba.org/K/asagrada%20escritura/la%20poesia%20en%20el%20anti%20test.htm> (08.01.21).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Galia HATAV, *The Semantics of Aspect and Modality: Evidence from English and Biblical Hebrew*, Studies in Language Companion Series 34. Amsterdam: John Benjamins 1997, 20-21. Traducción del redactor, entendida como textos no narrativos del discurso profético, con los cuales se tienen similitudes con narrativas de secuencias contrarias entre sí. [www.researchgate.net > publication > 233633366\\_The\\_d...](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/233633366_The_d...) (10.01.21).

<sup>82</sup> La poesía consiste en el uso de una expresión que resulta poco habitual en la conversación corriente y familiar, que utiliza construcciones sintácticas y figuras estilísticas precisamente para marcar un nivel de comunicación diferente al habitual. En este sentido, en poesía la función de la comunicación pasaría a un segundo plano, ocupando el primer acto de la expresión en sí mismo; se visualiza en Os 11,1-4. En Qatal, llamado también perfecto, es propio de la poesía. Cf. Alverio NICCACCI, *Sintaxis del Hebreo Bíblico*, 163-164.

<sup>83</sup> La contribución más significativa que el pueblo hebreo ha hecho a la literatura universal es su poesía, de ella una tercera parte en el AT. Entre los libros poéticos del AT está el texto de Oseas.

La poesía religiosa se divide en cuatro clases generales:

1. La lírica, cuya forma más hermosa son los Salmos, pero que también se muestra en los libros históricos.
2. La gnómica o proverbial que se halla en los Proverbios, parte de Eclesiastés y en muchos aforismos esparcidos en el AT.
3. La dramática que se encuentra especialmente en Job, uno de los más hermosos poemas de la literatura universal, y posiblemente en el libro de los Cantares que ha sido interpretado como un drama poético que ensalza el amor humano.
4. La elegíaca que se ve en Lamentaciones y en otras endechas y cantos fúnebres contenidos en los libros históricos y proféticos.

Más que por su rima, que raras veces aparece en el Antiguo Testamento, la poesía hebrea se distingue por otras dos características de forma: el acento rítmico y el paralelismo. Los versos de la poesía hebrea se caracterizan por su énfasis acentual y entre estos el verso corriente puede tener dos, tres o cuatro acentos. El acento rítmico hebreo se determina según el número de palabras significativas que tenga el verso. Normalmente cada palabra encierra una idea y se cuenta como una unidad acentuada del verso, pero a veces dos palabras cortas se consideran como una sola o una palabra larga contada en dos unidades. Los poetas hebreos diferían de los modernos en que al componer un verso solamente consideraban las sílabas acentuadas, y a veces introducían entre estas tres o cuatro sílabas no acentuadas. El ritmo más común era de dos versos con tres acentos en cada uno, o con tres en el primer miembro y dos en el segundo. Los versos individuales se unían por lo que se conoce con el nombre de paralelismo. Este es una rima de sentido y no de sonido; se puede apreciar aún en las traducciones.



“Cuando Israel era niño lo amé, y de Egipto llamé a mi hijo”

Os 11,1: כִּי נָעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶהְיֶה וּמִמְצָרִים קָרָאתִי לְבָנִי:

“Yo enseñé a caminar a Efraín, lo tomé sobre sus brazos, pero ellos no supieron que yo los cuidaba”.

Os 11,3: וְאַנְכִי תַרְגְּלֹתַי לְאַפְרַיִם קָחַם עַל-זְרוּעֹתַי וְלֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי רִפְאֵתִים:

Se tiene w-x-qatal, una estructura usada en la poesía profética preferiblemente en el segundo hemistiquio; en todos los casos ocurre esto, excepto en Os 11,3. Así pues, queda de manifiesto que una de las funciones más importantes que ejerce el esquema w-x-qatal es la expresión de una estructura paralela anterior en el discurso.

Por ende, el género literario es profético, ya que contiene una colección de oráculos<sup>85</sup> proféticos que en su mayoría están escritos en poesía; solo hay dos secciones en prosa (Os1,1- 9 y 3,1-5). Este tipo de poesía tiene como propósito comunicar un mensaje especial de Dios a su pueblo. También es un medio muy común para criticar la desigualdad y la injusticia social. Como es el caso del profeta Oseas, que hace la denuncia por medio de este género literario<sup>86</sup>.

En conclusión, a partir de la exégesis, se han tomado en cuenta elementos históricos para describir el contexto de la creación de los textos poéticos, de acuerdo a las diferentes formas de análisis. La postura crítica es necesaria para establecer distinciones de los diversos aspectos que componen el texto, tomando como referencia el pasaje de Os 11,1-4.

Uno de los problemas que se han identificado y tratado de descifrar, consiste en la corrupción, que implica la dificultad a la hora de traducir según las diferentes versiones, tales como el TM, los LXX, la Vulgata y Siriaca.

Respecto al tema de la crítica literaria, se ha analizado el lenguaje figurado contenido en el texto de Oseas, ya que se ha interpretado con diferentes elementos sin que por ello cambie el sentido original de éste, pues su escrito es homogéneo, aún en medio de las diferencias encontradas durante el estudio.

Al abordar el análisis sintáctico, se han observado las características lingüísticas del texto, la relación y consecuencia de sus elementos que han permitido comprender la distribución y delimitarla en cuanto a su contenido. De igual manera se han analizado las expresiones contenidas en el texto profético, con variedad de significados, los cuales aluden al contexto histórico de Israel.

Del género literario, se ha comprendido que estos textos proféticos se clasifican como poesía en forma narrativa, en cuanto describen discursos de exhortación y predicción, haciendo énfasis en los oráculos escritos en verso. Este tipo de poesía tiene como propósito comunicar un mensaje especial de Dios a su pueblo, a su vez, contiene crítica a la desigualdad e injusticia social.

Cf. Estudios bíblicos, diccionario. [https://estudiosbiblicos.org/diccionariobiblico/dictionary/poesia-hebrea/\(08.01.21\)](https://estudiosbiblicos.org/diccionariobiblico/dictionary/poesia-hebrea/(08.01.21)).

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Lynell ZOGBO y Ernst WENDLAND, La Poesía del Antiguo Testamento, Pautas para su traducción, Guía práctica para sus traductores, 9.

<sup>85</sup> A través de estos oráculos el Señor advierte las maldiciones que vendrían sobre Israel por su infidelidad al pacto, tales como rechazo (1,6-9), castigo (1,4; 9:7,9), destrucción (4,3; 8:14), deportación (9,3-6; 11:5), etc. Pero también se encuentran oráculos de esperanza y salvación. Cf. CRISTÓBAL SEVILLA JIMÉNEZ, «Crisis y esperanza en los profetas de Israel», El Instituto Teológico San Fulgencio, Murcia, (año XXIV- No 47-48), 7-22, 11-16.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Lynell ZOGBO y Ernst WENDLAND, La Poesía del Antiguo Testamento, Pautas para su traducción, 8.



# The Phenomena of Divine Light

di Sonny Wibisono, O.Carm

## Chapter 2 The Phenomenon of Divine Light in Various Religions

### 2.1 The Divine Light in Hinduism

Hindus discovered very early in their history the presence of this divine phenomenon. The prayers of a Hindu philosopher: “Lead me from untruth to Truth. Lead me from darkness to Light. Lead me from death to Immortality.”<sup>1</sup> One of the most Hindu scriptures is *The Upanishads* that were compiled between 800 and 500 BC. It references to topics in religious mysticism. Clearly, the writers of these texts had witnessed the Divine Light and its ecstasy. One of the principal texts in this collection - *the Chandogya Upanishad* - tells us of what we are likely to encounter after we die. In a dialogue between Prajapati, one of the main characters, and the god Indra, we are told that “Our body is mortal. It has been appropriated by Death. But it is the standing-ground of that deathless, bodiless Self (Atman) ... that serene one, when he rises up from this body, reaches *the highest light*.”<sup>2</sup>

The ‘highest light’ that the emancipated ‘Self’ reaches Divine by nature. Divinity goes by many names in Hinduism (e.g., Indra, Vishnu, Siva, Purusha, Brahma, or Brahman). However, the tradition is very clear on the point that these are just different manifestations of one Divine reality. This divinity is “higher than the highest, greater than the greatest, and naturally brilliant.”<sup>3</sup> Vishnu, so says the *Skanda Upanishad*, is the “Light of all Lights.”<sup>4</sup> *The Kaivalya Upanishad* goes on to identify the One who is formless, wonderful, all-pervading, indestructible and Lord of all: “He only is Brahman. He only is Indra. He only is Vishnu. He only is Self-Shining.”<sup>5</sup>

The ‘real seat of Vishnu,’ then, dawns on man “as the form of light.”<sup>6</sup> Brahman is seen as “the light of an endless sphere.”<sup>7</sup> The “Brahman-OM” is “the highest light, the foundation and sovereign lord of all.”<sup>8</sup> Brahma is light, says the *Maitri Upanishad*, and the mystic symbol OM is “a leader, brilliant, sleepless, ageless [and] deathless....”<sup>9</sup> Brahma, ‘the limitless One,’ is that “shining form which gives heat in yonder sun.... Unending are the rays of him.”<sup>10</sup> Brahman is ‘self-shining,’ ‘self-luminous,’ and ‘shines by his own brightness.’ As He shines “does everything else shine after.”<sup>11</sup> As we find in the *Brahmarahasya Upanishad*,

“Brahma is the Light of lights.  
He is Self-luminous.

<sup>1</sup> *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*: 1, 3, 28 in ALANNA KAIIVALYA, *Sacred Sound, Discovering the Myth and Meaning of Mantra & Kirtan*, New World Library, California, 2014, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> R.E. HUME, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1954, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> PATRICK OLIVELLE, *Samnyasa Upanishads*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> K. NARAYANASVAMI AIYAR, *Thirty Minor Upanishads*, n.p., Madras, 1914, p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> AIYAR, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> *Sandilya Upanishad*, in AIYAR, p. 183.

<sup>7</sup> *Mandalabrahman Upanishad*, in AIYAR, p. 247.

<sup>8</sup> *Naradaparivrajaka Upanishad*, in OLIVELLE, p. 219.

<sup>9</sup> HUME, p. 425.

<sup>10</sup> *Maitri Upanishad*, in HUME, p. 435 & 443.

<sup>11</sup> *Vicharabindu Upanishad*, in SWAMI SIVANANDA, *Ten Upanishads*, P.O. Shivanandanagar: The Divine Life Society, 1973, p. 68, 203 & 226.



He is Supreme Light.  
 He is ultimate light.  
 He is an embodiment of Light.  
 By His Light all else shines.”<sup>12</sup>

Another of the great scriptures of Hinduism is the *Bhagavad Gita*.<sup>13</sup> It is one of the most important religious classics of the world. It is considered a religion book, which means it is all about relationship between God and Man.<sup>14</sup>

“The Bhagavad Gita is a mystic poem, dealing with the nature of the soul and body of man, man’s relation to God, and the way or ways by which man is to attain salvation. It is poetic, mystical, and devotional, rather than logical and philosophical. It contains many discordant doctrines; to try to unite them all in a consistent system is to do violence to its spirit. In this respect, it is like all Hindu speculative literature of its time and earlier, - particularly like the Upaniṣads, to which it is deeply indebted. Like them, too, it is practical in its attitude, seeking religious or philosophic truth not for its own sake but as a means of human salvation.”<sup>15</sup>

Ajuna saw the light like the splendor and the radiance of Supreme Spirit. The ultimate goal in most forms of Hinduism is to achieve liberation (*moksha*) from the material world. This can be accomplished in several ways or path: “The way of *karma*, or action, emphasises exercises that are designed to physically untangle the spirit from the body. The way of *jnana*, or knowledge, would have one consider the true nature of reality in order to gain the ultimate goal. The way of *bhakti*, or worship, allows one to pray either to a specific God or any number of gods, depending on the person and the situation in classical Hinduism.”<sup>16</sup> According to this text, as with the *Upanishads*, the Light of the spiritual path is glorious and Divine: “If there should be in the sky, a thousand suns risen all at once. Such splendour would be of the splendour of that Great Being.”<sup>17</sup>

Experiencing Divine light is not only well recognized in Hinduism, but is one of its ultimate goals. “The essence of the Bhagavad Gita is the vision of God in all things and all things in God.”<sup>18</sup> It is the vision of Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita: “If the light of a thousand suns suddenly arose in the sky, that splendour might be compared to the radiance of the Supreme Spirit. And Arjuna saw in that radiance the whole universe in its variety, standing in a vast unity in the body of the God of gods (BG 11.12-13).” In the battle of the Bhagavad Gita there is a great symbol of hope that he who has a good will and strives is never lost, and that in the battle for eternal life there can never be a defeat unless we run away from the battle. Love leads to Light, but the Light is not ours it is given to us, it is given to us as a reward for our love and our good work. Whoever encounters this extraordinary light achieves “incomparable bliss (BG 5.2)” and “the highest happiness is happiness beyond end (BG 6.27-28).”

The Bhagavad Gita tells us that the path to Divine realization is through appropriate effort, concentration, and the renunciation of material concerns: “He whose self is

<sup>12</sup> SIVANANDA, 148.

<sup>13</sup> “*Bhagavadgita*, (Sanskrit: “Song of God”) an episode recorded in the great Sanskrit poem of the Hindus, the *Mahabharata*. It occupies chapters 23 to 40 of Book VI of the *Mahabharata* and is composed in the form of a dialogue between Prince Arjuna and Krishna, an *avatar* (incarnation) of the god Vishnu. Composed perhaps in the 1st or 2nd century BC, it is commonly known as *the Gita*.” Cf. WENDY DONIGER, *Bhagavadgita*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bhagavadgita>, (access: 03.04.2017).

<sup>14</sup> SWAMI NIKHILANANDA, *The Bhagavad Gita*, RamakrishnaVivekananda Centre, New York, 1944, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> FRANKLIN EDGERTON (ed.), *The Bhagavad Gītā*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 189.

<sup>16</sup> BRIAN A. BAIN, *Divine Encounters, Light and Ecstasy in Religious and Near-Death Experiences*, <http://www.lovingslight.com/bbain/hinduism/hinduism.htm>, (Access: 05.05.2017).

<sup>17</sup> WINTRHROP SERGEANT, *The Bhagavad Gita*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York, 1984, p. 464.

<sup>18</sup> EKNATH EASWARAN, *Essence of the Bhagavad Gita: A Contemporary Guide to Yoga, Meditation, and Indian Philosophy*, Nilgire Press, California, 2011, p. 62.





unattached to external sensations, who finds happiness in the self, whose self is united with Brahman through Yoga, reaches imperishable happiness (BG 5.21).” Thus, continually disciplining himself, the Yogin whose mind is subdued goes to Nirvana, to supreme peace, to union with Me (BG 6.15)” The Light of the spiritual path is glorious and Divine: “Such splendour would be of the splendour of that Great Being (BG11.12).” “This brilliance “illuminates the entire universe (BG 15.12).” Within the Divine light abides supreme peace and the eternal abode (BG 18.62).” That this light is divine in origin is abundantly clear: “I see thee without beginning, middle, or end; I behold thy infinite power, the power of thy innumerable arms. I see thine eyes as the sun and the moon. And I see thy face as a sacred fire that gives light and life to the whole universe in the splendour of a vast offering” (BG 11.19). Thy blazing is burning all this universe with Thine Own Radiance and filling all the universe with splendour, thy terrible rays consume it: “The flames of thy mouths devour all the worlds. Thy glory fills the whole universe. But how terrible thy splendour burns!” (BG 11.30)

Many Hindu scriptures convey expressions of this profound light of divine over and over again in a compelling, even awesome fashion. There is no doubt, however, that the experience of the supreme bliss and brilliance of the Divine Light is firmly rooted in the Hindu tradition.

## 2.2 The Divine Light in Buddhism

Buddhism grew out of Hinduism, beginning with a young man of the *Kshatriya* class named Siddhartha Gotama. Siddhartha is a *Sanskrit* personal name which means ‘He Who Achieves His Goal’. The Sanskrit family name Gautama means ‘descendants of Gotama’. Gotama was born around 563 BC, in northern India.<sup>19</sup> Although not a Brahmin, the lad saw fit to contemplate the nature of Ultimate Reality, and attained perfect enlightenment. From this point on he was known as “**the Buddha - the enlightened one.**”<sup>20</sup> Like Hinduism, Buddhism sets as its ultimate goal the achievement of a profound mystical experiences, but Buddhism has always claimed that anyone can and should achieve this, so that another person could be helped along the path.<sup>21</sup>

There are two school in Buddhism, Mahayana and Theravada.<sup>22</sup> In the 8th century texts of the *Mahayana*, the light of Buddha is said to be “beautiful, extremely powerful, incomparable, infinite splendour and infinite brilliance.”<sup>23</sup> The body of Buddha issues forth ‘brilliant rays,’ and is called the “King of Light.”<sup>24</sup> These images were applied to a

<sup>19</sup> CRISTIAN VIOLATTI, *Siddhartha Gautama*, Ancient History Encyclopedia, [https://www.ancient.eu/Siddhartha\\_Gautama/](https://www.ancient.eu/Siddhartha_Gautama/), access (02.11.2017).

<sup>20</sup> NEW WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA, <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Buddha>, access (02.11.2017).

<sup>21</sup> BRIAN A. BAIN, *Divine Encounters: Light and Ecstasy in Religious and Near-Death Experiences*, <http://www.lovinglight.com/bbain/buddhism/buddhism.htm>, (02.11.2017). “The Buddha taught a path to salvation that requires coming to complete awareness of the self and its myriad self-centered desires, or “cravings,” that bind us to suffering and keep us in ignorance. He taught the way to discipline and deny the body, the egoistic self, and any sort of self-seeking, in order to achieve a state of complete selflessness (anatta) or ‘emptiness.’ In attaining the state that is absolutely empty, the seeker becomes unified, free of desires, able to live a fully awakened existence. Gotama rejected the whole Hindu class and caste system, and promoted enlightenment for everyone.”

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* “In the largest school, Mahayana, individuals can pray to a Buddha to enlist help along the spiritual path. In the older school, Theravada, prayers are considered meaningless, because the Buddha does not exist as some sort of god, but as a state of being. The Mahayanists counter that the Theravadins might be correct ultimately, but if prayer and worship help a person achieve enlightenment, then such practices should not be discouraged.”

<sup>23</sup> E.B. COWELL (trans.), “The Land of Bliss,” in *The Buddha-Karita of Asvaghosha*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1894, p. 28-29.

<sup>24</sup> E.B. COWELL (trans.), *Amitayur-Dyana Sutra: Meditation on Buddha-Amitayus*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1894, p. 180-185.



mythological account of the Buddha's birth. When the newborn Buddha was first "gazed at, though of such surpassing brightness, he attracted all eyes like the moon. With the radiant splendour of his limbs, he extinguished like the sun the splendour of the lamps; with his beautiful hue as of precious gold he illumined all the quarters of space."<sup>25</sup>

Buddhist schools and texts that refer to a Divine Light do so about a cosmic, God-like Buddha. The *Dhammapadam*, dating as far back as the 6th century BC, tells us that "the sun shines by day, the moon shines by night; continually, day and night, does the luminous Buddha shine."<sup>26</sup> Other texts tell us that "the brilliance of Buddha's light is measureless."<sup>27</sup> Buddha, "the Great Enlightened One is brilliant and highly bright."<sup>28</sup> The Enlightened Teacher Buddha has illumined all nations with "the bright light of the doctrine and thinking in the brightness."<sup>29</sup> Buddha is the "World Honoured One and Light Brightness."<sup>30</sup> In a very famous passage from the *Lotus Sutra*, written around the 3rd century CE, we read that:

"The Buddha emitted a light from between his eyebrows, manifesting signs that are rarely seen. This light illumined the eastern direction, eighteen thousand Buddha lands. One could see how these Buddha lands adorned with numerous jewels, shone with hues of lapis lazuli and crystals, was due to the illumination of Buddha's light."<sup>31</sup>

The brilliance of the Buddha's light is often said to be indescribable.

"The Buddha of Immeasurable Life has eighty-four thousand features; each feature has eighty-four thousand secondary attributes; each secondary attribute sends forth eighty-four thousand rays of light; each ray of light shines out over the world of the ten quarters; and those sentient beings who are mindful of the Buddha are embraced (by that light), never to be abandoned."<sup>32</sup>

The *Flower Ornament Scripture*, written between 359 and 710 CE, contains an overwhelming number of references to the Buddha as a Divine Light. The scripture said that "the Buddha is a boundless treasury of light. A great assembly all saw the Buddha's body emit a hundred trillion infinities of inconceivable great lights."<sup>33</sup> To quote just a few examples:

"The Buddha's great light of knowledge illumines all lands in ten directions. The Buddha-body is peerless, it has no compare; Its light shines throughout ten directions. Traversing all realms of existence for countless ages, His light is everywhere as pure as space. Emanating inconceivable nets of lights. Everywhere purifying all conscious beings. All the lights in the world cannot match the light of a single pore of the Buddha. This is how inconceivable the Buddha's light is."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>25</sup> COWELL, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> WOODILLE ROCKHILL, *Udanavarga: A Collection of Verses from the Buddhist Canon*, Trubner & Co., London, 1883, p. 199.

<sup>27</sup> HSUAN HUA, *Amitabha Sutra*, Buddhist Text Translation Society, San Francisco, 1974, p. 31.

<sup>28</sup> BUNNO KATO, YOSHIRO TAMURA, and KOJIRO MIYASAKA (trans.), "Innumerable Meanings Sutra," in *The Three Fold Lotus Sutra*, Kosei Publishing, Tokyo, 1986, p. 6-7.

<sup>29</sup> NICHOLAS POPPE (trans.), *The Diamond Sutra*, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1971, p. 145.

<sup>30</sup> KUMARAJIVA (trans.), *The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*, vol. 6, Buddhist Text Translation Society, San Francisco, 1980, p. 1116.

<sup>31</sup> BURTON WATSON (trans.), *Lotus Sutra*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1993, p. 18.

<sup>32</sup> MEIJI YAMADA (trans.), *Lotus Sutra*, Ryukoku University Translation Centre, Kyoto, 1984, p. 35, 57 & 59.

<sup>33</sup> THOMAS CLEARY (trans.), "Ascent to the Palace of the Tushita Heaven," in *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, vol. 1, Shambala, Boulder, 1984, p. 510-511.

<sup>34</sup> THOMAS CLEARY (trans.), "The Wonderful Adornments of the Leaders of the World," in *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, vol. 1, Shambala, Boulder, 1984, p. 82-83.



“The great ocean of worlds has no bounds; Its circumference of jewels is pure and multicolored. Made of masses of diamonds, also raining beautiful jewels, their jewel atmospheres are unique and different, radiating pure light beautifying everywhere.”<sup>35</sup>

“Buddha emanates a great light. That light touches all with its glow, pervading the whole cosmos.”<sup>36</sup>

“The Buddha sits on the site of enlightenment. Pure and clear is his great radiant light, like a thousand suns emerging, illumining all over space, illuminating the world with light that has no end. Behold the Buddha’s body with webs of light so pure, willing the ten directions.”<sup>37</sup>

“I see the great pure light of Buddha’s ocean of worlds calmly realizing enlightenment, pervading the whole cosmos. The Buddha’s body emanates great light with physical forms boundless and totally pure, filling all lands like clouds from each hair pore appear clouds of light, filling all space, emitting great sound: All dark places are illumined, causing the pains of hells to disappear.”<sup>38</sup>

“One light illumines boundlessly, filling all lands in the ten directions, causing all worlds to gain great brightness.”<sup>39</sup>

Many other Buddhist texts also identify the Buddha as a super-brilliant being of light. In the *Lotus Blossom* of the *Fine Dharma*, we find that the “Buddha’s radiance none shall be able to succeed.”<sup>40</sup> The Buddha’s body is said to be of a “wonderful brightness.”<sup>41</sup> “The brilliance of a trillion suns, moons and pearls are outshone by the pure lights emanating from the mouth of Sakyamuni Buddha.”<sup>42</sup> “The lights of the World-Honoured One illuminate all the countless Buddha-lands throughout the ten directions. The brilliance of the sun and the moon cannot bear comparison with the brilliance of the *Tathagata* (Buddha).”<sup>43</sup>

The Tibetan *Book of the Dead*, written in the 8th century CE described the near-death experiences. After we die, we can expect to encounter the ‘Clear Light of Reality.’ When we do, we are advised to “try to abide in that state because the radiance of the Clear Light of Pure Reality is naturally void..the All-Good.”<sup>44</sup> The Tibetan text tells us that “in that state being experienced by thee, in an unbearable intensity, voidness and Brightness inseparable. The Voidness bright by nature and the Brightness by nature void. The Brightness is inseparable from the Voidness.”<sup>45</sup> Further, we are told that “thine own consciousness shining, void and inseparable from the Great Body of Radiance, hath no birth, nor death, and is the Immutable Light (Amitabha Buddha). Recognizing the voidness of thine own intellect to be Buddhahood, and looking upon it as being thine own consciousness, is to keep thyself in the divine mind of the Buddha.”<sup>46</sup>

<sup>35</sup> THOMAS CLEARY (trans.), “The Flower Bank World,” in *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, vol. 1, Shambala, Boulder, 1984, p. 204.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>37</sup> THOMAS CLEARY (trans.), “Vairocana,” in *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, vol. 1, Shambala, Boulder, 1984, p. 257.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262-264.

<sup>39</sup> THOMAS CLEARY (trans.), “Ten Practices,” in *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, vol. 1, Shambala, Boulder, 1984, p. 483.

<sup>40</sup> LEON HURVITZ (trans.), *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1976, p. 127.

<sup>41</sup> W.E. SOOTHILL, *The Lotus of the Wonderful Law*, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930, p. 242.

<sup>42</sup> GARMA C.C. CHANG (ed.), “On Emptiness” in *A Treasury of Mahayana Sutras: Selections from the Maharatnakuta Sutra*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1983, p. 92.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>44</sup> W.Y. EVANS-WENTZ (ed.), *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Oxford University Press, London, 1960, p. 92-95.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.



The supreme happiness is felt when one encounters this ‘Buddha-light.’ “His light, pure and immense, makes all sentient beings feel joyful in body and mind.”<sup>47</sup> The *Flower Ornament Scripture* details this theme extensively. Seeing the ‘Pure Light’ gives rise to joy. The appearance of the Buddha causes all to give up suffering and attain peace and bliss. The exceptional joy and happiness of those who encounter the Buddha is told:

“The Buddha in vast eons past amassed an ocean of joy, endlessly deep; therefore, all who see him are glad. The Buddha showers the rain of truth without bound, able to make the witnesses greatly rejoice; supreme roots of goodness are born from this. Such is the realization of Exquisite Light. All who see or hear receive benefit, causing them all to dance for joy. In the past Buddha cultivated an ocean of joy, vast, boundless, beyond all measure; therefore, those who see are all delighted to save all beings in all the worlds: This is the liberation of Blissful Happiness. I see the independent power of Buddha, his light filling the universe causing delusions to vanish and joy to abound: This is what’s seen by Immutable Light.”<sup>48</sup>

“Illumined by the Buddha’s light, all beings are peacefully happy; all pains of existence cleared away, their minds are full of joy. Everyone’s paying reverent respect, all greatly joyful at heart gazing at the King of Truth.”<sup>49</sup>

Buddhism encourages its followers to attain a certain state of being, one in which the distinctions between Ultimate Reality and man become obscured. In Buddhism, however, this goes by different names: *Nirvana*, the Void, Emptiness, Nothingness, Buddhahood, even the Buddha himself. Each of these names are often associated with feelings of supreme bliss, and radiating a pure, brilliant light. In each case, we can also see that this phenomenon of divine light has left the impression that this is the ultimate object and meaning of Buddha life.

### 2.3 The Divine Light in Taoism

Taoism is an ancient religion that developed in China, where tradition states it was founded by *Lao-Tzu* (also commonly written Laotzi), a legendary and possibly mythical sage who reportedly lived in the 6th century BC.<sup>50</sup> There is also substantial evidence indicating that the founders of Taoism drew upon even older traditions in China connected to the Religion of the Sun that extended back thousands of years earlier.<sup>51</sup>

At the heart of Taoism is the concept of the ‘*Tao*’ (or ‘*Dao*’, Chinese: 道; *pinyin*) itself, which is similar in concept to the ‘Brahman’ of Hinduism.<sup>52</sup> It represents the unknowable and unmanifest source of creation, which words cannot truly describe. *Tao/Dao* or *pinyin* is a Chinese word signifying ‘way’, ‘path’, ‘route’, ‘road’, ‘choose’, ‘key’ or sometimes more loosely ‘doctrine’, ‘principle’ or ‘holistic science’.<sup>53</sup> Within the context of traditional Chinese philosophy and religion, “the *Tao* is the intuitive knowing of ‘life’ that cannot be grasped full-heartedly as just a concept but is known nonetheless through actual living experience of one’s everyday being.”<sup>54</sup>

The most famous book of Taoism is *Tao Te Ching*. It was written by the great Chinese spiritual adept *Lao Tse* about 2500 years ago. *Tao Te Ching* is one of the most fundamental

<sup>47</sup> GARMA C.C. CHANG (ed.), “On Pure Land,” in *A Treasury of Mahayana Sutras: Selections from the Maharatnakuta Sutra*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1983, p. 348.

<sup>48</sup> CLEARY, p. 84-128.

<sup>49</sup> CLEARY, p. 258.

<sup>50</sup> KING SHU LIU, “The Origin of Taoism” in *The Monist* 27, no. 3 (July 1917), p. 377.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. JUSTIN NORRIS, *Cultures Descended from the Civilization of the Sun*, <https://www.spiritualsun.com/lost-civilization-sun/descendants#Taoism>, (access: 02.11.2017).

<sup>52</sup> BELSEBUUB & ANGELA PRITCHARD, *The Path of the Spiritual Sun: Celebrating the Solstices & Equinoxes*, Mystical Life Publications, New York, 2017, p. 104.

<sup>53</sup> MEL THOMPSON, *Eastern Philosophy*, Hodder Education, London, 2012, p. 153.

<sup>54</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tao>, (access: 03.11.2017).



textbooks on the philosophy and methodology of spiritual development.<sup>55</sup> The phenomenon of Divine Light is described as Tao that manifest Itself. Light is the Origin of everything.

“One cannot cognize Tao only by speaking about It. One cannot name by a human name that Origin of the sky and the earth Which is the Mother of everything. Only those who are free from worldly passions can see It, and those who have such passions can see only Its Creation. **Tao and Its Creation are One in essence, though They are called by different names. The passage which exists between Them is a doorway to all that is miraculous.**” (*Tao Te Ching*, 1)

“Tao looks like a void. Yet, it is omnipotent! It is in the Depths. **It is the Origin of everything.** It controls everything. It pervades everything. It manifests Itself as shining **Light**. It is the Subtlest! It is the Main Essence of everything! **One cannot describe Its origin, for It is Primordial.**” (*Tao Te Ching* 4)

“Make *emptiness* in yourself complete and achieve full calm! Let everything around you move by itself! Let everyone bloom spiritually and advance to cognition of their *true Essence*! Those who have cognized their true Essence achieve full calm. Thus, they attain the common *Abode of All Those Who Have Attained It*. One’s presence in this *Abode* has to become constant. The One Who has achieved this goal is called *Enlightened, Perfect, and the Possessor of the Higher Wisdom*. That *Abode* is also called *Heaven*. This is *the Abode of Eternal Tao*. Tao is non-corporeal. It cannot be caught by anyone. Thus, it is invincible.” (*Tao Te Ching* 16)

“If earthly rulers rule in calm and harmony, people too are calm and peaceful, and they do not aspire to anything outside this wellbeing. On the contrary, if earthly rulers act with irritation and aggressiveness, then people begin to suffer. Then wellbeing is replaced with troubles and calamities. And people begin to seek the way out, and some of them find it by coming to non-doing and becoming immersed into **the Light of Infinite Tao**. Thus, luck and happiness may result from affliction. As we can see, happiness and unhappiness give birth to each other. The wise are always calm, gentle, and just. They do not want to take anything away from others. They are selfless and do not harm anyone. **They are honest and live in harmony with Tao, with nature, and with other people. They are bright but do not glitter.**” (*Tao Te Ching* 58)

“In order to serve Tao successfully by helping other people, one needs to be able to preserve and to accumulate the power of the consciousness. This requires renouncing everything that wastes this power. Such a renunciation at the higher stages of the Path helps one to grow one’s own Power of *Te*, which can become inexhaustible and can help one to cognize Tao completely. And **Tao is the Eternal and Infinite Primordial Foundation of every man and of the entire material world.** The way that unites man with this Foundation is called *root*.” (*Tao Te Ching* 59)

Taoist texts state that from the uncreated Tao, creation emerged, a process attributed to the interaction of three cosmic forces, simply called the ‘One’, ‘Two’, and ‘Three’<sup>56</sup> or in other sources as “*Yin, Yang, and the Central Harmony*.”<sup>57</sup> **The Three Pure Ones** (Chinese: 三清; *pinyin*: *Sānqīng*) also translated as **the Three Pure Pellucid Ones, the Three Pristine Ones, the Three Divine Teachers, the Three Clarities, or the Three Purities are the Taoist Trinity, the three highest Gods** in the Taoist pantheon. They are regarded as pure manifestation of the Tao and the origin of all sentient beings. From the Taoist classic *Tao Te Ching*, it was held that “The Tao produced One; One produced Two; Two produced

<sup>55</sup> Dr. VLADIMIR ANTONOV, *Tao Te Ching – Divine Way of Spiritual Heart, Comtemporany Knowledge abaout God, Evolution, and The Meaning of Life. Metodology of Spiritual Development*, [http://www.swami-center.org/en/text/taoism/page\\_01.shtml](http://www.swami-center.org/en/text/taoism/page_01.shtml), (access: 03.11.2017).

<sup>56</sup> GIA FU FENG & JANE ENGLISH (trans.), *LAO TZU- Tao Te Ching*, Vintage Books, New York, 1997, p. 26.

<sup>57</sup> ISABELLE ROBINET, “Cosmogony: Taoist Nations” in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, Fabrizio Pregadio (ed.), Roudledge, London, 2007, p. 49.



Three; Three produced All things.”<sup>58</sup> All of these deities are divine emanations of celestial energy, pure cosmic *qi*.

*Lingbao Tianzun* (靈寶天尊, ‘Lord of the Numinous Treasure’) is also known as the “Supreme Pure One” or “The Universally Honoured One of Divinities and Treasures”.

“In terms of worldview, the emergence of the *Shàngqīng* revelations signifies a major expansion of Taoism. Where the celestial masters had added the pure gods of the Tao to the popular pantheon, *Shàngqīng* enlarged this to include an entirely new layer of existence between the original, creative force of the Tao, represented by the deity ‘*yuan shi tian wang*’ (heavenly king of primordial beginning), and created world as we know it. This celestial layer consisted of several different regions, located both in the far reaches of the world and in the stars, and imagined along the lines of the ancient paradises *Penglai* (a legendary land of Chinese mythology) and *Kunlun* (a mountain or mountain range in Chinese mythology, an important symbol representing the divinity). It was populated by various divine figures: pure gods of the Tao who were emanations of original cosmic *qi*; immortals who had attained celestial status through effort and the proper elixir.”<sup>59</sup>

*Qi* is divine spark of life or vital life force. Light is also considered essential for life. “In Chinese philosophy, the ethereal substance of which everything is composed. Early Daoist philosophers and alchemists regarded it as a vital force associated with breath and bodily fluids and sought to control its movement within the body in order to achieve longevity and spiritual power.”<sup>60</sup> Yinyang as *Qi* (Vital Energy) and everything is embedded in *yin* and embraces *yang*; through *chong qi* (vital energy) it reaches *he* (harmony).



The forces of Yin and Yang are also depicted visually in the famous “Yin-Yang” symbol, which Yin-Yang represents the dual polarities that give rise to all creation as well as the cycles between darkness and light that occur both in the heavens and on a personal level during the process of spiritual transformation.<sup>61</sup> Taoists held that “a divine light exists within”<sup>62</sup> and that the aim of spirituality is “to develop this potential and achieve immortality.”<sup>63</sup> Achieving this aim, according to Taoist texts, is a gradual process requiring disciplined spiritual practice (self-observation, awareness, concentrative meditation, breathing exercises, and visualization).

In the “*Tao Song Soul Mind Body Transplant – Permanent Treasures to Increase the Power of Your Tao Song*” is said that the Divine and Tao are creators and manifester. Everything has a soul, a mind (consciousness), and a body (energy and matter).<sup>64</sup>

“Divine Soul Mind Body Transplants are permanent treasures that will accompany the recipient forever. Everyone has parents, loved ones, friends, and colleagues. They are our *yang* companions.

<sup>58</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three\\_Pure\\_Ones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Pure_Ones), (access: 02.11.2017).

<sup>59</sup> LIVIA KOHN, *Daoism and Chinese Culture*, Three Times Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2001, p. 89.

<sup>60</sup> Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, Pennsylvania State University, 2011, p. 1532.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>62</sup> ISABELLE ROBINET, “Syncretism” in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, Fabrizio Pregadio (ed.), Routledge, London, 2007, p. 23.

<sup>63</sup> FARZEEN BALDRIAN-HUSSEIN, “Neidan” in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, Fabrizio Pregadio (ed.), Routledge, London, 2007, p. 765.

<sup>64</sup> ZHI GANG SHA, *Tao Song and Tao Dance*, Atria Books, Toronto, 2000, p. 48.



When we receive Divine Soul Mind Body Transplants, they become our divine *yin* companions. After our physical life ends, these treasures will continue to accompany our soul for all your future lifetimes. Therefore, Divine Soul Mind Body Transplants are permanent divine treasures.

Tao Soul Mind Body Transplants come from the Source. Similar to Divine Soul Mind Body Transplants, the Source can create Tao Soul Mind Body Transplants for a system, organ, part of the body, and cells or for a particular quality, such as Tao love or Tao compassion. The Source can create anything. Whatever we can imagine, the Source can create. Whatever we cannot imagine, the Source can also create.

Tao Soul Mind Body Transplants carry Tao frequency and vibration, which transforms the frequency and vibration of all life in countless planets, stars, galaxies, and universes ... carry Tao love which melts all blockages and transforms all life ... carry Tao forgiveness, which brings inner joy and inner peace ... carry Tao compassion, which boosts energy, stamina, vitality, and immunity ... carry Tao light, which heals, prevents sickness, purifies and rejuvenates soul, heart, mind, and body, transforms relationships, finances, intelligence, and more, and brings success to every aspect of life.”<sup>65</sup>

**Wan Ling Rong He** (All souls join as one). *Wan* means ‘ten thousand’, which in Chinese represents ‘all or every’. *Ling* means ‘soul’. *Rong He* means ‘join as one’. The Soul World has a Light Side and a Dark Side. The Light Side includes buddhas, saints, healing angels, ascended masters, gurus, lamas, and all kinds of spiritual fathers and mothers in all layers of Heaven. The Dark Side includes demons, monsters, and ghosts.

All souls joining as one means that all souls on the Light Side and the Dark Side join as one. This is not easy at all. To meld them together requires unconditional love, forgiveness, compassion, and light. The Light Side and Dark Side are opposites. Selflessness and selfishness are a pair of opposites. Selfishness is the Dark Side. Selflessness is the Light Side. To meld them together is difficult. Conflict and harmony, war and peace are also pairs of opposites. Conflict is the Dark Side. Harmony is the Light Side. To meld them as one is not easy.

*Wan ling rong he* is to meld all of the Light Side and all of the Dark Side as one. It will take the greatest effort of all humanity and all souls to achieve this final goal in the Soul Light Era. How can we achieve this goal? Apply divine love, forgiveness, compassion, and light.

“Divine love melts all blockages and transforms all life.

Divine forgiveness brings inner joy and inner peace.

Divine compassion boosts energy, stamina, vitality, and immunity.

Divine light heals, prevents sickness, and transforms every aspect of life, including relationships and finances.”<sup>66</sup>

There is a practice to meld the Light Side and the Dark Side with a Chant: “Divine love, divine forgiveness, divine compassion, and divine light meld the Light Side and Dark Side.”<sup>67</sup>

When a person does meditation, divine energy flows down to the practitioner; filling him with Divine Light, Love, and Power. The practitioner becomes a channel of this Divine energy.

“Spiritual aspirants who have practiced this meditation for quite sometime may experience being enveloped by dazzling, sometimes blinding light. In addition, practitioners may experience divine ecstasy and bliss, and a feeling of oneness with all creation. This has been a common experience among advanced yogis and saints of all religions, and can be verified through their holy scriptures.

This blinding, brilliant, and dazzling light is known as *Heaven Ki* in Taoist yoga, or the pillar of light in ancient Jewish Kabbalah traditions. To the Indian yogis and saints, they call this pillar of light, the Antakharana, or spiritual bridge of light. The Christians refer to it as the descent of the

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> ZHI GANG SHA, *Tao I: The Way of All Life*, Atria Books, Toronto, 2000, p. 4-7.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*



Holy Spirit, symbolized by a pillar of light with a descending white dove. The white dove represents the coming down of divine energy. The descent of the divine energy causes the temporary expansion of the practitioner's major chakras and inner aura. But if this meditation is practiced daily for a year, then the expansion may become permanent."<sup>68</sup>

#### 2.4 The Divine Light in Confucianism

Confucianism emphasizes harmony within human society and promotes a form of etiquette which a civilization can achieve astounding and fulfilling spiritual and material greatness. This etiquette is the natural result of education and one may learn of and practice right behavior with immediate benefit.

Confucius was a great teacher born in China 550 BCE. Confucius was not a god nor even a divine sage. Speaking of himself, he said: "*The Master said: As to be a Divine Sage or even a Good Man, far be it for me to make any such claim, far be it from me to make any such claim.*" (VII, 33) And he added: "*I for my part am not one of those who have innate knowledge. I am simply one who loves the past and who is diligent in investigating it. A Divine Sage I cannot hope ever to meet; the most I can hope for is to meet a true gentleman.*" (VII, 19, 25)<sup>69</sup>

The major teachings of Confucius refer to a concept of *li*, which is a Chinese word meaning "offering" but which refers to formal ritual. Confucius loved *li* and used it as a means to inspire participants to profound accomplishments; at the same time, he sought to create the society which could appreciate, rather than simply perform, *li*. A related concept is that of *ren*, which is both a feeling of love for others and the attribute of benevolence. Within Confucianism, a person who is *ren* practices *li*. This lifestyle benefits society in measurable ways, while granting personal success and spiritual fulfillment to the practitioner. The core value in Confucianism might be politeness. Confucianism regards each person's active involvement in a community as being the means to fulfillment. Civility is a matter of respecting fundamental relationship (Child's obedience to parent's proper upbringing. Subject's good morality to ruler's benevolence. Wife's fidelity to husband's adoration. Young's respect to old's guidance. Friend's constancy to more-experienced friend's concern).

Confucius' firmest and most frankly stated religious convictions related to heaven, or *t'ien*. The Mandate of Heaven or *Tian Ming* (Chinese: 天命; *pinyin*: *Tiānmìng*) is a Chinese political and religious doctrine used since ancient times to justify the rule of the Emperor of China. According to this belief, heaven (天, *Tian*) - which embodies the natural order and will of the universe - bestows the mandate on a just ruler of China, the 'Heavenly Son' of the 'Celestial Empire.' "If a ruler was overthrown, this was interpreted as an indication that the ruler was unworthy, and had lost the mandate. It was also a common belief that natural disasters such as famine and flood were signs of heaven's displeasure with the ruler, so there would often be revolts following major disasters as citizens saw these as signs that the Mandate of Heaven had been withdrawn."<sup>70</sup> The Mandate determines whether an emperor of China is sufficiently virtuous to rule; if he does not fulfill his obligations as emperor, then he loses the Mandate and thus the right to be emperor. Thus, he must have a power of heaven.

He looked upon heaven as the source of his power, a heaven that had entrusted him with a sacred mission as a champion of the good and true in China's culture. Confucius generally thought of heaven as an impersonal, ethical force, a cosmic counterpart of the ethical sense in man, a guarantee that somehow there is sympathy with man's sense of morality in the

<sup>68</sup> Ricardo B. Serrano, *Return to Oneness with the Tao*, Holistic, Vancouver, 2011, p. 90.

<sup>69</sup> ARTHUR WALEY (trans.), *The Analects of Confucius*, Bradford and Dickens, London, 1956, p. 127, 128, 130.

<sup>70</sup> KALLIE SZCZEPANSKI, "What Is the Mandate of Heaven in China?" in *Thoughtco* (December 4, 2015), <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-mandate-of-heaven-195113>, (access: 10.11.2017).





very nature of the universe. *The Great Learning*, one of the so-called four books of Confucianism, teaches that only as persons are transformed into true manhood can the world move toward peace:

“If there be righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character.  
If there be beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home.  
If there be harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation.  
If there be order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.”<sup>71</sup>

Confucianism had been adapted to Japanese needs and this meant that the practical dimensions of Confucianism were emphasised at the expense of its more philosophical deliberations. “In parting with Zhu Xi’s dogmas and taking the subjective heart/mind of Wang Yangming as the foundation of Confucianism, Tōju took Japanese Confucianism forward into a new arena, one in which inner experience and personal happiness took precedence over external investigation and universal principles. Tōju called the innate moral senses ‘the inner light’ or the ‘Divine Light of Heaven’, and believed that it was only this light, not anything else, that guided one’s life.”<sup>72</sup>

“Though the Tokugawa government supported the Neo-Confucianism of Zhu Xi, Zhu’s opponent, Wang Yang-ming, also won adherents. *Nakae Tōju* (1608-48) had studied Zhu Xi’s writings for many years, but on discovering the work of Wang Yang-ming he became convinced that Wang’s intuitive approach was superior to Zhu’s rational ‘investigation of things.’ Nakae particularly stressed Wang’s idea that in each person was an innate moral sense. This meant that one did not have to be a scholar to become a good person. Nakae called this inner sense the ‘*Divine Light of Heaven*’, and his teachings emphasized a personal god called the Supreme Lord Above. Nakae was also impressed by Wang’s emphasis on action. Discussing or even understanding virtue were not sufficient: goodness had to be expressed in deeds.”<sup>73</sup>

Under Confucian political philosophy, a good ruler takes care of his subjects, rather than satisfying personal desires. In other words, he serves the culture that he leads rather than serving his own needs. The ruler who abused his power through lack of responsibility to his subjects went against the Will of Heaven or Divine Light. If he went against the Will of Heaven, then he lost Heaven’s Mandate and was subject to overthrow.

*Nakae Tōju* (1608-48) had studied *Zhu xi*’s writings for many years, but on discovering the work of *Wang Yang-ming* he became convinced that *Wang*’s intuitive approach was superior to *Zhu*’s rational “investigation of things.” He particularly stressed *Wang*’s idea that in each person was an innate moral sense. This meant that one did not have to be a scholar to become a good person. *Tōju* called **the innate moral senses ‘the inner light’ or the ‘Divine Light of Heaven’**, and believed that it was only this light, not anything else, that guided one’s life. What *Tōju* did not succeed in was the unification of the notions of subjective experiences and social reforms so that personal happiness could have been guaranteed by institutional structure.<sup>74</sup> Discussing or even understanding virtue were not sufficient: goodness had to be expressed in deeds. The popularity of Nakae’s philosophy helped spread Confucianism as a form of religion in Japan.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> JAMES LEGGE, “The Great Learning” in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, 1960, p. 263-264.

<sup>72</sup> XINZHONG YAO, *An Introduction to Confucianism*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2000, p. 132.

<sup>73</sup> DOROTHY HOOBLER & THOMAS HOOBLE, *Confucianism*, Chelsea House, New York, 2009, p. 77.

<sup>74</sup> XINZHONG YAO, *An Introduction to Confucianism*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2000, p. 132.

<sup>75</sup> DOROTHY & THOMAS HOOBLER, *Confucianism*, Chelsea House Publisher, New York, 2009, p. 77.



Pound<sup>76</sup> had the notion of light came from the medieval philosopher *John Scotus Erigena*, whose famous dictum, ‘all things that are are lights,’ is a recurrent theme in *The Cantos* (LIIIX/449). From Erigena’s Neoplatonic perspective, the world is a theophany of divine radiation, in which God is light and his creations are lights; divine creation is thus God’s act of manifesting himself in his creatures. Pound seems to be more interested in the ‘corporeal’ dimension of the light metaphor. In his long essay on Guido Cavalcanti, who in Pound’s view was also influenced by the light philosophy, Pound approvingly quotes from Etienne Gilson’s 1925 book on medieval philosophy: ‘Light is a very subtle corporeal substance and it is almost incorporeal. Its characteristic properties are to engender itself perpetually and to diffuse itself spherically and instantaneously about a point. This extremely tenuous substance is also the stuff of which all things are made, it is the primary corporal form and some people call it corporeality.’ In quoting this passage Pound clearly points to his inclination to characterize light in terms of its materiality.<sup>77</sup>

Pound’s ‘discovery’ largely relies on his reading of the Chinese character *ming* (bright). In Confucian works, *ming* does not carry the heavy philosophical weight perceived in it by Pound, but the character is indeed often used in contexts where the transcendental supreme intelligence is the topic, such as in the mention of Dao in the opening paragraph of *Da xue* (*ming de*, ‘illustrious virtue’), or in the description of *Tian* in *Zhong yong* 26.5 (*gao ming*, ‘high and bright’). Pound discovers the linkage between Confucianism and Neoplatonism, then, in this contextual significance of *ming*. Thus, he states: “The sun and moon, the total light process, the radiation, reception and reflection of light, hence, the intelligence. Bright, brightness, shining. Refer to Scotus Erigena, Grosseteste and the notes on light in my *Cavalcanti*’ (Con, 20). Such a perception informs Pound’s consistent strategy of superimposing the Neoplatonic vision of light on Confucian metaphysics in his translations. For example, Pound translates a key *Zhong yong* passage on *the Dao of Heaven* in the following way:

“From these hidden seeds it moves forth slowly but goes far and with slow but continuing motion it penetrates the solid, penetrating the solid it comes to shine forth on high. The celestial and earthly process pervades and is substantial; it is on high and gives light, it comprehends the light and is lucent, it extends without bounds, and endures” (Con, 181-3)

Pound interpreted the character *zhi* (wisdom) in his typical etymographic manner. The character consists of two components: *zhi* (knowledge) and *ri* (sun). Pound’s line underscores his consistent recognition that religion is a mode of enlightened knowledge, or rather, a cognizance of the divine light. In other words, the innate desire to understand the source of divine creation forms an important part of human nature.<sup>78</sup>

Pound’s spiritual belief system precisely because the notion denies the reality of earthly existence and deprives human beings of the chance for self-perfection, leaving them as powerless, sinful creatures at the mercy of a mysterious transcendental force. In Confucianism, the way towards redemption lies in education in the form of self-cultivation rather than in salvation by an external force. The relationship between human nature and education is persuasively elucidated in Pound’s version of the first paragraph of *Zhong yong*: “What heaven has disposed and sealed is called the inborn nature. The realization of

<sup>76</sup> In the summer of 1923, *Ezra Pound* (1885-1972), the American poet then self-exiled in Paris, wrote a poem dedicated to the Chinese sage Confucius (c. 551-479 BCE). The poem, now known to Pound’s readers as the Confucian canto, ends with three memorable lines that encapsulate Pound’s almost lifelong commitment to Confucianism

<sup>77</sup> FENG LAN, *Ezra Pound and Confucianism: Remaking Humanism in the Face of Modernity*, University of Toronto Press, London, 2005, p. 176.

<sup>78</sup> FENG LAN, *Ezra Pound and Confucianism: Remaking Humanism in the Face of Modernity*, University of Toronto Press, London, 2005, p. 155.



this nature is called the process. The clarification of this process [the understanding or making intelligible of this process] is called education.”<sup>79</sup>

Pound’s inborn nature, a proper rendering of the Chinese term *xing* (intrinsic nature), designates the primordial nature of humanity originating from Heaven. Since Heaven in Confucianism is essentially benevolent, it is inconceivable that the inborn nature of humanity could contradict the Dao (Pound’s process) of Heaven. The way to regain this heavenly origin is through cultivating human nature, bringing to light what human beings have been endowed with by Heaven, namely the four beginnings of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom.<sup>80</sup> In the *Cantos*, Pound’s celebration of such Confucian heroes characteristically marks the height of his spiritual quest, a moment of joy and triumph when the poet witnesses the ascendance of the sage-kings in the glory of the divine light, testifying to the perfect union between humanity and Heaven.<sup>81</sup>

## 2.5 The Divine Light in Islam

Islam means “submission, submission to the word of God (*Allah*).”<sup>82</sup> An individual who thus submits is a Muslim. The holy book of Islam, **the Qur’an**, contains clear and specific references on the subject. The Islamic tradition is rich in references to a Divine Light. Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, received instruction from a revelation that occurred around the turn of the seventh century CE.<sup>83</sup> A voice came to him and said, “Read!” Muhammad, being illiterate, responded to the voice that he could not read. The voice said that “it is the Lord Most Bountiful who teacheth by the pen, [who] teacheth man that which he knew not” (Qur’an Surah Al ‘Alaq, 1-5). Then the voice said, on two separate occasions, “O Muhammad, thou art God’s messenger, and I am Gabriel.”<sup>84</sup> The vision accompanying this voice was exceptionally bright, so much so that Muhammad had to turn away his face “from the brightness of the vision....”<sup>85</sup> The Qur’an is quite specific about who would be the source of this kind of Light: **Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. Light upon Light, Allah guideth unto His light whom he will.**” (Qur’an *Surah An-Nur*, 35).

Muslims call God *Allah*. “Allah is the one and only God, the creator of the universe.”<sup>86</sup> He is the same God who has revealed himself to, and is worshipped by, Jews and Christians. Muslims accept “the legitimacy of the Jewish and Christian scriptures.”<sup>87</sup> However, according to Muslims, the final and perfect sacred book is the Qur’an. Allah let “His word and will be known through a revelation to the prophet Muhammad, who recorded, in the Qur’an, everything that Allah had revealed to him.”<sup>88</sup> While Muslims differ on some points of belief, they generally believe that “Muhammad was the last in a line of prophets which includes Moses and Jesus.”<sup>89</sup> Thus Muslims consider Jesus to be inspired by, but not the incarnate son of, God. But then not even Muhammad was perfect, according to Islam, only Allah is. Likewise, written traditions about the prophet are contained in a collection known as the *Hadith*. Hadith is one of various reports describing the words, actions, or habits of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

<sup>79</sup> FENG LAN, p. 157.

<sup>80</sup> FENG LAN, 157.

<sup>81</sup> FENG LAN, p. 183.

<sup>82</sup> WALTER HAZEN, *Inside Islam*, Lorenz Educational Press, Missouri, 2002, p. 14.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. LAROUSSE (ed.), *Religions of the World*, Peter Bedrick Books, New York, 2000, p. 54.

<sup>84</sup> THOMAS PATRICK HUGHES, *Dictionary of Islam*, W.H. Allen, London, 1885, p. 133.

<sup>85</sup> MOHAMMED M. PICKTHALL, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, New American Library, New York, 1998, p. 10.

<sup>86</sup> TALIB SAMAT, *The 99 Most Eminent Names of Allah*, Utusan Publications, Kuala Lumpur, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> JOHN PHILBRIC HASTY, *Harrold’s Choice*, Xlibris Corporation, New York, 2013, p. 148.

<sup>88</sup> IFTIKHAR AHMED MEHAR, *Al-Islam*, Islam Press, USA, 2003, p. 201.

<sup>89</sup> ALLEN WEBB, *Teaching the Literature of Today’s Middle East*, Routledge, New York, 2012, p. 12.



The phenomena (phenomenon) of Divine Light according to the mystical tradition of Islam is known as Sufism. Sufism is “mystical islamic belief and practice in which Muslims seek to find the truth of divine love and knowledge of God.”<sup>90</sup> The Sufi tradition of Islam makes frequent reference to the vision of a Divine Light and experience with God. As with the Qur’an, the poetry in this Sufism tradition is an exquisite expression of the Divine presence that the Sufi encounters. In Sufism, “we find not only visions of the Light, but also frequent descriptions of the joy that so often accompanies this vision.”<sup>91</sup> As a mystical tradition, Sufism is “that form of Islam that emphasizes the need for a direct experience with God.”<sup>92</sup> Sufis frequently dwell on the identification of God (*Allah*) with the Light. For the 13th century Sufi Muhyiddin ibn ‘Arabi, “God is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth.”<sup>93</sup> God is “the embodiment of light, and the source of all illuminations.”<sup>94</sup> Sufis routinely describe “an experience with a Light once a devotee reaches a certain level of contemplation, usually accompanied by intense feelings of ecstasy.”<sup>95</sup> Hussein Nasr offers a few introductory examples that will help to illustrate: “The Essence of the First Absolute Light, God gives constant illumination, whereby it is manifested and it brings all things into existence, giving light to them by its rays. Everything in the World is derived from the Light of His Essence and all beauty and perfection are the gift of His bounty, and to attain fully to this illumination is salvation.”<sup>96</sup> The experiences of sufism about God like living in heaven, so said: “I take refuge in the Light of Thy Glorious Countenance which illuminates the heavens.”<sup>97</sup> The light of the divine exceeds the artificial light of the world: “O God, thou art hidden from us, though the heavens are filled with Thy light which is brighter than the sun and the moon.”<sup>98</sup> “There is naught in the Universe save one Light! It appears in a variety of manifestations. God is the Light; its manifestations, the Universe.”<sup>99</sup>

The Divine Light is not like any other light, however. “It is unlike anything ordinary people see from day to day. Even more than that though, the phenomenon is really beyond description.”<sup>100</sup> Sufis Ibn ‘Arabi has recourse to poetry to describe the indescribable: “When one perceives the Divine Light fully, everything else disappears. The person then realizes that this is really the very light of the Absolute [God] as such...Ocean’s a drop from my pervading Sea, Light but a flash of my vast Brilliancy.”<sup>101</sup>

The 13th century Indian Sufi Maneri tells us that God’s “very brilliance blinds me to whatever descends.” This Light is “a thousand times more luminous than that of the sun.” Mansur al-Hallaj lets us know that once one becomes aware of the presence of God and His Light, there is no turning back: “You understand our God is a consuming fire. The rose opens to the light, the Narcissus leans to the shade...But at some point, His Light penetrates our eyes, destroying our shades... If we are roses we are drawn to light. We do not think about the end. There is none.” Furthermore, Yusuf Ali says:

<sup>90</sup> ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL, Sufi Islam, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sufism>, (access: 05:05:2017).

<sup>91</sup> MUHAMMAD HISHAM KABBANI, *Classical Islam and the Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition*, Islamic Supreme Council of America, Fenton, 2004, p. 526.

<sup>92</sup> [http://www.adishakti.org/his\\_light\\_within/the\\_light\\_islam.htm](http://www.adishakti.org/his_light_within/the_light_islam.htm), (access: 05:05:2017).

<sup>93</sup> Ibn ‘Arabi (d. 1240), in ISMAIL HAKKI BURSEVI, *Fusus al-Hakim*, Vol. II, Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society, Oxford, 1987, p. 319.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn ‘Arabi, quoted by Prof. MUHAMMAD ENAMUL HAQ, *A History of Sufism in Bengal*, Asiatic Press, Dacca, 1975, p. 399.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> HUSSEIN NASR, *Three Muslim Sages*, University Press, Cambridge, 1963, p. 69.

<sup>97</sup> CONSTANCE E. PADWICK, *Muslim Devotions*, SPCK, London, 1961, p. 62.

<sup>98</sup> KENNETH CRAIG (ed.), *The Wisdom of the Sufis*, New Directions, New York, 1976, p. 33.

<sup>99</sup> Dr. MIR VALIUDDIN, *The Quranic Sufism*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1977, p. 43.

<sup>100</sup> BRIAN A. BAIN, *Divine Encounters, Light and Ecstasy in Religious and Near-Death Experiences*, <http://www.lovinglight.com/bbain/islam/thesupreme.htm>, (access: 05.05.2017).

<sup>101</sup> Ibn ‘Arabi, Lama’at, quoted by A.J. ARBERRY, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics in Islam*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1968, p. 103.



“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: The Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! Allah doth guide whom He will to His Light: Allah doth set forth Parables for men: and Allah doth know all things.”

## 2.6 The Divine Light in Christianity

The good news of Christianity is about “God’s saving designs for humanity as a whole.”<sup>102</sup> It is not just good news for Christians but also for the salvation of the universe. Christians proclaim that “Jesus Christ is as the center, summit, and fullness of all revelation.”<sup>103</sup> As with other major religions of the world, Christianity has many literatures (has many writings) that deal with Divine Light. The Christian New and Old Testament has several references that identify God as Light.

In the introduction to the Gospel according to John the Apostle, we find that there was a man sent from God whose name was John (the Babtist) as a witness of Light.

“We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard, so that you too may share our life. Our life is shared with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing this to you so that our joy may be complete. This is what we have heard from him and are declaring to you: **God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all.** If we say that we share in God’s life while we are living in darkness, we are lying, because we are not living the truth. But **if we live in light, as he is in light, we have a share in another’s life, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.** If we say, ‘We have no sin,’ we are deceiving ourselves, and truth has no place in us; if **we acknowledge our sins, he is trustworthy and upright, so that he will forgive our sins and will cleanse us from all evil.**” (John 1: 3-9).

Futhermore, John the Apostle stated that God is “spirit” (John 4:24), and that he is “light” (1 John 1:5, 7; cf. 1 Tim. 6:16). God is also “He who lives par excellence” (Matt. 16:16, 63; John 6:51; 1 John 1:1-2). Above all, God is “love” (1 John 4:8, 16). Certainly, these words must first be understood in terms of “the salvific manifestation of God in Christ: in the face of a world of hate and darkness and death, Christ offers us the path of liberation.”<sup>104</sup>

The Christian tradition is “a whole focus on the birth, life, death, and resurrection of a man named Jesus.”<sup>105</sup> This fundamental belief in Jesus’ triumph over death leads Christians to believe that “Jesus was and is indeed the Son of God, and has the power to grant anyone eternal life.”<sup>106</sup> Jesus Christ is True Light. Jesus spoke to the people and said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). But we know that “The Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness more than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). According John, Christians must have that Light because “while you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of light” (John 12:36). We should find life in Him because “if we say we have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth” (1 John 1:6). In Jesus is manifested that which is from all eternity. It is the truth of the divine life, the life that comes from the Father, and which the Son and the Holy Spirit share in fullness. The biblical understanding of God indicates that divine perfection consists in giving and in love. Love is the ultimate meaning of divine self-possession; love

<sup>102</sup> AVERY DULLES, *Revelation and the Religions*, Quaker Universalist Fellowship, New York, 1999, p. 5.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Apostolic Letter SALVIFICI DOLORIS*, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/hlthwork/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_11021984\\_salvifici-doloris\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/hlthwork/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_11021984_salvifici-doloris_en.html), (access: 15.05.2017)

<sup>105</sup> RICHARD FERGUSON, *A Real-Life Christian Spiritual Journey*, iUniverse, Bloomington, 2011, p. 209.

<sup>106</sup> JOEL OSTEEN, *Hope for Today Bible*, Simon and Schuster Press, New York, 2009. p. 1185.



expresses this perfectly. In the Canticle of Zechariah, we read: **“In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.”** (Luc 1:78-79)

Now, let us furthermore look at the identity of Jesus as the Divine Light. The Transfiguration of Jesus is an event reported in the New Testament when Jesus is transfigured and becomes radiant in glory upon a mountain. Jesus and three of his apostles (Peter, James, and John) go to a mountain to pray. On the mountain, **“Jesus begins to shine with bright rays of light.”** (Matthew 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8; Luke 9:28–36; 2 Peter 1:16–18; John 1:14). Jesus was transfigured before them; his face shone as the sun, and his garments became white as the light. At that point, the prophets Elijah and Moses appeared, and Jesus began to talk to them. A bright cloud appeared, and a voice from the cloud was heard to say: **“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him”** (Mark 9:7). The Transfiguration not only supports the identity of Jesus as the Son of God, but the statement ‘listen to him’, identifies him as the messenger and mouth-piece of God. This is the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. Thomas Aquinas considered the Transfiguration “the greatest miracle in that it complemented baptism and showed the perfection of life in Heaven.”<sup>107</sup> In Christian teachings, “the Transfiguration is a pivotal moment, and the setting on the mountain is presented as the point where human nature meets God: the meeting place of the temporal and the eternal, with Jesus himself as the connecting point, acting as the bridge between heaven and earth.”<sup>108</sup>

Only because the luminous center from which all rays proceed, Christ, “the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:15), has shone in the center of history, can man have an undeserved, if inchoate, “participation in the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16). It is only “in his light,” that “we see light” (Ps. 36:9; 1 Cor 13:12). Christ is “the light” (John 8:12) that clarifies what preceded him and guides what follows him. He is, in a sense, the beginning and center of time, because without meaning there is no time.<sup>109</sup> This “center”, then, is not a geographical location but rather the divine and human person, “the Lamb slain for man’s salvation” (Rev. 5:6) in whom God in his immemorial (eternal) plan (*mysterion*) desired to “reconcile all things to himself” (Col. 1:19). When the apostle Peter was in jail, God sent a liberating angel, “and **a light** shone in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, *Arise quickly. And his chains fell from his hands*” (Acts 12:7).

**That Light was Jesus**, the Word of God, the Son of God, who also was God. The apostle Paul tells us that Jesus was “*the brightness of [God’s] glory, and the express image of his person*” (Heb. 1:3). The Book of Acts says that Paul was on his way from Jerusalem to Syrian Damascus with a mandate issued by the High Priest to seek out and arrest followers of Jesus, with the intention of bringing them back to Jerusalem as prisoners for questioning and possible execution. One day, Saul came upon a remarkable sight. The journey is interrupted when Paul sees a **blinding light**, and communicates directly with a divine voice.

“As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’

‘Who are you, Lord?’ Saul asked.

‘**I am Jesus**, whom you are persecuting,’ he replied. ‘Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’

The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So, they led him by

<sup>107</sup> NICHOLAS M. H., *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian of the Christian Life*, Ashgate, New York, 2003, p. 100.

<sup>108</sup> DOROTHY LEE, *Transfiguration*, Bloomsbury Academic, Melbourne, 2004, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup> T. S. ELIOT, *Four Quartets*, Harcourt Brace & World, New York, 1971, p. 23.



the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.” (Acts 9:3–9)

This experience had quite an influence on Saul, as it resulted in his conversion to Christianity. From Paul’s experience, we know that Jesus Christ is the Light of God. He is the Ultimate Reality that has come into the world and gives His light to invite all sentient beings through the way of following His Light.

The mystics of the church see the divine light in their life experience. St. John of the Cross, a mystic and a church poet in the 16th century wrote in *The Dark Night of the Soul*, in the framework of the spiritual life struggle: **“Why, if it is a divine light (for it illumines souls and purges them of their ignorances), does one call it a dark night?”**<sup>110</sup> The mystic answers this by way of analogy:

“...the clearer and more obvious divine things are in themselves, the darker and more hidden they are to the soul naturally. The brighter the light the more an owl is blinded; and the more one looks at the brilliant sun, the more the sun darkens the faculty of sight, deprives it and overwhelms it in its weakness. Hence when the divine light of contemplation strikes souls not yet entirely illumined, it causes spiritual darkness.... This divine and dark light causes deep immersion of the mind in the knowledge and feeling of one’s own miseries and evils; it brings all these miseries into relief so that the soul sees clearly that of itself it will never possess anything else....”<sup>111</sup>

Among his contemporaries, Teresa of Avila provides us with a wonderful metaphor of the Divine Light. Teresa wants us to know about the beauty and glory of the vision of God, and the consequences of rejecting Him: “consider what it would mean to this so brilliantly shining and beautiful castle, this pearl from the Orient, this tree of life planted in the very living waters of life (that is in God) to fall into mortal sin; there’s no darker darkness nor anything more obscure and black.”<sup>112</sup> St. Teresa tells us that “the brilliance of this inner vision is like an infused light coming from a sun covered by something as sparkling as a properly cut diamond.”<sup>113</sup> It is as if one were “shown another light so different from earth’s light that if he were to spend his whole life trying to imagine that light, he would be unable to do so.”<sup>114</sup> We encounter this light in the “Interior Castle” - the soul. The soul can reflect the radiance of God “as is crystal capable of reflecting the sun’s brilliance.”<sup>115</sup>

In the hymn of evening prayer, Sunday in the week of Easter is said: “O Trinity of blessed light, O Unity of princely might, the fiery sun now goes his way, shed Thou within our hearts Thy ray.” Jesus Christ is the Light of Divine who illuminates the world. He is the divine light that leads souls to God.

“Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;  
rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross!  
Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,

<sup>110</sup> KIERAN KAVANAUGH, OCD (ed.), *St. John of the Cross: Selected Writings*, Paulist Press, New York, 1987, p. 201.

<sup>111</sup> KAVANAUGH, p. 202.

<sup>112</sup> KAVANAUGH, p. 39.

<sup>113</sup> KIERAN KAVANAUGH, OCD (ed.), *St. Teresa of Avila: The Interior Castle*, Paulist Press, New York, 1979, p. 157.

<sup>114</sup> KAVANAUGH, p. 136.

<sup>115</sup> KAVANAUGH, p. 39.



to the glory of God, the Father.” (Philippians 2:6-11)

