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Teresa of Ávila's Elaboration of Imagery in Her Literary  
Expression of Mystical Experience

by

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD to the University of  
Glasgow. Research conducted in the Faculty of Arts, University  
of Glasgow.

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## CONTENTS

Abstract	
Preface	i
Acknowledgements	iv
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: <u>The background to St Teresa's writings</u>	10
Introduction	10
I Imagery in Spanish literature prior to Teresa; Traditions that nourished her	11
II Teresa's imagery: some insights from modern critical scholarship	26
III Santa Teresa in the social context of sixteenth century Spain	37
IV Santa Teresa in the religious context of sixteenth century Spain	42
V Santa Teresa in the literary context of sixteenth century Spain	46
VI Santa Teresa in the spiritual context of sixteenth century Spain	53
VII Teresa and the Bible	66
Chapter 2: <u>The meaning of "Oración" in the writings of St Teresa</u>	
Introduction	88
I "Oración" as communication between the physical/ spiritual nature of Man and the spiritual nature of God	93
II "Oración" as productive of spiritual impetus to achieve the paradoxical union of opposites (the human and divine)	99



III	“Oración” as experience	108
IV	“Oración” as conveyed through Teresa’s God-given imagery of the higher mystical experiences	114
V	“Oración” as “incarnation”: Teresa’s expression of her sublime experiences through imagery	124

### Chapter 3: The Imagery of Water

	Introduction	139
I	The soul watered as a garden to produce growth	139
II	The First Water: the first stage in spiritual progress	150
III	Torno y arcaduces: imagery of increase	155
IV	The Third Water: the River	162
V	The Fourth Water: Rain	171
VI	Imagery of water: <i>Las moradas</i>	177
VII	Water and Wine	186

### Chapter 4: Imagery of the Castle

	Introduction	197
I	The Castle: a palace of experiential exploration	198
II	The Castle: a journey of spiritual progress and Perception	212
III	The Castle: a place of spiritual battle	220

### Chapter 5: The Imagery of Fire

	Introduction	239
I	Fire and Sexual Passion	246

II	Fire and Water	256
III	Fire and Light and transformation	263
IV	Fire and flight; expansion and transformation	268
	Conclusion	276

#### Appendices

I	Imagery in the Psalms with echoes in Teresa's writings (Psalm Order)	284
II	Imagery in the Psalms with echoes in Teresa's writing (classified by images used)	302
III	Imagery in the book Ezekiel with echoes in Teresa's writings	314
IV	Imagery in the book of Ezekiel (classified by Images used)	322

	Bibliography	330
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Teresa of Ávila's elaboration of imagery in her literary expression of  
mystical experience

By John Paddock

Abstract of Thesis presented for the Degree of PhD in the  
University of Glasgow  
September 2004

This thesis argues that Teresa of Ávila's mystical writings contain images which she methodically fashions and elaborates into a developed and consistent scheme designed to express, to the extent possible through literary artistry, her mystical experiences of God.

Teresa does not give a specific or detailed account of the sources for her key images. However, her mental and spiritual formation were those of a devout Catholic in sixteenth century Spanish society, in which the teaching of the Catholic Church (Scripture and Tradition), with its Christocentric, redemptive doctrines, was as fundamental to life for the secular laity as it was for the religious Orders. When Teresa introduces a particular image, whether from secular or religious sources, she does so as if it is a memory that occurs to her which gives her a trusted foundation to build on. From the initial image-idea, whether consciously or unconsciously remembered, she develops and expands a complex system within an inter-relating structure. The thesis seeks to show that she develops, extends and elaborates imagery as her mystical experiences intensify, and as she reflects on them with steadily growing insight and maturity. Her imagery undergoes a process of growth and development to maturity as Teresa attempts to convert ultimately indescribable mystical experiences into intellectually understandable metaphor.

Chapter 1 examines the social and religious background to her writings and the literary and spiritual traditions in which she writes. Chapter 2 explores the meaning of "oración" in Teresa's writings, for which I have retained the Spanish word, for the term "prayer" does not encapsulate the depth of meaning and significance of the term "oración" as understood by Teresa and her contemporaries. This chapter, while identifying some of Teresa's principal imagery, considers the problem she encounters of expressing the inexpressible, the difficulty of paradoxes, and her literary management of concepts or ideas which challenge, or even defy, rational and intellectual credibility. Chapter 3 examines the key Teresian imagery of water, in which the soul is seen as a garden which produces growth and increase, and shows how this imagery relates both to similar ideas in Catholic teaching and to Teresa's other key images. Chapter 4 considers the complexity of the imagery of the Castle as it is used to convey both the process and the effects of spiritual exploration and experience as achieved through "oración". Chapter 5 examines Teresa's imagery of Fire, considering that image in relation to other "elemental" images already surveyed, and to those of other writers, secular and sacred. The thesis concludes that all Teresa's key images, and indeed subsidiary images, inter-relate, growing and developing into a skilfully contrived fabric of imagery which

is of the highest literary quality, and which has a profoundly spiritual impact on the reader. The images seem to take on a life and significance of their own, so that they relate to the other images and to the whole scheme of Teresian imagery, and yet at the same time convey to the reader a constant awareness that there is much more spiritual meaning and experience beyond what these words of the image express, "*y así es mejor no decir más*".

## PREFACE

The life and works of Santa Teresa de Avila have continued to interest scholars and critics as fit subjects of major study from her own lifetime (1515-1582) right down to the present day. Her works continue to be reprinted and studied, and new biographers regularly add, with fresh insights, to an already large and interesting collection of books on her life.<sup>1</sup>

Santa Teresa is often discussed in conjunction with her equally important mystic contemporary, San Juan de la Cruz. For those who do so, however, there is a danger to be avoided, for the contrast between Teresa's basic schooling and San Juan's philosophical, theological and intellectual formation at University can result in the false assumption that San Juan expresses his thoughts and feelings in a qualitatively "better" way. There is no doubt that San Juan wrote some of the most sublime poetry in the Spanish language, while Teresa's poetry is certainly much less distinguished in literary quality. As prose writers, however, though they are very different, they are much more evenly matched in terms of the quality of their achievement. San Juan's prose works are polished, logical and methodical. His poetry and prose have been illuminated by the most distinguished international scholars of mysticism in Spain.<sup>2</sup> Teresa's prose style does not display such outward and visible signs of a scholarly training, but the kaleidoscope of images which she exploits in her apparently spontaneous, unpolished and haphazard style of Castilian actually masks a comparable systematic thinker who is equally able to express creatively through her prose

writing the ultimately inexpressible complexities of her mystical experience.<sup>3</sup>

San Juan and Santa Teresa, both acknowledged by theologians and scholars alike as giants of spirituality and literature, can each stand alone, and should as such, in their own right.

San Juan de la Cruz and Santa Teresa, whilst having a different type and level of education, shared the same Catholic culture as products of sixteenth-century Spanish society. Undoubtedly there was in their own time and country a socially conditioned perception of the differences between the two people. There was in those days a much sharper awareness of the distinction between a man and a woman, and even indeed between a priest and a religious. Women were not generally perceived as equals to men in society, Church or State, and opportunities were much greater for men to receive a good education and choose a career. Moreover, Santa Teresa was writing and living at an age and in a country full of disruptions and instability, both political and ecclesiastical, caused by the fear of unorthodox teachings and influences, such as illuminism. Bearing such sixteenth-century realities, uncertainties and limitations in mind, Santa Teresa's literary achievements are seen to be even more extraordinary, those of a humble nun with only a modest education who wrote works which have become classics of international mystical literature. The Inquisition did not find fault with them. The Catholic Church subsequently adopted them, and in the last century (1970) its exclusively male hierarchy declared Teresa to be a Doctor of the Church, the first woman saint to be so honoured. So her works are applauded both as theology and as literature. San Juan and Santa Teresa also use

many of the same images and symbols of the physical, material world to describe their individual intuitions and experiences of the spiritual life and its order. It is not the intention of this study, however, to catalogue or compare images common to the two writers, but to examine the imagery of Santa Teresa as she elaborates it within her own principal writings.

This study is written in the knowledge that the literary works of Teresa of Avila contain still inadequately charted regions of literary imagery and symbolism. Her writings are creative works in which images are elaborated to relate to her developing spiritual maturity; an inter-related spiritual and literary system which grows and evolves, revealing to the perceptive and receptive reader as it does so, fresh glimpses and insights into the maturing interior world of her mystical experiences.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to all my tutors at the Universities of Liverpool and Oxford for opening my mind to the intellectual treasures of Hispanic Studies and Theology. Particular thanks are due to Norman Lamb, formerly Senior Lecturer in Portuguese (University of Liverpool), for introducing me to the literature and culture of Portugal, especially of Camoes; to the late Professor Derek Lomax (University of Liverpool / University of Birmingham) who was always a true friend and scholar who introduced me to Spanish Medieval History & Literature, and to a lifelong enthusiasm for Hispanic Studies; to my wife, Jennifer, whose patience, understanding, support and encouragement have been unfailing; and, finally, to my supervisor, Professor Ann Mackenzie (University of Glasgow), for her scholarly help, inspirational guidance and generous encouragement.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In 1991, for example two authors published biographies. Professor Rowan Williams published *Teresa of Ávila* (London, 1991), and Shirley du Boulay published *Teresa de Ávila* (London, 1991), two very different kinds of works, reflecting the continuing breadth of interest and approach among scholars.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Colin P. Thompson, "The Authenticity of the Second Redaction of the *Cántico Espiritual* in the light of the Doctrinal Additions", *BHS*, 51 (1974), 244-254. Thompson refers to "the mind of a systematic thinker, applying itself to his earlier, more spontaneous lyrical creation, so rich in language, so evocative in atmosphere, expressing the inexpressible".

<sup>3</sup> Menéndez Pidal, in "El estilo de Santa Teresa" gives an overview of Teresa's style, but does not examine her language in any detail. Alison Weber, in *Teresa of Ávila and the rhetoric of femininity*, examines her language and attempts to assert that her style was a deliberate manipulation of social stereotypes about women's ways of speaking and behaving to serve the rhetorical purpose of being listened to by men.

## INTRODUCTION

An attempt to analyse and explain the complexity of the human state known as "spiritual consciousness", or "mystical experience", has been the purpose of much philosophical and religious literature produced down the centuries by many different civilisations, cultures and religions. There is an intuition of something beyond human sensual perception that engages thinking minds of every generation, and in every cultural context. One among many of the commentators on this phenomenon, Evelyn Underhill, in her book *Mysticism: The Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness* suggests that there is order, logic and process in this field of human experience, and that its effects can be studied:

Our business, then, is to trace from its beginning a gradual and complete equilibrium of the self. It is a change whereby that self turns from the unreal world of sense in which it is normally submerged, first to apprehend, then to unite itself with the Absolute reality: finally, possessed by and wholly surrendered to this Transcendent Life, it becomes a medium whereby the spiritual world is seen in a unique degree operating directly in the world of sense. In other words, we are to see the human mind advance from the mere perception of the phenomena, through the intuition – with occasional contact – of the Absolute under its aspect of the Divine transcendence, to the entire realization of, and union with, Absolute Life under its aspect of Divine Immanence.<sup>1</sup>

The great religions of the world have their particular sacred writings which they believe to have been inspired by the mysterious source of power beyond natural human perception. There are many literary and

philosophical writings which attempt to chart the process of human religious experience known as mystical, and which come from many traditions, including the three great monotheistic traditions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. These writings often have an influence on their readers, and, in the case of devout adherents of a particular faith, often affect the readers' perceptions through the adoption of particular imagery. Many of these images, with the concepts, feelings and experiences that they convey are common currency among the world's major religions.

This study concentrates on the literary imagery used to communicate concepts, feelings and experiences of the mystical experiences in prayer, worship and devotion of Santa Teresa de Avila (1515-1582) as found in her principal writings. In this connection it is important to establish from the start the general context within which Teresa thinks and writes, and from which, and within which, her ideas and perceptions emerge and are elaborated. The Scripture and Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church provide Santa Teresa with her intellectual context. The carefully phrased and explained orthodox doctrines, or teachings (known as "Tradition"), of the Catholic Faith, together with the Bible (Scripture), both replete with metaphors, are the two basic pillars of the Catholic Faith, and also the two basic sources of Teresa's literary imagery. Scripture was often seen as a divinely-inspired book of sacred rhetoric. These also underpin Teresa's understanding of the nature and practice of "oración", the source of her mystical experiences. Teresa's debt to the imagery and ideas of Scripture

and Tradition is both acknowledged by herself and confirmed by her commentators. Among such scholars, E. Allison Peers, in the Introduction to his edition and translation of Teresa's *The Complete Works* wrote: "her mind was so completely immersed in Biblical phraseology that it is sometimes hard to tell if she is consciously quoting at all."<sup>2</sup> The question of the origins of the biblical phraseology in Teresa's writing will have to be addressed. Peers again refers to her scriptural sources later in the same Introduction: "Where she uses or imitates the phraseology of Holy Scripture she does so unconsciously"<sup>3</sup>. However, her *Meditaciones sobre los Cantares* (first editions 1566 and 1572-1575) is clearly not unconscious use or imitation of biblical phraseology. Yet it is written at a time when publishing and reading Holy Scripture in the vernacular was prohibited. Teresa is always clear that she wishes to be firmly within orthodox Catholic belief and practice. She does not wish to say or write anything that is not in accordance with the teaching of the Church, but she often makes allusions to Scripture consciously in direct quotation or allusion, or unconsciously through biblical ideas and images, to express and seek validation of her mystical experiences. In her *Libro de la vida* she reveals clearly the importance she attaches to this validation process: "de tal manera creo ser verdadera la revelación como no vaya contra lo que está en la Sagrada Escritura o contra las leyes de la Iglesia que somos obligados a hacer." (*Vida* 22,17).<sup>4</sup> She makes a similar statement in her *Cuentas de conciencia*: "... ella no quería saber sino si era conforme a la sagrada escritura todo lo

que tenía”.<sup>5</sup> Her use of Biblical ideas, images and phraseology assists her to establish, to her satisfaction, that her mystical experiences do not run counter to, but are in keeping with the teachings of Scripture.

In whatever she experienced and wrote, Teresa was very careful to uphold her Catholic orthodoxy, and to show her submission and obedience to the judgement of the Church: “En todo me sujeto a lo que tiene la madre santa Iglesia Romana” (*Fundaciones*, prólogo 6.)<sup>6</sup> Repeatedly she submits her deeply personal experiences and interpretations of them to the test of orthodoxy, applying imagery and phraseology from Scripture to express herself in her writings. In her attempts to give a full and comprehensive account of her mystical experiences, however, Teresa elaborates the imagery of Scripture with literary creativity of exceptional quality. This study will examine and interpret the creativity of the imagery she uses and elaborates in order to explain Teresa’s progressively inward mystical explorations into the “interior castle” of her soul.

Teresa would not have had official direct access to vernacular Scripture, for in the sixteenth century this was forbidden in Spain. However, works like *El cartujano* acted as a kind of substitute. The official language of the Church was Latin, in which the liturgy was celebrated, and the faithful would “hear” Mass and the divine offices. Even the Vulgate, the Latin version of the Bible, which was standard, was not widely available to the laity. However the Vulgate text of the Bible is used in this study for two reasons. First it was the authoritative text of the post-Tridentine Roman

Catholic Church, and was the text which theologians and educated clergy would use as a basis for their teaching. Secondly, although Teresa would not have made much overall sense out of it, it is at times closer in resonance and appearance to the vernacular Spanish spoken and read by Teresa than is apparent from any English language text. The meaning of "Cum dilatasti cor meum", for example, is recognisable from the Spanish linguistic point of view. The Latin word "dilatare" and Spanish "dilatar" are similar, and the Latin "cor" is embedded in the Spanish "corazón". This is significant to any consideration of the way in which biblical text, language and imagery was transmitted to Teresa.

Teresa claims that her understanding of Latin was weak, unless God infused the meaning into her mind: "Y es así que me ha acaecido estando en esta quietud, con no entender casi cosa que rece en latín, en especial del Salterio, no sólo entender el verso en romance, sino pasar adelante en regalarme de ver lo que el romance quiere decir." (*Vida* 15,7). As for Scriptures in the vernacular, she would have certainly been exposed to these indirectly (and arguably directly) through sermons, and through readings from the Breviary.<sup>7</sup> Translations of Patristic works (Jerome, Augustine) were available, and also numerous books which she mentions as being formative influences on her prayer experience.<sup>8</sup>

The opening pages of her *Vida* reveal her interest and delight in reading good books from an early age. Her early reading in the vernacular undoubtedly provided a foundation for her later literary skills: "Era mi

padre aficionado a leer buenos libros, y así los tenía de romance para que leyesen sus hijos, estos" (*Vida* I.I)<sup>9</sup>. Later in her life, in 1559, the Inquisition put a number of vernacular religious books on the Index of prohibited reading for Roman Catholics, and therefore, as censored, these were withdrawn from public circulation and destroyed. It was then that Teresa was told by God that she would be given a "living book".<sup>10</sup> Teresa's idea or image of her spiritual life as a "living book" is significantly similar to the Catholic theological idea of the New Covenant of Christianity which, as distinct from the Old Covenant of the Law of Judaism, written on stone, is "alive" and "written on men's hearts".<sup>11</sup> Catholic doctrine emphasises that Christianity is a spiritual relationship with the living God. From the Catholic perspective, the Jew Jesus is recognised as the Christ Jesus, who through the process of his suffering, death and resurrection, brings new life to mankind in union with God. Similarly, the whole process of Teresa's spiritual development and prayer life is one that has its parallel in the whole Christian concept of dying, death and resurrection.

This thesis will examine the way in which Teresa creates and develops a complex system of imagery to give literary expression to her experiences of what she claims and believes to be her soul's spiritual journey and its growth and development on that journey. Engaging with a subject not yet adequately researched by scholars, this study will show that the imagery chosen by Teresa is elaborated through a mental outlook which

employs clusters of images, common in Scripture, transmitted through the teaching tradition of the Catholic Church, and in the recitation of the daily Offices and Liturgy of convent life, and weaves a coherent, compelling system of symbolic representation, which is profoundly influenced by, and becomes a rewriting of, Christocentric and redemptive themes central to the belief system of the Catholic Church.

Whereas previous scholars have researched a number of possible Jewish, Islamic and Christian antecedents for Teresa's imagery, and have compared and contrasted her images in the light of their findings, this thesis analyses in greater detail the complex literary process by which Teresa weaves clusters of images common to the Catholic heritage into a metaphorical system which she continually reviews and elaborates in such a way that metaphors beget other metaphors. Furthermore it will show the importance of a hidden dynamic, as yet not properly evaluated by scholars, of Christological and redemptive doctrines consistently underlying and shaping her metaphorical scheme.

It will show that the clusters of images which become the basis of her metaphorical system are embedded not only in the Bible, but also in the secular and sacred literary inheritance of the sixteenth century, the Spanish Golden Age, and which were adopted and adapted to her own literary use through the personal perspective of her mental outlook, which itself had been shaped and nurtured by particular traditions and influences – her



private reading, her experience of monastic spirituality, and the thinking and arguments behind and surrounding the Carmelite Reform.

Despite the limitations in her formal education, there is no doubt that Teresa's writings are profoundly theological and in keeping with the dogma and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time, they are the creative literary expressions of her intuitive mystical experience. Though these are steeped in ideas from Scripture and Christian thought, her personality is stamped on her writings. The result is a complex mosaic of ideas and images which she has chosen and elaborated to communicate to others, to the extent possible, her mystical intuitions and prayer experiences. Her blended elaboration of ideas and imagery from the Bible, and from Spanish sixteenth century Roman Catholic culture, is masterly, as she explores the phenomenon of her experiences of prayer. Her writings are a distinctive contribution to the literary expression of mystical experience.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> E. Underhill, *Mysticism. The Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness* (Oxford, 1993), p. 174

<sup>2</sup> E. Allison Peers, *The Complete Works of St Teresa of Jesus*, (London, 1941). See Volume 1, p. xxiii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxix.

<sup>4</sup> Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas*, ed A. Barrientos, second edition (Madrid, 1976)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1113, ("Relación de su vida espiritual y confesores que ha tenido", Sevilla 1576)

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 386

<sup>7</sup> In *Vida* 19,9, for example, there is a reference to the way in which the Breviary reading inspires her: "Una vez, rezando las Horas ...llegué al verso que dice: *Justus es, Domine, y tus juicios*. Comencé a pensar cuán gran verdad era ..... (*Ibid.*, p. 141)

<sup>8</sup> For example she refers to Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario* (*Vida* 4,7), St Augustine's *Confesiones* (*Vida* 9,8), St Jerome's *Epístolas* (*Vida*, 3, 7), Bernardino de Laredo's *Subida del Monte* (*Vida* 23,12)

<sup>9</sup> Her reading of romances of chivalry may well have been one of the sources of her ideas and imagery of castles and battles. See *Vida*, 2.1.

<sup>10</sup> "Cuando se quitaron muchos libros de romance, que no se leyesen, yo sentí mucho, porque algunos me daba recreación leerlos, y yo no podía ya — por dejarlos en latín — me dijo el Señor: *No tengas pena, que Yo te daré libro vivo.*" *Vida* 26,6.

<sup>11</sup> "qui ostendunt opus legis scriptum in cordibus suis", "what the law requires is written on their hearts" *Ad Romanos* 2.15

## CHAPTER 1

### The background to St Teresa's writings

#### Introduction

The literary works of St Teresa are acknowledged by literary and theological scholars alike to contain some of the profoundest writings on mystical experience. The imagery used by Teresa is common to the tradition in which she is set, so her originality lies not in the imagery itself, but in the way she develops and elaborates it. To appreciate her originality, it is necessary to view the literary background to her writings, and consider them in the context of the traditions that nourished her.

This study will also refer to two near contemporary documents, not properly examined by scholars to date, which give evidence of the everyday life and practice of the Carmelite Order during the time of Teresa. The *Instrucción de novicios de los Carmelitas descalzos* was first published in 1591, under the "mandato de la consulta para que se imprima y guarde" dated 11 January 1590 and signed by a group of "consiliarios", including Teresa's friend, guide and confessor, San Juan de la Cruz, and is a useful handbook regulating the instruction and education of novices about Carmelite monastic life and tradition. The other work is the *Tratado de oración*, written c. 1587 by the discalced Carmelite Juan de Jesús María (Aravalles), "maestro de novicios" at Pastrana, a handbook on "oración", some of which is copied verbatim in the *Instrucción*. The works give important and intriguing insights into what was being read by Carmelites

contemporary to Teresa, and show how highly Teresa was regarded by members of her Order. Although both works appear after her death (1582), their importance lies not in their dates of printing but in the way they bring together already existing Carmelite ideas and habits of mind.

# I

## Imagery in Spanish literature prior to Teresa: traditions that nourished her.

An examination of even a few of the landmark writers of Spanish literature prior to Teresa reveals the type and range of imagery inherited and employed by Teresa. This is not to say that she was directly influenced by these writers, but it does establish evidence of the literary background and tradition in which she works, and shows that there is a common fund of ideas and images, transmitted in written texts, and, indeed, through oral tradition through, for example, ballads.

*El Poema de Mio Cid* is an epic poem, probably composed in the twelfth century and written down from the early fourteenth century, about the exploits of the national hero, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, known as El Cid, who lived from about 1043 to 1099. Fray Luis de León, (1527-1591), the first editor of Teresa's works, refers to the Cid in his poem "Virtud, hija del cielo", *A Don Pedro Portocarrero*:

Tú dende la hoguera  
Al cielo levantaste al fuerte Alcides  
Tú en la más alta esfera  
Con estrellas mides  
Al Cid clara victoria de mil lides.<sup>1</sup>

The era to which the epic *Poema de mio Cid* belongs is one of political instability, with battles between Catholic Christians and Islamic Moors, two religious communities living in Spain with their respective literary, cultural and theological traditions, some of which are common, in political conflict with each other. There are consequently many references in this Christian epic poem to Catholic religious piety and practice such as making the sign of the cross and visions of angels, and to the images of warfare, including castles and battles, ideas which are passed on from generation to generation:

Un sueñol priso dulce tan bien adurmió  
 El ángel Gabriel a él vino en visión  
 Cavalgad, Cid, el buen Campeador,...  
 Quando despertó el Cid la cara se santigó;  
 Sinava la cara a Dios se fo acomendar.<sup>2</sup>

There are also many references to castles and the basic need of water, a life-sustaining commodity among people living in dry, arid, desert-like terrain, and relying on supplies of fresh water from wells, rivers and rain:

Asmó mio Cid con toda su conpañia  
 Que en el castiello no i avrie morada  
 E que serie retenedor mas non i avrie agua<sup>3</sup>.

The legend of el Cid, as the great national epic hero, incarnating the ideals of valour and piety, (with its blend of pious religious practice and warfare, its Kings and their castles,) became embedded in Spanish literary and oral folklore, and was part of the social inheritance of the sixteenth century.

Gonzalo de Berceo (late 12<sup>th</sup>, early 13<sup>th</sup> century), a priest who was associated with the monastery of San Millán, wrote *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*. In his work he attempted to write vernacular verse translations from Latin prose miracle stories. The opening verses of *Milagros* describes an allegorical garden, symbol of the Virgin Mary, and full of "locus amoenus" elements:

Yo maestro Goncalvo de Verceo nomnado  
Iendo en romería caecí en un prado  
Verde e bien sencido, de flores bien poblado,  
Logar cobdiciaduro pora omne cansado.

Daban olor soveio las flores bien olientes,  
Refrescavan en omne las caras e las mientes,  
Manavan cada canto fuentes claras corrientes,  
En verano bien frías, en yvierno calientes.

Avie hi grand abondo de buenas arboledas  
Milgranos e figueras, peros e mazedas,  
E muchas otras fructas de diversas monedas;  
Mas non avie ningunas podridas nin azedas.

La verdura del prado, la olor de las flores  
Las sombras de los arbores de temprados sabores  
Refrescaron me todo, e perdí los sudores:  
Podrie vevir el omne con aquellos olores.

Nunqua trobé en sieglo logar tan deleitoso,  
Nin sombra tan temprada, ni olor tan sabroso.  
Descargue mi ropiella por iazer más vicioso,  
Poseme a la sombra de un arbor fermoso.

Yaziendo a la sombra perdí todos cuidados,  
Odí sonos de aves dulces e modulados;  
Nunqua udieron omnes organos más temprados,  
Nin que formar pudiessen sonos más acordados.<sup>4</sup>

These ideas, including the scent of flowers and fruitfulness of meadows, and of running streams of crystal-clear water, are repeated in secular and

religious poetry throughout the following centuries, with the full spectrum of imagery employing the senses, sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell.

The four Gospels are described as four fountains irrigating the meadow:

Las quatro fuentes claras que del prado manavan,  
Los quatro evangelios esso significavan,<sup>5</sup>

This image is part of a tradition common to writers found, for example, in the biblical four rivers of the garden of paradise (Genesis 2.10), and, later, Teresa's four ways of watering the garden of the soul (*Vida* 11.7), which includes the image of the well. Berceo also uses the image of a well to describe the fathomless depths of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

Sennores e amigos, en vano contendemos,  
Entramos en gran pozo, fondo nol trovaremos;<sup>6</sup>

The *Laberinto de fortuna* (1444), was written by Juan de Mena (1411-1456)<sup>7</sup>. Described in *Laberinto* as "flor de saber e de cavalleria"<sup>8</sup> he began his studies at Salamanca University from 1424, and then went to Rome. Returning to Spain he became Chronicler to Juan II. In the *Laberinto* the poet contemplates the crystal palace of Fortune. Within there are three wheels.<sup>9</sup> Two of them, representing time past and time future, are still "inmotas e quedas"; the third, moving, is an allegory of time present. Each wheel has seven circles, each one influenced by one of the seven planets. The poem contains ideas and images used by many other writers, including Teresa, such as the transparency of the castle walls:

"E toda la otra vezina planura

estava cercada de nítido muro,  
 assi *trasparente, clarífico, puro*,  
 que mármo! de Paro parece en alburá...<sup>10</sup>

the vermin at the entrance:

De allí se veía el espérico centro,  
 e las cinco zonas con todo el austral,  
 brumal aquilón, e la equinocial,  
 con lo que solsticia contiene de dentroñ  
 e *vi contra mi venir al encuentro*  
*bestias e gentes de estrañas maneras,*  
*mostruos*, e formas fengidas e veras,  
 quando delante la casa más entro.<sup>11</sup>

the lax or corrupt clergy:

Debaxo de aquestos yo vi derribados  
 los que las pazes firmadas ya ronpen,  
 e los que por precio virtudes corronpen,  
 metiendo alimentos a los renegados;  
 allí vi: *grand clero de falsos perlados,*  
*que fazen las cosas sagradas venales*  
 ¡o religión religada de males,  
 que das tal doctrina a los mal doctrinados!<sup>12</sup>

¿Quién assí mesmo dezir non podría  
 de cómo las cosas sagradas se venden,  
 e los viles usos en que se despienden  
 los diezmos ofertos a Santa María?  
 Con buenas colores de la clerezía  
 dissipan los malos los justos sudores  
 de simples e pobres, e de labradores,  
*cegando la santa católica vía.*<sup>13</sup>

the wounding arrow, and the dove:

Pues vimos a Pandaro, *el dardo sangriento*,  
 Errano de aquel buen archero de Roma,  
 que por Menesteo la libre *paloma*  
*firió donde iba volando en el viento*<sup>14</sup>

the sacrament of matrimony:

Venidos a Venus vi en grado especial  
 los que en el fuego de su juventud



fazen el vicio ser santa virtud  
por *el sacramento matrimonial*.<sup>15</sup>

battle and warfare:

Belfigero Mares, tú, sufre que cante  
*las guerras que vimos de nuestra Castilla* <sup>16</sup>

and the fortress-soul:

Fuerca se llama, mas non fortaleza,  
la de los miembros, o grand valentía;  
*la gran fortaleza en el alma se cría*  
que viste los cuerpos de rica nobleza,  
de cuerda osadía, de gran gentileza,  
de mucha costancia, de fe e lealtad:  
a tales esfuerca su auctoridad,  
que débiles fizo la naturaleza.<sup>17</sup> (my emphases)

Jorge Manrique (1440-1479) was born in Palencia. He was involved in the Battle of Ajofrín, Toledo in 1470, and in battles thereafter, and was killed in action at the Castle of Garcimuñoz in 1479. His poetry deals with aspects of love and warfare, and contains many of the conceits and images of an established tradition. He describes, for example, the "wounding" of love:

Vos cometistes traición  
pues me heristes, durmiendo,  
d'una herida qu'entiendo  
el deseo d'otra tal  
herida como me distes,  
que no llaga ni mal  
ni daño que me hezistes <sup>18</sup>

He uses the conceits of paradox, in attempting to describe the feelings of love:

Es plazer en c'ay dolores,  
dolores en c'ay alegría,  
un pesar en c'ay dulçores<sup>19</sup>

One of Jorge Manrique's poems describes love as a Religious Order into which people are professed and take vows, an example of a common and enduring image:

porqu'en esta religión  
 entiendo siempre durar,  
 quiero hazer profesión  
 jurando de corazón  
 de nunca la quebrantar  
 Prometo de mantener  
 continuamente pobreza  
 d'alegría y de plazer.....  
 .....  
 Prometo más: obediencia.....  
 .....  
 En lugar de castidad,  
 prometo ser costante... ..  
 .....  
 prometo de ser subiecto  
 al amor y su servicio<sup>20</sup>

Jorge Manrique's poem *Castillo d'Amor* is one of many examples in literary tradition prior to Teresa of the image of love as a castle:

La fortaleza nombrada  
 está'n los altos alcores  
 d'una cuesta  
 sobre una peña tajada,  
 maçica toda de amores,  
 muy bien puesta;  
 y tiene dos baluartes  
 hazia el cabo e'ha sentido  
 ell olvidar,  
 y cerca a las otras partes,  
 un río mucho crescido  
 qu'es membrar.  
 .....  
 Las ventanas son muy bellas  
 y son de la condición  
 que dirá aquí:  
 que no pueda mirar d'ellas  
 sin ver a vos en visión  
 delante mí;<sup>21</sup>

Manrique's poem *Escala d'Amor* is an allegory of falling in love as an assault on a fortress. The opening lines have a similar ring to the opening lines of Juan de la Cruz's poem *En una noche oscura*:

Estando triste, seguro,  
mi voluntad reposaba,  
cuando escalaron el muro  
do mi libertad estaba.  
A'scala vista subieron  
vuestra beldad y mesura,  
y tan de rezo hirieron,  
que vencieron mi cordura.<sup>22</sup>

There is a tradition in literature of the notion of the bodily senses being attacked, whilst the higher or rational part of the soul (which in Teresa is the memory, understanding and will, and in Manrique is "libertad"), is overtaken and taken over by the invading power. This is an example of an already established secular parallel to the description of the process by which God takes over the soul in the higher reaches of prayer.

Luego todos mis sentidos  
huyeron a lo más fuerte,  
mas iban ya mal heridos  
con sendas llagas de muerte;  
y mi libertad quedó  
en vuestro poder cativa;  
mas gran placer hove yo  
desque supe qu'era viva.

.....  
Después que hovieron entrado,  
aquestos escaladores  
abrieron el mi costado  
y entraron vuestros amores  
y mi firmeza tomaron,  
y mi coraçon prendieron,

y mis sentidos robaron,  
y a mí sólo no quisieron.<sup>23</sup>

Teresa's poem

Vivo sin vivir en mí  
Y tan alta vida espero,  
Que muero porque no muero<sup>24</sup>

uses ideas already present in Jorge Manrique's poem:

Que la muerte anda revuelta  
con mi vida.

.....

Con vi vida no me hallo  
porqu'estó ya tan usado  
del morir,  
que lo sufro, muero y callo,  
pensando ver acabado  
mi vevir.

Mi vevir que presto muera,  
muera porque viva yo;  
y, muriendo,  
fenezca el mal, como quiera  
que jamás no fenesció  
yo viviendo.<sup>25</sup>

Manrique's contemplative poem *Coplas por la muerte de su padre* uses the

image of rivers going down to the sea to represent the journey of human  
lives moving towards death:

Recuerde el alma dormida,  
avive el seso e despierte,  
contemplando  
cómo se pasa la vida,  
cómo se viene la muerte  
tan callando

.....

Nuestras vidas son los ríos  
Que van a dar en la mar,  
Qu'es el morir;<sup>26</sup>

Manrique refers to rivers of different sizes and sorts, representing and reflecting the relative importance of different lives in the conventions of the hierarchy of human society, whereas Teresa subsequently uses the imagery of four different ways of watering the garden of the soul:

Allí los ríos caudales,  
allí los otros medianos  
e más chicos,  
allegados son iguales  
los que viven por sus manos  
e los ricos.<sup>27</sup>

As Teresa views the prayer life of the soul as a progressive pilgrimage through the countless rooms of the interior castle, so Manrique also sees life as a journey towards a "morada":

Este mundo es el camino  
para el otro, qu'es morada  
sin pesar  
.....  
Partimos cuando nascemos,  
andamos mientras vivimos,  
e llegamos  
al tiempo que feneçemos;  
assí quando morimos  
descansamos.<sup>28</sup>

The concepts of spiritual ascending and descending, movement upwards and downwards are perceptible in Manrique's thinking:

Aun aquel fijo de Dios  
para subirnos al cielo  
descendió  
a nacer acá entre nos,  
y a vivir en este suelo  
do murió.<sup>29</sup>

Manrique also uses the conventional image of the wheel of fortune to illustrate the upwards and downwards movement of life:

Que bienes son de Fortuna  
que revuelven con su rueda  
presurosa ...<sup>30</sup>

Teresa constantly stresses the beauty of the human soul and the weakness of the flesh. Manrique too compares the beauty of the soul with the corruption of the flesh:

Si fuesses en nuestro poder  
hazer la cara hermosa  
corporal,  
como podemos hazer el alma tan gloriosa,  
angelical...<sup>31</sup>

Manrique refers to the history of battle and warfare in conventional terms which are employed by other writers, including Teresa:

Las huestes innumerables  
los pendones, estandartes  
e banderas,  
los castillos impugnables,  
los muros e baluartes  
e barreras,  
la cava honda, chapada  
o cualquier otro reparo,  
¿qué aprovechada?  
Cuando tú vienes airada,  
todo lo passas de claro  
con tu flecha.<sup>32</sup>

The social climate in which Teresa thinks and writes is the result of centuries of Catholic doctrine and religious practice influencing and directing political history. Her childhood reminiscence of wanting to go off to be martyred in the land of the Moors (*Vida* 1.5), and her subsequent choice of the convent and life of prayer, reflects the social attitudes,

philosophy and options common to people of her own generation and of generations before her, alluded to by Manrique:

El vivir qu'es perdurable  
 non se gana con estados  
 mundanales  
 ni con vida delectable  
 donde moran los pecados infernales;  
 mas los buenos religiosos  
 gánanlo con oraciones  
 e con lloros;  
 los caballeros famosos,  
 con trabajos e aflicciones  
 contra moros.<sup>33</sup>

The theological idea of the Christian soul being conformed with the divine will is another well-established religious ideal taught by the Catholic Church and alluded to in Manrique:

Que mi voluntad está  
 conforme con la divina  
 para todo.<sup>34</sup>

Fernán Pérez de Guzmán (1378-1460) wrote *Generaciones y semblanzas* (1450), a series of brief biographies of illustrious contemporary figures, judged from the perspective of Christian patriotism. His work reflects key elements of the social manners of the society in which he lived, transmitted from generation to generation, and which are the social norms later reflected and referred to in Teresa's writing. There was a respect for social status, for example, in the description of Don Pedro Tenorio, "de buen linaje". There was an admiration and respect for learning, "Fue grant doctor e ombre de grant entendimiento", "traía grant compañía de letrados cerca de sí, de cuya çiençia el se aprovechaua mucho en los grandes fechos". Purity

of blood and lineage was admired, "Fue buen christiano, casto e linpio de su presona".<sup>35</sup> Teresa may be critical of her contemporary society's obsession with "honor", but she often indicates her respect and admiration for learning and men of learning.

Secular and religious authors contemporary to Teresa reflect the traditions which she shares and in which she writes. Cardinal Cisneros (1436-1517) sponsored the Complutensian Polyglot Bible and encouraged the publication of devotional texts as spiritual reading for the cloister. Among those published at Alcalá de Henares were John Climacus' *Scala paradisis*<sup>36</sup> and the writings of mystics from Italy, such as Angela of Foligno<sup>37</sup> and Catherine of Siena<sup>38</sup>. Cardinal Cisneros also supported the translation of Dionysius the Areopagite's *Mystical Theology*.<sup>39</sup>

Fray Luis de Granada (1504-1588) wrote a translation of the *Imitation of Christ* (generally called at the time *Contemptus Mundi*), published in Seville, 1536, replete with biblical quotations and references.<sup>40</sup> Vulgate Bible texts, with theological analysis and commentary on them, were being transmitted through direct translation and allusions, and key ideas and images were thereby being transmitted to, and assimilated by, Teresa. A few examples from the Castilian version of Luis de Granada will suffice<sup>41</sup>:

Dice el Señor: El reino de Dios dentro de vosotros está. Conviértete a Dios de todo corazón, y deja este mísero mundo y hallará to alma reposo. (*Imitación* 2.1)<sup>42</sup>

Estar con Jesus es dulce paraíso .... Ver cuán suave es el Señor ... (*Imitación* 2.8)<sup>43</sup>



Niégate a ti mismo, toma la cruz, y sigue a Jesús ... porque si murieses juntamente con Él, vivirás con Él... Toda la vida de Cristo fué cruz y martirio... (*Imitación* 2.12)<sup>44</sup>

Oír lo que habla el Señor Dios en mí. Bienaventurada el alma que oye al Señor que habla en ella ... Bienaventurados los oídos que están cerrados a las cosas exteriores, y muy atentos a las interiores. (*Imitación* 3.1).<sup>45</sup>

Teresa's poetry was written within an existing tradition of popular lyrical poetry, including the *cancionero* tradition, and other popular forms of poetry, sacred and secular. There are collections of early Galician-Portuguese poems in manuscript collections dating from the late thirteenth century, for example the *Cancioneiro de Ajuda*. From the fourteenth century there is a transition from the use of Galician-Portuguese to Castilian, seen, for example in the *Cancionero de Baena*.

Alison Weber comments on what she sees as a "picaresque" element in Teresa's style of writing. Weber speaks of Teresa's humour and wit, especially seen in the *Fundaciones*, in which Teresa, in Weber's opinion, comes across as a scheming "pícaro", constantly attempting to outwit hierarchical authority in order to get her own way and make her new foundations. Speaking of the *Fundaciones*, Weber says:

I do not mean to imply the direct influence of *Lazarillo de Tormes*. While Teresa may have been familiar with folkloric trickster tales, it is unlikely that she had read the 1554 masterpiece. Nonetheless, "picaresque" seems an appropriate description.<sup>46</sup>

There are inevitable parallels and similarities of style and content among contemporary authors writing from within a common background of history

and tradition. Although full of irony and barbed criticism, some of the style of writing and religious scenes portrayed in *Lazarillo de Tormes* do accord with those of Teresa:

Y así bajó del púlpito y encomendó a que muy devotamente suplicasen a Nuestro Señor tuviese por bien de perdonar a aquel pecador, y volverle en su salud y sano juicio, y lanzar dél el demonio, si Su Majestad había permitido que por su gran pecado en él entrase. Todos se hincaron de rodillas, y delante del altar con los clérigos comenzaban a cantar con voz baja una letanía. Y viniendo él con la cruz y agua bendita, después de haber sobre él cantado, el señor mi amo, puestas las manos al cielo y los ojos que casi nada se le parecía sino un poco de blanco, comienza una oración no menos larga que devota, con la cual hizo llorar a toda la gente como suelen hazer en los sermones de Pasión de predicador y auditorio devoto, suplicando a Nuestro Señor, pues no quería la muerte del pecador, sino su vida y arrepentimiento<sup>47</sup>, que aquel encaminado por el demonio y persuadido de la muerte y pecado, le quisiese perdonar y dar vida y salud, para que se arrepintiese y confesar sus pecados.<sup>48</sup>

Writing within a long tradition, to which previous generations of authors had contributed, Teresa may not have known a lot about them, but she was nurtured and nourished by this tradition from the time she began reading spiritual books rather than romances of chivalry.<sup>49</sup> The comparisons and paradoxes found in her writings are echoes of this tradition, including the belief, which Teresa shared, that women could experience God directly in contemplative prayer as well as men. Such a line of thought was under the surface of contemporary European theological thinking, even if it was expressed in different ways. Erasmus and his followers were among those expressing such ideas in the early sixteenth century.

## II

### Teresa's imagery: some insights from modern critical scholarship

In his article, *The Imagery of the Interior Castle and its Implications*<sup>50</sup>

Trueman Dicken discusses possible sources for the origins of Teresa's use of castle imagery. Pointing out the lack of reliable information and evidence about the conversational exchanges that took place between Teresa and Juan de la Cruz, especially during the period when the latter was Confessor at the Encarnación (1572-1577), he asserts that there can be no doubt that the two saints were mutually influenced by one another, but that there is little evidence to show whether it was Teresa who learned from Juan de la Cruz, or *vice versa*. At the back of his mind is the distinction between growth in nature and spiritual development. He refers to two authors cited by Teresa, Osuna and Laredo, as literary sources for the notion.<sup>51</sup> He also considers possible geographical locations known to Teresa, and to San Juan de la Cruz, namely Ávila itself, as a walled city with the cathedral in the central part of the eastern wall, or the Castillo de la Mota in Medina del Campo. His assertion "we may and should look for a real, existing structure of stone and mortar as the paradigm for the castle"<sup>52</sup> is not, however, convincing, although we might agree with him that the legendary castles of Spain are undoubtedly one factor in the complexity of possible origins for her allegorical castle. More interesting is his reference to the passage from Bernardino de Laredo's *Ascent of Mount Sion* which speaks of building

the new Jerusalem of crystal and precious stones, setting up its walls and towers on the level plain which is the Christian soul.<sup>53</sup> (“...el ánima... el muro es un cristal admirablemente claro, y las torres de todas gemmas preciosas...” *Subida* II, XLVI p. 270). Trueman Dicken rightly suggests that “Teresa may well owe something to the passage from Bernardino de Laredo already cited when she speaks of her castle as being built of crystal and precious stones.” However he is not correct in his assertion, “...but what Bernardino de Laredo describes is the actual process of building a city, explicitly the New Jerusalem, situated within or upon the soul, and each of these important features is wholly alien to St Teresa’s allegory.”<sup>54</sup> As will be shown, Teresa’s allegory, itself a developing process, involves a progressive recognition of the process of building up the spiritual life of the soul, which is the New Jerusalem, and the paradise of God. A remark in *Camino de Perfección* referred to in passing by Trueman Dicken actually shows the real link in Teresa’s mind between city and castle, and the “building up” or educational process of the soul by means of preaching and theology: “... y a los capitanes de este castillo o ciudad, los haga muy aventajados en el camino del Señor, que son los predicadores y teólogos”. (*Camino* 3,2.). The same chapter in the *Subida* uses a number of images developed by Teresa. “Y aun tenemos otra torre que es castillo, es fortaleza, casa fuerte, casa real, es aposento del rey, alcázar de la ciudad ..... es nuestra gran fortaleza y nuestra muy gran ciudad y es puerta por donde cuantos han entrado han ido a gozar de Dios....” (*Subida* p 272 ff.).

Trueman Dicken suggests that the imagery in Osuna's *Tercer abecedario*, of defending a fortified castle to express the idea of guarding the soul against the assaults of its enemies, "Guarda tu corazón con toda guarda, porque de él procede la vida", (*Tercer abecedario* IV,ii,iii), is "in almost every respect very much closer to what St Teresa had in mind, namely an already extant castle of the medieval type." It will be shown that this view underrates the complexity of the origins and development of Teresa's allegory. A castle has two significant aspects: it can be a military fortress, "castillo", and/or a residential palace "morada". Secular chivalric romances and theological writings refer to both aspects.

Trueman Dicken touches on a significant idea, which unfortunately he does not elaborate, that his line of thought "may have still more instructive theological implications"<sup>55</sup>, but he is too anchored to his theory that the imagery is rooted in real extant building, and therefore is concerned with the number of towers on various buildings: "...Ávila has rather more than seven towers, which, in his (Prof. Ricard's) view would make it a convincing pattern for the castle of the soul. In fact it has no less than eighty-eight! Yet I should not wish to argue that the Castillo de la Mota, with only nine main towers apart from the central keep, is for this reason alone necessarily to be preferred as the possible paradigm." Again, when discussing Teresa's idea that the mansions are not to be thought of as coming one after another "*como cosa enhilada*",<sup>56</sup> he again focusses on physical structures, in this case of Ávila's walls: "I can think of no more apt

description for the arrangement of the towers strung out along the perimeter wall at Ávila than this phrase of Teresa's; they remind one quite inevitably of beads on a necklace or rosary, and for this reason alone I should wish to reject Unamuno's identification of Ávila as the pattern for the castle of the soul." Similarly, in his analysis of the "palmito" image, he returns to real castles: "Of course, the ground plan of the Castillo de la Mota is still not exactly that of the Interior Castle: there are only two concentric walls outside the keep..."<sup>57</sup>.

He refers to the Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament "tucked away in the very heart of the keep" in the Castillo de la Mota.<sup>58</sup> "The place where God dwells sacramentally is thus literally surrounded by three series of apartments, some higher, some lower, some at the sides". The Catholic theological doctrine of the Sacramental presence of God in bread and wine is a key source of Teresa's imagery of the Castle of the soul and of her understanding of the way in which God is present at its centre, rather than any particular physical castle structure. Trueman Dicken acknowledges that the figurative concept of the soul as *un castillo fuerte* "gives way to a new one which Teresa evidently finds more attractive and appropriate: the fortress becomes a palace sited within us, in which dwells the king, God himself, upon his throne."<sup>59</sup>.

In Roman Catholic liturgical practice the Blessed sacrament, the sacramental presence of Christ, was often "enthroned" on the altar in a monstrance for devotions, or Benediction, or carried in processions. The

liturgy of the Catholic Church is undoubtedly one source of Teresa's ideas and imagery. Interestingly, Laredo, in *Subida del Monte Sión*, which Teresa had read, (*Vida* 23.12), uses the image of a lighted Paschal Candle, the presence of the Light of Christ, taken from the ceremonies of the Easter Vigil: "En el medio de este ya cercado campo se considere un rico cirio pascual ... y que está encendido el cirio, la cera es el sacratísimo cuerpo de Cristo; el pabito, su ánima felicísima; y de su lumbre perfectamente encendida podéis y todos podemos alzar el entendimiento a la santa Trinidad en una sola y purísima substancia." (*Subida* II, XLVI p 270). Light scattering the darkness is an important symbol of Christ's vanquishing death, and is given liturgical expression in the Easter Ceremonies of the Catholic Church, when at the Easter Vigil, the church is in darkness and the Paschal Candle is lighted from a fire kindled from a spark made by flints.

Sullivan, in his article "Night and Light. The poet John of the Cross and the *Exultet* of the Easter Liturgy" points to the possible links between Liturgy and Poetry in San Juan de la Cruz.<sup>60</sup> There is clearly a similar link between the Easter Liturgy generally and the symbolism of Teresa's mystical experience. According to the Liturgy, the Paschal Candle, before it is lighted, represents the body of the lifeless Saviour lying in the tomb, the type of the pillar of cloud which guided and protected the Hebrews out of Egypt. After it is lighted it represents Christ illuminating the world with resurrection light, type of the pillar of fire which guided the Hebrews in the Desert. In the Easter Vigil ceremonies the Paschal Candle is lowered three

times into the waters of the font. The waters are blessed with the sign of the cross, dividing the waters into four "a fin de que, concebida en virtud de esta santificación, salga del inmaculado seno de esta divina fuente una nueva criatura, una prole celestial"<sup>61</sup> There are here profound and powerful parallels with Teresa's complex imagery of water and light, and of the silkworm becoming a butterfly. The Liturgy of the Vigil refers to this holy night "en que se unen lo celestial con lo terreno, lo divino con lo humano",<sup>62</sup> in itself an apt description of mystical experience. In Catholic Liturgy that concept is similar to the heavenly presence of Christ in earthly bread and wine, the Blessed Sacrament. For Teresa, Christ's real presence in the Sacrament is the creative *fiat lux* of her individual spiritual experience:

...en llegando al sacramento, luego a la hora quedaba tan buena, alma y cuerpo, que yo me espanto. No parece sino que en un punto se deshacen todas las tinieblas del alma, y salido el sol conocía las tonterías en que me había estado... (*Vida* 30.14).

Trueman Dicken explains the concept of the soul withdrawing *dentro de sí* to find God. "The crux of the issue is that God necessarily substantially indwells every single human soul, or it would have no being at all: and for this reason he is said to be the soul's own inmost centre".<sup>63</sup> He is right when he says "...St Teresa had not merely grasped the point, but had perceived its crucial import at so deep a level that she could devise an allegory to give it literary expression. It is an allegory so finely conceived that it meets in detail to a quite remarkable degree the demands of the



doctrine she aims to unfold, and does so simultaneously at the metaphysical, theological and practical pastoral levels.<sup>64</sup>

Teresa's imagery: implications of the mystical claim of ineffability.

Mystical experience is, by definition, an experience of the ineffable, and the attempt to verbalise it is an attempt to express the inexpressible. At first sight the term "mystical experience" embraces a wide area of mental or psychological experience. It is a widespread phenomenon, present in Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Within this very loose and wide-ranging understanding of the term, various states of mind and body have been described. The *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* points to that area:

Psycho-physical phenomena, such as dreams, locutions, trances, visions and ecstasies, have been frequent concomitants of mystical experience. But while these are recognised by Christian spiritual writers as possible accessories of true mystical insight, they are not held to be essential to it, and indeed are considered to be sometimes hindrances to its proper realisation.<sup>65</sup>

The faith of a Catholic Christian is committed to a belief in the direct communication between God and the human soul, even if, at times in history, the Church has been suspicious of its manifestations in individuals. Knowles, in his study of mysticism, explains the nature of the soul:

(The soul is) an entity in its own right, directly created by God, to "inform" the body and to make up with it the human being. This soul, of itself a spiritual being, gives actuality to all the powers and faculties of the body, but has also, of itself, intellectual and volitional powers which make it capable of rational knowledge of the universe about it and of free will to direct its activities and to control and direct its love.<sup>66</sup>

Mystical experience in a soul is an immediate knowledge in love, but it is incommunicable and inexpressible to a third party, except vaguely and partially through symbolism and imagery. The inexpressibility of incommunicable and ineffable knowledge poses a major problem for any literary artist.

Alain Cugno, in his study of St John of the Cross, explores the nature of ineffability:

Mysticism is the measure of the distance between God and man – a distance that can be called infinite (from man's point of view) or non-existent (from God's). But it is so infinitely removed from him. Through faith God makes himself present to man, immediately though invisibly. God is then one who says who he is, and also the One who shapes man's heart so that he may be believed when he says who he is. It is taking this shaping seriously that we call mysticism.<sup>67</sup>

The literary genius of Teresa lies in the way she attempts to convey the inexpressible and transmit meaningfully the ineffable through literary imagery by means of experiential and psychologically accurate analysis based on her shrewd observation of personal experience.

Teresa only attempts this because she was under the vow of obedience, and was commanded to try: "Plega al Señor no lo haya sido (atrevimiento) lo que he dicho, aunque ha sido por obedecer a quien me lo ha mandado." (*Cantares* 1,1). So she is attempting to describe the development and progress of the soul in prayer by employing images, metaphors, similes and analogies to give literary expression and meaning to her experiences. Knowles comments on Teresa's method:

St Teresa ... tells of the life of the spirit by way of external, personal details, largely drawn from her experience. Nevertheless the sharp lines of psychological and theological reality lie behind her words.<sup>68</sup>

Joseph Chorprenning pointed out that most of the images used by Teresa to speak of the soul were commonplace in monastic tradition and literature.<sup>69</sup>

Monasteries and royal palaces were often conjoined in Spain during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, as Wolfgang Braunfels noted.<sup>70</sup> The Escorial, begun in 1562, is a good example. Teresa considered her first foundation, San José, to be a "castillito" (*Camino* 3.1.2), and a "morada en que Su Majestad se deleita" (*Vida* 35.12). This imagery is, of course, also applied to the soul. The other image of the soul is the "huerto", which, in turn is a commonplace image widely applied to religion and to religious orders: "..... el novicio, que es postura nueva en el jardín de la santa Religión" (*Instrucción de Novicios*, prólogo, l. 17).

Helmut Hatzfeld suggests that the literary skill of Teresa resides in her attempt to verbalise mystical experience and spiritual progress:

The mystical writings of Santa Teresa of Ávila belong to literature because of their originality, spontaneity, their imagery and pedagogical skill in the expression of concepts usually considered ineffable ... The form in which she expresses the mystical development is her own spiritual and literary contribution.<sup>71</sup>

Teresa claims that she was taught certain things directly by God in mystical experience. Weber referred to the sociopolitical implications of the ineffable nature of mystical experience: "Historically the alliance between mysticism and the Church has often been an uneasy one, for the mystic's ineffable, antiintellectual experience of the divine is, ultimately,

nonhierarchical and antiinstitutional.”<sup>72</sup> However, Teresa’s humble honouring of her vow of obedience, her repeated insistence on her loyalty to the authority of the Catholic Church, and the application of her strong intellect to create and develop literary imagery which conveys, within the limitations of language, something of an understanding of the depth and nature of her experiences, show that her experience of the divine is comfortably within the accepted norms of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and institution. In humility and obedience she accepts the challenge of ineffability and inexpressibility, and, in so doing, creates masterpieces of literature and theology.

*Las Moradas* is the most comprehensive expression of her/the soul’s mystical journey of “oración” and direct experiences of God’s loving Spirit that Teresa achieved in her writings. Paradoxically, however, it is perhaps in her *Vida* that Teresa most eloquently records her awareness of the problem of ineffability, that she can never wholly communicate in human thoughts and words – even with the powerful assistance of the schemes of images she so creatively elaborates – the mystical nature of her always developing love-relationship with God and the unfathomed essence of His Divine Being:

Íbame el Señor mostrando más grandes secretos; porque querer ver el alma más de lo que se representa no hay ningún remedio, ni es posible. Y así no veía más de lo que cada vez quería el Señor mostrarme; era tanto, que lo menos bastaba para quedar espantada y muy aprovechada el alma para estimar y tener en poco todas las cosas de la vida. Quisiera yo poder dar a entender algo de lo menos que entendía, y pensando cómo puede ser, hallo que es imposible; porque en sólo la diferencia que hay de esta luz que vemos a la que allá se

representa, siendo todo luz, no hay comparación, porque la claridad del sol parece cosa muy desgustada. En fin, no alcanza la imaginación por muy sutil que sea a pintar ni trazar cómo será esta luz, ni ninguna cosa de las que el Señor me daba a entender con un deleite tan soberano que no se puede decir; porque todos los sentidos gozan en tan alto grado y suavidad, que ello no se puede encarecer, y así es mejor no decir más". (*Vida* 38,2).

Fortunately, however, Teresa did go on to say much more.

### III

#### Santa Teresa in the social context of sixteenth century Spain.

The social context of sixteenth century Spain was intimately bound up with religion. Before 1492 Jews, Moslems and Christians all lived and worked side by side in Spain. In 1492, just over two decades before Teresa was born, the last Islamic stronghold fell to Christian control. Although works like *Lazarillo de Tormes* imply that Christian religious practices were not always performed through genuine piety, and indeed, there are strong criticisms in Teresa's writing of the laxity, ignorance and spiritual poverty among the clergy and laity alike, the practices and teachings of the Catholic Church had a profound influence and authority within the social and political institutions and structures of society. During the second half of the fifteenth century there was an increase in the number of religious foundations in Spain.

Jodi Bilinkof describes the precedents for the formation of religious houses in Ávila for women by women, often rich, influential widows who began their foundations informally in their own homes.<sup>73</sup> The history of these foundations is an interesting insight into the place and power of women within religious society at a time just prior to Teresa. In 1463 Doña Catalina Guiera drew up her will to leave money towards institutionalising an arrangement which she had lived for several years. In 1478 this informal arrangement became the Dominican Convent of Santa Catalina, Doña

Catalina being the first abbess. Doña María Dávila, twice married to wealthy men and widowed, childless, founded the Dominican monastery of Santo Tomás in 1482. Doña Elvira González de Medina, never actually married, but bearing four children fathered by a Canon of Ávila Cathedral, Archdeacon Don Nuño González del Aguila, established a house living by the Carmelite rule, which, in 1515, officially became the Convento de la Encarnación.<sup>74</sup> The Augustinian convent of Nuestra Señora de Gracia was founded by Doña Mencía López, the widow of a wealthy silversmith, Jorge de Nájera. After his death, in 1504, Doña Mencía was living in her home with two daughters and a female friend, observing the rule of St Augustine. The cathedral chapter granted her permission to purchase a property and convert it into a convent, of which she became the first abbess.

When Bilinkof suggests that "Saint Teresa's reform represented a daring alternative to the fundamentally aristocratic style of spirituality articulated in Ávila during the first decades of the sixteenth century,"<sup>75</sup> she was rightly highlighting the distinction between the rich, aristocratic practice of public vocal prayer established in these foundations, often at anniversary requiem masses for benefactors, with the Teresian vision of religious life based on poverty and interior, mental prayer. Inherent in the overall process of founding religious houses is the idea of transformation from death (the death of the benefactor) into life (the emerging of a new religious house or foundation).

Weber gives different, but useful insights into the place and status of women in sixteenth century Spain. Considering the implication of recent studies on language and gender, Weber considers the idea that Teresa's language and style are a "rhetoric of femininity", the product of her socio-cultural context, a strategy exploiting certain stereotypes about women's character and language, interpreted generally as feminine charm or humility, but actually, according to Weber, covert strategies of empowerment. Teresa was writing at a time when women did not participate in theological discourse. Literal belief in the Pauline injunction of silence and obedience for women,<sup>76</sup> and the early Fathers' suggestion that women were sensual and intellectually inferior were applied to the status of women in the regulation of Church life in the sixteenth century. That by no means hindered the flourishing of female piety and writing about mystical experience, nor in the educational and leadership roles of women in the regular life of women's convents, nor in the number of tertiaries and lay sisters. The intellectual atmosphere in wider society was, however, made difficult by the number of nuns whose revelations were being condemned as false and diabolical at the time when Teresa herself was experiencing her visions. There was the additional complexity within society of the combination of a fear of heterodox Protestant pietism and anti-Semitism in the implied social exclusion inherent in the apparent Jewish origins of some *alumbrados*, against whom the Inquisition published an edict in 1525. Weber suggests that the apparent prominence of women in



some of the emerging “dangerous sects” provided justification for reaffirming increased scepticism toward female spirituality. Isabel de la Cruz was condemned for teaching her own opinions in 1529. Teresa herself was terrified of the “grandes ilusiones en mujeres y engaños que les había hecho el demonio” (*Vida* 23.2). However there were many exceptions, María de Santo Domingo, Beata de Piedrahita, whose raptures, visions, stigmata and prophecies were affirmed by edict of papal envoys in 1510, being a classic example, prior to Teresa. Weber alludes to a semantic shift in the term *mujercilla*. She concludes that Teresa was born when *mujercilla* implied spiritual humility and evangelical poverty of spirit, but by the time of Teresa’s adult years the term meant “presumptuous female spirituality that bordered on the heretical.”<sup>77</sup>

Teresa was critical of the social obsession with “honra”: “... tenía un punto de honra, que por su culpa no perdiera un tanto o una puntica de su honra o estima” (*Cantares* 2, 24). “mas tienen mucha honra” (*Cantares* 2, 26). The customs of social hierarchy put demands on people to dress and behave according to their social status. “Honra” was such a prized possession it was defended to the death, and yet was all too often a cosmetic outward show, particularly evident in aristocratic foundations with their elaborate tombs and memorials. There was also an obsession with “purity” of lineage, reflecting the complexity of the social interaction of Jews, Moslems and Christians, and, in Teresa’s time, the desire to show a pure Christian lineage.

Teresa certainly wanted her nuns to have strength of character:

“Es muy de mujeres y no querría yo, hijas mías, lo fueseis en nada ni lo parecieseis, sino varones fuertes; que si ellas hacen lo que es en sí, el Señor las hará tan varoniles, que espanten a los hombres.” (*Camino* 7,8). Some things, she declares, particularly those ineffable matters, are not meant to be understood by women, or by men: “No es para mujeres, ni aun para hombres muchas cosas” (*Cantares* 1,1). She defends the dignity and worth of women, created, like men, in God’s image and likeness, and argues the case for their equality with men:

“Parece atrevimiento pensar yo he de ser alguna parte para alcanzar esto. Confío yo, Señor mío, en estas siervas vuestras que aquí están, que veo y sé no quieren otra cosa ni la pretenden sino contentaros. Por vos han dejado lo poco que tenían, que quisieran tener más para serviros con ello. Pues no sois Vos, Criador mío, desagradecido para que piense yo dejaréis de hacer lo que os suplican; ni aborrecisteis, Señor, cuando andabais en el mundo, las mujeres, antes las favorecisteis siempre con mucha piedad. *Y hallasteis en ellas tanto amor y más fe que en los hombres; pues estaba vuestra sacratísima Madre en cuyos méritos merecemos – y por tener su hábito – lo que desmerecimos por nuestras culpas. No basta, Señor, que nos tiene el mundo acorraladas ... que no hagamos cosa que valga nada por vos en público, ni osemos hablar algunas verdades que lloramos en secreto, sino que no nos habíais de oír petición tan justa. No lo creo yo, Señor, de vuestra bondad y justicia que sois justo juez y no como los jueces del mundo, que como son hijos de Adán y, en fin, todos varones, no hay virtud de mujer que no tengan por sospechosa. Sí, que algún día ha de haber, rey mío, que se conozcan todos. No hablo por mí, que ya tiene conocido el mundo mi ruindad y yo holgado que sea pública; sino porque veo los tiempos de manera que no es razón desechar ánimos virtuosos y fuertes, aunque sean de mujeres.*” (*Camino* 3,7).<sup>78</sup>

## IV

Santa Teresa in the religious context of sixteenth century Spain.

The *Interior Castle* was written at the time of the Carmelite Reform and acrimonious conflict between Calced and Discalced. The Carmelite Superior General forbade further foundations, and ordered Teresa to stay in the Toledo convent. San Juan de la Cruz would likewise spend several months of 1577 incarcerated in a Calced cell in Toledo.

The imagery used by Teresa emerges from the spiritual lifestyle of the Reform. The ideals of spiritual discipline of the Reform, expressed through the metaphors of gardening and building a palace are succinctly expressed by Juan de Jesús María (Aravalles) in a section of *Tratado de oración*:

Por ventura, díganme, almas dichosas: ¿no es buen sembrar en espíritu estarse uno recogido todo el día en la celda, meditando en la ley de Dios; tener dos horas y más de oración mental delante del Santísimo Sacramento? ¿No es sembrar en espíritu ayunar siete meses al año? ¿No es sembrar en espíritu no comer carne toda la vida? ¿No es sembrar en espíritu la inviolable guarda del silencio? ¿No es sembrar en espíritu andar en vueltos en sacos de sayal, los pies descalzos y el cuerpo desabrigado? ¿No es sembrar en espíritu dormir sobre tablas y levantarse todo el año indispensablemente a Maitines? ¿No es sembrar en espíritu azotes al tercer día? Verdaderamente sembrar en espíritu es. Pues si como dijimos, el que siembra en espíritu cojerá vida eterna; ¿qué menos hemos nosotros de esperar que esa vida eterna? Si vemos llevar a algún solar piedra, cal y arena, y comenzar a abrir los cimientos, luego concebimos en nosotros que allí habrá casa, y podríamos decir con much probabilidad que Dios tiene determinado que allí haya casa. Pues si vemos en alguno obras de virtud y penitencia; ¿por qué no diremos que sin duda labra un palacio real en el cielo, donde aposentarse para siempre, y que Dios así lo tiene determinado, y que así será?<sup>79</sup>

The *Instrucción de novicios* casts light on how highly Teresa and her teaching were regarded: "Lea sobre este póstrer punto a la Madre Teresa";

“procure principalmente (como dice nuestra Madre Teresa) enseñar el interior...”.<sup>80</sup> The incorporation of a quotation from *Camino de Perfección* 38.5 shows how highly her teaching and writings were rated: “también es buen aviso el que acerca de esta materia da nuestra madre Teresa de Jesús, que (hablando con sus hijas en el libro entitulado Camino de Perfección) dice así: “Donde el demonio..... La virtud se halla de ella pobre?” Palabras son todas estas de nuestra buena madre, que con gran verdad desengañan y dan a entender lo poco que el hombre debe fiar de su virtud.”.<sup>81</sup>

Teresa is named in the *Instrucción* among the highest of authorities on prayer and spirituality: “ayudándose para su declaración del glorioso docto San Buenaventura, y de nuestra madre Teresa de Jesús, y del muy devoto Padre Fray Luis de Granada...”<sup>82</sup>. “Que si miramos a achaquillos y damos entrada a la prudencia de carne (que en nuestro estado parece peor que en otros), nunca haremos cosa que de provecho sea, como dice nuestra buena Madre Teresa de Jesús.”.<sup>83</sup>

Teresa was much loved by the laity and nuns of her time, and by other religious. Her first editor, Fray Luis de León, himself a writer of aesthetically polished prose, evaluated her teaching and her literary style in a positive and warm way, praising her “unadorned elegance”, a compliment from a contemporary figure of literary eminence which challenges Weber’s thesis that she adopted linguistic features associated with women to gain access to the realm of power and influence associated with men.

San Juan himself draws attention to the value of Teresa's writings in *Cántico B*: "porque también la bienaventurada Teresa de Jesús, nuestra madre, dejó escritas de estas cosas de espíritu admirablemente, las cuales espero en Dios saldrán presto impresas a luz."<sup>84</sup>

The active soldier-like temperament of St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus in 1539/40, in the face of ill health and difficulties, and producing the formative *Spiritual Exercises* which concentrate the mind and spirit on God with a view to first hand personal experience, has obvious parallels with Teresa, both in character and in theology. Teresa often refers to the love and respect she has for members of the Society of Jesus: "tengo esta Orden en gran veneración porque los he tratado much y veo conforme su vida con lo que el Señor me ha dado de ellos a entender."(*Vida* 38.15). She admits that the Jesuits were a formative influence on her spirituality "Veo fue todo para mayor bien mio, porque yo conociese y tratase gente tan santa, como la de la Compañía de Jesús." (*Vida* 23.9). Her religious name, Teresa de Jesús, highlights the link, and Jesuit spirituality, enshrined in the methodology and tone of the *Exercises* is an influential strand in Teresa's spiritual formation, and on the Reform which she guided: "... en fundar estos monasterios, que se la habían dado de la Compañía de Jesús, que siempre han favorecido y ayudado a ella." (*Fundaciones* 27.1).

It was a time of international religious turmoil: "En este tiempo vinieron a mi noticia los daños de Francia y el estrago que habían hecho

estos luteranos, y cuánto iba en crecimiento esta desventurada secta.”

(*Camino* 1,2). It was Teresa's perception that she was called to do something to counter heresy, but that as a woman her options were limited. Her contribution, therefore, was to be a life of contemplative prayer in an enclosed community.

All these historical events, all the social and religious upset and turmoil, however misunderstood or mis-reported, were being assimilated into the crucible of Teresa's mind, and would be a factor in the choice, shaping and expression of her imagery.

## V

Santa Teresa in the literary context of sixteenth century Spain.

Teresa gives us an indication of the books which she read and which helped her, and of her appreciation of the place and value of books in Carmelite life and practice. Literature is a source of information and of imagery. She refers in *Cantares* to devotional books : "...libros muy devotos que entiendo" (*Cantares*, prólogo, 1). Books are sometimes bought or given as presents: "Porque aunque esté en muchas partes mejor escrito que yo lo diré, quizá no tendréis con qué comprar los libros – que sois pobres – ni quién os haga limosna de ellos;" (*Cantares* 2,7). Her theological education is self-taught through reading and remembering: "En muchas partes veréis escrito..." (*Cantares* 2,15).

The *Instrucción de novicios* recommends books for reading when engaged in spiritual exercises. "...se ocupará algunos ratos en lección de *vitas patrum*, *Contemptus mundi*, o de otro libro apropiado..."<sup>85</sup> Brothers are also encouraged to read before retiring to bed: "Dadas las dos váyanse los hermanos a reposar, hasta que los llamen a la oración de la mañana, y será bueno que un poquito antes que se echen, o en la misma tarima, lean algunos punticos espirituales..."<sup>86</sup> There is evidence that books were freely distributed within convents as part of planned strategy of renewal of spiritual education and enlightenment:

"Llévese adelante la santa costumbre que nuestros Maestros de novicios han tenido, haciendo que algunas veces entre año, traigan al oratorio, o a

su celda, los libros, breviarios, cruces, disciplinas y tinteros, con lo demás que los hermanos a uso tuvieren, todo lo cual les trocará y remudará, dando a cada uno algún librito de los que él no tenía, y que más le ayude a su devoción, y lo demás como saliere por suertes, o como al Maestro le pareciere....”<sup>87</sup>

The cells are to contain, among other recommended items, a place to put books. “Las celdas estén muy pobres ... y podían en ellas los hermanos tener ... una tablilla donde puedan tener dos o tres libros, los que el Maestro les diere...”<sup>88</sup> Novices were encouraged to read spiritual works. “...Santa Catalina de Senas, cuya doctrina ha sido siempre de mucho provecho para nuestros hermanos novicios, y así les encomendamos mucho su lectura”.<sup>89</sup> “Otras muchas virtudes se quedan y pasan en silencio (remitiéndonos a los muchos libros que de ellas tratan), por no haberse pretendido en esta instrucción, sino de aquellas solamente para que nos han dado ocasión algunas cosas exteriores, que era necesario advertir.”<sup>90</sup>

The chivalric romances which Teresa admits to have read in quantity may have influenced her in the use of military metaphors and description of the castle.<sup>91</sup> The *Instrucción de novicios* uses jousting imagery in recommending exercises to understand the nature of martyrdom. “porque así como la justa o torneo sirve a los caballeros de prueba, haciéndose más diestros para la sangrienta batalla, y juntamente le es fiesta y regocijo, y aun también se ganan buenas joyas en premio, según las suertes que cada uno hace, y las lanzas que quiebra.”<sup>92</sup> Teresa’s *Desafío espiritual* is itself a literary spiritual jousting tournament, a response to a challenge from the



discalced convent at Pastrana, written c.1572, when Teresa was Prioress at the Encarnación, and San Juan de la Cruz was confessor there.<sup>93</sup>

The transition from the secular life to the novitiate and profession is described in the *Instrucción* as being saved from the enemy at the point of a lance: "Mas los dos meses antes de la Profesión, o a lo menos uno, se le desocupe de todo, para poder preparar mejor sus almas al desposorio espiritual con Cristo, que las sacó por punto de lanza de las uñas del enemigo...".<sup>94</sup> The arrows, shot, targets and wounds of warfare and battle are easily transferred from books and poems of history or stories of fantasy as metaphors for the spiritual life. The importance of the combination of those images is reflected in the *Instrucción*: "... teniendo siempre delante de los ojos el blanco, y puesta la mira de la intención en él, vaya el tiro mejor enderezado, como de tirador certero, que *ascensiones in corde suo disposuit*, esto es, que tiene el corazón dispuesto para que suban por él amorosas saetas, que dulcemente hieran el corazón del esposo y le hagan que, con amorosas ansias, clame diciendo: *Vulnerasti cor meum soro mea sponsa, vulnerasti cor meum*." <sup>95</sup>

Some scholars have suggested possible links of Teresa's imagery with Islamic sources. The presence of Islamic culture in Spain for almost eight centuries between 711 and 1492 influenced the development of the history, learning and literature of the peninsular. Islamic and Jewish poets, living in contact with Christians, were familiar with popular Mozarabic poetry. The many Spanish Romance or Vulgar Arabic "jarchyas", primitive

lyrical poems included by Arabic poets in their classical Arabic "muwassahas", surviving from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries provide evidence and examples of this. This form also passed into Judaeo-Spanish Hebrew poetry. However, religious communities tend to be exclusive, protective and self-perpetuating, and although there is always a degree of mingling through marriage, or through social, commercial and artistic intercourse, religious authorities, institutions and individuals tend to be vigilant about orthodoxy - the establishment and working of the Inquisition being one example, Teresa's constant desire to write and speak orthodox Catholic doctrine being another.

Miguel Asín Palacios argued that there was precedent for the image of seven concentric castles in a text of a medieval mystical Islamic writer.<sup>96</sup> Luce López-Baralt subsequently argued in favour of suggested precedents in Islamic imaginative mystical literature for images of seven concentric castles, wine of ecstasy, "apretura y anchura", the orchard of the soul and the silkworm.<sup>97</sup> She argued, for example, that the ninth century Islamic writer Abu-l-Hasan al-Nuri wrote about seven concentric castles in terms close to Teresa's in his *Moradas de los corazones*. Citing Teresa's references to "dichosa embriaguez" and "borrachez divina", she says "Los místicos del Islam se "embriagaron" de Dios a lo largo de toda su hermosa literatura medieval."<sup>98</sup> She argues that the image of the silkworm was used by Rumi, a Persian writer of the thirteenth century. She does not argue that there was a direct influence on Teresa or previous Christian authors, but

that it was the result of a cultural and intellectual influence over centuries.

“Santa Teresa de Jesús y su Senequita – y aun muchos otros espirituales españoles y europeos que los procedieron – no son sino ejemplos elocuentes de las huellas que el Islám dejó en su fecundo contacto con Europa desde la temprana Edad Media.”<sup>99</sup>

Although hers is an interesting argument, it tends to neglect the volume of similar symbolism and imagery in the Bible and Christian devotional literature, (the more convincing argument to consider is that there is a significantly close relationship between Biblical imagery and Teresa’s imagery,) the importance of which is highlighted in this thesis.

There has also been scholarly interest in Teresa’s *converso* and Jewish family background, and features of Teresa’s attitudes and tenets have been examined to see if they might have emerged from her Jewish ancestry. This is a difficult area about which to come to any firm conclusions. Jews and Christians share a substantial number of Biblical books, and both religions have traditions of mystical writings, but the available evidence points strongly to Teresa’s engagement was with the Christian tradition. We can agree with Gareth Davies when he says, “As to her mystical inclinations, they were as much due to the promptings of her reading of the books of chivalry and the vague yearnings that they engendered, as to any influence that may have come from an ultimately Jewish mysticism.”<sup>100</sup>

Deirdre Green raises some of the issues:

...Teresa’s Christian faith, like that of many *conversos*, is a Christianity replete with Jewish influences in its symbolism and religious

presuppositions. As a *conversa*, Teresa absorbed into her writings elements of the religious heritage of Jewish mysticism, taken perhaps in some cases from the Christian Kabbalah then popular in Spain, but at the very least in the case of the seven-mansioned castle, it seems, from the Hekhalot-Zoharic tradition itself as it was perpetuated orally among Jewish converts to Christianity. Teresa found the language and symbolism of Jewish mysticism an appropriate descriptive tool for the expression of her experiences. The question to what extent she was aware of the Judaic origins of some of her descriptive terminology remains: in some cases she may have used Jewish images in a semi-conscious, unreflective manner, for many of these images, as we have said, had passed into the *converso* "folk" culture of Spain and were common intellectual property, while others had been adopted by Christian Kabbalists. I have argued, however, that it seems likely that Teresa was aware of the significance of her symbol of the castle and used it in full consciousness of its origins. In any case, it is certain that, if Teresa *was* aware of the origin of those elements of Jewish mystical tradition found in her writings, she would certainly have kept this knowledge to herself, for fear of more serious persecution from the Inquisition and the terrors that might entail.<sup>101</sup>

It will be argued in this thesis that the evidence rather points towards Christian sources and antecedents. Although possible Jewish or Islamic literary sources are not being definitively ruled out, unless clear or direct reference is made to them in Teresa's writings, primary consideration should be given to the vast amount of biblical and Christian material which was accessible to her in some form or another. Some of the documents, for example the Old Testament Scriptures, are common to Judaism and Christianity, but they are interpreted and transmitted through Christian culture and tradition. Their Jewish origin, it will be argued, is not of great importance. Furthermore the argument that Teresa was deliberately concealing Jewish practices or thinking does not stand up to analysis, in the light of her patent honesty and determination to be true to Catholic orthodoxy.

In her *Vida* Teresa refers to books which she considered had nourished her spiritual journey. She cites Francisco de Osuna's *Tercer abecedario* and Bernardino de Laredo's *Subida del monte Sión*<sup>102</sup> (both suppressed by the Inquisition in 1559), the *Confessions* of St Augustine, the *Moralia* of Gregory the Great<sup>103</sup>, the lives of the saints, the *Vita Christi* of Ludolf of Saxony ("El Cartujano")<sup>104</sup> and *Contemptus Mundi*. In her *Constituciones*, Teresa allows for a regular daily hour of reading: "En acabando visperas, el tiempo que se dicen a las dos, se tenga una hora de lección" (*Constituciones* 6), and recommends that Carmelite convents should have copies of specified books:

Tenga cuenta la priora con que haya buenos libros, en especial *Cartujanos*, *Flos Sanctorum*, *Contemptus Mundi*, los de Fray Luis de Granada, y del Padre Fray Pedro de Alcántara, porque es en parte tan necesario este mantenimiento para el alma, como el comer para el cuerpo (*Constituciones*, 8).

These works are crucial background to the inspiration and to the advancement of her thinking and possible sources of phraseology and imagery which she assimilates and stores in her mind through techniques of reading akin to *lectio divina*, which will be considered in the following section, and which become part of her own literary treasury of ideas and metaphors.

## VI

Santa Teresa in the spiritual context of sixteenth century Spain.

Teresa was writing within the traditions of the literary inheritance of the Spanish Golden Age; she also was writing within the context of another inheritance: the spiritual traditions of monastic prayer. At the heart of all monastic life was prayer and study. Manuscripts were copied for transmission and circulation. Texts included the Bible, the writings of the Fathers, commentaries and works by famous figures in the various monastic Orders. Vernacular translations, or paraphrases of the Vulgate text were embedded in books on prayer: "... mirar que Cristo Jesús, nuestro amado, enseñó el contrario, diciendo: si alguno me ama guardará mis palabras; y el que tiene mis mandamientos y los guarda, esa es el que me ama." (*Tratado VII*, 6 p 55), taken from "Si quis diligit me, sermonem meum servabit," (John 14, 23)<sup>105</sup> and "Qui habet mandata mea, et servat ea: ille est qui diligit me." (John 14, 21)<sup>106</sup>. Verses of Scripture were paraphrased and adapted in the vernacular for teaching purposes. "...*Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem*; las cuales palabras, fuera de la exposición común y literal, se podrían explicar: estoy triste por que no llega la hora en que tengo de padecer por el hombre." (*Tratado VII*, 8 p 61).

Teaching is also given by a rhetorical vernacular question and answer technique based on the Vulgate text. "Dice David: *Dederunt in escam*

*meam fel et in siti mea potaverunt me aceto*<sup>107</sup>; y en otra parte: *Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea, et super vestem meam misserunt sortem*<sup>108</sup>; ¿Cuándo, santo Profeta, os dieron a vos por manjar hiel, y vinagre por bebida? ¿Cuándo, por ventura, os traspasaron duros clavos y esquinados vuestras reales manos? ¿Cuándo quedaste tan debilitado y flaco, que os pudiesen contar los huesos? ¿Cuándo hecharon suerte los crueles verdugos sobre vuestras vestiduras? Verdad digo, que aunque estas cosas sucedieron a Cristo, yo las sentía; y el amor, cuya ley es hacer las cosas comunes, me hizo sentir el mal sabor de la hiel y del vinagre, con los demás trabajos, por estar yo unido con él; todo lo cual veía con la luz profética como pasado" (*Tratado IX*, 2 p 70).

At the same time, works of literature, philosophy and science were also being copied and transmitted. Religious were encouraged to write about spiritual progress. The *Instrucción de novicios* refers to this tradition as a regular monthly exercise: "a la entrada también de cada mes hagan los hermanos desafíos por escrito, que no pase cada uno de cuartilla pequeña de papel, con palabras llanas, sentidas y verdaderas, salidas del corazón, sin alegar autoridades, ni usar de algún artificio retórico, desafiando cada uno a dos virtudes, las que escogiere, una interior y otra exterior, y el que más diligencia pone en aquella virtud gana los merecimientos de los otros en ella" (*Instrucción 2*, p.53).

Some religious Orders engaged in an active ministry of preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Sermons were important. García de la Concha

argued that even the colloquial quality of Teresa's writing reflected not the spoken norm but the influence of contemporary sermons and the new style of writing of humanists like Juan de Valdés.<sup>109</sup> Preaching was sometimes lively and memorable: "... y en la contemplación del juicio y del infierno; que si el tal temor es sensible, se concibe un horror que causa exteriormente un estremecimiento y grito; lo cual es causa de predicar con grande espíritu, como se cuenta de un grande predicador de nuestros tiempos, que, predicando del infierno y la eternidad, se siguió un extremo exterior, que asombró al auditorio, viéndole meter el paño del púlpito en la boca y oyéndole dar una terrible voz: de estos tales predicadores se puede entender aquéllo *Vox Domini confringentis cedros...*" (*Tratado VII*, 5 p 51). The Maestro de Novicios had a duty to talk about prayer: "De esta oración les tratará el Maestro en las pláticas continuadamente a tal tiempo que todos los novicios lo lleven oído cuando salgan de su noviciado" (*Instrucción 4*, p.106).

Some monastic literature is based on sermons, spiritual conversations and the tradition of spiritual direction. San Juan de la Cruz refers to inexperienced spiritual directors, for example, in the prologue to the *Subida*: "Porque algunos padres espirituales, por no tener luz y experiencia de estos caminos, antes suelen impedir y dañar a semejantes almas". Those who think they are experiencing revelations are advised to consult with educated spiritual directors, rather than with less knowledgeable advisers. "... debe el que tuviere algunas cosas de estas extraordinarias, antes de que



dé algún crédito a ellas, por ciertas que parezcan, comunicarse con algún varón espiritual, no cualquiera, sino teólogo y docto, que en esta materia importa much la ciencia; y ha de dar crédito a lo que el tal le digere, no buscando confesor de manga y a su propósito, que le rasque la oreja, sino que le diga verdad” (*Tratado VII*, 6 p 53)

Conversations both in and out of the confessional, were the starting points of much written spiritual advice and guidance. The knowledge of the confessor was passed on to the penitent: “para esto conviene que el confesor sea letrado” (*Tratado VII*, 6 p 54).

The *Instrucción de novicios* and *Tratado de oración* cast light on what was being read by the Discalced Carmelites in Teresa’s time. One of the duties of the “hermano de la ropería” was to look after devotional books: “recogerá los libros de devoción” (*Instrucción I*, p.33). Carmelites were expected to read books as part of their daily routine. The section “de la tentación acerca de leer” in the *Tratado* gives an insight into the contemporary attitudes to reading. For those who thought it unnecessary to read books, there is a warning. “Suele el demonio, o la propia estimación, que es peor, el hacer creer a algunos no tienen necesidad de leer libros, porque ya se tienen por tiempo perdido el que se lee; y éstos deberían con mas neccsidad leer para que en los libros vean si su contemplación es engaño, porque la contemplación buena, no desprecia los ejercicios humildes y no tan altos, como es leer algún poquito” (*Tratado III*,2 p 22). Novices are advised of the benefits of reading good quality books: “Con el

leer también buenas cosas, se llena la memoria de buenas especies que espelan la vehetria y mal enjambre de las que del siglo trajimos." (*Tratado* III, 2 p. 22). Carmelites were advised to read spiritual books rather than secular writing, which is criticised: "No es menos tentación leer mucho, con una prisa como atareada, sólo por cumplir un apetito que tenemos que saber; que suele ser tan grande en algunos, que así pasan libros de devoción como si fuesen de caballerías ... y aun algunas veces no perdonan unas hojas desaprovechadas en que está el libro encuadernado, que suceden ser de Orlando o Boscán, y este es vicio de curiosidad pestilencial" (*Tratado* III,2 p 22). The general advice is that reading should be done carefully, regularly and in moderation. "Tómese, pues, un medio, y no se lea tanto que decline a demasía y se pierda el tiempo diputado para orar, ni se deje de leer en tanto extremo, que se tenga por cosa impertinente el leer; sino léase alguna cosa para cada día con pausa y sentimiento, que yo entiendo que a nadie dañará, y a muchos aprovechará, especialmente a los principiantes" (*Tratado* III,2 p 22).

The art of reading a sacred text prayerfully was known as *lectio divina*. The Bible and the Breviary were read and meditated on in such a way that the reading became prayer, meditating on the mysteries of Christ, and rooted in liturgical celebration. In the Middle Ages, and into the sixteenth century, biblical texts were read, by those who were authorised, slowly, often out loud, thereby committing it to memory. The purpose of *lectio divina* was not to extract information, but to learn and to contemplate. St

John of the Cross would have read the texts this way. This, of course, was forbidden to Teresa, but she would have gained insights and knowledge from conversations with him, and from her own reading. Terence O'Reilly, discussing the significance of *lectio divina* in San Juan's writings, suggests the importance of the nature of religious language in the context of contemplative prayer: "In their different ways, the poems and the prose works both grew out of *lectio divina*, and both were intended, in turn, to serve as *lectio divina* for others."<sup>110</sup> Teresa's literary imagery is likewise the product of the process of *lectio divina*.

Biblical imagery was also transmitted through the discipline of spiritual direction: "... que me han dicho letrados, rogándoles yo me declaren lo que quiere decir el Espíritu Santo y el verdadero sentido de ellos..." (*Cantares* 1,8); "...algunas veces he oído exposición de algunas palabras de éstas, y me la han dicho -- pidiéndolo yo -- ..." (*Cantares* 1,9). The same applies to the discipline of the confessional. It was a place of education as well as of absolution. "Así comienzo ... con licencia del que me confiesa." (*Cantares* 1,8). "Son tantas las vías por donde comienza nuestro Señor a tratar amistad con las almas, que sería nunca acabar — me parece — las que yo he entendido, con ser mujer, ¿Qué harán los confesores y personas que las tratan más particularmente?" (*Cantares* 2,23).

The Monastic Daily Office, in the Breviary, consisted largely of Old Testament readings, psalms and canticles. The Old Testament was mainly interpreted typologically and figuratively in such a way that its symbolism

and imagery applied to the Christian Church and to its members. Teresa would have learned much about this from her confessors and “letrados” with whom she talked, and would have practised *lectio divina* within what she was permitted to read and remember. The *Instrucción* gives a clear indication that Carmelites were expected to carry and use their Breviaries during Mass: “teniendo el breviario con dos manos, mirando siempre en él” (*Instrucción* 2, p 78). Peers, explaining how Teresa could have written a commentary (unfinished) on a text she was not permitted to read, pointed out: “She had often occasion, in the Divine Office, to read passages from the *Song of Songs* and, dwelling upon these, as she did, with loving thought, she desired to make the results of her meditations known to others.”<sup>111</sup> “Y así lo podéis ver, hijas, en el Oficio que rezamos de nuestra Señora cada semana. Lo mucho que está de cilos en antífonas y lecciones.” (*Cantares* 6,8)

There are several ways in which biblical language and imagery were transmitted to Teresa, orally and in writing. Teresa was unable to read the text in Latin. No vernacular translations were permitted<sup>112</sup>, but she heard or read the text: “fue el Señor servido oyese algunas cosas de los *Cánticos*...” (*Cantares* 1,6); “habiéndome a mí el Señor, de algunos años acá, dado un regalo grande cada vez que oigo o leo algunas palabras de los *Cantares* .... sin entender la claridad del latín en romance...” (*Cantares*, prólogo, 1). She was sometimes told the meaning of the texts in the vernacular: “.. y aunque me declaraban el romance...” (*Cantares*, prólogo

1). She also claims that God directly infused into her mind knowledge of the meaning of texts: "... me parece me da el Señor para mi propósito a entender algo del sentido de algunas palabras ... algunas veces da el Señor tanto a entender ..." (*Cantares*, prólogo, 2); "No sé si acertaré por las mismas palabras que allí quiso el Señor declararlo" (*Cantares* 4,1). Sometimes she consults experts: "... con parecer de personas a quien yo estoy obligada a obedecer..." (*Cantares*, prólogo, 3). "Y es así, que informado de algunas personas ..." (*Cantares* 6,5); "... que me han dicho letrados, rogándoles yo me declaren lo que quiere decir el Espíritu Santo y el verdadero sentido de ellos – dicen que los doctores escribieron muchas exposiciones y que aún no acaban de darle." *Cantares* 1,8). Even in the vernacular, she maintains, some things are as obscure as if they were in Latin, but she is equally aware of the variety and richness of meaning within biblical texts. "... una palabra suya tendrá en sí mil misterios, y así su principio no entendemos nosotras. Así, si estuviera en latín, o en hebraico o en griego, no era maravilla; mas en nuestro romance qué de cosas hay en los salmos del glorioso rey David, que cuando nos declaran el romance solo, tan oscuro nos queda como el latín. ... que aun palabras suyas dichas en romance nuestro no se pueden entender." (*Cantares* 1,2); "Cuando el señor quiere darlo a entender, Su Majestad lo hace sin trabajo nuestro". (*Cantares* 1,2). The ideas, language and imagery were held in her memory, and, in the context of contemplative prayer, were meditated upon.

Scripture was read daily in religious services as part of the Liturgy, and the sermon was the opportunity and occasion for the “*traditio*”, (“tradition”: the official teaching of the Church), to be transmitted orally to the congregation. Tradition is understood to be the living transmission through which the Church perpetuates and transmits to every generation what it believes and what it understands itself to be. According to Catholic teaching, Tradition is distinct from Scripture, yet closely connected and bound to it, and the one communicates with the other in the process of study and proclamation.

Teresa heard sermons on the Song of Songs: “... fue el Señor servido oyese algunas cosas de los *Cánticos*” (*Cantares* 1,6); “...me acuerdo oír a un religioso un sermón harto admirable, y fue lo más de él declarando de estos regalos que la Esposa trataba con Dios...(siendo sermón del *Mandato*..)” (*Cantares* 1,5). This reference is particularly interesting because it alludes to a particular Liturgy, the Liturgy of Maundy Thursday, and the reading of the “*mandatum*” Gospel (John 13.34), “*Mandatum novum do vobis*”; “A new commandment I give you”. The Liturgy becomes thereby a vehicle for the transmission of biblical texts and ideas.

In the daily routine of the convent, there was spiritual reading in the refectory during meals, and religious were admonished to listen carefully: “Dicha la misa y horas, y hecho el examen de conciencia, irán con la comunidad al Refectorio, a donde, asentados con mesura y templanza, comerán lo que el Señor les diere sin engolfarse en la comida, atendiendo

más a la santa lección que a ella" (*Instrucción 2*, p.78). Hearing Mass, reading the Divine Office, the examination of conscience and refectory readings make up a network of constant and regular exposure to the transmission of doctrine, biblical texts, and commentary. There was even time set apart to elucidate the detail of the ceremonial or prayers: "A la hora de Vísperas se juntarán en el Oratorio un rato a registrar y tratar algo del rezado y Ceremonial, para que no se hagan faltas en el coro" (*Instrucción 2*, p. 81). This constant exposure to biblical and liturgical texts in community was continued individually in the cell before bed: "Recogidos ya todos en las celdas, se estarán en ellas meditando en la ley del Señor, y ocupados siempre en orar, leer o escribir todas cosas de espíritu, que ayuden a la reformation y bien de sus almas..." (*Instrucción 2*, p. 81).

San Pedro de Alcántara is a source of Franciscan and penitential influences on Teresa. She describes him as "un santo hombre y de gran espíritu" (*Vida* 27.3), whose harsh penitential practices left a deep impression on her.<sup>113</sup> The influence of Fray Pedro de Alcántara extends both to Teresa's spiritual formation, and to her active work in the reform: "Fue el Señor servido remediar gran parte de mi trabajo ... con traer a este lugar al bendito Fray Pedro de Alcántara." (*Vida* 30.2). His significance is further underlined by Teresa's description of his appearance to her in visions after he had died: "Me apareció el santo Fray Pedro de Alcántara,

que era ya muerto, ...Ya lo le había visto otras dos veces después que murió y la gran gloria que tenía." (*Vida* 36.20).

San Juan de la Cruz was Confessor to the nuns of the Convento de la Encarnación from 1572-1577. Teresa and San Juan were in close contact during this period, although there is little information extant on their dialogue, either written or conversational. Most of Teresa's major writings were produced before this time, apart from *Cantares* (1572-1575), the latter chapters of *Fundaciones*. (1573-1582), and *Moradas*, (1579). San Juan de la Cruz did not produce his writings until after his imprisonment (1577). There is therefore no case to argue for any literary dependence of Teresa on San Juan, but we can agree with Trueman Dicken that there may have been a "common fund of teaching hammered out by the two saints in concert during their time together in Ávila", <sup>114</sup> and "concerted reflection upon spiritual doctrine by the two saints during their years together". <sup>115</sup> Teresa is likely to have gained many theological insights and analysis from such conversations. He is doubtless correct in his assertion "When both writers evince marked interest in one particular verse of holy writ, and use it to similar effect, it is difficult to believe that they had not discussed it together at length to their mutual edification."<sup>116</sup> Ordinary conversations, mostly of course unrecorded, must have played a significant part in transmitting and developing ideas and images. Teresa describes her special friendship and spiritual kinship with San Juan de la Cruz : "El era tan bueno, que, al menos yo, podía mucho más aprender de él que él de mí"



(*Fundaciones* 13.5). In San Juan de la Cruz can be seen, synthesised in the experience of Teresa, the methodology of the Jesuits and the penitential severity of San Pedro de Alcántara. Teresa describes San Juan de la Cruz thus: "Aunque es chico, entiendo es grande en los ojos de Dios ... No hay fraile que no diga bien de él, porque ha sido su vida de gran penitencia ... Jamás le hemos visto una imperfección." (*Carta* 13, 6 de julio de 1568).

Many other ideas and images will have come from the Saints and the Fathers, not directly named by Teresa, but quoted authoritatively in the daily life and learning of the convent. St John Climacus is referred to in the *Instrucción* as being an important and respected source of doctrine: "... ponemos aquí la división de las virtudes que San Juan de Clímaco (cuya doctrina ha sido siempre en nuestros noviciados recibida como de tan gran padre) pone en el capítulo de la discreción..." (*Instrucción* 3, p. 57ff). Teresa's understanding of prayer was shaped by the definitions, insights and explanations given by such saints and spiritual writers. The *Treatado de oración* gives contemporary evidence of a number of definitions in circulation. This paragraph is copied almost verbatim in the *Instrucción*, evidence in itself of the way in which information was transmitted:

"Oración, dicen San Isidoro y San Jerónimo, arrimándose a la etimología del vocablo, es hablar con Dios. Oración, dicen San Agustín y San Damasceno, es petición de lo que nos conviene. Oración, dice San Dionisio Arcopagita, metiéndose en el abismo de ella, es entrega que hace el alma de sí a Dios y unión con Él. Simón de Cassia dice, entre otras muchas cosas, que es la vista fija del alma que mira a Dios con ojos de Fe. San Crisóstomo: es nervios espirituales del alma. San Juan Clímaco, en un hermoso alarde que hace de los efectos de la oración, la llama fuente de las virtudes; San Bernardo: sacrificio para Dios y música para los Angeles. San Buenaventura: principio de nuestra

bienaventuranza. Lorenzo Justiniano: pasto de la caridad, derretimiento de las entrañas y pacificación del corazón. Y Taulero, varón espiritualísimo, con un divino lenguaje que no pude con la propiedad que concebí traducirle, la define diciendo, est unitiva spiritus creati in increatum Dei spiritum introversio" (*Tratado de Oración* II, p10 and *Instrucción* 3, p 123).

The *Tratado de oración* suggests that St John Damascene's definition was among the most popular: "pero usando de la definición de San Damasceno, que es la más usada entre los espirituales y en esta escuela santa de este Noviciado, Oración es *elevatio mentis in Deum*, es elevación del entendimiento en Dios" (*Tratado* II,1 p 12)

The *Tratado* makes reference to the commonly held view of Carmelites at that time that mental prayer was divided into seven parts: "Esta suelen dividir los espirituales unos en más, otros en menos partes; mas yo, siguiendo la división que en mi noviciado me enseñaron y he visto siempre practicar en él, se la divido en siete partes: preparación, lección, meditación, contemplación, hacimiento de gracias, petición y epílogo. Y no se divide en estas partes por que todas sean necesarias para la oración..." (*Tratado* II,3 p14). This traditional division into seven may have been one among many influences on Teresa's choice of the number of *moradas*.

## VII

Teresa and the Bible

It is argued in this thesis that there is a close relationship between the use of imagery in passages from the Scriptures, notably the Psalms, but also other biblical books, and the use of imagery in Teresa's writing. Clusters of images appearing within biblical texts appear in similar clusters in Teresian texts.

It has already been established that Teresa was familiar with the Psalms, canticles and readings of the Divine Office, recited in community several times a day, and that in various ways the ideas and images she encountered in their Latin were transmitted to her in the vernacular. There is a clear relationship between the layout of images in these biblical extracts and that of Teresa in her writings. Some of the Psalms are constructed with a tight, compact use of several of the key images which Teresa expands and develops. A few examples will show how closely the biblical and Teresian image clusters relate to each other. Further examples can be found in the Appendices.

Psalm 101.8

"Vigilavi et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto."

Teresa quotes this verse in Latin in *Vida* 20.10 and comments on it, in the context of describing the feeling of loneliness during prayer:

... y por ventura lo dijo el real Profeta estando en la misma soledad, sino que como a santo se la daría el Señor a sentir en más excesiva manera:

*Vigilavi, et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto.* Y así se me representa este verso entonces que me parece lo veo yo en mí, y consuélame ver que han sentido otras personas tan gran extremo de soledad, cuánto más tales. Así parece que está el alma, no en sí, sino en el tejado o techo de sí misma y de todo lo criado; porque aun encima de lo muy superior del alma me parece que está. (*Vida* 20.10)

Teresa's defective knowledge of Latin is shown by what she wrote phonetically in the original: "vigilavi ed fatus sun sicud passer solitarius yn tecto", writing, perhaps, guided by the memory of what the text sounded like when spoken aloud. Her comments also show how she applied biblical imagery to herself and her experience ("lo veo yo en mí), and how biblical imagery is applied to the soul. The passage shows the process by which a text is assimilated, transformed and elaborated.

#### Psalm 144 (Vulgate 143)

- (1) Benedictus Dominus Deus meus, qui docet manus meas ad praelium, et digitos meos ad bellum.
- (2) Misericordia mea et refugium meum, susceptor meus et liberator meus; protector meus, et in ipso speravi; qui subdit populum meum sub me.
- (3) Domine, quid est homo, quia innotuisti ei? Aut filius hominis, quia reputas eum?
- (4) Homo vanitati similis factus est; dies eius sicut umbra praetereunt.
- (5) Domine, inclina caelos tuos, et descende; tange montes, et fumigabunt.
- (6) Fulgura coruscationem, et dissipabis eos; emitte sagittas tuas et conturbabis eos.
- (7) Emitte manum tuam de alto, eripe me; et libera me de aquis multis, de manu filiorum alienorum.
- (8) Quorum os locutum est vanitatem, et dextera eorum dextera iniquitatis.
- (9) Deus, canticum novum cantabo tibi. In psalterio decachordo psallam tibi.
- (10) Qui das salutem regibus, qui redimisti David servum tuum de gladio maligno

(1) Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for war and my fingers for battle;

- (2) my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, who subdues the peoples under him.  
 (3) Lord, what is man that thou dost regard him, or the son of man that thou dost think of him ?  
 (4) Man is like a breath, his days are like a passing shadow.  
 (5) Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down ! Touch the mountains that they smoke !  
 (6) Flash forth the lightning and scatter them, send out thy arrows and rout them !  
 (7) Stretch forth thy hands from on high, rescue me and deliver me from the many waters, from the hands of aliens,  
 (8) whose mouths speak lies and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.  
 (9) I will sing a new song to thee, O God; upon a ten-stringed harp I will play to thee,  
 (10) who givest victory to kings, who rescuest David thy servant.

A number of Teresa's images are present and relate to each other within these lines: the image of the soul prepared for and engaged in battle (v.1) by God who is the castle fortress into whom the soul enters for refuge (v.2); the inexpressible contrast between the glorious majesty of God (vs 5,6, 10), and the feebleness of man (v. 3-7), and yet, through the uttering of the vocal prayer (vs. 6 & 7), the descending of God coming down to man (v.5); the image of light and of arrows (v.6), and of many waters (v.7). The "many waters" are a reminder of the waters of Meribah, "thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah" (*Deuteronomy* 33.8), the waters of strife from which the soul needs rescue, an important theme in the Old Testament; in the *Song of Songs* the imagery is repeated: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" (*Song* 8.7).

The ideas inherent in verses 1-7 are expressed succinctly by Teresa: "... amor y temor de Dios! Son dos castillos fuertes, desde donde se da guerra al mundo y a los demonios" (*Camino* 40.2). Verses 3 - 4 contain the imagery of humility, which is a theme repeatedly emphasised by Teresa: "Como este edificio (espiritual) todo va fundado en humildad, mientras más llegados a Dios, más adelante ha de ir esta virtud". (*Vida* 12.4). The majesty of God, (vs 5 & 6) and paradoxically, the utter humility of God's nature in his willingness to descend to meet man, (v.5), are often voiced in Teresa's writings: "Espanta mirar esta majestad; más, más espanta, Señor mío, mirar con ella vuestra humildad." (*Vida* 37.6).

#### Isaiah 61.10 – 62.5

(61.10) Gaudens gaudebo in Domino, et exultabit anima mea in Deo meo, quia induit me vestimentis salutis, et indumento iustitiae circumdedit me, quasi sponsum decoratum corona, et quasi sponsam ornatam monilibus suis.

(11) Sicut enim terra profert germen suum, et sicut hortus semen suum germinat, sic Dominus Deus germinabit iustitiam et laudem coram universis gentibus.

(62.1) Propter Sion non tacebo, et propter Ierusalem non quiescam, donec egrediatur ut splendor iustus eius, et salvator eius ut lampas accendatur.

(2) Et videbunt gentes iustum tuum, et vocabitur tibi nomen novum, quod os Domini nominabit.

(3) Et eris corona gloriæ in manu Domini, et diadema regni in manu Dei tui.

(4) Non vocaberis ultra derelicta, et terra tua non vocabitur amplius desolata; sed vocaberis voluntas mea in ea, et terra tua inhabitata, quia complacuit Domino in te; et terra tua inhabitabitur.

(5) Habitabit enim iuvenis cum virgine, et habitabunt in te filii tui; et gaudebit sponsus super sponsam, et gaudebit super te Deus tuus.

(61.10) I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall exult in my God: for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with

the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

(11) For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

(62.1) For Zion's sake I will not rest, until her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch.

(2) The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name which the mouth of the lord will give.

(3) You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

(4) You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My delight is in her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.

(5) For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

This passage combines images and imagery of marriage (61.10), (62. 4 & 5), the garden (61.11), (62.4), light ((62.1) and jewels (61.10 and 62.3).

This layout of images is similar to that used in the latter chapters of the *Vida*, where Teresa applies it to herself as she recounts some of her visions.

The crown (v.3), the robe of righteousness (v.10), and the virgin (v.5) are linked together in one vision:

“Estando haciendo oración en la iglesia antes que entrase en el monasterio, estando casi en arrobamiento, vi a Cristo que con grande amor me pareció me recibía y ponía una corona, y agradeciéndome lo que había hecho por su madre. Otra vez, estando todas en el coro en oración, después de Completas, vi a Nuestra Señora con grandísima gloria, con manto blanco, y debajo de él parecía ampararnos a todas.” (*Vida* 36.24).<sup>117</sup>

A similar use of the same set of images, combining the garments of salvation and the jewel (v.10), vindication and glory (v.2), and brightness of light (v.1), is found in chapter 33:

...me veía vestir una ropa de much blancura y claridad. Y al principio no veía quién me la vestía; después vi a nuestra Señora, hacia el lado derecho, y a mi padre San José al izquierdo, que me vestían aquella ropa. Díóseme a entender que estaba ya limpia de mis pecados..... Parecíame haber echado al cuello un collar de oro muy hermoso, asida una cruz a él de much valor. Este oro y piedras es tan diferente de lo de acá, que no tiene comparación. (*Vida* 33.14).

The nuptial imagery, used to describe the higher reaches of mystical union, is combined in this psalm with the garden image (v. 4). In Teresa God delights to walk in the garden of the soul - (*Vida* 11.6) - just as in this psalm God delights in the "married" land (v. 4) and the bridegroom "rejoices" over the bride (v. 5). In *Moradas* 6.5;11 the jewels (v.10) given by the bridegroom bedeck the bride: "Estas son las joyas que comienza el Esposo dar a su Esposa".

Psalm 63:1-7 (Vulgate 62:2-9)

- (2) Deus, Deus meus, ad te luce vigilo, sitvit in te anima mea; quam multipliciter tibi caro mea.
  - (3) In terra deserta, et in via, et in aquosa, sic in sancto apparui tibi, ut viderem virtutem tuam et gloriam tuam.
  - (4) Quoniam melior est misericordia tua super vitas, labia mea laudabunt te.
  - (5) Sic benedicam te in vita mea; et in nomine tuo levabo manus meas.
  - (6) Sicut adipe et pinguedine replatur anima mea, et labiis exultationis laudabit os meum,
  - (7) Si memor fui tui super stratum meum, in matutinis meditabor in te.
  - (8) Quia fuisti adiutor meus, et in velamento alarum tuarum exultabo,
  - (9) Adhaesit anima mea post te; me suscepit dextera tua.
- 
- (1) O God thou art my God, I seek thee, my soul thirsts for thee; my flesh faints for thee, as in a dry and weary land where no water is.
  - (2) So I have looked upon thee in the sanctuary, beholding thy power and glory.
  - (3) Because thy steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise thee.



- (4) So I will bless thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on thy name.
- (5) My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips,
- (6) when I think upon thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the watches of the night; for thou hast been my help, and in the shadow of thy wings I sing for joy.
- (7) My soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me

The principal images in this extract are the dry land, the thirsty soul, and the loving swoon (all in v. 1), the banquet (v. 5), and the sensuous images of the (marriage) bed (v. 6), "clinging" and embracing (v. 7), reminiscent of the *Song of Songs*: "... I am sick with love ... O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me!". (*Song* 2. 3, 6). The extract refers to vocal prayer (v. 4) and to mental prayer and meditation (v. 6), and to the flight of the Spirit (v.6). Within this extract it is possible to see a simple but compact outline sketch of Teresian images, from verse 1, the soul as land that needs to be watered (*Vida* 11), through to verse 7, the higher reaches of mystical union expressed in terms of banquets and marriage (*Moradas* 7).

Psalm 11:1-4 (Vulgate 10:2-5)

- (2) In Domino confido; quomodo dicitis animae meae: transmigra in montem sicut passer?
  - (3) Quoniam ecce peccatores intenderunt arcum; paraverunt sagittas suas in pharetra, ut sagittent in obscuro rectos corde;
  - (4) Quoniam quae perfecisti destruxerunt; iustus autem quid fecit?
  - (5) Dominus in templo sancto suo; Dominus in caelo sedes eius. Oculi eius in pauperum respiciunt, palpebrae eius interrogant filios hominum.
- (1) In the Lord I take refuge; how can you say to me, "Flee like a bird to the mountains;"

- (2) for lo, the wicked bend the bow, they have fitted their arrow to the string, to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart;
- (3) if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do ?
- (4) The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids test, the children of men.

The cluster of images here includes that of a bird fleeing to the mountains (v. 1), the bow and arrow (v.2), foundations (v. 3), the temple and the throne and the ever-watchful all-seeing nature of God (v.4). Teresa uses and adapts all the images found in this cluster. Talking of her difficulties in prayer she says, "... en acordándome de mí, se me quiebran las alas para decir cosa buena..." (*Moradas* 3;1,5). She says this in the context of thinking about the Psalms, having just quoted a phrase in Latin from Psalm 111: "beatus vir qui timet dominum". Again her attempt at writing Latin is phonetic, "beatus vir qui timed dominun", and her knowledge of its meaning is confirmed earlier in the chapter, where she quotes it in the vernacular: "... bienaventurado el varón que teme al Señor" (*Moradas* 3;1,1), in the context of describing the conflicts and "combates" suffered by the soul progressing through "oración". The soul, in the spirit of this extract, is taking refuge in God (mental prayer), and is under attack ("combates"), fleeing like a bird (the soul) to the mountain (Carmel or contemplative prayer): "... todas las que traemos este hábito sagrado del Carmen somos llamados a la oración y contemplación, porque este fue nuestro principio; de esta casa venimos, de aquellos santos padres del Monte Carmelo que en tan gran soledad y con tanto desprecio del mundo buscaban este tesoro ..." (*Moradas* 5;1.2). The image of verse 2 of the

psalm is elaborated in Teresa's mind. Whereas the psalm portrays the wicked firing arrows of hate at the innocent in the dark, in Teresa's use of the image God sends the arrow of love through the medium of an angel of light into the heart of an unworthy sinner, the basic image of the "transverberation", (*Vida* 29.13). She also re-writes this image to explain how love directed to God rebounds:

Paréceme el amor una saeta que envía la voluntad, que si va con toda la fuerza que ella tiene, libre de todas las cosas de la tierra, empujada en sólo Dios, muy de verdad debe de herir a Su Majestad; de suerte que metida en el mismo Dios, que es amor, torna de allí con grandísimas ganancias, como diré. Y es así, que informado de algunas personas a quien ha llegado nuestro Señor, a tan gran merced en la oración, que las llega a este embebecimiento santo con una suspensión, que aun en lo exterior se ve que no están en sí; preguntadas lo que sienten, en ninguna manera lo saben decir, ni supieron, ni pudieron entender cosa de cómo obra allí el amor (*Cantares* 6.5).

Teresa refers to the importance of good "foundations" (v. 3) when building the spiritual edifice of prayer (*Moradas* 2;1.7), perhaps a reference to the building of a house on rock by the wise man, and on sand by the foolish man (Matthew 7.26ff.). In the Psalm the idea of "foundations" is closely followed by the idea of the Lord in his temple, enthroned in heaven. In Teresa's development of these ideas, the foundation of prayer is humility, and God is enthroned in the human heart, the heaven or paradise (*Moradas* 1;1.1) of love within the centre of the soul. She also had a vision of the throne of God in heaven: "...parecióme vi abrir los cielos ...Representóseme el trono que dije a vuestra merced he visto otras veces, y otro encima de él, adonde por una noticia que no sé decir, aunque no lo ví,

entendía estar la Divinidad" (*Vida* 39.22). The ever-watchful nature of God is reflected in "... mas estáis Vos conmigo y veisme siempre" (*Vida* 37.8).

Psalm 84:1-3 (Vulgate 83:2-4)

- (2) Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine virtutum!
- (3) Concupiscit, et deficit anima mea in atria Domini; cor meum et caro mea exsulaverunt in Deum vivum.
- (4) Etenim passer invenit sibi domum, et turtur nidum sibi, ubi ponat pullos suos; altaria tua, Domine virtutum, Rex meus et Deus meus.
- (1) How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts !
- (2) My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the Lord: my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.
- (3) Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at thy altars, my King and my God.

Each of these images is used and reflected on by Teresa. She writes of the beauty of God's dwelling place, the soul, (v.1), "la gran hermosura de un alma ... la gran hermosura de este castillo" (*Moradas* 1;1,1); the soul longing and swooning for God in contemplation, with body and spirit involved in vocal and mental prayer (v.2), "...cuando da arrobamientos que la saca de sus sentidos, porque si estando en ellos se viese tan cerca de esta gran Majestad no era posible por ventura quedar con vida ..."

(*Moradas* 6;4,2); the birds making their home and bringing up their young at the altars, (v. 3), "...nos atrevemos a volar, como hacen los hijos de las aves cuando se enseñan que aunque no es de presto dar un gran vuelo, poco a poco imitan a sus padres." (*Moradas* 3;2,12).

Individual Psalm texts quoted by Teresa

Psalm 1.3

"He is like a tree planted by streams of water." (Psalm 1.3).

"Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum,"  
(Vulgate 1.3).

Antes que pase adelante os quiero decir que consideréis qué será ver este castillo tan resplandeciente y hermoso, esta perla oriental, este árbol de la vida que está plantado en las mismas aguas vivas de la vida que es Dios, cuando cae en un pecado mortal. (*Moradas* 1;2,1)

The streams of water become in Teresa's image "aguas vivas", perhaps a contrast with the "still" waters of Psalm 23 ("he leads me beside still waters"). Additionally they are the "aguas de la vida", life-giving waters of the grace of God. The idea of the tree is also modified to become the "árbol de la vida", an enhancement of the basic psalm image, reminiscent of the tree of life in the paradise Garden of Eden. The psalm reference is enhanced to convey the comparison between the radiance and beauty of the castle-soul in a state of grace, and the soul in a state of mortal sin. Teresa returns to the psalm again in the seventh *moradas*:

La verdadera penitencia es cuando le quita Dios la salud para poderla hacer y fuerzas; que aunque en otra parte he dicho la gran pena que esto da, es muy mayor aquí, y todo le debe venir de la raíz adonde está plantada; que así como el árbol que está cabe las corrientes de las aguas está más fresco y da más fruto, ¿qué hay que maravillar de deseos que tenga esta alma, pues el verdadero espíritu de ella está hecho uno con el agua celestial que dijimos ? (*Moradas* 7;2,9).

The psalm image is enhanced in a similar way. The concepts of freshness and fruition are enhancements to the image which emphasize the dynamic aspect of movement ("corrientes") and growth and transformation, inherent in the idea of fruition ("da más fruto"), which is how the psalm continues,

"that yields its fruit in due season" ("quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo").

### Psalm 18.26

"With the pure thou dost show thyself pure" (Psalm 18.26)

"Cum sancto sanctus eris" (Vulgate 17.26)

"... porque entonces no entendía la ganancia tan grande que son los trabajos, que por ventura han sido medios para traerla Dios allí, y, como la compañía que tiene le da fuerzas muy mayores que nunca, porque si acá dice David que *con los santos seremos santos*, no hay que dudar sino que estando hecha una cosa con el fuerte por la unión tan soberana de espíritu con espíritu, se le ha de pegar fortaleza, y así veremos la que han tenido los santos para padecer y morir (*Moradas* 7;4,10).

Psalm 18 also contains the familiar cluster of images or ideas prevalent in Teresa's writing, namely the fortress (vv. 1,6,30), angels, or heavenly visions (10), flight (v.10), light and glory (vv.12), arrows (v.14), humility (v. 27), the deer (v.33),

The Lord is my rock, my fortress (18,1)

Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum, (Vulgate 17,3)

From his temple he heard my voice (18,6)

Exaudit de templo sancto suo vocem meam (17,7)

He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind (18,10)

Et ascendit super cherubim, et volavit; volavit super pennas ventorum (17,11)

Out of the brightness of his presence (18,12)

Præ fulgore in conspectu eius ... (17,13)

He shot his arrows (18,14)

Et misit sagittas suas (17,15)

You save the humble, but bring low those whose eyes are haughty (18,27)  
Quoniam tu populum humilem salvum facies, et oculos superbiorum humiliabis (17,28)

You...keep my lamp burning (18,28)  
Tu iluminas lucernam meam (17,29)

He is a shield for all who take refuge in him (18,30)  
Protector est omnium sperantium in se (17,31)

He makes my feet like the feet of a deer (18,33)  
Qui perfecit pedes meos tanquam cervorum (17,34)

The quotation of Psalm 18.26 comes in the context of a parallel cluster of selected images and ideas in *Moradas* 7;4. The idea of God giving strength, fortitude and courage (Psalm 18 vv. 1,6,30) is reflected in Teresa's writing: "...porque la da el Señor una gran entereza" (*Moradas* 7;4,2); the idea of visions of heaven (Psalm 18.10) is frequently commented on by Teresa, as, for example when she says, "por él (San Pablo) podemos ver qué efectos hacen las verdaderas visiones y contemplación, cuando es de nuestro Señor y no imaginación o engaño del demonio." (*Moradas* 7.4 5); and the importance of Humility, (Psalm 18.27) is referred to in numerous places, including: "... porque todo este edificio, como he dicho, es su cimiento humildad..." (*Moradas* 7;4,8). The arrows and the deer of the psalm (vv 14 & 33) are images associated with the *Song of Songs* (1.9; 3.5; 8.14). Arrows denote wounding, either the wounding of love, or the malicious wounding of the flesh as in the Crucifixion, and being restricted, slowed down or impeded. The deer denotes speed, agility

and movement.<sup>118</sup> The *Song of Songs* (2.4) is referred to in *Moradas* 7;4.11 in the same paragraph as the quotation of Psalm 18:

Es muy cierto que aun de la que ella allí se le pega, acude a todos los que están en el castillo, y aun al mismo cuerpo, que parece muchas veces no se siente; sino, esforzado con el esfuerzo que tiene el alma bebiendo del vino de esta bodega, adonde la ha traído su Esposo y no la deja salir, redunda en el flaco cuerpo, como acá el manjar que se pone en el estómago da fuerza a a todo él.” (*Moradas* 7;4,11).

The wounding and pain of the cross is associated with the wine of the Eucharist, the life-giving “blood of Christ”. *Moradas* 7.4 has several references to suffering and crucifixion:

“... los que más cercanos anduvieron a Cristo nuestro Señor fueron los de mayores trabajos...” (*Moradas* 7;4.5); “Gusto yo mucho de san Pedro cuando iba huyendo de la cárcel y le apareció nuestro Señor y le dijo que iba a Roma a ser crucificado otra vez; ninguna rezamos esta fiesta adonde esto está, que no me es particular consuelo” (*Moradas* 7;4.5).<sup>119</sup>

#### Psalm 112.1

“Blessed is the man who fears the Lord” (Psalm 112.1)

“Beatus vir qui timet Dominum” (Vulgate 111.1).

A los que por la misericordia de dios han vencido estos combates y con perseverancia entrado a las terceras moradas ¿qué les diremos, sino *bienaventurado el varón que teme al Señor*? No ha sido poco hacer su Majestad que entienda yo ahora qué quiere decir el romance de este verso a este tiempo, según soy torpe en este caso. (*Moradas* 3;1,1).

Teresa’s comment reminds us of the complex issues of the time regarding the translation of biblical texts and commenting on their meaning.<sup>120</sup> Teresa uses this verse in the context of discussing the importance of winning the spiritual battles of earlier *moradas*, and of the continuing, constant battle of life:



Harto gran miseria es vivir en vida que siempre hemos de andar como los que tienen los enemigos a la puerta, que ni pueden dormir ni comer sin armas y siempre con sobresalto si por alguna parte pueden desportillar esta fortaleza. (*Moradas* 3;1,2).

The Psalm contains two important ideas which are inherent in the Teresian text. First, *Terceras moradas* refer to the stage of spiritual development known as "exemplary life": "Yo he conocido algunas almas ... que han llegado a este estado y estado y vivido muchos años en esta rectitud y concierto alma y cuerpo..." (*Moradas* 3;2,1). The psalm refers to this concept: "It is well with the man who deals generously and lends, who conducts his affairs with honour" (Psalm 112.5). Secondly, the concept of the steady heart in the psalm, "... his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord. His heart is steady, he will not be afraid..." (Psalm 112. 7ff), is paralleled in Teresa's comments:

"... y después de ellos que ya parece habían de estar señores del mundo, al menos bien desengañados de él, probarlos su Majestad en cosas no muy grandes, y andar con tanta inquietud y apretamiento de corazón que a mí me traían tonta y aun temerosa hartó..." (*Moradas* 3;2,1).

Teresa enhances her imagery by using two opposite ideas, "apretamiento de corazón", as above, and "dilatamiento o ensanchamiento en el alma" (*Moradas* 4;3,9). Quoting Psalm 119. 32, "dilatasti cor meum", Teresa combines the two opposites:

Ahora me acuerdo en un verso que decimos a Prima, al fin del postrer salmo que, al cabo del verso, dice *cum dilatasti cor meum*. A quien tuviera mucha experiencia esto le basta para ver la diferencia que hay de lo uno a lo otro; a quien no, es menester más. Los contentos que están dichos no ensanchan el corazón, antes lo más ordinariament parece aprietan un poco... (*Moradas* 4;1,5).<sup>121</sup>

Teresa confirms the crucial importance and relevance of this biblical association of ideas to her attempt to explain the overflowing delights that can be experienced at this level of "oración":

Estotra fuente viene el agua de su mismo nacimiento, que es Dios; y así como su Majestad quiere, cuando es servido hacer alguna merced sobrenatural, produce con grandísima paz y quietud y suavidad de lo muy interior de nosotros mismos, yo no sé hacia donde ni cómo, ni aquel contento y deleite se siente como los de acá en el corazón, digo en su principio, que después todo lo hinche; vase revertiendo este agua por todas las moradas y potencias hasta llegar al cuerpo, que por eso dije que comienza de Dios y acaba en nosotros; que cierto, como verá quien lo hubiere probado, todo el hombre exterior goza de este gusto y suavidad.

Estaba yo mirando, escribiendo esto, que en el verso que dije, *dilataste cor meum*, dice que se ensanchó el corazón... (*Moradas* 4;2,4ff).

#### The Song of Songs and nuptial imagery

The Song of Songs was, according to Jean Leclercq, "the book which was most read and most frequently commented on in the medieval cloister" for its teaching about "loving, disinterested contemplation".<sup>122</sup> Written c. 1572, Teresa's commentary on the Song, *Cantares*, predates *Las moradas*.<sup>123</sup> Both at the beginning and the end she declares the didactic purpose of her writing, "por obedecer a quien me lo ha mandado"<sup>124</sup> :

Habiéndome a mí el Señor, de algunos años acá, dado un regalo grande cada vez que oigo o leo algunas palabras de los *Cantares* de Salomón, en tanto extremo, que sin entender la claridad del latín en romance, me recogía más y movía mi alma que los libros muy devotos que entiendo. Y esto es caso ordinario, y aunque me declaraban el romance, tampoco le entendía más ... que sin entenderlo de mí ... apartar mi alma de sí.

Ha como dos años – poco más o menos – que me parece me da el Señor para mí propósito a entender algo del sentido de algunas palabras. Y paréceme scrán para consolación de las hermanas, que nuestro Señor lleva para este camino...(*Cantares* prólogo, 1ff);

“... pues mi intento fue, cuando lo comencé, daros a entender cómo podéis regalaros cuando oyereis algunas palabras de los *Cánticos*, y pensar – aunque son a entender vuestro oscuras – los grandes misterios que hay en ellas” (*Moradas* 7.9).

The verses she quotes directly for comment represent only a very small part of the biblical text:

“Bésame el Señor con el beso de su boca, porque más valen tus pechos que el vino,” (*Cantares* 1, from Song 1.1);

“Más valen tus pechos que el vino, que dan de sí fragancia de muy buenos olores” (*Cantares* 4, from Song 1.1ff);

“Sentéme a la sombra del que descaba, y su fruto es dulce para mi garganta” (*Cantares* 5, from Song 2.3);

“Mecióme el Rey en la bodega del vino, y ordenó en mí la caridad.” (*Cantares* 6, from Song 2.4)<sup>125</sup>;

“Sostenedme con flores y acompañadme de manzanas, porque desfallezco de mal de amores”, (*Cantares* 7, from Song 2.5).

The importance of the Song in Carmelite spirituality of the period can be seen from the fact that all the above texts are commented on by San Juan in his writings. It is reasonable to assume that they were the subject of conversations between the two saints.<sup>126</sup>

Nuptial imagery is also present in the New Testament. Referring the image of bridegroom to himself, Jesus says: “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.” (*Matthew* 9.15). He also uses nuptial imagery in the Parable of the wise and foolish

virgins: "...Behold the bridegroom! Come out to meet him! Then all those maidens rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil..." ... the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast..." (*Matthew 25.6ff*). John the Baptist uses nuptial imagery to describe his relationship as forerunner to the ministry of Jesus: "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice: therefore this joy of mine is now full. He must increase, but I must decrease." (*John 3.29 ff*). The imagery of increasing and decreasing is also employed by Teresa, in, for example, the expansion of the "pilón", or of the soul, as will be shown in chapter 3.

The Book *Revelation* uses nuptial imagery to describe the new heaven and the new earth:

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them. (*Revelation 21.1ff*).

This, again, is an antecedent of the imagery of transformation, and an image of "oración" – God dwelling with the soul in a marriage-like relationship. Chapter 5 will show how nuptial imagery is woven into the landscape of Teresa's metaphorical scheme.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Fray Luis de León, *The Original Poems*, ed Edward Sarmiento, MUP 1961 p 9
- <sup>2</sup> Ramón Menéndez Pidal (ed), *Poema de mio Cid*, Madrid: Clásicos castellanos, 1968, l.405
- <sup>3</sup> l. 524
- <sup>4</sup> *Milagros* Introducción, pp 1ff
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid* p. 6
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid* p.11
- <sup>7</sup> Juan de Mena, *El laberinto de fortuna*, Madrid: Clásicos castellanos, 1968
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid* p. 124
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid* p. 56
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid* p. 15
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid* p. 34
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid* p. 87
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid* p. 95
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid* p. 88
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid* p. 100
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid* p. 141
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid* p. 211
- <sup>18</sup> Jorge Manrique, *Poesía*, Salamanca: Biblioteca Anaya, 1969, p.57
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid* p. 58
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid* p. 60
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid* p. 63
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid* p. 67. The idea of scaling the castle wall is used in the *Instrucción*: "... es necesario que en los sentidos exteriores (que son las ventanas por donde este castillo se escala y le entra la muerte) haya particular recato..." (*Instrucción* 3, p. 87). A biblical antecedent for this is in the prophet Jeremiah: "Quia ascendit mors per fenestras nostras, ingresa est domus nostras..."; "For death has come up into our windows, it has entered our palaces." (*Jeremias* 9.20).
- <sup>23</sup> Manrique, op. cit. p. 67ff
- <sup>24</sup> Teresa de Ávila, *Obras* p. 1264
- <sup>25</sup> Manrique, op. cit. p. 79
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid* p. 122
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid* p. 123
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid* p. 124
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid* p. 125
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid* p. 127
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid* p. 128
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid* p. 134
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid* p. 139
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid* p. 140. Compare, with Teresa: "En lo que está la suma perfección ... (es) en estar nuestra voluntad tan conforme con la de Dios..." (*Fundaciones* 5.10).
- <sup>35</sup> Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, *Generaciones y Semblanzas*, Clásicos Castellanos, 1965 p 57
- <sup>36</sup> San Juan Climaco is referred to in *Instrucción de novicios* p123 and *Tratado de Oración* pages 10 & 88
- <sup>37</sup> Angela of Foligno is referred to in *Instrucción de novicios* p 144
- <sup>38</sup> Referred to in *Instrucción de novicios* pages 138 & 184, and in *Tratado de oración* pages 53, 56, 57, 71 & 164ff
- <sup>39</sup> Referred to in *Instrucción de novicios* p 123 and *Tratado de Oración* pages 67, 69, 72 & 131

<sup>40</sup> The first Spanish translation of the *Imitation of Christ* was published in 1490.

<sup>41</sup> Kempis, *Imitación de Cristo*, versión castellana del Fr. Luis de Granada, Buenos Aires: Biblioteca de bolsillo, 1943.

<sup>42</sup> "Ecce enim regnum dei intra vos est" (Lucam 17.21). "Convertimini ad me in toto corde vestro" (Joel 2.12).

<sup>43</sup> Gustate, et videte quoniam suavis est Dominus (Psalmus 33.9). Used by Teresa in *Exclamaciones* 14.1

<sup>44</sup> "abneget semetipsum, et tollat crucem suam, et sequatur me" (Matthaeum 16.24). Echoed in *Moradas* 2.1.7 ("abrazaos con la cruz que vuestro Esposo llevó sobre sí y entended que ésta ha de ser vuestra empresa."); "Si autem mortui sumus cum Christo, credimus quia simul etiam vivemus cum Christo" (Ad Romanos 6.8) "...ayúdele a llevar la cruz, y piense que toda la vida vivió en ella..." (*Vida* 11.10).

<sup>45</sup> "Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus Deus." (Psalmi 84.9)

<sup>46</sup> Weber, *The Rhetoric of Femininity*, p.133

<sup>47</sup> An embedded vernacular translation of "Nolo mortem impij, sed ut convertatur impius a via sua, et vivat"; "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live". (Ezechiel 33.11). Another example of the transmission of biblical text in the vernacular.

<sup>48</sup> *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes*, ed. R.O. Jones, Manchester University Press, 1963 p.50

<sup>49</sup> "Era aficionada a libros de caballerías" (*Vida* 2.1). Classical examples were: *Amadís de Gaula*, *Esplandián*, *Florisandro*, *Tirante*, *Tristán*, *Florambel de Lucea*, *Palmerín de Oliva*, *Historia del Caballero Don Polindo*.

<sup>50</sup> E W Trueman Dicken, "The Imagery of the Interior Castle and its Implications", *Ephemerides Carmeliticae*, 21 (1970), 198-218

<sup>51</sup> Osuna and Laredo are cited in *Vida* 4.7 and 23.12

<sup>52</sup> Trueman Dicken, op cit p 202

<sup>53</sup> op cit p 201

<sup>54</sup> op cit p 202

<sup>55</sup> op cit p 204

<sup>56</sup> *Moradas* 1.2,8

<sup>57</sup> op cit p 206

<sup>58</sup> op cit p 203

<sup>59</sup> op cit p 203

<sup>60</sup> *Ephemerides Carmeliticae*, 30 (1979), 52-68

<sup>61</sup> Alfonso M. Gubianas, *Misal Cotidiano de los fieles*, (Barcelona: Editorial Litúrgica Española, 1941) p 463

<sup>62</sup> op cit p 444

<sup>63</sup> Trueman Dicken p 213

<sup>64</sup> op cit p 214

<sup>65</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* ed E.F.C. Cross, Oxford

<sup>66</sup> David Knowles, *What is Mysticism?* (Burns & Oates, 1967) p. 9

<sup>67</sup> Alain Cugno, *St John of the Cross*, (Burns & Oates, 1982) p. 17

<sup>68</sup> op cit p 9

<sup>69</sup> Joseph Chorprenning, *The Monastery, Paradise and the Castle*, *BHS*, 62 (1985), 245-257

<sup>70</sup> Wolfgang Braunsfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe: the architecture of the Orders*, trans. Alastair Lang (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 1972) p 192

<sup>71</sup> Helmut Hatzfeld *Santa Teresa de Ávila* New York 1969

<sup>72</sup> op cit p. 35

<sup>73</sup> Jodi Bilinkof, *The Ávila of Saint Teresa*, Cornell University Press (1989)

<sup>74</sup> Clerical concubinage was common in late medieval Ávila, as it was in Europe generally.

<sup>75</sup> Op cit p. 52

<sup>76</sup> "the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says." (I Corinthians 14.34ff). "The women likewise must be serious, no slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things." (I Timothy 2.11).

- <sup>77</sup> op cit p. 33
- <sup>78</sup> The italicised lines were crossed out in the first draft manuscript.
- <sup>79</sup> *Tratado de oración* 14.2, p143
- <sup>80</sup> *Instrucción de novicias* 1, pp 26 and 22
- <sup>81</sup> Op cit pp 142ff
- <sup>82</sup> op cit p. 107
- <sup>83</sup> op cit p. 128
- <sup>84</sup> Juan de la Cruz, *Cántico* B 13.4
- <sup>85</sup> *Instrucción* 2, p. 44
- <sup>86</sup> op cit p. 68. Teresa's *Constituciones* order a period of reading: "En acabando vísperas, el tiempo que se dicen a las dos, se tenga una hora de lección..." *Constituciones* (Obras p. 1213).
- <sup>87</sup> *Instrucción* 3, p. 162
- <sup>88</sup> op cit p. 164
- <sup>89</sup> op cit p. 184
- <sup>90</sup> op cit p. 194
- <sup>91</sup> Javier Herrero suggests the influence of chivalric romance in "The Knight and the Mystical Castle", *Studies in Formative Spirituality* 4, 1983: 393-407
- <sup>92</sup> *Instrucción* pp 45ff
- <sup>93</sup> *Obras* p.1302ff
- <sup>94</sup> *Instrucción* p. 61
- <sup>95</sup> op cit p. 77
- <sup>96</sup> Miguel Asín Palacios, *El simit de los castillos y moradas del alma en la mística islámica y en Santa Teresa*, (El Andalus, II, (1946) pp 263-274).
- <sup>97</sup> Luce Lopez-Baralt, *Santa Teresa de Jesús y el Islam* *Teresianum* XXXIII, (1982), pp 629-678
- <sup>98</sup> op cit p. 634
- <sup>99</sup> op cit p. 658
- <sup>100</sup> Gareth Davies, 'St Teresa and the Jewish Question', in *Teresa and her world*, ed. Margaret Rees, Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds, (1981), pp 51-73
- <sup>101</sup> Deirdre Green *Gold in the crucible*, Element Books, Dorset, 1989 p. 118ff
- <sup>102</sup> Teresa cites Francisco de Osuna in *Vida* 4.7 and Bernardino de Laredo (1482-1540) in *Vida* 23.12 and *Moradas* 4;3,2
- <sup>103</sup> St Augustine and St Gregory were considered to be standard spiritual authorities during the centuries before Teresa, as this extract from Berceo shows:  
Las aves que organan entre estos fructales,  
Que an las dulces voces, dicen cantos leales,  
Estos son Agustint, Gregorio, otros tales  
Quantos que escrivieron los sos fechos reales. (*Milagros* p.8).
- <sup>104</sup> Teresa mentions reading El Cartujano: "Estaba un día, víspera del Espíritu Santo, después de misa. Fuime a una parte bien apartada adonde yo rezaba muchas veces, y comencé a leer un Cartujano esta fiesta." (*Vida* 38,9). *Vita Christi* was translated into Spanish c.1502 by Ambrosio de Montesinos.
- <sup>105</sup> "If a man loves me, he will keep my word."
- <sup>106</sup> "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me."
- <sup>107</sup> Psalmus 68.22: "They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."
- <sup>108</sup> Psalmus 21.17ff: "they have pierced my hands and my feet, I can count all my bones...and for my raiment they cast lots."
- <sup>109</sup> García de la Concha, *El arte literario de Santa Teresa* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1978)
- <sup>110</sup> Terence O'Reilly, *St John of the Cross and the traditions of monastic exegesis*, ed. Margaret Rees, Leeds Papers on Saint John of the Cross, (Leeds: Trinity and All Saints College, 1991) pp 105-126
- <sup>111</sup> E. Allison Peers, *Complete works of Saint Teresa of Jesus*, Volume II, page 352.

<sup>112</sup> The 1559 Index banned all vernacular translations of the Scriptures and all vernacular guides to prayer and devotion, including works by Luis de Granada, San Juan de Ávila, and San Pedro de Alcántara.

<sup>113</sup> These penitential practices are described in detail in *Vida* 27.16-20

<sup>114</sup> *op cit* p. 209

<sup>115</sup> *ibid* p. 212

<sup>116</sup> *ibid* p. 210

<sup>117</sup> A further image of a robe of righteousness being given is found in *Vida* 38.13

<sup>118</sup> Compare also Psalm 42.1 "As the deer pants for streams of water so my soul pants for you, o God".

<sup>119</sup> Another example of the transmission of biblical texts through the recitation of the Divine Office, and of the Liturgy for Saints' Days.

<sup>120</sup> Teresa refers to the difficulties involved in the first chapter of *Cantares*: "... qué tan gran Dios y Señor tenemos, que una palabra suya tendrá en sí mil misterios, y así su principio no entendemos nosotras. Así si estuviera en latín o en hebraico o en griego, no era maravilla; mas en nuestro romance qué de cosas hay en los salmos del glorioso rey David, que cuando nos declaran el romance solo, tan oscuro nos queda como el latín." (*Cantares* 1.2).

<sup>121</sup> A further example of the transmission of biblical texts during the Divine Office (Prime).

<sup>122</sup> Jean Jacquier, *The Love of Learning and the desire for God*, tr. Catherine Misrahi (London: SPCK, 1978 New York: Fordham University Press, 1961), pp. 106, 108.

<sup>123</sup> It is interesting to note that in 1572 Fray Luis de León was arrested and imprisoned by the Inquisition. One of the reasons for his arrest was that he had made a vernacular translation of the Song.

<sup>124</sup> *Moradas* 7.9

<sup>125</sup> Teresa also quotes Song 2.4 in *Moradas* 5;1,12

<sup>126</sup> *Song* 1.1 (Noche oscura 2.20,2); *Song* 2.3 (*Cántico A* 33.5 with vernacular translation: "debajo de la sombra de aquel que había deseado me asenté, y su fruto es dulce a mi garganta"); *Song* 2.4 (*Cántico A* 17.5 with vernacular translation: "Metíome dentro de la bodega secreta y ordenó en mí caridad").



## CHAPTER 2

### The meaning of "oración" in the writings of St Teresa

#### Introduction

The opening words of *Libro de la vida* of St Teresa of Ávila set the scene and context from which eventually emerge some of the finest creative literature on mystical prayer experiences ever written in Christendom. Teresa did not set out to write great works of religious and imaginative literature. She acted in obedience to her confessors and religious directors who had ordered her to write down what she claimed to have experienced: "... como me han mandado y dado larga licencia para que escriba el modo de oración y mercedes que el Señor me ha hecho..." (*Vida*, prólogo, 1,1).

To understand the imagery Santa Teresa employs in trying to describe her spiritual experiences, as she had been ordered to do, it is necessary to consider thoughtfully what she means by "oración". The translation "prayer" does not adequately cover the depth of meaning and significance of the term "oración" in Teresa's writings, much of which is focussed on "oración" as a process of mystical experience and its effects on both body and soul. The process of "oración" has its own pattern of growth and development, as well as having a variety of effects on the human being who practices and experiences "oración". So it is not a simple task, as Teresa is well aware, to define "oración", any more than it is to describe its effects:

Pocas cosas que me ha mandado la obediencia se me han  
hecho tan dificultosas como escribir ahora cosas de oración:  
(*Moradas*, Prólogo 1)

The initial stages of the process of “oración” involve meditation and petition, and these are features common to what is generally known and understood by the term “prayer”. In his Spanish language dictionary published in 1613, Sebastián de Covarrubias, (1539-1613 ), a near contemporary of Teresa, gives a simple definition of “oración”: “Latine ORATIO, omnis locutio, comúnmente lo tomamos por las deprecaciones que hacemos a Dios”.<sup>1</sup> Three centuries later the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* reflects a similar definition: “Súplica, deprecación, ruego que se hace a Dios y a los santos. Elevación de la mente a Dios para alabarle o pedirle mercedes”.<sup>2</sup> For Teresa, however, such a simple definition would only apply to the starting point or first stage of what she understands by “oración”. Not being an academically trained theologian, which she could not have been, Teresa naturally had a layperson’s awareness of spoken and written prayer such as is acquired from listening to sermons and confessors, and from spiritual conversation and reading.<sup>3</sup> But the vocal repetition of the Catholic Church’s prayers and teaching is the least important aspect of Teresa’s understanding and experience of prayer. She was fully aware of the effects and limitations of her orthodox education where subjects such as prayer were concerned, as comments like the following indicate: “así como los pájaros que enseñan a hablar no saben más de lo que les muestran u oyen y esto repiten muchas veces, soy yo al pie de la letra” (*Moradas*, Prólogo 2).

To understand what Teresa means by “oración”, as conveyed through the imagery in her descriptions of her divinely granted mystical experience, we have to bear in mind, first of all, that Teresa understands the term

"oración" in a conventional Roman Catholic way. More importantly, however, we must also take into account that Teresa's own experiences go beyond, and leave behind, traditional dogmatic definitions of "oración", and therefore she has to create her own system of elaborated images to explain her mystical experiences. Through that individually elaborated system of images she expresses her personal understanding of the meaning and nature of "oración". Teresa believes that her experiences come directly from God; the way she portrays them, however, comes from her own literary talent. She does, however, make a distinction between God's words and her own. As "oración" is, in her own experience, a (spiritual) process which grows, develops and matures, so her imagery through which she records her experience of "oración", is itself a (literary) process which grows, develops and matures. The complex processes of her mystical experiences are encapsulated in and transmitted to the reader through a similarly complex process of literary imagery. The process or progress of her imagery, like that of "oración" itself, in its spiritual development, begins in simplicity and grows into profound maturity.

For Teresa, in accordance with Roman Catholic teaching, "oración" usually begins with the mind consciously setting out to meditate on spiritual matters. This is an accepted part of the Catholic understanding of the process of "oración". Of course, the human mind has finite limitations, and cannot comprehend the infinite, but, at least, it can attempt the task, as Teresa says, within its own capabilities: "Apenas deben llegar nuestros entendimientos, por agudos que fuesen, a comprenderla (el alma), así como no pueden llegar a considerar a Dios" (*Moradas* 1.1;1).

### The stages of "oración"

The various stages of prayer referred to by Teresa and other writers on the practice of mental prayer are tentative guides to a widely ranging process rather than accurate, definitive, all-inclusive definitions. There have been many attempts by various writers to formulate schemes, but the boundaries and borders between different stages as described by different writers are flexible and overlapping. Teresa's mapping of the process and practice of "oración" is equally flexible and the resulting scheme is no less complex. However it is useful to have a general overview of her understanding of the process, and to try to fit together the stages that she refers to in her works.

The process of "oración" begins with meditation, which has both active and passive aspects: reflection or reasoning, and affection, or the opening of the heart to the divine.

The next stage is the prayer of recollection in which the soul collects together all the faculties and enters within itself to be with God. It involves detachment from exterior things, by which the senses are withdrawn from exterior stimuli. The soul was understood by the theologians of Teresa's time to have a "higher part", the spirit, including memory, understanding and will, and a "lower part", the animal soul, including five exterior senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell) and the interior senses, imagination and fancy.<sup>4</sup>

From the prayer of recollection the praying soul goes through the way of purgation, which is a state of awareness of conflict between attachment to the world of senses and yet aspiration to experience the divine. The prayer of recollection and the way of purgation are equivalent to and inclusive of

Teresa's imagery of the first water, the well, (*Vida* 11.9), and the gateway of vocal prayer and meditation, humility (first *moradas*), the practice of prayer (second *moradas*), and meditation, and exemplary life (third *moradas*).

The stage beyond the way of purgation is deemed to be the beginning of the supernatural prayer of Quiet, in which the soul, in a state of receptivity, stillness and inner silence experiences an inner peace, joy and delight; the soul's will cleaves to God's will. The prayer of quiet incorporates the imagery of the second water, the water wheel (*Vida* 14.1), the gently filling water basin, (the ante-room to the fourth *moradas*), and the two water basins filled in different ways (fourth *moradas*).

Beyond the prayer of Quiet is "illumination", the prayer of Union. Normally of brief duration, this state is a foretaste of union as spiritual marriage, "betrothal". The soul in this state enjoys deep, intimate experience of God's presence. There is a sense of an inner transformation taking place, and of the soul looking directly at divine reality. The prayer of union is roughly equivalent to the imagery of the third waters, the river or spring, and the fourth water, rain, (*Vida* 16.1 and 18.1), and the fifth *moradas*, including the transformation of the silk worm into a butterfly.

Beyond the prayer of Union is the suspension or sleep of the faculties, involving loss of normal surface consciousness, beyond that stage lies the wound of love or pain of God, an awareness of separation and sinfulness, and yet an awareness of a longing for God. It is a form of purification through suffering. The trials and dark night of the spirit are roughly the

sixth *moradas*. From this point on occur phenomena such as rapture, ecstacy, trance and flight of the spirit.

The final stage is described as spiritual marriage. An inner peace is experienced which impels the soul to outward works. This stage is equivalent to the seventh *moradas*, in which the Trinity is revealed, and where there is a state of permanent peace, a sense of incorporation and indissolubility (expressed through Teresa's imagery of the river running into the sea, and the light of two windows going into one room).

# I

## "Oración" as communication between the physical/spiritual nature of Man and the spiritual nature of God

The initial stages of "oración" involve the active exercise of the mind in a meditative consideration of spiritual matters. The mind tries to understand what it considers, even if the task is impossible to accomplish. Teresa explains the reason for the impossibility: "puesto que hay la diferencia de él a Dios que del Criador a la criatura, pues es criatura" (*Moradas* 1.1;1), an ontological reason very marked in the teaching of San Juan de la Cruz. The mind therefore engages itself in the attempt to know God and know itself. Teresa, again, points out the extreme difficulty of even trying to understand itself: "¿No es pequeña lástima y confusión que por nuestra culpa no entendamos a nosotros mismos ni sepamos quién somos?" (*Moradas* 1,1:2)

The Catholic Church understands God to be pure spirit, invisible to physical perception. A human is understood to be both a physical and spiritual being, but the human tendency to sin means that the balance is weighted heavily towards the physical, so that there has to be a conscious effort made to activate the faculties of the spirit. Teresa highlights the way in which the physical dominates the early stages of spiritual activity:

¿No sería gran ignorancia, hijas mías, que preguntasen a uno quién es y no se conociese ni supiese quién fue su padre ni su madre ni de qué tierra? Pues si esto sería gran bestialidad, sin comparación es mayor la que hay en nosotras cuando no procuramos saber qué cosa somos, sino que nos detenemos en estos cuerpos y así a bulto, porque lo hemos oído y porque nos lo dice la fe, sabemos que tenemos almas. (*Moradas* 1,1;2)

One of the problems of “oración” is the way in which the weakness of one’s individual person – both spiritual and physical – detracts from the search for truth about oneself and God. The soul, as it engages in an exploration of its own spiritual ways, through which it attempts to experience and explore the spiritual nature of God, has to struggle to escape the constraints of bodily matters. Often the human being is too busy with the physical dimension to allow the soul to explore its spiritual nature.

Teresa explains, through imagery : “Todo se nos va en la grosería del engaste o cerca de este castillo, que son estos cuerpos” (*Moradas* 1.1,2)

“Oración”, though it is a developmental process of spiritual experience, begins with an awareness that the human being is body and spirit. Both aspects have to be addressed and managed for the soul to progress in and through “oración”. There has to be a balance between the recognition of the physicality and the appreciation of the spirituality of human existence so that both these aspects of humanity reach their full potential. Teresa is

not denigrating the physical aspects of human existence. She is recognising that the human being, marred by the Fall and the consequent propensity to sinfulness, is both body and soul, and she points out that human beings are not angels; they have bodies.<sup>5</sup> Teresa is aware that the body in its weaknesses and its strengths has to be taken into consideration. A sister may be sick, and so the hours of prayer should be adapted or changed.<sup>6</sup> It may be better to go for a walk in the country, or take rest and food.<sup>7</sup> She is therefore aware of the genuine need to respect physical functions and requirements, while stressing that we should not pander to bodily appetites at the expense of the spiritual soul:

Dios nos libre, hermanas, cuando algo hiciéremos no perfecto decir "No somos ángeles", "no somos santas"; mirad que aunque no lo somos, es gran bien pensar, si nos esforzamos, lo podríamos ser, dándonos Dios la mano (*Camino de perfección* 16.12).

Another point made by Teresa as being important to remember in connection with "oración" is that individual human beings are different and have different needs. Different souls have different experiences, and each individual soul is a castle made up of millions of rooms (*Moradas* 1.2,12). "Oración", therefore, encompasses potentially, for everyone who embarks upon it, a virtually infinite number of experiences. Teresa points out:

quizá será Dios servido pueda por ella daros algo a entender de las mercedes que es Dios servido hacer a las almas y las diferencias que hay en ellas hasta donde yo hubiere entendido que es posible; que todas será imposible entenderlas nadie, según son muchas (*Moradas* 1.1,3).

Teresa frequently stresses the infinite variety and richness of spiritual experience to be attained by a soul embarking on "oración". The glory of God is so far in excess of anything experienced in the bodily dimension that



it seems as if the soul is imprisoned in bodily exile. Teresa suggests that it is "oración" that is the key that can free the soul from its bodily prison:

es posible en este destierro comunicarse un tan gran Dios con unos gusanos tan llenos de mal olor y amar una bondad tan buena y una misericordia tan sin tasa (*Moradas* 1.1,3).

The finite physicality of the body is at the opposite end of the scale from the infinite spirituality of God. In her imaginative descriptions, which recognise the dualism of human nature, physical and spiritual, Teresa attempts to show the difference between God and human beings in readily understandable comparisons. For example, he is "un tan gran Dios" compared with ourselves, "gusanos tan llenos de mal olor"<sup>8</sup>.

"Oración", as Santa Teresa shows, is the way of communication between two such absolute opposites. There is a reciprocal dimension in "oración". God calls each person to a mysterious encounter with him, and the human being responds. Communication from human to God can be undertaken in two stages. In the first stage, the soul must get to "know itself". Then, in the second stage, the soul can "speak" directly to God. In describing the first stage, in which the soul gets to know itself, Teresa uses, most notably, the image of the soul as a castle – an image we shall discuss in chapter IV which is entered by the gate of "oración":

Pues tornando a nuestro hermoso y deleitoso castillo, hemos de ver cómo podremos entrar en él ..... este castillo es el ánima (*Moradas* 1.1,5).

Through the process of "oración" the human soul has changed from being a "gusano tan lleno de mal olor", associated with the ugly vermin outside the castle, into something "hermoso y deleitoso". The image of the ugly worm being transformed in the cocoon and emerging as a beautiful butterfly will

become the literary figure through which Teresa chooses to convey this whole indescribable process of “oración” and its effect in transforming the soul.<sup>9</sup> The transformation of the silkworm involves a process within the physical, biological world, but Teresa rightly sees in it an image that portrays both the Catholic concept of the resurrection of the dead, and of the transformation undergone by the human soul in the spiritual world through the process of “oración”. So the spiritual process of “oración” somehow restores the lost “image and likeness of God” in the soul.<sup>10</sup>

“Oración” involves both having and further acquiring self-knowledge, together with growing in the humility to appreciate the greatness of God in comparison to the insignificance and fragility of human existence. “Oración” therefore provides the means of entry into one’s inner soul: “la puerta para entrar en este castillo es la oración y consideración” (*Moradas* 1.1,7). Here, Teresa emphasises the effort made by the human intellect to meditate – “consideración” – and in so doing, clarifies the important unity between vocal prayer and mental prayer. When “oración” involves talking to God – “con ser de natural tan rica y poder tener su conversación no menos que con Dios” (*Moradas* 1.1,6) – the words must be accompanied by thought, otherwise the words are empty and meaningless:

... no digo más mental que vocal; que, como sea oración, ha de ser con consideración; porque el que no advierte con quién habla y lo que pide y a quién, no la llamo yo oración aunque mucho menee los labios ... Mas quien tuviese de costumbre hablar con la Majestad de Dios como hablaría con su esclavo, que ni mira si dice mal, sino lo que se le viene a la boca y tiene deprendido por hacerlo otras veces, no la tengo por oración ni plega a Dios que ningún cristiano la tenga de esta suerte (*Moradas* 1.1,7).

Clearly, then, Teresa understands “oración” to include the idea of the soul communicating with God through words, but her concept of “oración” is

wider than vocal prayer. Physically uttered words are not enough. To escape from the prison of the body ("bestialidad"), the soul, in humility, must consider ("considerar") the vast difference between itself and its Creator. Prayer without thought (e.g. the mindless, mechanical repetition of a formula of words) expels the soul outside the castle back among the vermin: "es harto bueno para no caer en semejante bestialidad" (*Moradas* 1.1,7). There is a clear distinction made here between the concepts of being "inside" and of being "outside". The two worlds of the life of "religion inside" the convent, and the life of the "world outside" are paralleled in Teresa's experience of "oración". The experience of the soul in "oración", becomes a means of release, or escape, from the confines and finitude of human physical existence (the natural life of the body) into the realms of the infinite spaciousness of the spiritual world of God.

The contrast between the dignity of the prayerful soul and the bestial vermin outside the castle shows to what extent Teresa understands prayer to be a life-giving process. Prayer ennobles, beautifies, strengthens and above all enlivens the soul. Teresa highlights this by the contrasting image of a soul without prayer as not functioning properly, rather like a paralysed body, a physical state with which she had had direct experience<sup>11</sup>:

Decíame, poco ha, un gran letrado que son las almas que no tienen oración como un cuerpo con perlesía o tullido que aunque tiene pies y manos no los puede mandar (*Moradas* 1.1,6).

This is a significant image from which Teresa develops the idea of the movement, or flight of the spirit, which is a movement variously perceived as being upwards and outwards towards God, as well as being a penetration through the inner recesses of the soul deep into the innermost chamber

where God resides. A soul without “oración” is crippled, and is unable to make the necessary movements to progress towards His presence without the direct intervention of God. Teresa alludes (in *Moradas* 1.1,8) to the Gospel account (John 5) of the man who had been unable to move forward into the healing pool of water; his cure came when Jesus intervened directly. The man is near the water for so long, and yet he cannot move into it by his own effort or will until God acts to enable him. For Teresa, this story exemplifies the soul’s dependency on God to give it the grace which it needs to experience the health and wholeness of the spiritual life. “Oración” is the inner desire for movement towards the waters of God’s being. God, as and when he wishes, enables the soul to enter those waters which bring it to wholeness of life.

## II

“Oración” as productive of spiritual impetus to achieve the paradoxical union of opposites (the human and divine)

The Christian tradition of spirituality has always included the idea of pilgrimage, or life as a journey, involving movement from one place to another, better, location. The earliest Jewish faith experiences, from Abraham on, involved movement to the Promised Land. In Teresa’s

experience of "oración", there is a parallel process, a "movement" of the spirit, expressed through terminology borrowed from the world of physical and spatial movement. Because the language of movement is itself a metaphor, all movement is paradoxical – ascent and descent, moving outside and within, are the same process. Likewise "Oración" involves a complex process of possible movements. The soul can move inside itself, and so towards God "within itself". It can equally move towards its centre, upwards and outwards towards God outside and "beyond itself". This movement of the soul through "oración" is a learning process of spiritual growth and development. In parallel to the life of the body, the soul is fed and nourished, increases in wisdom and stature, grows and develops, but it can also regress and fall backwards at any stage in the process.

At what is still an early stage in its extended and demanding journey, the soul "enters" itself: "harto hacen en haber entrado" (*Moradas* 1.1,8). To do so requires effort of thought, will and desire. Even in its initial stages "oración" involves such effort, but the rewards granted by God are not dispensed in proportion to, or because of the effort expended. There has to be a cooperation between the soul and God; the soul cannot acquire rewards simply from its own endeavours. The soul must be joined spiritually with God for any of its works to be good works. If there is no communion and interaction with the source of goodness, the "works" of a soul are without real value.

As "oración" must be accompanied by thought and desire for it to be effective, likewise works, to be "buenas obras", must be accompanied by "oración", i.e. the desire to be united with God, the desire to bring the two

extremes of the human and divine into communion. "Oración", as a movement from the human to God, must, therefore, involve a cleansing action to eradicate sin, so that the sinful human being can be united with the perfect being of God – to achieve, as we shall show, the ultimate paradox of uniting two incompatible extremes: the human with the Divine. The image of the ugly worm transformed mysteriously in the cocoon to emerge as a beautiful butterfly is a brilliant literary way of expressing the paradox.<sup>12</sup>

Using the biblical expression of humility, "I am a worm and no man"; "Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo" (Psalm 21.7), Teresa contrasts the ugliness of the worm with the beauty of the butterfly. And yet, mysteriously, the latter emerges from the former. The image incorporates the idea of the ugliness of sin and the beauty of holiness and the way in which the former can be transformed into the latter. A sinful soul when washed by the waters of baptism is transformed into a soul in the state of divine grace. The beginning (sin) and the end (grace) are seemingly incompatible, and yet a mysterious process of transformation is possible. This is a reverse re-reading of the Genesis narrative, in which in the beginning the human being is in a perfect state of grace and communion with God, and goes through a transformation (sin and the fall) to become a sinful human being, excluded from paradise and perfect communion with God, and subject to decay and death. In Teresa's image, the ugly worm (the sinful human) undergoes a process of disappearance and death in the cocoon ("oración") to emerge as a beautiful butterfly (the human soul experiencing the paradise of God's presence).

Water images are significantly used and elaborated by Teresa to convey the movement or thought progress of the soul's "oración" to the paradoxical achievement of union. One example will suffice here.<sup>13</sup> She brings together several aspects of her thinking on the nature of "oración" in this composite image:

así como de una fuente muy clara lo son todos los arroyicos que salen de ella, como es un alma que está en gracia que de aquí le viene ser sus obras tan agradables a los ojos de Dios y de los hombres porque proceden de esta fuente de vida ... (*Moradas* 1.2,2)<sup>14</sup>

Teresa repeatedly makes clear the fact that there is much more to "oración" than human activity or even effort of will. As well as the visible activity of nuns saying their community and personal vocal prayers, there has to be the invisible activity of God within the human soul, responding to its prayerful sincerity and humility:

porque siempre oímos cuán es la oración y tenemos de Constitución tenerla tantas horas y no se nos declara más de lo que podemos nosotras; y de cosas que obra el Señor en un alma declárase poco, digo sobrenatural. (*Moradas* 1.2,7)

For Teresa, included in the effort of "oración" is always the element of asking or petitioning God for grace, and to be delivered from evil. Teresa quotes the scriptural warning (Psalm 127) that unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain: "Esto es, hijas, de lo que hemos de andar temerosas y lo que hemos de pedir a Dios en nuestras oraciones, porque si él no guarda la ciudad en vano trabajaremos". (*Moradas* 1.2,5). For Teresa, in its search for, or pilgrimage towards, God at its centre, the soul is a vast complex of rooms, "las moradas", within which movement is possible between them in all directions, upwards, downwards, inwards

and outwards. Teresa says that this freedom of movement, achieved by the enabling power of "oración", is important:

Esto importa mucho a cualquier alma que tenga oración, poca o mucha; que no la arrincone ni apriete; déjela andar por estas moradas arriba y abajo y a los lados. (*Moradas* 1.2,8)

"Oración" enables the soul to attain self-knowledge as it progresses with humility on its exploratory journey towards God, though that is only one of its goals. If the soul's desire to know God leads to self-knowledge, it is also true that its desire to know itself leads to a knowledge of God, as Teresa points out:

Mirando su grandeza, acudamos a nuestra bajeza y mirando su limpieza veremos nuestra suciedad; considerando su humildad veremos cuán lejos estamos de ser humildes. (*Moradas* 1.2,9)

On its journey of "oración", meditating and contemplating and observing as it seeks out God, the soul does not remain cool and dispassionate, its search is a very intimate and passionate activity. The goal of "oración" is union which Teresa, like San Juan, and other mystics, describes in explicitly sexual imagery. This use of sexual imagery to convey the soul's love for God and His for the soul derives principally from centuries of exegesis and theological reflection on the nuptial imagery of the Song of Songs, and also from the Old Testament idea and Hebrew idiom that "knowledge" is sexual intercourse – "Adam vero cognovit ("conoció") uxorem suam Hevam; quae concepit et peperit ...".<sup>15</sup> Teresa uses this imagery to clarify what she means by "oración" and its purpose. In human sexual activity, erotic desire leads to intercourse, and intercourse leads to the production of a child. Teresa sees in the process of "oración" a parallel to human sexual desire and its fulfilment. The passionate desire of the soul



to contemplate and know God leads to God-given union between the soul and God (the bride and Bridegroom). The outcomes of the union are “buenas obras”, in the sense that the fruit of prayer is apostolic action. The fruits of Teresa’s own union with God through “oración” included, for example, the foundation of reformed convents throughout Spain.

“Oración” for Teresa is also searching for spiritual perfection, a concept which Teresa defines clearly:

Entendamos, hijas mías, que la perfección verdadera es amor de Dios y del prójimo y mientras con más perfección guardáramos estos dos mandamientos seremos más perfectas. (*Moradas* 1.2, 17)<sup>16</sup>

As such it involves the “determinación”, that is the determined effort to escape from the “culebras y cosas emponzoñosas” that surround the exterior of the castle where the door is, and can even enter into the first few moradas to disturb the soul’s tranquility, distracting it from its purpose.

For Teresa, “oración” involves listening as well as looking. She describes the difference between the soul in the “Moradas primeras” where it is both deaf and dumb and in the “Moradas segundas” where it is dumb. The closer the soul gets to God, the more it needs to listen for his voice:

con todo esto, tiene en tanto esto Señor nuestro que le queramos y procuremos su compañía que una vez u otra no nos deja de llamar para que nos acerquemos a él; y es esta voz tan dulce que se deshace la pobre alma en no hacer luego lo que la manda; y, así como digo, es más trabajo que no lo oír. (*Moradas* 2.1, 2)

Listening is an important part of “oración”. Teresa uses the term loosely to include listening for the voice of God, not only in the supernatural sense of “auditions”, but also, in the early stages of “oración”, to refer to messages from God within sermons and spiritual conversations:

No digo que son estas voces y llamamientos como otras que diré después, sino con palabras que oyen a gente buena sermones o con lo

que leen en buenos libros y cosas muchas que habéis oído por donde llama Dios o enfermedades, trabajos, y también con una verdad que enseña en aquellos ratos que estamos en la oración, sea cuan flojamente quisieréis, tiénelos Dios en mucho. (*Moradas* 2.1,3)

“Oración” also requires “perseverancia y buenos deseos”, because it is often accompanied by pain and discomfort, physical and spiritual, which Teresa attributes to the works of the Devil. Teresa records that it gets worse as the soul proceeds closer to the inner mansions, because the Devil is more active and the soul more sensitive to the call of God and its own fragility of spirit, tempted and distracted by the things of the world such as honours, friends and relatives. The consequence is the spiritual anguish described by Teresa as “baraúnda” and “batería” (*Moradas* 2.1, 3 & 4). So persistence in “oración” leads to a battle, in which body and soul are engaged against the forces of darkness in their advance towards light. In this battle the soul, as understood in classical theology, brings to bear its faculties (intellect/mind/understanding, memory and will):

La fe le enseña cuál es lo que le cumple; la memoria le representa en lo que paran todas estas cosas ... La voluntad se inclina a amar ... en especial se le pone delante cómo nunca se quita de con él este verdadero amador, acompañándole, dándole vida y ser. Luego el entendimiento acude con darle a entender que no puede cobrar mejor amigo”. (*Moradas* 2.1,4)<sup>17</sup>

“Oración”, as Teresa emphasises, is not only travelling towards God, it is travelling with him – in Christian terms, accompanying Christ on his ascent of Calvary, and helping to carry the cross, suffering pain with him and for him:

abrazaos con la cruz que vuestro Esposo llevó sobre sí y entended que ésta ha de ser vuestra empresa: la que más pudiese padecer, que padezca más por El y será la mejor librada. (*Moradas* 2.1,7)

"Oración" involves an attitude of mind which is becoming receptive to God's will. Carrying the cross is an acceptance of God's will:

Toda la pretensión de quien comienza oración — y no se os olvide esto, que importa mucho — ha de ser trabajar y determinarse y disponerse con cuantas diligencias pueda a hacer su voluntad conformar con la de Dios y, como diré después, estad muy cierta que en esto consiste toda la mayor perfección que se puede alcanzar en el camino espiritual. (*Moradas* 2.1,8)

While some degree of progress along the spiritual path can be achieved by contact with other people ("hace mucho al caso tratar con personas experimentadas", *Moradas* 2.1, 10), throughout the soul's journey it is God who guides and draws the soul towards him ("todo lo guiará el Señor a nuestro provecho", *Moradas* 2.1,10).

"Oración" is a process which involves falls and failures, and as progress is made, demonic opposition and human weakness increase, but as long as the "edificio" of "oración" is built on firm foundations, and not sand, the work will prosper in the face of ever-increasing obstacles ("que es peor la recaída que la caída", *Moradas* 2.1,9). Teresa stresses the idea that all these difficulties and setbacks are no reason not to embark on the journey of "oración". For life without prayer is a far worse situation to be in than having to negotiate any of the many hard obstacles encountered along the spiritual ascent:

Podría alguna pensar que si tanto mal es tornar atrás que mejor será nunca comenzar lo sino estarse fuera del castillo. Ya os dije al principio y el mismo Señor lo dice: que quien anda en el peligro en él peca, y que la puerta para entrar en este castillo es oración, pues pensar que hemos de entrar en el cielo y no entrar en nosotros conociéndonos y considerando nuestra miseria y lo que debemos a Dios y pidiéndole muchas veces misericordia es desatino. (*Moradas* 2.1,11)

“Oración” is a process of progress towards perfection which requires humble perseverance and selfless determination because of all the “caídas”, and dangers of the journey, but God will draw the soul towards a safe haven where the distractions which cause falls from grace have no effect:

confíen en la misericordia de Dios y no nada en sí y verán cómo su Majestad le lleva de unas moradas a otras y le mete en la tierra adonde estas fieras ni le puedan tocar ni cansar sino que él las sujete a todas y burle de ellas y goce de muchos más bienes que podría desear, aun en esta vida digo. (*Moradas* 2.1,9)

## III

"Oración" as experience

As progress is made, God provides gifts to the soul which are divine, and can only be perceived by its sharpened spiritual sensitivity. The soul has its own independent capacity to experience or feel in a way parallel to, though essentially distinct from and superior to, the natural, bodily, physical capacity to feel or experience. Although the human being can use the combined faculties of body and soul to initiate the search for God, and show desire and intention to progress, it is God who gives these gifts and sharpens the spiritual awareness of the recipient. It is such "experiencias" which Teresa and other "personas experimentadas" have received that Teresa, through her own choice of imagery, attempts to describe and the imagery she uses helps us to understand at least something of what she has experienced in her soul. "Oración" involves a spiritual ascent to God. The soul must initiate it by thought and meditation, but it is God who grants, as a gift of spiritual experience, contemplation and any such movement beyond the soul's initial desire to seek him:

El mismo Señor dice: ninguno subirá a mi Padre sino por mí....y quien me ve a mí ve mi Padre. Pues si nunca le miramos ni consideramos lo que le debemos y la muerte que pasó por nosotros, no sé cómo le podemos conocer ni hacer obras en su servicio, porque la fe sin ellas y sin ir llegadas al valor de los merecimientos de Jesucristo, bien nuestro, ¿qué valor pueden tener ni quién nos despertará a amar a este Señor? (*Moradas* 2.1,11)

The various elements of Teresa's understanding and experiential feeling of "oración" which will determine and characterise the system of images she elaborates to convey them, are evident here: the idea of ascent ("subir"),

looking for and looking at God, (“mirar”), meditating (“considerar”), faith (“fe”) and works (“obras”), and the awakening of love (“despertar a amar”). Outside the castle the world, the flesh and the devil attack the soul’s spiritual integrity. The soul needs protection. In Teresa’s writings, “oración” is, in itself, a protection:

Hemos menester obrar para gozar su gloria y que para esto nos es necesario orar para no andar siempre en tentación. (*Moradas* 2.1,11)

It is interesting that the verb “gozar” in Spanish often has overtones of sexual pleasure even when it does not refer directly to sexual intercourse as a pleasurable experience. Teresa’s use of “gozar” here relates to the imagery of the divine marriage and its consummation which she uses to convey the spiritual experience of union with the divine Being attainable through “oración”.

“Oración”, as Teresa perceives it, is an on-going process through life, which can be given up at any stage, and resumed. So there is an ebb and flow of spiritual experience, and different degrees of spiritual enjoyment are attained at different stages in one’s life and spiritual development. Teresa refers to a time when she interrupted her practice of “oración” for a time: “yo andaba tan destruida y sin oración ..... dijele que ya no tenía oración (*Vida* 7.11). It is also an activity that can be encouraged in others. Teresa once gave such encouragement to her father:

Como quería tanto a mi padre, deseábale con el bien que yo me parecía tenía con tener oración – que me parecía que en esta vida no podía ser mayor que tener oración – ; y así, por rodeos, comencé a procurar con él la tuviese. Dile libros para este propósito. (*Vida* 7.10)

Upon mature and informed reflection, Teresa, of course, advises against giving it up, and recommends perseverance, despite obstacles and failures,

because God is potentially within the soul at all times: "Pedidle, hijas mías, que viva su Majestad en mí siempre" (*Moradas* 3.1,3). She advises equally against complacency. Nuns in a convent might think, wrongly, that they have the advantage because they are enclosed, away from the world, and that somehow they are exempt from the pitfalls of the outside world:

ni hagáis caso del encerramiento y penitencia en que vivís, ni os asegure el tratar siempre de Dios y ejercitaros en la oración tan continuo y estar tan retiradas de las cosas del mundo y tenerlas, a vuestro parecer, aborrecidas. Bueno es todo esto, mas no basta, como he dicho, para que dejemos de temer (*Moradas* 3.1,4).

"Oración" has to be undertaken by an alert, hard-working soul. It requires effort, determination and commitment. These are the characteristics typical of those who enter the "Moradas terceras". Their attitude and actions in everyday life are disciplined and conscientious, and this gives them a good background for the practice of "oración":

Son muy deseosos de no ofender a su Majestad ni aun de los pecados veniales se guardan y de hacer penitencia amigas; sus horas de recogimiento; gastan bien el tiempo; ejercítanse en obras de caridad con los prójimos muy concertadas en su hablar y vestir y gobierno de casa, las que las tienen (*Moradas* 3.1,5).

Such discipline in daily life results in the right disposition for the practice of "oración", but it is one of Teresa's key ideas that discipline itself will not necessarily result in divine favours and spiritual gifts. That disposition, although a state much to be desired, does not guarantee divine gifts, but merely opens the way to union with God:

Cierto, estado para descár y que, al parecer, no hay por qué se les niegue la entrada hasta la postrera morada, ni se la negará el Señor, si ellas quieren, que linda disposición es para que las haga toda merced (*Moradas* 3.1,5).

Even at this stage in the mystical journey of "oración" experiences range widely from a painful sense of boredom and apparent dryness or sterility, as in the spiritual desert, to the most sublime and indescribable pleasure on the spiritual dimension, derived through the presence of God and the experience of His love. The proportions of this spiritual pleasure are merely hinted at through the use of images suggestive of erotic love and sexual enjoyment.

One of the goal's of "oración" is union with God through which He possesses the soul. This means that the soul is infused by God as it allows itself and wills itself to be entered by God. Teresa, in common with many other mystics, uses imagery of physical, bodily, sexual intercourse to convey the experience of the marriage of the soul with God. Teresa stresses the difference between desiring the experience and actually managing to engage in it:

todas decimos que lo queremos, mas, como aún es menester más para que del todo posea el Señor el alma, no basta decirlo como no bastó al mancebo cuando le dijo el Señor que si quería ser perfecto (*Moradas* 3.1,6).

Of course, there has to be a desire and intention on the part of the soul and love ("amor") for God in order for "oración" to lead to higher mystical experiences:

y este amor, hijas no ha de ser fabricado en nuestra imaginación, sino probado por obras; y no penséis que ha menester nuestras obras, sino la determinación de nuestra voluntad (*Moradas* 3.1,7).

But the practice of "oración" does not in itself guarantee any gifts and favours in the form of a spiritual, mystical relationship with God. There will more likely or often be "sequedades" rather than the waters of divine



grace and favour. But the very practice of "oración" is itself beneficial to the spiritual health of the soul:

el Señor os lo dará a entender para que saquéis de las sequedades humildad y no inquietud, que es lo que pretende el demonio; y creed que, adonde la hay de veras que, aunque nunca dé Dios regalos, dará una paz y conformidad con que anden más contentas que otros con regalos (*Moradas* 3.1,9).

Moreover, "oración" has its practical dimension; it is not simply a passive waiting for "gustos":

no está el negocio en tener hábito de religión o no, sino en procurar ejercitar las virtudes y rendir nuestra voluntad a la de Dios en todo, y que el concierto de nuestra vida sea lo que su Majestad ordenare de ella, y no queramos nosotras que se haga nuestra voluntad sino la suya (*Moradas* 3.2,6).

The practitioner of "oración" must, Teresa warns us, bear in mind human weakness: "Somos amigos de contentos más que de cruz" (*Moradas* 3.1,9).

Teresa advises those who would practise "oración" to be aware of, and guard against such human weakness, and, at the same time, to master it rather than be mastered by it. It must not discourage us.

olvidemos esta flaqueza natural, que nos puede ocupar mucho; el cuidado de estos cuerpos ténganle los prebados .... nosotras, de solo caminar aprisa para ver este Señor (*Moradas* 3.2,8).

"Oración" is the practice of love, in humble obedience to the divine commandment to love God and love one's neighbour.<sup>18</sup> The true measure of "oración" is the degree to which the soul loves in this fashion, and not the quality of the "gustos" received:

no está la perfección en los gustos, sino en quien ama más, y el premio lo mismo, y en quien mejor obrare con justicia y verdad (*Moradas* 3.2,10).

In other words, "oración" should be the practice of seeking unselfishly to follow God's will, by being attentive to it, and conforming to it. To assist

us in pursuing this kind of “oración” Teresa, using an image of flight and ascent, recommends following the good examples of those who are experienced and proficient in it:

porque algunas cosas que nos parecen imposibles, viéndolas en otros tan posibles y con la suavidad que las llevan, anima mucho y parece que con su vuelo nos atrevemos a volar, como hacen los hijos de las aves cuando se enseñan que aunque no es de presto dar un gran vuelo, poco a poco imitan a sus padres (*Moradas* 3,2,12).

This, of course, includes people of spirituality and prayer, as well as canonised Saints. The prayerful study of such lives of grace, can give us inspirational examples to follow.

According to Teresa, between the third and fourth mansions is the point at which the effects and experiences of “oración” become so sublime that they are clearly in the higher realms of spiritual consciousness:

Para comenzar a hablar de las cuartas moradas bien he menester lo que he hecho, que es encomendarme al Espíritu Santo y suplicarle de aquí adelante hable por mí para decir algo de las que quedan de manera que lo entendáis; porque comienzan a ser cosas sobrenaturales y es dificultosísimo de dar a entender, si Su Majestad no lo hace (*Moradas* 4.1,1).

At this stage, “oración” involves a consciously contrived disposition on the part of the soul to wait upon or be sensitive to the action of God, who, according to Teresa, can and does act on or in the soul whenever he wishes. Teresa makes it clear that God is autonomous, and can act outside and beyond human “oración”. So he does not only engage with souls who have prepared themselves and made themselves ready “porque da el Señor cuando quiere y como quiere y a quien quiere” (*Moradas* 4.1,2). Nevertheless, when a soul practises “oración” it benefits from a degree of spiritual preparation for experiencing God’s presence when he comes.

## IV

"Oracion" as conveyed through Teresa's God-given imagery of the higher  
mystical experiences

A fundamental difficulty that Teresa faces is that of explaining in words what goes beyond rational explanation or definition. She has been commanded to write about her experiences, so she has to try to express the inexpressible, and convey in human words these higher states of her spiritual awareness and contact with the Divine. The implication in her writings is that God not only infuses her soul directly with these mystical experiences, but also gives her the means to communicate them to others in written form. Teresa believes that God inspires her to use and develop particular images to convey the nature of these mystical experiences: "Si el Señor quisiere diga algo nuevo, su Majestad lo dará, o será servido traerme a la memoria lo que otras veces he dicho" (*Moradas* Prólogo, 2).

The images are divinely gifted, in keeping and in parallel with the notion of "oración" as "the gift of God"<sup>19</sup>. Teresa's divinely chosen images not only convey the spiritual depth of her experiences, but also tell us something more about the nature of "oración" as it operates on what may be described as the highest mystical levels ("las moradas que quedan"), to which the saint attains.

Teresa takes the view that those who have been granted experiences similar to hers will recognise from the imagery what she is talking about. Those with no experience will find it difficult to understand, but the secrets

of "oración" are conveyed through the imagery. Ultimately, according to Teresa, it is God who decides what each soul will or will not understand of her writings on "oración", just as it is He who decides what each soul will, or will not experience when it engages in "oración".

Through the practice and pursuit of "oración" her soul creates for itself the possibility of experiencing God beyond the usual realms of everyday consciousness, on levels where normal logical reason and normal intellectual perceptions cease to be useful, because these cannot make sense of what the faculties of the soul perceive. This is not to say that "oración" may not start as an intellectual or mental human activity in the normal sense, but in the higher states of mystical experience this type of mental activity may cease, and the soul may become passive and receptive. These ideas have a parallel in the Gospel account of Martha and Mary. Mary sat passively at Jesus' feet, listening receptively to his teaching. Martha was actively distracted with much serving. Jesus' conclusion was that Mary the passive listener had chosen the good portion over and above the activity of Martha. Teresa makes the comment "no está la cosa en pensar mucho, sino en amar mucho" (*Moradas* 4.1,7), indicative of her sense of movement from active to passive modes of prayer.

There is, according to Teresa, no certain progression or set pattern where "oración" is concerned. Indeed, the experience of "oración" involves the shedding of the preconceived ideas and expectations of the human mind in order for the spirit to be sensitive to the apparent randomness it encounters in the higher realms of the mystical journey. It is as if the human mind understands something of the order of God's Creation out of chaos when it

is engaged in normal consciousness, but once the soul moves towards its Creator the mind is faced with the chaos which God alone understands, and in the spiritual dimensions to which the soul aspires in "oración", the human mind becomes deaf, blind and dumb. Again, the Christian idea that God created "ex nihilo" gives a similar picture.<sup>20</sup> The conscious mind is, for example, aware of the story of Creation in Genesis, and the progressive developmental build up from chaos, the creation of light, the bringing of order and the separation of the waters, then the creation of a hierarchy of existence and being, beginning with vegetation, birds in flight, creatures in water, animals on land, then the crowning glory, humans, man and woman. To some extent Teresa appears to use a similar cluster of ideas, but in reverse, to try to explain the soul's return to God in "oración", from the starting point of being a woman engaging body, mind and spirit, then through the imagery of movement, flight, water and light, going back towards that point of chaos, and beyond into the dark mystery of God and the mystery of "nada". Significantly, in Teresa's scheme of "oración", whereas the mind is increasingly numbed, the soul increases its perception and sensitivity; as was noted earlier, the soul in the "Moradas primeras" is deaf and dumb, whereas in the "Moradas segundas" the soul has acquired hearing.

Teresa conveys through her imagery this departure from the realm of the logic and pattern of ordinary consciousness into a state of spiritual consciousness where the unexpected and paradoxical disturb the usual security of the mind. At the gate of the Castle, the "cosas ponzoñasas" which abound there are able to enter with the soul into the first few

"moradas". This shows the initial tensions and conflicts within the soul which desires to move towards God in "oración", and yet is equally tempted and attracted to the things of earthly creation, commonly referred to as the world, the flesh and the devil. In the higher realms of spiritual "oración", there is still a link with the things of the earth, so that the anxieties are still apparent, but their spiritual effects are lessening:

En estas moradas pocas veces entran las cosas ponzoñosas y si entran no hacen daño, antes dejan con ganancia (*Moradas* 4.1,3).

This is a sort of transitional stage between the concerns of a soul still engaged in worldly affairs, and the later stages of "oración" in which the soul has shed such concerns and may even have allowed itself to be taken up into the heavenly realms of union with God, in which the soul accepts unconditionally whatever God wills. There is at this transitional level an inner battle which Teresa welcomes in which the conflicting desires of the soul appear to be under attack from the Devil: "Y tengo por muy mejor cuando entran y dan guerra en este estado de oración" (*Moradas* 4.1,3). "Oración" here brings a consciousness of being pulled in two directions towards God on the one hand and on the other towards the Devil. Augustine spoke of a similar experience: "our heart is restless until it rests in you".<sup>21</sup> This is the spiritual battle due to the weakness of the flesh and the inclination towards evil, called, in Catholic theology, "concupiscence". Within "oración" the soul experiences both the pleasure of Paradise and the pain of Fall.

Teresa clarifies for us further her understanding of "oración" when attempting to differentiate between "gustos" and "contentos". The soul recollects itself and prepares itself by conscious effort. But any feelings

which ensue might be acquired through the usual physical senses – they are not necessarily divine gifts

Pues hablando de lo que dije que diría aquí de la diferencia que hay entre contentos en la oración o gustos, los contentos me parece a mí se pueden llamar los que nosotros adquirimos con nuestra meditación y peticiones a nuestro Señor, que procede de nuestro natural, aunque en fin ayuda para ello Dios, que hase de entender en cuanto dijere que no podemos nada sin él....(*Moradas* 4.1,4).

“Oración” brings both feelings, “gustos” (active gifts) and “contentos” (passive gifts), depending on the situation. “Oración” is a spiritual state in which feelings can originate from ordinary human nature, or from God. Human feelings such as joy, surprise, happiness are different in kind and quality from the feelings which arise in the soul through the grace of God. “.....estos contentos ..... comienzan de nuestro natural mismo y acaban en Dios. Los gustos comienzan de Dios y siéntelos el natural y goza tanto de ellas .....” (*Moradas* 4.1,4).

Teresa conveys through her imagery not only what her experiences are like, but also her conception of “oración”. One of her key ideas on the nature of “oración” involves the relationship between knowledge and love, between thinking and loving:

para aprovechar mucho en este camino y subir a las moradas que deseamos, no está la cosa en pensar mucho sino en amar mucho (*Moradas* 4.1,7).

Thinking (“pensar”), suggests Teresa, represents the earthly aspect of “oración”, or the initial effort involved in engaging in prayer. Loving (“amar”), on the other hand, is a more advanced spiritual state, because it is a putting into obedient practice the Divine Law (“Love God and love your neighbour”). Spiritual loving is an enactment of the will of God, the soul’s stated goal, which combines faith and works. In Catholic theology, love

(or charity) is a theological virtue by which the Christian loves God above all things for God's own sake, and loves neighbour for the love of God.

Quizá no sabemos qué es amar..... porque no está en el mayor gusto, sino en la mayor determinación de desear contentar en todo a Dios y procurar en cuanto pudiéremos no le ofender y rogarle que vaya siempre adelante la honra y gloria de su Hijo y el aumento de la Iglesia católica. Estas son las señales del amor, y no penséis que está la cosa en no pensar otra cosa, y que si os divertís un poco va todo perdido (*Moradas* 4.1,7).

The mystical way that is "oración" therefore involves effort ("determinación", "procurar en cuanto pudiéremos"). Its purpose is not merely to acquire "gustos". It begins with thought, but it is a state that can be independent of thinking. It is possible, for example, for the intellect to be thinking about something completely different while the soul is actually engaged in "oración". Sometimes there are physical consequences in some people who engage in prayer:

Paréceme queda dicho de los consuelos espirituales. Como algunas veces van envueltos con nuestras pasiones traen consigo unos alborotos de sollozos y aún a personas he oído que se les aprieta el pecho y aun vienen a movimientos exteriores, que no se pueden ir a la mano, y es la fuerza de manera que les hace salir sangre de narices y cosas así penosas ..... (*Moradas* 4.2,1).

So the body itself can be affected by the process of "oración" in a variety of ways. But Teresa is always careful to point out that bodily effects are certainly not an essential part of "oración". They do not have any special place in her scheme. Her image of "dos pilones" is a masterly summary of two possibilities within "oración", in which body and soul experiences "gustos", one through activity, the other through passivity:

Los que yo llamo gustos de Dios, que en otra parte lo he nombrado oración de quietud, es muy de otra manera, como entenderéis las que lo habéis probado por la misericordia de Dios. Hagamos cuenta, para entenderlo mejor, que vemos dos fuentes con dos pilas que se hinchen de agua ..... de diferentes maneras; el uno viene de más lejos por



muchos arcaduces y artificio; el otro está hecho en el mismo nacimiento del agua y vase hinchiendo sin ningún ruido .....  
(*Moradas* 4.2, 2&3).<sup>22</sup>

Obviously the "arcaduces" and "ruido" are also evocative of the time and effort put in during "oración" which have their own rewards and effects. But, clearly, the superior "oración" is centred on God ("Estotra fuente viene el agua de su mismo nacimiento, que es Dios"), and these are the "gustos" that come from God, and have an effect on the soul and on the body:

vase revirtiendo este agua por todas las moradas y potencias hasta llegar al cuerpo, que por eso dije que comienza de Dios y acaba en nosotros; que por cierto, como verá quien lo hubiere probado, todo el hombre exterior goza de este gusto y suavidad (*Moradas* 4.2,4).

An important distinction is made here between the activity of the "hombre exterior" and the activity of God in "el mundo interior". "Oración", of course, can involve both types of activity, as the imagery implies: the two fountains signify the two types of activity during "oración". In one, the human being deliberately and intentionally attempts to meet God in prayer, and this way involves reading or focussing the mind on a picture, (i.e. "meditation"). In the second, the soul passively receives the grace of God within itself without the need for this kind of activity, for the greater activity comes from God himself. Teresa's image clarifies the difference concisely: "el uno viene de más lejos por muchos arcaduces y artificio"; "Estotra fuente viene el agua de su mismo nacimiento, que es Dios" (*Moradas* 4.2,4).

It is clear that "oración" is a term which Teresa uses to cover the whole process of the mystical way and its variety. The soul, for Teresa, is a castle with countless rooms ("un millón"), representing the various degrees and states of spiritual sensitivity or consciousness. "Oración" is the means of

entry into the presence of God within the soul. Her own thoughts, as she expresses through an elaboration of the castle image her conception of the mystic way, are accompanied by feelings of awe and wonder at the implications of what she is trying to describe: “pues en nosotros mismos están grandes secretos que no entendemos”; “veo secretos en nosotros mismos que me traen espantada muchas veces”. (*Moradas* 4.2,5)

Teresa uses the image of “widening” or “expanding” in conjunction with water imagery to describe what seems to happen to the soul in certain degrees of prayer. “Oración”, as the gate which opens up entry into the countless rooms of the soul, brings also an ever-widening, ever-extending experience or variety of experiences. The waters of grace are filling the soul:

como comienza a producir aquella agua celestial de este manantial que digo de lo profundo de nosotros, parece que se va dilatando y ensanchando todo nuestro interior y produciendo unos bienes que no se pueden decir, ni aun al alma sabe entender qué es lo que se da allí (*Moradas* 4.2,6).

In referring to expansion Teresa not only describes the spiritual sensation experienced, she gives an almost diagrammatic indication of the way in which the borders of spiritual perception are enlarged in the exercise of “oración” so that the soul’s horizons are widened. In consequence there is an increase in sensitivity for the purely spiritual, which, by definition, has no physical form, but which Teresa has to describe through imagery redolent of human physical sensation and experience:

el calor y humo oloroso penetra todo el alma y aun hartas veces, como he dicho, participa el cuerpo. Mirad, entendedme, que ni se siente calor no se huele olor, que más delicada cosa es que estas cosas ..... y lo entiende el alma más claro que yo lo digo ahora; (*Moradas* 4.2,6).

For Teresa, "oración" is the process in which the soul recognises the two different dimensions of earthly existence and heavenly eternity for what they are, and attempts to move towards being incorporated into the life of God:

por diligencias que hagamos no lo podemos adquirir y en ello mismo se ve no ser de nuestro metal, sino de aquel purísimo oro de la sabiduría divina (*Moradas* 4.2,6).

In the image of the two "fuentes" Teresa drew a clear distinction between the two types or stages of "oración" – one in which there was human industry, the other where the soul was passive. These distinctions, which are more apparent in the initial stages, are blurred as the process of "oración" develops and the soul progresses to higher spiritual levels. There is a process of merging and emerging in which, as the imagery reflects, body and soul are intimately involved.

At, or around, the point at which human experience is differentiated from the experience of the divine, the soul's perception of what it is experiencing becomes as blurred as the distinctions: "Aquí no están las potencias unidas, a mi parecer, sino embebidas y morando, como espantadas, qué es aquello" (*Moradas* 4.2,6). This is the soul in "oración" at the stage between the two "fuentes" as described by Teresa.

In the course of her life and spiritual experiences there is no doubt that a development takes place in Teresa's knowledge of "oración", and therefore in the way in which she attempts to express what it is. Her ideas and images are elaborated to reflect the progress of her understanding of the mystical way. There is a noticeable difference between the way she appears to understand "oración" in her *Vida* (1562 – 1565) as compared and contrasted

with her understanding of "oración" in *Las Moradas* (1577 – 1580). The four waters of the *Vida* have become the two waters of the *Moradas*. Her thinking, and her ability to express her thoughts through literary imagery have matured in *Las Moradas*. Her images become not only more complex, but also more refined as Teresa achieves a clearer understanding of her mystical relationship with God:

Podría ser que en estas cosas interiores me contradiga algo de lo que tengo dicho en otras partes; no es maravilla porque en casi quince años que ha que lo escribí quizá me ha dado el Señor más claridad en estas cosas de lo que entonces entendía (*Moradas* 4,2;7).

## V

“Oración” as “incarnation” : Teresa’s expression of her sublime experiences through imagery.

A major difficulty encountered by Teresa, also by all practitioners and narrators of the mystical life, is the dichotomy between physical and spiritual experience. Christian theologians have tried to solve this problem by using metaphors and images to convey the teachings of their Faith. Thus the sacraments of the Christian Church are outward and visible signs conveying inward, spiritual grace. Jesus himself used parables – stories of the ordinary, everyday human world which had a spiritual message or a divine meaning embedded within them. Teresa’s approach to “oración” is on similar lines. She uses things from the natural world to serve as visual aids in her attempted explanations of her mystical experiences. But these allusions are not just visual or superficial, for they take on an almost sacramental character and quality as Teresa interweaves and elaborates her images of water, fire, rooms, love and marriage.

An examination of Teresa’s imagery reveals two different schemes which she chose and developed as her mystical experiences and her understanding of them changed and developed in different periods in her life. It is not intended to suggest that the two schemes of her imagery are wholly compatible one with the other in the way they convey the stages of her mystical progression. Both schemes do, however, have significant common features. Thus the first four “Moradas” within her soul as she develops them, correspond to the first two ways she identifies in her

autobiography of watering the garden of her soul ("sacar el agua de un pozo", *Vida* 11.9, and "con artificio de con un torno y arcaduces", *Vida* 14.1). In both schemes, the effort and industry of vocal prayer and meditation are shown to be the ways and means to "oración" which leads on into "recogimiento" and "quietud". Some features of the imagery are very similar in both works: for example, "con artificio de con un torno y arcaduces" (*Vida* 14.1) is similar to "muchos arcaduces y artificio" (*Moradas* 4.2,3), and both images of which these features are part have water as their central characteristic. The choice of water is not surprising, for, as she puts it, "no me hallo cosa más a propósito para declarar algunas cosas de espíritu que esto de agua" (*Moradas* 4.2,2). Water is central to human life, it cleanses, nourishes, and has also other qualities such as its flowing and its rises and falls in volume which are appropriate to convey the fluctuations (ebb and flow) and progressions of the mystic life. Water provides in all its manifestations (river, sea, stream, well,) an extremely versatile image which relates and connects the physical and spiritual worlds. Those aspects make it an ideal image to describe the process of "oración".<sup>23</sup>

In Teresa's early understanding of "oración" such as is exemplified in her *Vida*, there were four ways of watering the garden of the soul, which incorporated the classical divisions of the process of "oración" from vocal prayer, meditation and recollection to union and the spiritual marriage. The images were separate, rather like a set of stills in the photographic sense. This happened when a particular point in the process of "oración" was being examined and scrutinised in Teresa's mind, and a suitable image

was chosen by her to relay to the reader something of her feelings and experiences at that specific point in the process. Thus there is the well and bucket, then the water wheel, then the river, then the rain – all separate images which stand as units in their own right with their own qualities and spiritual meaning, even though they are linked quite closely by the common feature of water. The choice of water, of course, brings with it the significance that water has in Catholic teaching, which uses it in terms of baptism, grace, and spiritual cleansing. Teresa was familiar with the story in Luke 3.21ff, to which she refers in *Exclamaciones* 7.1, of Christ's baptism in the waters of the River Jordan, a story which describes a revelation of the Trinity of the Father, whose voice is heard from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descending as a dove upon Jesus, the Son. Within the story and its surrounding text are a cluster of ideas: water, audition, vision, dove<sup>24</sup>, and indeed of cleansing through the baptism of fire (Luke 3.16), all of which are used by Teresa in her scheme of imagery. In a passing reference to the troubles of the contemporary Church, Teresa refers to people being made members of the Church through baptism: "...(*de estos luteranos en especial, porque eran ya por el bautismo miembros de la Iglesia*)..." (*Vida* 32.6 ). Of course the concept of "miembros de la iglesia" also includes the biblical idea and image that individual Christians are, through the waters of baptism, living members together making up the Body of Christ<sup>25</sup>, or living stones together making up a spiritual building<sup>26</sup>. So the images are powerfully laden with theological significance, but they are each, in Teresa's early writings, individually meaningful along the sequential and progressive journey of her own personal experience of "oración". It is later,

in her spiritual maturity, that Teresa brings out and uses biblical and theological ideas which are latent in her initial imagery.

It is important for Teresa to show how, during "oración", the spiritual and material worlds of human experience, from which her imagery is equally taken, are united. So in her writings "oración" becomes an "edificio". This "building" is not only to be understood in terms of a castle, or a fortress. It also encapsulates the idea of the cocoon in which an unseen and wonderful transformation takes place of the silkworm into a butterfly, or the tomb in which, equally wonderful and unseen, the dead are brought back to life. It is an "edificio" which has the potential for growth and expansion. Her "oración" may bring her:

un recogimiento que también me parece sobrenatural, porque no es estar en oscuro ni cerrar los ojos ni consiste en cosas exterior, puesto que sin quererlo se hace esto de cerrar los ojos y desear soledad y sin artificio parece que se va labrando el edificio para la oración ..... (*Moradas* 4.3,1).

Such an idea of movement and development is present in embryo in the image of the "dos fuentes", because the distinction is made between the "pila" that is filled from outside by human effort, and the other "pila" that is filled from within by God. At the same time that God expands the "pila" of the soul, the soul somehow is drawn into itself, into the building which is being created by "oración". This is the castle, into which the soul is drawn, called by the sweet "silbo del pastor". Vision and hearing are important senses for the transmission, reception and understanding of the truths and mysteries of faith. "Uditu auris audivi te; Nunc autem oculus meus videt te."; "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee." (Job 42.5). Teresa, and San Juan, question the soul's reliance on the



physical senses in interior recollection, but agree that they have their spiritual equivalents. The soul hears “un silbo tan penetrativo para entenderle el alma que no le puede dejar de oír; porque no parece sino que en hablando el esposo, que está en la séptima morada, por esta manera, que no es habla formada, toda la gente que está en las otras no se osan bullir: ni sentidos, ni imaginación, ni potencias” (*Moradas* 6.2,3). San Juan de la Cruz describes the same phenomenon: “Este divino silbo que entra por el oído del alma no solamente es sustancia, como he dicho, entendida, sino también descubrimiento de verdades de la Divinidad y revelación de secretos suyos ocultos...” (*Cántico* 14,15). Sound, air and wind are associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost: “.. a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind”; “et factus est repente de caelo sonus, tanquam advenientis spiritus vehementis...” (*Actus Apostolorum* 2.2). The “silbo” represents the loving communication of God calling spiritually within the soul.

This is “oración” as it works to enable the progress of the soul inwards towards God:

Visto ya el gran Rey, que está en la morada de este castillo ..... como buen pastor, con un silbo tan suave ... Y tiene tanta fuerza este silbo del pastor que desamparan las cosas exteriores en que estaban enajenados y métense en el castillo (*Moradas* 4.3,2).

As always, Teresa highlights the spiritual significance of what she conveys.

The soul responds to God’s call, which it does not “hear” in the physical sense of hearing, but “hears” inwardly through spiritual perception:

No sé por dónde ni cómo oyó el silbo de su pastor; que no fue por los oídos, que no se oyó nada, mas siéntense notablemente un encogimiento suave a lo interior ..... (*Moradas* 4.3,3).

As God calls the soul to enter within itself to find and meet Him at its centre, it expands in self-knowledge to the extent that it realises that it contains within the interior castle of its being the countless rooms of spiritual experience. In moving deeper within itself the soul recollects and concentrates its essence in a way that is paralleled in nature:

Paréceme que he leído que como un erizo o tortuga cuando se retiran hacia sí; ..... Mas éstos no está en nuestro querer, sino cuando Dios nos quiere esta merced (*Moradas* 4.3,3).

The image of shrinking or contraction as understood in the natural world ( a hedgehog rolling up into a ball, or a tortoise withdrawing into its shell) is used to illustrate the process of recollection and withdrawal in which the soul engages as it explores deeper into its inner depths.<sup>27</sup> Paradoxically, this shrinking is also an expansion. The soul, turning inwards, is positively advancing towards union, rather than, like the tortoise, negatively and defensively retreating . The “palmito” image is similar. As the layers are removed, and there is movement towards the centre the palmito shrinks in size, but at the heart of the palmito is the presence of God. These are the beginnings of a more dynamic type of image, with the peeling away of the layers and movement within the soul. In keeping with Teresa’s developing understanding of “oración” which at the higher levels ceases to have stages as separate units, but flows and merges, her imagery likewise develops from the separate, static images she had previously related to different stages of “oración”, and grows into a dynamic system of imagery imbued with the capacity to shift, merge and be transformed. Thus her imagery serves to show that there is no particular point of entry into the higher “moradas” that distinguishes one mansion from another.

As she begins to consider the higher ("sobrenatural") levels of spiritual experience, which do not lend themselves to interpretation in progressive order, Teresa's use and choice of imagery changes to suit the more dynamic, dense and intermingled aspects of her mystic journey, which literary images of a static and unitary character fail to convey adequately. Thus in using the imagery of the castle, she signals that this is multi-dimensional, for she is changing perspective and releasing the images from sequential or unitary restrictions:

Pues tornemos ahora a nuestro castillo de muchas moradas, no habéis de entender estas moradas en pos de otra como cosa enhilada .... (*Moradas* 1.2,8).

Teresa's mystical experiences are not separate units that happened to her in order, the rooms of her interior castle are not in a row, and Teresa's use of imagery from now on will show inter-relationship, not separation. No longer can the images be viewed as stills, they have rather the quality of film. Or, in less anachronistic terms, the images are as subject to movement, development and inter-relationship as, for example, characters in a drama. Like such characters, they gain significance from each other, and, as they communicate with each other, the meaning of the plot and their dynamic part in it are better understood. A quality within Teresa's images impels the reader to follow them through to their dénouement ("desenlace"), which, in Teresa's terminology is arrived at when the centre of her interior castle is reached: "poned los ojos en el centro que es la pieza o palacio adonde está el rey" (*Moradas* 1.2,8).

In leading the reader (or listener) gently and carefully along her journey of "oración", Teresa gives hints of what is to come in order to arouse and

maintain their interest and attention, sometimes through a conscious choice of image she considers appropriate to her readers or audience:

Considerad como un palmito que para llegar a lo que es de comer tiene muchas coberturas que todo lo sabroso cercan (*Moradas* 1.2,8).

This image, apparently natural in its simplicity, is complex in significance. It conveys what Teresa understands about the journey of mystic discovery that is "oración". This journey is a process of uncovering the layers, involving movement inwards towards the centre or heart, which is covered from ordinary view, and incorporating the image of eating, perhaps in a way that relates to the eating of the Blessed Sacrament, for at the heart of the fruit and in the centre of the castle is the all-loving God. The transformation of the silkworm in the cocoon is also hidden from view, and also involves a process of eating and consuming which makes possible the eventual transformation of silkworm into butterfly.

There are also more subtle implications in what Teresa writes at this point, as she encourages and instructs us to view the castle in multi-dimensional terms. She has said that the rooms of the castle are not in a row "como cosa enhilada". In this observation there is an idea that she will perfect in her handling of the image of the silk-worm in the "moradas quintas". Defining "enhilada" under "hilar", Covarrubias makes an interesting comment:

Dicen que la araña nos enseñó el arte de hilar y de urdir telas; ellas y los gusanos de seda desbaban el hilo de su vientre y se van consumiendo" (Covarrubias, *Tesoro*, p 636).

Teresa uses the image of the silk-worm to great effect in *Moradas* 5.

When she wrote her autobiography, Teresa was aware that she had reached a significant turning point in spiritual experience, as her observation at the beginning of chapter 23 makes clear:

Es otro libro nuevo de aquí adelante, digo otra vida nueva. La de hasta aquí era mía. La que he vivido desde que comencé a declarar estas cosas de oración, es que vivía Dios en mí a lo que me parecía (*Vida* 23.1).

This development in her spiritual life is paralleled in the shift in her imagery observable in, for instance *Moradas* 4.3,3 where ideas of shrinking, contracting, expanding and enlarging invigorate her images, even as her mystic experiences through "oración" become infused rather than acquired<sup>28</sup>:

Y es disposición para poder escuchar, como se aconseja en algunos libros, que procuran no discurrir sino estarse atentos a ver qué obra el Señor en el alma; que si su Majestad no ha comenzado a embebernos, no puedo acabar de entender cómo se pueda detener el pensamiento de manera que no haga más daño que provecho;" (*Moradas* 4,3;4).<sup>29</sup>

Teresa's reference to the divine inebriation of the soul in the higher levels of "oración" links up with her by now familiar use of water imagery through the common property of liquid.

As she proceeds to elaborate her imagery, Teresa makes clear the difference between a static image such as the "pozo" (*Vida* 11.9) and the dynamic imagery of the "dos pilones" (*Moradas* 4.2,3), which culminates in a composite image, which, paradoxically is both static and dynamic :

Así como se entiende claro un dilatamiento o ensanchamiento en el alma a manera de como si el agua que mana de una fuente no tuviese corriente sino que la misma fuente estuviese labrada de una cosa que mientras más agua manase más grande se hiciese el edificio; así parece en esta oración (*Moradas* 4.3,9).

The image is no longer about what the soul does, or what happens within the soul, it is more about what the soul is actually developing into. The soul is increasing in grace, and is undergoing a process of growth and transformation. "En fin, en todas las virtudes queda mejorada y no dejará de ir creciendo si no torna atrás ....." (*Moradas* 4.3,9)

In the *Vida*, in narrating the four ways of watering the garden of the soul Teresa was more concerned with trying to portray what happened to the soul. She distinguished between human effort (the labour involved in raising the bucket) and divine gift (river and rain watering a passive land), but her imagery was used to reflect what happened in "oración" rather than to convey what "oración" is. At the lower levels of "oración" the natural and the supernatural are separate. At the higher levels they merge. The turning point is the stage at which "es también natural junto con lo sobrenatural" (*Moradas* 4.3,14). Teresa uses her imagery so that this merging of natural and supernatural is recorded: when she depicts the river and the rain as they merge with the soil in the third and fourth ways of watering the garden, she is seeking to illustrate the union between God and the soul. This stage in the watering of the garden is roughly equivalent to the "moradas quintas" of her *Castillo Interior*.

At such a high level as that represented in the "moradas quintas" the soul is beyond rational thought, and language ceases to be capable of expressing this state:

no se ha de saber decir ni el entendimiento lo sabe entender ni las comparaciones pueden servir de declararlo, porque son muy bajas las cosas de la tierra para este fin. (*Moradas* 5.1,1)

When the soul is intimately united with God so that "está su Majestad tan junto y unido con la esencia del alma" (*Moradas* 5.1,5), the feelings and experiences of ordinary living cease to be adequate equivalents as vehicles to transmit to the inexperienced the nature and quality of the mystic joys and sentiments felt by the soul at this level, on which "oración" is union: "estuvo en Dios y Dios en ella" (*Moradas* 5.1,9). This is the actualisation, or bringing into consciousness of the theological proposition "que estaba Dios en todas las cosas por presencia y potencia y esencia" (*Moradas* 5.1,10).<sup>30</sup>

At this level, the image of the silk-worm in the *moradas quintas*, which is a masterpiece within the whole scheme of Teresa's literary imagery, is used to illustrate the transformation of the soul through "oración", but is so elaborated as to convey the entire process and fulfilment of "oración" itself. The image Teresa uses comes from a process that has its origins in God: "sólo El pudo hacer semejante invención". This process, as she makes clear, has tiny beginnings ("a manera de granos de pimienta") into which God puts life ("comienza esta simiente a vivir"). Without God's nourishment life would not have come into being: "hasta que hay este mantenimiento de que se sustentan, se está muerta". At first the nourishment is small ("y con hojas de moral se crían") but then there is development and growth which result in productive work:

hasta que después, de grandes, les ponen unas ramillas y allí con las boquillas van de si mismos hilando la seda unos capuchillos muy apretados adonde se encierran.

This image of the worm that becomes a beautiful butterfly conveys what Teresa understands of the process of "oración" to be and its effects upon

the soul. The soul is transformed from an ugly "gusano" – a parallel, as previously noted, with the vermin outside the castle – into a "mariposica", which is beautiful, white and capable of flight upwards towards God in His Heaven. The transformation takes place within the cocoon which the worm produces. This cocoon is, by another name and image, the interior castle of the soul into which it goes deeper through the way of and to "oración" until at its centre it is transformed through union with God:

hilando la seda y hacen unos capuchillos muy apretados, adonde se encierran y acaba este gusano que es grande y feo, y sale del mismo capucho una mariposica blanca y muy graciosa (*Moradas* 5.2,2).

The process of transformation which involves such effort and industry in its initial stages reaches completion in union with God, out of which come gifts and graces from God which cannot be predicted. So the process of "oración" is not static any more than the interior castle of the soul is an unalterable structure. On the contrary, the soul is a living being, the silkworm, which must die within the castle or cocoon it has been constructing, and then be resurrected:

Pues crecido este gusano ..... comienza a labrar la seda y edificar la casa adonde ha de morir. Esta casa querría dar a entender aquí, que es Cristo. En una parte me parece he leído u oído que nuestra vida está escondida en Cristo, o en Dios ..... o que nuestra vida es Cristo (*Moradas* 5.2,4).<sup>31</sup>

In the process of "oración", when or if its culmination is achieved, the soul undergoes a sort of death and resurrection "cuando está en esta oración, bien muerto está al mundo, sale una mariposica blanca". Teresa's scheme of imagery culminates in this image of the silkworm, which she elaborates to express the mystic transformation of the human soul through union with God. In doing so she relates the fulfilment of the soul through "oración" to



the most sacred belief of the Christian Church – the Incarnation of the invisible God made man through Jesus Christ, whose birth, life, death and resurrection brought salvation to humankind, with everlasting life after death, transformed and united in love with God.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Covarrubias Orozco, Sebastián de, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o española* (Madrid: Editorial Castalia), 1994, p. 788.

<sup>2</sup> Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (Madrid, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> Teresa records in the first chapter of her *Vida* that her father was fond of reading good books, and had some in Spanish, so that his children might read them too. In the early stages of her religious life, books were important to her to focus her mind when beginning "oración".

<sup>4</sup> Teresa refers to the higher part of the soul in *Moradas* 4;1.10

<sup>5</sup> "... no somos ángeles, sino tenemos cuerpo" (*Vida*, 22.10)

<sup>6</sup> *Camino de perfección* 19.13

<sup>7</sup> *Camino de perfección* 24.5

<sup>8</sup> Note Psalm 21,7 "Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo"; "I am a worm and no man".

<sup>9</sup> "... así quercis levantar un gusano tan vil" (*Vida* 19,2). The silkworm is later "raised" via the cocoon to become a butterfly. Further imagery from the Psalms with resonances and echoes in Teresa's writings can be seen in Appendix I & II.

<sup>10</sup> *Moradas*, 5,2

<sup>11</sup> In the Genesis creation story, God creates man "in his own image and likeness":

"Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram"; *Genesis* 1,26.

<sup>12</sup> *Vida* 6. 2

<sup>13</sup> *Moradas* 5,2

<sup>14</sup> In this chapter we are examining the meaning of "oración", so Teresa's imagery is being analysed and discussed here from that perspective. The literary imagery of water, and the way it is elaborated in relation to Teresa's metaphorical scheme is discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

<sup>15</sup> "Oración" enables the soul to tap the source of divine grace. So a soul in a state of grace is able to produce works which themselves are the fruits of grace, acceptable to both God and man. This is reminiscent of Luke 2.52 which describes the boy Jesus "growing in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

<sup>16</sup> *Genesis*, 4, 1

<sup>17</sup> *Matthew* 22.37ff

<sup>18</sup> Faith is one of the theological virtues, rather than a faculty of the soul. Perhaps Teresa may not have understood this very well.

<sup>19</sup> "Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, et ex tota anima tua, et ex omnibus viribus tuis, et ex omni mente tua: et proximum tuum sicut teipsum." *Lucam* 10,27.

<sup>20</sup> "Si scire donum Dei"; "If you knew the gift of God" (*Ioannem* 4.11), from the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, being offered the waters of divine grace.

<sup>21</sup> It is Catholic belief that God does not need anything pre-existent nor any help to in order to create. God creates freely "out of nothing", *ex nihilo*.

<sup>22</sup> *Confessions*, 1,1.1

<sup>23</sup> This is a later elaboration, and even simplification, of "the four waters".

<sup>24</sup> Covarrubias, in his *Tesoro*, gives a good summary of the characteristics of "agua":

"Elemento principal, entre los cuatro. Quieren algunos se haya dicho de A et QUA, cuasi a qua vivimus. Tales Milesio tuvo por cierto ser el agua la primera materia de que fueron criadas todas las cosas .... Levantándose en el aire por vapor, riega la tierra y la fertiliza. Ella tiene virtud de refrigerar, de limpiar, de ablandar y humedecer ... el agua, en las divinas letras, significa el Espíritu Santo..."

<sup>25</sup> There are references to doves in the Song of Songs, and, of course in San Juan de la Cruz, *Cántico*, including a reference, (*Cántico* 34), to the Dove sent out from the ark by Noah and returning with the olive twig. The cleansing of the earth by the waters of the flood sent by God is an important underlying element of that biblical story.

<sup>26</sup> "Nescitis quoniam corpora vestra membra sunt Christi?" (1 Ad Corinthios 6.15).

<sup>27</sup> "et ipsi tanquam lapides vivi superaedificamini domus spiritualis..." (1 Petri 2.5)

<sup>28</sup> *Moradas* 4.3,3 Osuna uses the image in *Tercer abecedario* 6.4

<sup>29</sup> The terms "acquired" and "infused" are used in their technical theological sense.

"Acquired" knowledge or experience is that in which the soul plays an active part through means of preparation, reading, thinking, and the exercise of imagination. The soul engages its various faculties, mental thought, imagination, emotion, and desire to acquire knowledge or experience. "Infused" knowledge or experience is that which is

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communicated immediately and directly by God – it is entirely a gift and the soul plays no part in its creation.

<sup>29</sup> Covarrubias clarifies the concept “embeber” thus: “Recoger en sí alguna cosa líquida, como la esponja embebe en sí el agua o otra cualquier licor.” (Covarrubias, *Tesoro*, p 460)

<sup>30</sup> In Christian Theology God is both transcendent and immanent. The symbols of depth and height are applied to God, suggesting that he is both an external power separate and independent from the world, and yet, also he is the inner principle, indwelling in the world, that expresses itself in the world-process. This was expressed, as Teresa says, in terms of God being in all things through presence, power and essence. Augustine used the Latin word “essentia” to designate God’s mysterious being, his unique unchanging reality.

<sup>31</sup> A reference to Colossians 3,3-4

## CHAPTER 3

### The Imagery of Water

#### Introduction

We have seen in the previous chapter how Teresa's imagery gives an insight into her understanding of what she means by the word "oración". In this chapter we will examine in greater detail the literary imagery of Water in her writings and the ways in which Teresa elaborates it as she attempts to describe metaphorically the process and development of her "oración", her mystical experience:

.....no me hallo cosa más a propósito para declarar algunas de espíritu que esto de agua ..... y soy tan amiga de este elemento, que le he mirado con más advertencia que otras cosas .....(*Moradas* 4.2,2).

An examination of her principal prose works indicates that as her mystical experiences develop in intensity, and as her reflections on them mature, so she becomes more skilful in her use and elaboration of the imagery of water. Considerable use is made of the imagery of water in the Bible, and in the teaching of the Catholic Church. Teresa uses ideas which are common to many sources and to other authors, but she skilfully develops them into her own literary scheme of images with consummate artistry.

#### I

#### The soul watered as a garden to produce growth

Teresa tells us that she has acquired her garden imagery from her memory of written or oral sources:

Paréceme ahora a mí que he leído u oído esta comparación – que como tengo mala memoria, ni sé adónde ni a qué propósito; mas para el mío

ahora conténtame - . Ha de hacer cuenta el que comienza, que comienza a hacer un huerto en tierra muy infructuosa, que lleva muy malas hierbas, para que se deleite el Señor; su Majestad arranca las malas hierbas, y ha de plantar las buenas (*Vida* 11.6).

Ahora tornemos a nuestra huerta o vergel, y veamos cómo comienzan estos árboles a empreñarse para florecer y dar después fruto, y las flores y claveles lo mismo para dar olor. Regálame esta comparación, porque muchas veces en mis principios – y plega el Señor haya yo ahora comenzado a servir a Su Majestad – (digo principio de lo que diré de aquí adelante de mi vida), me era gran deleite considerar mi alma un huerto y al Señor que se paseaba en él. Suplicábale aumentase el olor de las florecitas de virtudes, que comenzaban – a lo que parecía – a querer salir, y que fuese para su gloria y las sustentase – pues yo no quería nada para mí – y cortase las que quisiese, que ya sabía habían de salir mejores; digo cortar, porque vienen tiempos en el alma que no hay memoria de este huerto; todo parece está seco y que no ha de haber agua para sustentarle, ni parece hubo jamás en el alma cosa de virtud. Pásase mucho trabajo, porque quiere el Señor que le parezca al pobre hortelano, que todo el que ha tenido en sustentarle y regarle va perdido. Entonces es el verdadero escardar y quitar de raíz las hierbecillas, aunque sean pequeñas, que han quedado malas, con conocer no hay diligencia que baste si el agua de la gracia nos quita Dios, y tener en poco nuestra nada y aun menos que nada. Gánase aquí mucha humildad; tornan de nuevo a crecer las flores (*Vida* 15,9).

Her ideas and imagery are close enough to those of Osuna's to assume a direct influence through her reading of the *Tercer abecedario*:

El corazón del justo es paraíso terrenal, donde se viene el Señor a deleitar.... Llámalo paraíso, porque dondequiera que él está y se ha de gustar, es paraíso. Llámalo terrenal, porque está en la tierra de nuestro cuerpo situado.

...Hácese en esta razón del Sabio más mención de la gracia que no del corazón, porque si él es paraíso, es por la gracia del Señor que en él mora, la cual es como fuente que riega el paraíso del corazón; y dicese que la fuente principal del paraíso se divide en cuatro, porque fortalece en nuestro corazón las cuatro virtudes cardinales... (*Tercer abecedario*, Tr.4 c.4).<sup>1</sup>

However, there are also several other biblical antecedents for garden imagery, accessible to Teresa in the course of sermons, in the liturgy, in commentaries or in the breviary. In the book *Ezekiel*, a book cited by Osuna

in the same chapter, the concept of desert land being made fertile and fruitful by water is used to be a symbol of individual and communal spiritual development. The imagery, repeated for effect, is that of growth, development and transformation being achieved through the life-giving properties of water:

I made you grow like a plant of the field (*Ezekiel* 16,7)  
 Multiplicatam quasi germen agri dedi te

... fertile soil. He planted it ...by abundant water (17,5)  
 et tulit de semine terrae, et posuit illud in terra pro semine ... super  
 aquas multas

... good soil by abundant water (17,8)  
 in terra bona super aquas multas

Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, planted by the  
 water; it was fruitful and full of branches because of abundant  
 water (19,10)

Mater tua quasi vinea in sanguine tuo super aquam plantata est;  
 fructus eius et frondes eius creverunt ex aquis multis

... desert, in a dry and thirsty land (19,13)  
 in desertum, in terra invia et sitiendi  
 I made you grow like a plant of the field (*Ezekiel* 16,7)  
 Multiplicatam quasi germen agri dedi te

*Ezekiel* refers to the garden as the garden of God, and as the Paradise of

Eden:

The cedars in the garden of God could not rival it (*Ezekiel* 31,8)  
 Cedri non fuerunt altiores illo in paradiso Dei

No tree in the garden of God could match its beauty (31,8)  
 Omne lignum paradisi Dei non est assimilatam illi

You were Eden, the garden of God, every precious stone adorned  
 you (28,13)

In deliciis paradisi Dei fuisti, omnis lapis pretiosus operimentum  
tuum

The envy of all the trees of Eden in the garden of God (31,9)  
Et aemulata sunt eum omnia ligna voluptatis, quae erant in  
paradiso Dei

The Psalms also make reference to the watering of desert, and its  
transformation into fertile land:

You drench its furrows ... you soften it with showers (*Psalms*  
65,10)  
Sulcos eius irrigasti ... imbribus eam molliasti (64,11)

You gave abundant showers, o God, you refreshed your weary  
inheritance (68,9)  
Pluviam copiosam demisisti, Deus, in hereditatem tuam (67,10)

He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering  
the earth (72,6)  
Descendet ut pluvia super gramen, sicut imbres qui irrigant terram  
(71,6)

They make it a place of springs, the autumn rains also cover it with  
pools (84,6)  
Fontem faciem eam, ac benedictionibus vestiet eam pluvia prima  
(83,7)

He turned the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground  
into flowing springs (107,35)  
Posuit desertum in stagna aquarum, et terram sine aqua in exitus  
aquarum (106,35)

Who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of  
water (114,8)  
Qui convertit petram in stagna aquarum, et rupem in fontes  
aquarum (113,8)

He supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills  
(147, 8)

Qui operit caelum nubibus, et parat terrae pluvium, qui producit in montibus foenum (146,8)

Teresa's image of the soul as a garden watered in four ways has an important biblical precedent in Genesis 2, which describes how God planted a garden. There is a sense of development and growth in the biblical story. Initially there was no plant or herb, neither was there rain :

non enim pluerat Dominum Deus super terram, et homo erat qui operaretur terram, sed fons ascendebat e terra, irrigans universam superficiem terrae.<sup>2</sup>

When man was created, and plants grew, then a river flowed, dividing into four: "Et fluvius egrediebatur de loco voluptatis ad irrigandum paradisum, qui inde dividitur in quatuor capita."<sup>3</sup> This biblical image has the same cluster of principal elements which Teresa develops in her writings: the **garden**, (for Teresa, the human soul), watered by a **river** or **fount** (to her the "waters" of God's grace) producing plants tended by human labour (her personal effort in spiritual development), but planted by **God**. Teresa develops the imagery contained in the Genesis story of the Garden of Eden, so as to add to their spiritual meaning and increase the intensity of their literary expression.

In the Genesis story (Genesis 2.8ff) the river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and it divided into four rivers (2.10). Man was placed in the garden to be the gardener (2.15). Man had direct communion with God who took delight in the Garden (3.8). Initially the Garden was the perfect setting with plants that were pleasing to the taste and sight (2.9). Subsequently, after man's disobedience and refusal to listen to God (3.10),



the garden produced thorns and thistles. Paradise is thereby lost. Teresa uses elements and features present in the biblical story, but in reverse order. Thus, in Teresa's image, (*Vida* 11.6ff), the beginner must think of himself as setting out to make a garden in which God will take delight. The soil to start with is full of weeds, "tierra muy infructuosa... malas hierbas". God will replace the weeds with good plants, and now, through prayer, attentive listening and obedience, the soul, like a good gardener, waters the plants so that they may produce flowers and fragrance to refresh God, so that he will come often into the garden and take his pleasure and delight, "y así se venga a deleitar muchas veces a esta huerta...". Paradise, through "oración", is restored. Teresa appears to be offering a redemptive re-writing of the biblical story of the Garden of Eden, in which elements of the story, well-known to her nuns and to herself, are used in reverse order to show how "oración" restores the state of grace to the soul.

The ideas that she uses are found within other parts of the Bible. These images are well-known to the nuns to whom they are exposed through regular sermons, the liturgy, the Offices and reading, and serve unconsciously, or consciously, to enhance the basic images used by Teresa. The biblical image, present in the memory of the reader, enhances Teresa's image. The Psalms, for example, have similar images which serve to validate, confirm and exemplify Teresa's writing in the mind of the reader. A number of features are thus exemplified:

- the presence of God in the waters of grace, and his supreme governance over and beyond the Garden of Eden, and indeed over Teresa's garden of the soul:

The voice of the Lord is over the waters (29,3)  
 Vox Domini super aquas (28,3)

The Lord sits enthroned over the flood (29,10)  
 Dominus super diluvium sedet (28,10)

- God as the source of the waters of life-giving grace:

You give them drink from your river of delights (36,8)  
 Et torrente voluptatis tuae potabis eos (35,9)

For with you is the fountain of life (36,9)  
 Quoniam apud te est fons vitae (35,10)

- the idea of the soul being thirsty ground:

My soul thirsts for God (42,2)  
 Sitivit anima mea ad Deum (41,3)

Earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land, where there is no water. (63,1)  
 Sollicite te quaero; te sinit anima mea, desiderat te caro mea, ut terra arida et sitiens, sine aqua (62,2)

My soul thirsts for you like a parched land (143,6)  
 Anima mea sicut terra sine aqua tibi (142,6)

- and the idea of growth, transformation and fruition:

He is like a tree planted by streams of water. (1,3)  
 Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum,  
 He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth (72,6)  
 Descendet ut pluvia super gramen, sicut imbres qui irrigant terram (71,6)

He supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills (147, 8)  
 Qui operit caelum nubibus, et parat terrae pluvium, qui producit in montibus fenum (146,8)

Teresa is trying to encourage beginners in the spiritual life by telling them what she has herself learned. She points out that at first there is a great deal of personal effort to be expended. The beginner has to work hard to make a start and progress in the religious, spiritual life. This echoes the message found in Genesis that "in toil ..... in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread".<sup>4</sup> Teresa emphasises the labour involved:

los que sacan agua del pozo, que es muy a su trabajo ..... que han  
de cansarse ..... es harto trabajo.  
(*Vida* 11.9)

Using the image of the external aridity of soil that is not irrigated to reflect the interior spiritual aridity of a soul that is untouched by God, she stresses individual endeavour is required to initiate the process whereby the soul can, by divine grace, receive divine favour: "Hacemos lo que podemos para regar estas flores" (*Vida* 11.9). The image of water brought from the well to irrigate the land conveys well the degree of individual exertion involved in establishing contact between the "arid" soul and God, the creator of life-giving water. By water in this context she includes feelings without tears, as well as tears of emotion, welling up from within the soul, produced by devotion to God and assisting contact with the Almighty:

Hasta aquí podemos adquirir nosotros, entiéndese con el favor de  
Dios ..... Esto es comenzar a sacar agua pozo ..... Llamo agua aquí  
las lágrimas, y aunque no las haya, la ternura y sentimiento interior de  
devoción. (*Vida* 11.9)

The image developed by Teresa of the human soul here as a garden is, of course, similar to the biblical description of a human being as earth, or dust, infused with the breath of life by God. The story of the Garden of Eden in

which God places living beings and of the creation of Adam from the ground, undoubtedly give Teresa a basis and source for her metaphorical scheme, and they provide her with a conceptual framework which she proceeds to elaborate. According to the story in Genesis, at the creation of the world the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters, and order was brought out of chaos. Human beings were created from the earth and were given spirits. We are particularly reminded of this passage in Genesis:

Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Formavit igitur Dominus Deus hominem de limo terrae, et inspiravit in faciem eius spiraculum vitae, et factus est homo in animam viventem.<sup>5</sup>

In her explanation of mystical experience, Teresa builds on this cluster of ideas. So she presents the human being, body and soul, as a garden which is watered, or given grace, by God who effectively animates, or breathes spiritual life into it. Just as the physical body of Adam is raised from the ground, and what is physically lifeless becomes alive by the grace and action of God, so the spiritually lifeless human being is raised to spiritual experience, by the grace of God. The idea of "raising" will be developed in Teresa's major writings in terms of flight or movement upwards and outwards, and also in the sense of transformation, or resurrection.

Terms and concepts which usually refer to concrete realities in the human sense-experience of the physical world are employed by Teresa to

describe the spiritual realities of her experiences through "oración". In this respect, Teresa's imagery is similar to the use made of parables by Jesus for teaching about the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God in many of which he uses stories of the natural world of farming and agriculture.<sup>6</sup>

Teresa, of course, was familiar with these parables. Aware of their depth of meaning, she was to adopt similar techniques to convey her own understanding of the mystic way to union with God and the kingdom of Heaven. So soil is irrigated by water in varying degrees, showing how, during the different stages of mystical experiences, the human soul is nourished and inspired by God's grace. The soul is the garden; God is the gardener.

Comienzo a hacer un huerto en tierra muy infructuosa, que lleva malas hierbas, y ha de plantar las buenas. (*Vida* 11.6)

In Teresa's scheme, the human soul is both the garden itself and "within" the garden — a complex idea which she employs again, and in still more complex forms in the castle imagery of *Las Moradas*:

Parce que digo algún disparate; porque, si este castillo es el ánima, claro está que no hay para qué entrar, pues se es el mismo. (*Moradas* 1.1,5)

This idea is implied, while not elaborated, in the biblical texts. For human beings are fashioned, so the Bible teaches, from the same material as the garden ("Dust you are, and to dust you shall return" *Genesis* 3.19). As Teresa suggests, the castle is the soul, so human beings are spiritually "in" the garden, but at the same time they are physically part "of" the garden.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose behind the imagery in Genesis is different from that of Teresa. In Genesis, for instance, the waters of the rivers are simply irrigating the land, as part of the visual description of the location of the Garden. Teresa, on the other hand, uses and elaborates the imagery of water to signify the progress of the soul in "oración" as it attempts to reach God. Her imagery of water was devised and has to be appreciated while bearing in mind that she was attempting to teach her conventual sisters about the different degrees and stages of their life of prayer and contemplation, and its development. So in her parable, the water which she describes as bringing life and growth to the garden, represents the grace of God giving nourishment and life to the soul.<sup>8</sup> Teresa uses the imagery of water to indicate the varying intensities and the different stages involved in the process of oración by which her Carmelite sisters as "gardens" should seek to receive the waters of the spiritual life.

Paradise becomes, after the fall, an enclosed garden, "hortus conclusus"<sup>9</sup>. Enclosure in monastic life fulfils a similar role. Souls withdraw from the world, and become enclosed so that they can seek to attain union with God.<sup>10</sup> As Joseph Chorprenning pointed out<sup>11</sup>, Teresa uses the images of a dwelling place, paradise, a castle and heaven to speak of her reformed foundation, San José, in Ávila. Virtually every image Teresa previously associates with San José is assigned to the soul. The monastery is an enclosed garden, a paradise, with God at the centre, in the

reserved Sacrament of the Eucharist.<sup>12</sup> The monastery as heaven on earth was a commonplace idea in monastic literature.

There is, of course, a link between the Garden of Paradise, the scene of man's disobedience, and the Garden of Gethsemane, the scene of Christ's betrayal and passion. Teresa is particularly fond of meditating on the passion of Christ.<sup>13</sup> In the passion narrative, when Christ is praying earnestly, so that his sweat is falling like drops of blood, an angel appears, (Luke 22.43), to strengthen and assist Christ on his journey, rather than to guard the entrance to paradise as in the Genesis story. In the garden of Eden Adam's disobedience leads him to suffering, death and disgrace; in the garden of Gethsemane Christ's prayerful obedience leads him through suffering and death to glory.

Teresa is using everyday, familiar concepts for her imagery for didactic purposes. She wants to teach and encourage her Carmelite sisters to persevere in prayer, in a down to earth manner that they will easily understand.

## II

### The First Water: the first stage in spiritual progress

Teresa uses the image of water brought up from a well to portray the first stage in spiritual development. The water signifies God's grace, which is

provided by God to germinate spiritual growth. Water is taken from deep within the earth by pulling it up with a bucket from a well. The water, of course, is already there. Human effort is, however, required to initiate the process. Likewise while the water of God is available as his gift to anybody who makes the effort to seek it or ask for it, there has to be a conscious decision to seek the grace of God. One of Teresa's favourite Gospel stories was that of the Samaritan woman at the well. Teresa will have read about this story in Osuna's *Tercer abecedario*, in passages which combine other images, including the imagery of wounding and of marriage, taken from the *Song of Songs*, which Osuna cites:

... y Cristo nuestro Señor a la pobre mujer samaritana enseña cómo había de orar en espíritu, según oran los verdaderos adoradores de Dios; y le amonestó pedir agua viva, que era el espíritu que habían de recibir los creyentes.<sup>14</sup>

...y si quiere ser elevado de la tierra en alteza de contemplación como arca de Noe, hanse de multiplicar en ti las aguas, rompiéndose en tu corazón las fuentes del mar, que son las llagas de tu esposo Jesucristo; y hanse de abrir en ti los caños del ciclo de la divinidad, para que así tengas entera abundancia de santo diluvio en que te salves; porque así lo tenía la esposa, que se llama en los Cánticos pozo de aguas vivas que corren con ímpetu del monte Líbano. Pozos de aguas vivas tienes cuando derramas lágrimas por la humanidad de tu esposo Cristo; empero, si quieres que este pozo de por cima se haga fuente que salte hasta la vida eterna, procura que venga a ti el ímpetu del monte Líbano, que son las lágrimas derramadas por su divinidad.<sup>15</sup>

The biblical story contains elements which convey the ideas of meditation, recollection and purgation. The well is a place of conflict. Jesus is described as weary (v.6), and the woman is argumentative (vv 9,11,12,17). Furthermore Jews "have no dealings with Samaritans"(v.9). It is also a



place of purgation, for Jesus gives the Samaritan woman “the spring of water welling up to eternal life” (v.14), the water that will permanently quench thirst (v.14). It is a place of humility and the beginnings of exemplary life, for the woman leaves her water pot (v.28), and admits that, although she has had five husbands and is with someone who is not her husband, she “has no husband”. She is aware of the conflict between her attachment to the world of senses, yet she aspires to experience the divine, “Sir, give me this water” (v.15). The well, and the story of the Samaritan woman, is for Teresa a latent symbol of the prayer of recollection and the way of purgation. She refers to it more than once in her writings, in *Meditaciones* 7,6 and also in *Moradas* 6.11,5. In her *Vida* Teresa tells us that she often brought the story to mind: “¡Oh, qué de veces me acuerdo del agua viva que dijo el Señor a la Samaritana! Y así soy muy aficionada a aquel Evangelio. Y es así, cierto, que sin entender como ahora este bien, desde muy niña lo era y suplicaba muchas veces al Señor me diese aquel agua, y la tenía dibujada adonde estaba siempre, con este letrero, cuando el Señor llegó al pozo: *Domine, da mihi aquam*” (*Vida* 30, 19). God, as it were, acts first. He provides the grace/water and initiates the life-giving process, and the human soul, exercising freedom of will, can choose to draw, or not to draw the water. If the human soul so chooses then the retrieval process is begun, deep within the person, as indeed happens when the bucket is lowered into the depths of the earth to find the water, that is, entering the self and acquiring self-knowledge.

Teresa is careful to point out to beginners in the spiritual life that human effort alone does not guarantee the reception of sublime experiences. Although human effort is necessary, as a significant starting point, God alone decides how and when his grace is to be consciously experienced. So although the soul labours to pull the water of God's spirit up and out of the well, it can only receive passively what God acts to offer. Having made the effort, the soul then needs to await, in an attitude of humble resignation, the sovereign will of God:

Si El quiere que crezcan estas plantas y flores, a unos con dar agua que saquen de est pozo, a otras sin ella, ¿ qué se me da a mí ? Haced vos, Señor, lo que quisieréis. (*Vida* 11.12)

The plants and flowers which are germinated by the effects of the water represent the germination of spiritual growth in the human soul.<sup>16</sup> But the gifts of the search for grace are a privilege not a right, for God gives them whenever and to whomsoever he wants. Teresa is careful to point out that God's response is not dependent upon the human initiative of searching for the water of the spirit. Some people are granted grace without seeking it; some seek it and appear not to receive it in any conscious or visible way. It is all in God's hands.<sup>17</sup> Her illustrated interpretations of her own mystical experiences are not to be interpreted as a guarantee that everybody who engages in "oración" will experience similar spiritual favours. She is merely indicating what can happen when the human soul obeys the divine injunction "Seek, and ye shall find".<sup>18</sup> Once the soul has made the attempt to seek the water of God's grace it has proved it is ready to work to tend

the seedlings planted by God in its garden: "Hacemos lo que podemos para regar estas flores" (*Vida* 11.9)

The image of the first water brought up from the well, the first stage in spiritual progress, includes the traditional stages of prayer known as meditation, the prayer of recollection and the way of purgation.

### III

#### Torno y arcaduces: imagery of increase

In her later writings, assisted by maturer reflection and increased personal experience, Teresa was to schematise the process and development of her mystical communication with greater precision. But at the time of writing her *Vida* she chooses to describe the stage of mystical experience known as the Prayer of Quiet through a second image or method of watering the garden.

Pues ya queda dicho con el trabajo que se riega este vergel y cuán a fuerza de brazos, sacando el agua del pozo, digamos ahora el segundo modo de sacar el agua que el Señor del huerto ordenó para que con artificio de con un torno y arcaduces sacase el hortelano más agua y menos trabajo, y pudiese descansar sin estar continuo trabajando. Pues este modo aplicado a la oración que llaman de quietud es lo que yo ahora quiero tratar. (*Vida* 14.1)

At this second stage of mystical experience, the process of acquiring the divine water needed for its spiritual growth becomes less of an effort for the soul, and the amount and flow of water are increased. This is because there is now a mechanism for obtaining water more plentifully. Teresa conveys this more advanced second stage or method of spiritual growth through elaborating her imagery of water. She does so by introducing the image of the "torno y arcaduces" which signify the soul's increased ability to obtain from God more of the nourishing water of his grace. As with the first image, it is not the effort of the soul which actually produces the water, for it is God who has supplied the well and its contents. Once the human soul,

in a state of receptivity, has chosen to cooperate with God in developing its mystical capacities, then God gives the waters of his grace as he sees fit, to assist the soul to achieve this fulfilment. Teresa stresses at this stage, as she has done previously, that reception of grace, or intensity of mystical experience, does not depend solely on human effort, and is not necessarily given in proportion to the amount of effort expended:

Verdad es que parece que algún tiempo se han cansado en andar el torno y trabajar con el entendimiento y henchídose los arcaduces; más aquí está el agua más alto, y así se trabaja muy menos en sacarla del pozo. (*Vida* 14:2)

Teresa contrasts the first stage of "oración" with the second, for now there is less effort needed, but more water produced. The water is nearer the surface, more easily available.

Pues todo esto que para aquí es con grandísimo consuelo, y con tan poco trabajo, que no cansa la oración, aunque dure mucho rato ..... saca mucho más agua que no sacaba del pozo. (*Vida* 14:4)

In this second image of water, the grace mystically received by the soul in its direct experience from God is more productive than the first. It also gives more delight to the soul in a foretaste of heaven:

Este agua, de grandes bienes y mercedes que el Señor da aquí, hacen crecer las virtudes muy más sin comparación que en la oración pasada; porque se va ya esta alma subiendo de su miseria y dásela ya un poco de noticia de los gustos de la gloria. (*Vida* 14:5)

It will be remembered that the imagery of Genesis concentrates on the idea of "Paradise Lost". The Garden denoted there, watered by four rivers, was the place of communion between God and Man. Disobedience resulted in

Man being evicted from the Garden, and prevented from returning by the presence of an angel with a flaming sword:

“Eiecitque Adam: et collocavit ante paradisum voluptatis cherubim, et flameum gladium, atque versatilem, ad custodiendam viam ligni vitae.” (*Genesis*, 3, 24)<sup>19</sup>

Teresa, however, creates a well-integrated framework of imagery which points forwards to “Paradise Regained”. The human soul in its mystical experience, freely yet in obedience to God’s will, becomes the place of communion between God and itself, the soul, – the Garden watered in four ways. The soul is drawn inwards and upwards towards God instead of outwards towards the aridity of exile. The cherubim and flame-tipped lance, viewed within the context of Teresa’s mystical interpretations of God’s ultimate purpose, mark the point of consummation, the restoration of ecstatic full communion between God and Man. The story of the transverberation (*Vida* 29.13), is effectively a redemptive rewriting of the Genesis imagery.

At this second stage, the more abundant water is instrumental in making the soil fertile in the garden of the soul. Teresa here broadens the image to include allusions that appeal to the senses of sight and smell. As a result of the life-bringing effects of the water, scented blossoms delight the senses:

..... comienzan estos árboles a empreñarse para florecer y dar  
después fruto, y las flores y claveles lo mismo para dar olor.

Teresa seems to derive intensely personal pleasure in developing in this way the imagery of the waters of the garden of the soul:

Regálame esta comparación, porque muchas veces en mis principios ..... me era gran deleite considerar mi alma un huerto y Señor que se paseaba en él. (*Vida* 14:9)

Although God is similarly described in Genesis: “Et cum audissent vocem Domini Dei deambulantem in paradiso ad aurem post meridiem” (*Genesis* 3:8), the hearing of God’s voice makes Adam and Eve hide because of their sin of disobedience, the sin of pride.<sup>20</sup> Teresa’s image is much more developed and much richer in mystical significance because she includes the need for humility. Thus, for Teresa, personally, humility is more important for the reception of the water of divine grace and for the growth of the soul than is effort or activity: “Gánase aquí mucha humildad; tornan de nuevo a crecer las flores” (*Vida* 14:9). Teresa wants to emphasise the soul’s or the garden’s utter dependence on God, and, therefore, the importance of humility. Without the water of grace, the ground is infertile:

estando en mí sin Vos, no podría, Señor mío nada, sino tornar a ser cortadas estas flores de este huerto, de suerte que esta miserable tierra tornase a servir de muladar, como antes. *Vida* (14:11)

Her garden/soul, with all its potential for sensuously beautiful and fruitful growth is fundamentally dependent on the water of God’s love and grace, the essential elements of the entire image:

“..... no hay diligencia que baste si el agua de la gracia nos quita Dios, y tener en poco nuestra nada y aun menos que nada.” (*Vida* 14:9)

The spiritual state of “quietud y recogimiento” achieved through the effects of this “second water” brings, therefore, delights associated with the state of paradise – “satisfacción”, “paz”, “grandísimo contento”, “sosiego”,

"suave deleite" (*Vida* 15:1). The sensuousness of this state is reminiscent of the garden of delights in ancient Persian traditions, as well as the Judaeo-Christian conception of the garden of Eden. The waters of fountains and streams likewise irrigate and decorate the palaces and gardens of Spain. Water is a symbol of refreshment and rest. Teresa incorporates these associations in order to clarify her conception of the water of grace and the garden of the soul:

Así que en estos tiempos de quietud dejar descansar el alma con su descanso. (*Vida* 15:8)

These descriptions also belong to the topos of the "locus amoenus". The same elements of the classical topos - the shady, natural setting of trees and meadows, flowers, birds and springs of water - are already present in the biblical landscape of the Song of Songs.

Luce López-Baralt argues unconvincingly that Teresa's source is Islamic, rather than Christian. Although it is fair to assert that "el olor alegórico de las flores místicas se esparció por las almas de los espirituales del Islam siglos antes que por el alma privilegiada de la Reformadora" it is an unsafe conclusion to assume that there is a direct intellectual Islamic influence on her.<sup>21</sup> Jewish, Christian and Islamic writers all share a common literary inheritance. It is inevitable that there will be common imagery.

Not for the first time, Teresa, consciously or unconsciously, links the image of the life-giving waters with the idea of tears: "que no puedo decir esto sin lágrimas" (*Vida* 14:10). The flourishing growth of the soul's



communion with God brings tears of emotion signalling the great delight of her spirit: "gran regalo de mi alma". Such a connection would come naturally to Teresa, for the element of water and the emotion of delight are also combined in Scripture, for instance in the Psalms: "Fluminis impetus laetificat civitatem Dei: Sanctificavit tabernaculum suum Altissimum." (Psalmus 45.5)<sup>22</sup>

Already at this stage for Teresa (recorded in her *Vida*) a subtle link is being forged between the water that brings colour and perfume to the garden, and the water of grace which brings delight to the soul and the body. The garden of the soul described by Teresa, irrigated by different qualities of the water of grace, is taking shape as the "holy place where the most High dwells"<sup>23</sup>. It is easy to see how Teresa comes to develop further her idea of the soul as an irrigated garden as described in her *Vida*, so that the soul becomes a temple or castle in which God resides, which is the soul represented and explored in *Las moradas*.

The different qualities of the water, and the ways in which that element is supplied are used by Teresa to illustrate the soul's increasing degrees of spiritual awareness and sensitivity. In so doing Teresa is concerned to remind her readers that the ways of watering the garden that she describes have an inner logic that links each to the other. They are not to be perceived as isolated stages or experiences which are left behind as the soul progresses. So she reminds the reader of the first stages or methods even

when she has moved on to describe more advanced stages or levels in the cultivation of the human soul through the waters of God's grace:

..... avisé yo en el primer modo de oración, en la primera agua, que es gran negocio comenzar las almas oración ..... (*Vida* 15:11)

Each time that Teresa makes these references or connections the reader's awareness is increased that Teresa is consciously developing and elaborating her illustrative and metaphorical allusions into a complex scheme of imagery to serve the purpose of her writings: to communicate to others the nature and way of her soul's experiences of God. The relationship between effort and grace is changing as the soul progresses. The soul, in a state of inner silence, experiences delight.

## IV

The Third Water: the river

In her description of the third water Teresa continues to elaborate her imagery of water, as she records her soul's progress in "oración":

Vengamos ahora a hablar de la tercera agua con que se riega esta huerta, que es agua corriente de río o de fuente, que se riega muy a menos trabajo, aunque da el encaminar el agua. Quiere el Señor aquí ayudar al hortelano, de manera que casi El es el hortelano y el que lo hace todo. (*Vida* 16:1)

In seeking to convey feelings and intuitions which, she realizes, by their nature are impossible to put adequately into words, Teresa increases the intensity of her descriptions:

Es sueño de las potencias ..... el gusto y suavidad y deleite es más sin comparación que lo pasado ..... Yo no sé otros términos cómo lo decir ni cómo lo declarar ..... Es un glorioso desatino, una celestial locura ..... (*Vida* 16:1)

The image of flowers growing is retained: "ya, ya se abren las flores, ya comienzan a dar olor" (*Vida* 16:3), but is further elaborated so as to stress her delight and pleasure in their scent.<sup>24</sup> The soul does not need to put in as much labour, but is reaping the rewards of the God-given flow of water:

..... está como espantada de ver cómo el Señor hace tan buen hortelano, y no quiere que tome él trabajo ninguno, sino que se deleite en comenzar a oler las flores. (*Vida* 17:2)

Teresa later combines this image with her imagery of fire in a complex, composite image of literary artistry:

"para aquí es en aquel ensanchamiento, que así parece: que, comienza a producir aquella agua celestial de este manantial que digo de lo profundo

de nosotros, parece que va dilatando y ensanchando todo nuestro interior y produciendo unos bienes que no se pueden decir, ni aun el alma sabe entender qué es lo que se le da allí: entiende una fragancia, digamos ahora, como si en aquel hondón interior estuviese un brasero adonde se echasen olorosos perfumes; ni se ve la lumbre ni dónde está; mas el calor y humo oloroso penetra toda el alma, y aun hartas veces, como he dicho, participa el cuerpo" (*Moradas* 4,2:6).

In one of his commentaries on the Psalms, St Augustine makes the link between Christ and the sweet-smelling savour:

"Por lo tanto, la ofrenda de la tarde fue la pasión del Señor, la cruz del Señor, la oblación de la víctima saludable, el holocausto acepto a Dios. Aquella ofrenda de la tarde se convirtió en ofrenda matutina por la resurrección. La oración brota, pues, pura y directa del corazón creyente, como se eleva desde el ara santa el incienso. No hay nada más agradable que el aroma del Señor: que todos los creyentes huelan así".<sup>25</sup>

The water flows freely, irrigating the soil of the soul's garden with the life-giving nutrients in the waters of grace. Here the literary imagery is a parallel to the theological nature of the Christian sacraments, which are defined as the outward and visible signs (images) of the inner, spiritual grace, given by God: the outward sign, the literary images of water and fragrance, points to and conveys the indescribable and invisible idea of the inner spiritual gift, grace.

As she has done in describing the first and second waters, Teresa makes clear that the soul is wholly and constantly dependent on God, who gives or withholds graces or experiences as he wishes. God is the origin and Creator of water:

Que en una llegada de ésta – por poco que dure – como es tal el hortelano, en fin criador del agua, dala sin medida. (*Vida* 17,2)

His gifts if he chooses, he gives in abundance. If God wills, and only if He wills, the garden of the soul reaches prayerful maturity:

..... y lo que la pobre del alma con trabajo por ventura de veinte años de cansar el entendimiento no ha podido acaudalar, hácelo este hortelano celestial en un punto; y crece la fruta y madúrala de manera que se puede sustentar de su huerto, queriéndolo el Señor. (*Vida* 17:2)

While the intensity of the soul's experience is greater than in the previous two waters, Teresa emphasizes that this is only the third water, and that there are limits and controls on its nature and significance:

Mas no le da licencia que reparta la fruta, hasta que él esté tan fuerte con lo que ha comido de ella, que no se le vaya en gustaduras, y no dándole nada de provecho, ni pagándosela a quien la diere, sino que los mantenga y dé de comer a su costa, y quedarse ha él por ventura muerto de hambre. (*Vida* 17:2)

Although spiritual experiences in the third water can be more intense, the requirement for humility is more stringent, and more apparent: "Aquí es muy mayor la humildad y más profunda, que al alma queda, que en lo pasado" (*Vida* 17:3). The soul should constantly remind itself of its own limitations and that what it experiences is because the Lord wills it.

The experiences from this third water are so intense that they may overflow from the spiritual to the "corporeal" – that is to say, the experiences actually appear to affect the bodily senses in the material sphere, rather than just being experienced mentally in the realm of the soul:

Comienza a obrar grandes cosas con el olor que dan de sí las flores, que quiere el Señor se abran para que ella vea que tiene virtudes, aunque ve muy bien que no las podía ella, ni ha podido ganar en

muchos años, y que en aquello poquito el celestial hortelano se las dio. (*Vida* 17:3)

Rivers and springs are often used in Judaeo-Christian literature to convey the idea of life-giving irrigation, refreshment and nourishment.<sup>26</sup> It is more than likely that Teresa would have learned of this through sermons, spiritual reading and discussion with *letrados*, as well as from her reading of permitted devotional books. Early theologians suggested that the four rivers that irrigate the Garden of Eden in Genesis were the figures of the four Gospels which convey grace. The waters of baptism have their biblical source in the River Jordan. In the Psalms water is an important image used to convey the means by which God gives life to the spirit. Water gives pleasure, nourishment, life: "...thou givest them drink from the river of thy delights. For with thee is the fountain of life" ("Et torrente voluptatis tuae potabis eos; quoniam apud te est fons vitae").<sup>27</sup> Psalm 1, for instance, likens the "blessed" man to "a tree planted by the streams of water, that yields its fruit in due season" – "Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum, quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo."<sup>28</sup> Osuna refers to this psalm: "... si quieres que el árbol de tu cuerpo fructifique, plántalo cerca del corrimiento de las aguas de tus ojos, y en su tiempo dará fruto..."<sup>29</sup>

Hunger and thirst are images which are linked to the idea of water as appetite-quenching nourishment. The soul "thirsts" for God in the sense of wanting to satisfy its appetite: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God"

("Sitivit anima mea ad Deum fortem, vivum .....").<sup>30</sup> Psalm 41,  
 "Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima  
 mea ad te, Deus", is particularly rich in imagery that has its parallel in  
 Teresa. Osuna cites this psalm, providing a translation of the opening  
 verse: "Así como el ciervo desea ir a las fuentes de las aguas, así esta ánima  
 desea ir a tí, Dios".<sup>31</sup>

The idea of the hart longing for flowing streams, thirsting for God is  
 portrayed within an atmosphere of spiritual exhaustion encouraged by faith.  
 The "deadly wound in my body", "dum confringuntur ossa mea", (verse  
 10), is reminiscent of John of the Cross's mystical "wounding" of the soul  
 by God. Garcilaso de la Vega, in his *Egloga Segunda*, describes how  
 Camila has been pursuing a wounded stag with a poisoned arrow in its left  
 side. This is an interesting secular parallel to the imagery in the Psalms, and  
 a common one, from the Galician-Portuguese cançoes onwards:

Tal vai o meu amigo  
 Con amor que ll'eu dei,  
 Como cervo lancado  
 De monteiro del rey.<sup>32</sup>

The taunts in psalm 41, ("Where is your God?" ; "Ubi est Deus  
 tuus?") are a reminder of the constant battle Teresa had with those who  
 scoffed at her experiences. Within the structure of this Psalm water is not  
 only a source of refreshment, but a symbol of overwhelming power:  
 "Abyssus abyssum invocat, in voce cataractarum tuarum; omnia excelsa

tua, et fluctus tui super me transierunt" ("Deep calls to deep at the thunder of thy cataracts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me").<sup>33</sup>

In the Scriptures water is a complex and diverse image, and is used in many contexts. It refreshes, it cleans, it appeals to the appetite, even to the extent of having sexual overtones: "Deus, Deus meus, ad te de luce vigilo. Sitivit in te anima mea; quam multipliciter tibi caro mea . In terra deserta, et invia , et inaquosa" ("O God, thou art my God, I seek thee, my soul thirsts for thee; my flesh faints for thee (ie my body longs for you), as in a dry and weary land where no water is").<sup>34</sup> Water is also simply a sign of the presence of God: "Fumen Dei repletum est aquis" ("the river of God is full of water,") ..... Visitasti terram et inebriasti eam" ("Thou visitest the earth and waterest it").<sup>35</sup> Water is brought out of parched desert: "Interrupt petram in cremo, et adaquavit eos velut in abyssio multa. Et eduxit aquam de petra, et deduxit tanquam flumina aquas" ("He clef the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. He made streams come out of the rock, and caused waters to flow down like rivers").<sup>36</sup> "Quoniam percussit petram, et fluxerunt aquae, et torrentes inundaverunt." ("He smote the rock so that water gushed out and streams overflowed").<sup>37</sup> That is in line with the idea of the soul as thirsty earth: "anima mea, sicut terra sine aqua tibi." ("My soul thirsts for thee like a parched land").<sup>38</sup>

In the apocalyptic visions of John in the book of Revelation, a river is an important image. The shepherd is seen guiding the redeemed "ad vitae



fontes aquarum" ("to springs of living water").<sup>39</sup> Spiritual thirst is quenched: "Ego sitienti dabo de fonte aquae vitae, gratis" ("To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life .....").<sup>40</sup> But the climax is a vision of the river: "Et ostendit mihi fluvium aquae vitae, splendidum tanquam crystallum, procedentem de Sede Dei et Agni. In medio plateae eius, et ex utraque parte fluminis lignum vitae, afferens fructus duodecim, per menses singulos, reddens fructum..." ("Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit .....").<sup>41</sup> The Song of Songs uses a similar metaphor: "Aquae multae non potuerunt extinguere charitatem. Nec flumina obruent illam."; "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it".<sup>42</sup>

Teresa incorporates many of these ideas into her own elaboration of the imagery of water, and in her references to the river in the Third Water: the garden of the soul in which God is the gardener is watered by the running water that springs from his grace. The river is dynamic, running with its own life. God is the active gardener, whereas the soul is passively receiving everything that God is pleased to give. The soul's spiritual thirst, the parched land, is being quenched, and yet the soul is also experiencing the sleep of the faculties, the loss of normal surface consciousness, yet, mysteriously, "many waters still cannot quench love", "desatinada y embriagada en este amor" (*Vida* 16.2). The soul experiences, as it were,

death to the world and fruition of God: “No me parece que es otra cosa sino un morir casi del todo a todas las cosas del mundo, y estar gozando de Dios” (*Vida* 16.1). It is the beginning of the transformation from death to life. Teresa is re-writing the image of the sacrament of baptismal regeneration. She is showing how water cleanses, purges and regenerates the soul, transforming death into life. It is a union of the entire soul with God: “... porque en sí tiene el que le satisface más” (*Vida* 17.4). The river of the Third Water brings pleasure to a greater degree than that derived from the previous two Waters:

El gusto y suavidad y deleite es más sin comparación que lo pasado; es que da el agua a la garganta a esta alma de gracia .....(*Vida* 16:1)

The pleasure taken by the soul in its fruitfulness is a “heavenly madness” of enjoyment:

Es un glorioso desatino, una celestial locura, adonde se aprende de la verdadera sabiduría, y es deleitosísima manera de gozar el alma (*Vida* 16:1).

God saturates the soul with grace, and the water of this grace not only gives the soul enjoyment, but also enables its growth and spiritual maturity.

As the Creator of the water, the Gardener can give the soul the water of His grace without limit, in a brief moment, but only if He so wishes. The Heavenly Gardener gives what the soul could not acquire by many years of concentrated effort in the practice of “oración”. The timing and quantity of God’s spiritual gifts are a matter for God’s discretion. The contrast between the greater power of God and the wretchedness of the soul is thus made clear. These ideas contained in Teresa’s description of the Third

Water in themselves are not original to Teresa, but the way she elaborates them by means of her carefully worked-out scheme of imagery proves her literary originality and artistry.

## V

The Fourth Water: rain

In her introductory remarks to her exposition of the Fourth Water Teresa reveals her awareness of the difficulty of expressing in language the indescribable spiritual experience undergone during this advanced state in “oración”. The Fourth Water is an experience which defies description:

Cuando comencé esta postrera agua a escribir, que me parecía imposible saber tratar cosa, más hablar en griego, que así es ello dificultoso. (*Vida* 18:8)

This state of “oración” which can be attained only by God’s goodness, and not by human merits or effort, “ ..... no por merecerlo, sino por la bondad del Señor”, is so sublime, so ineffable, that the contrast between the liquid, which is the water of grace, and the parched ground which is the condition of the human soul without His intervention, is more apparent. A related image, of the fragile vessel, is also used here to emphasize further the difference between the spiritual grace of God and the human soul: “No pongáis, Criador mío, tan precioso licor en vaso tan quebrado” (*Vida* 18:4).<sup>43</sup> The soul’s inadequacy and spiritual fragility can result in the precious liquid being spilt: “pues habéis ya visto de otras veces que le torno a derramar” (*Vida* 18:4). The heavenly rain saturates and fills the soul with water in abundance. However, the earthly condition of fallen human nature is such that grace is not always given. Fruitfulness and fruition are not guaranteed:

“ ..... mientras vivimos es imposible; siempre ha de haber cuidado de cuando faltare la una agua procurar la otra” (*Vida* 18:9)

With this reminder of the other Waters Teresa ensures that there is conscious appreciation in her readers that her description of the Waters is not a series of unconnected metaphors, but a carefully worked out scheme of imagery which she uses to convey the experiences of her soul as it comes through the lower stages of “oración” through which it benefits from communion with God. At the same time her imagery of the waters, despite so much conscious elaboration, retains a freshness and vigour that is due to the elements of unpredictability in it and about it. So she does not fail to convey to the reader the excitement and surprise involved in her spiritual encounters with God: “Esta del cielo viene muchas veces cuando más descuidado está el hortelano”. (*Vida* 18:9).

As the soul is saturated with the grace of this Fourth Water, outward strengths vanish, and the inner strength of the soul increases.

“ ..... toda la fuerza exterior se pierde y se aumenta en las del alma para mejor poder gozar su gloria. El deleite exterior que se siente es grande y muy conocido” (*Vida* 18:10).

Using the idea of rain flooding the earth to the point of saturation Teresa shows how the earth (soul) is intimately united with the water (mystical grace, or experience of God). This essentially indescribable experience is one in which the life of the soul seems to become the life of God, as the silk worm is transformed, apparently through a process of dying in the cocoon, and becomes the butterfly:

Díjome el Señor estas palabras: Deshágase toda, hija, para ponerse más en Mí ; ya no es ella la que vivo, sino Yo. Como no puede comprender lo que entiende, es no entender entendiendo (*Vida* 18:14).<sup>44</sup>

The soul is transformed in a way which is similar to the Roman Catholic understanding of the transformation of the bread and wine at the Eucharist: the bread, being consecrated, becomes for the faithful the body of Christ, and yet still retains its identity as bread.<sup>45</sup> Osuna, quoting St Bernard, refers to the eucharistic mystery:

Cualquiera que tiene el sentido de Cristo sabe cuánto aprovecha a la cristiana piedad, y cuánto convenga al siervo de Dios y le sea útil, a lo menos alguna hora del día, recoger más atentamente los beneficios de su pasión y redención para gozar de ello suavemente en su conciencia, y fielmente en su memoria guardarlo, lo cual es en espíritu comer el cuerpo de Cristo y beber su sangre en su memoria, según Él lo mandó. <sup>46</sup>

Likewise, in this experience of the union of love, but not of being, the life of the soul becomes the life of God, and yet the soul retains its identity:

Sólo podré decir que se representa estar junto con Dios, y queda una certidumbre que en ninguna manera se puede dejar de creer. (*Vida* 18:14)

The water is itself a channel of grace:

Es de notar y entender que siempre esta agua del cielo, este grandísimo favor del Señor, deja el alma con grandísimas ganancias ..... (*Vida* 18:15)

The element of human inadequacy is stressed, as it has been in her descriptions of the previous Waters:

Bendito seáis, Señor mío, que así hacéis de pecina tan sucia como yo, agua tan clara que sea para vuestra mesa. (*Vida* 19:2)

In Teresa's composite imagery the elements of mortal clay and clear waters are contrasted, the creative transformation by God of earth to water is

conveyed, and also the link made with appetite, (eating and drinking,) which itself is evocative of the sacramental meal of the Eucharist at the Lord's Table here on earth, and of the heavenly banquet in the spiritual realm. The extreme contrast between heaven and earth is particularly emphasized: "Seáis alabado ¡oh regalo de los ángeles!, que así queréis levantar un gusano tan vil" (*Vida* 19.2). The idea of "levantar" incorporates the upward flight of the soul in rapture, as well as the concept of resurrection. Within this exclamation so concentrated in mystical significance there is also a hint of the illustrative idea of the cocooned silkworm becoming a butterfly (*Moradas* 5.2).

The image of the Garden is skilfully manipulated in the Fourth Water to be evocative of the biblical gardens of Creation, of Gethsemane and of the Resurrection of Christ<sup>47</sup>, incorporating references to the creative power of God, the suffering, failure and conflict inherent in the human condition, and the transformation, through the grace and merciful intervention of God, of the fallen mortal being into the redeemed and resurrected body and soul:

Si esta tierra está muy cavada con trabajos y persecuciones y murmuraciones y enfermedades – que pocos deben llegar aquí sin esto – y si está mullida con ir muy desasida de propio interés, el agua se embebe tanto, que casi nunca se seca; mas si es tierra, que aun se está en la tierra y con tantas espinas como yo al principio estaba, y aún no quitada de las ocasiones, ni tan agradecida como merece tan gran merced, tórnase la tierra a secar; y si el hortelano se descuida, y el Señor por sola su bondad no torna a querer llover, dad por perdida la huerta, que así me acaeció a mí algunas veces ..... Escribolo para consuelo de almas flacas como la mía ..... lágrimas todo lo ganan; un agua trae otra (*Vida* 19:3).<sup>48</sup>

At this point in her narrative Teresa consciously recapitulates. She employs yet also varies ideas and metaphors from the first three Waters to intensify the overall effect produced of her imagery which is cumulative. Thus she recalls the image of the well from the First Water, yet changes it significantly to suggest an unclean well, a metaphor she applies to the sinful human soul. She also brings in, as elsewhere, the connection between water and tears. This time, however, the tears are not of joy but regret :

Con estas lagrimillas que aquí lloro, dadas de Vos – agua de tan mal pozo, en lo que es de mí parte – aclarad agua tan turbia ..... (*Vida* 19:6)

Teresa intimately links the idea of water to the human being in two different respects: on the one hand the water of human tears reflects the devotional and penitential response of a soul; on the other hand the “mal pozo” and “agua tan turbia” referred to describes the imperfections of the fallen human being whom the power of God can transform so that he/she is cleansed of sin and pure and clean in spirit. The water described here, “living water”, is therefore no longer something viewed objectively as the contents to be hauled up out of a well, but is perceived to be part of the emotional and spiritual nature of the human being affected by and responsive to the redemptive and purifying powers of God. Through this shift of emphasis in her imagery Teresa elaborates her ideas of the two natures, human and divine, which through the grace of God unite in mystical union. Here again, Teresa’s mystical imagery reflects the manner and matter of incarnational theology: spiritual becomes substantial, and



substance somehow is more than just the vehicle of the spiritual – it is shown to be consubstantial, sharing its nature whilst retaining its identity.

By means of such shifts in the meanings and emphases of her imagery Teresa conveys the soaring upwards of the soul into God at a time when the “water” of grace is at its most abundant, and, therefore, when the “earth” of the soul, or the “earthly soul” is, by its human nature, least capable of accommodating it:

Consideremos ahora que esta agua postrera ..... es tan copiosa, que, si no es por no lo consentir la tierra podemos creer que se está con nosotros esta nube de la gran Majestad acá en esta tierra ..... coge el Señor el alma digamos ahora a manera que las nubes cogen los vapores de la tierra, y levántala toda ella ..... he lo oído así esto, de que cogen las nubes los vapores o el sol -- y sube la nube al cielo y llévala consigo, y comiéndola a mostrar cosas del reino que la tiene aparejado. (*Vida* 20:2)<sup>49</sup>

## VI

Imagery of water: *Las Moradas*

Teresa's imagery of water was worked and refined over more than a decade. Completed in 1565, Teresa's *Vida* was the literary starting point for her images of water and her techniques of connecting them. When, subsequently, her mystical experiences of God deepened, she reflected on them, and made further attempts to describe them through elaborating further her imagery of water. In *Camino de Perfección* (1565), begun after the completion of the *Vida*, Teresa selects three among the many properties of water so as to use and develop them in combination within her complex scheme of imagery to illustrate the nature of her spiritual journey:

El agua tiene tres propiedades, que ahora se me acuerda que me hacen al caso, que muchas más tendrá ... la una es que se enfría... es la otra la propiedad limpiar cosas no limpias ... la otra propiedad del agua es que harta y quita la sed ... (*Camino de Perfección* 19; 3,6, & 8)

In using the property of water to quench thirst, Teresa refers to "unas personas que han mucha sed y ven el agua de muy lejos ... quieren más morir de sed que beber agua que tanto ha de costar" (*Camino de Perfección* 19;2). Teresa naturally relates the idea of thirst for water and of the body desiring nourishment with the thirst of the soul to drink the water of God's Spirit. Teresa increases the impact of the image of thirst by linking it to the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, a story for which, as we have seen, she had a personal fondness. But in so doing she is bringing her readers to think of God's life-giving waters:

... se les acaba la fuerza, y por ventura no estaban dos pasos de la fuente de agua viva, que dijo el Señor a la Samaritana, que quien la bebiere no tendrá sed. (*Camino de Perfección* 19;2)

Teresa had used this biblical allusion previously in *Vida* 30;19., relating there to the key idea of thirst quenching with the image of the living water offered from the well of God:

¡ oh qué de veces me acuerdo del agua viva que dijo el Señor a la Samaritana ! y así soy muy aficionada a aquel evangelio ... desde muy niña ... suplicaba muchas veces al Señor me diese aquel agua, y la tenía dibujada adonde estaba siempre, con este letrado, cuando el Señor llegó pozo: Domine, da mihi aquam. (*Vida* 30;19)

Teresa distinguishes spiritual thirst from natural thirst and intensifies the pain and pleasure which, paradoxically, are present in combination when the soul longs to quench its thirst for the water of God: "Mas ¡ con qué sed se desca tener esta sed ! ... es sed penosísima que fatiga, trae consigo la misma satisfacción con que se mata aquella sed." Through the use of this paradox in *Camino de Perfección*, 19;2 she clarifies the soul's longing for the spiritual marriage.

The mystery and paradox of mystical experience are also conveyed by Teresa through antithesis when she combines imagery of water and fire. The first of the three qualities of water that she has highlighted is that water cools. Yet, though it can often extinguish flame through its coolness, under certain circumstances it can make a fire rage even more "salvo si no es de alquitrán, que se enciende más" (*Camino de Perfección* 19;3). Teresa sees theological and mystical significance in the fact that when a fire is raging, water can make it burn more fiercely "aunque son contrarios" (*Camino de*

*Perfección* (9;4).<sup>50</sup> Of course, the images of fire and water are linked in the Bible in the words of St John the Baptist: "Ego quidem aqua baptizo vos: veniet autem fortior me ... ipso vos baptizabit in Spiritu Sancto et igni,"; "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming ... he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire," which refer not only to the symbolic spiritual cleansing process of water in baptism, but to the "baptism of fire" – through the coming of the Holy Spirit.<sup>51</sup> When Teresa links fire and water in her imagery, showing the superiority of fire, she means to emphasize, as does San Juan de la Cruz, that the living flame of God's love for the soul can never be extinguished.

*Las Moradas* (1577) is the product of her spiritual development and maturity which took place in the years after writing her *Vida* and *Camino de perfección*. In *Las Moradas* she retains the ideas and imagery of the mystical sections of the *Vida*, but consolidates, refines and elaborates them. So in her *Moradas*, she shows through her elaborated imagery how her mystic experiences have deepened and become more complex.

In *Las Moradas* Teresa sometimes brings in references to water through direct allusions to stories in the Gospels. For example, she alludes to the sick man (in John 5) who had no-one to help him down to the water, so Christ healed him:

Pues no hablemos con estas almas tullidas, que si no viene el mismo Señor a mandarlas se levanten, como al que había treinta años que estaba en la piscina ..... (*Moradas* 1.1,8)

The healing and transforming power of God is characteristically linked here to the presence of water, even though in this particular story it is Christ, not the water, who heals. Here, as elsewhere in Teresa's developing progression of images the presence of the water signifies change or improvement, which while it may also be physical, is essentially spiritual.

Teresa draws directly on both Old and New Testament references to water. She refers, for example, to "este árbol de vida que está plantado en las mismas aguas vivas de la vida que es Dios" (*Moradas* 1.2,1), a compact image, uniting the elements of water, life, fruitfulness, planting, and the ideas of the Tree of Life and Water of Life, which is found in, among other biblical sources, the Psalms:

Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum,  
quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo .....<sup>52</sup>

The soul is like a fruitful tree, planted beside the spring of life which nourishes it and makes it produce fruit:

"..... esta fuente de vida adonde el alma está como un árbol plantado en ella, que la frescura y fruto no tuviera si no le procediere de allí, que esto le sustenta y hace no secarse y que dé buen fruto. (*Moradas* 1.2,2)

The combination of water and fruitfulness also appears in other biblical texts; in Ezekiel: "mater tua quasi vinea in sanguine tuo super aquam plantata est; fructus eius et frondes eius creverunt in aquis multis"; "Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard transplanted by the water, fruitful and full of branches by reason of abundant water";<sup>53</sup> and in Jeremiah: "Et erit quasi lignum quod transplantatur super aquas ..... et erit folium eius viride

..... *facere fructum*"; "he is like a tree planted by water ... its leaves remain green ... it does not cease to bear fruit." <sup>54</sup>

In *Las Moradas* Teresa emphasises the cleansing properties of water.<sup>55</sup> The source of the water of the spirit is God, and therefore is pure.<sup>56</sup> But the soul's spiritual life in communion with God can be soiled by earthly contacts. The contrast she draws is vivid when she says: "Así como de una fuente muy clara lo son todos los arroyicos que salen de ella .....", but goes on to refer to "el alma que por su culpa se aparta de esta fuente y se planta en otra de muy negrísima agua y de muy mal olor, todo lo que corre de ella es la misma desventura y suciedad" (*Moradas* 1.2,2).<sup>57</sup> This contrast is used to emphasise the difference between God's purity and the pollution brought about by human sins:

los que están en pecado moral cuán negras y de mal olor son sus corrientes ..... metidos siempre en la miseria de nuestra tierra, nunca el corriente saldrá de cieno de temores, pusulanimidad y cobardía ..... (*Moradas* 1.2,10)

The image of two fountains, each with a basin, is used and developed by Teresa to explain in *Las Moradas* her understanding of the different types of "oración". Evidence of the spiritual maturity she has acquired since writing about the four waters in the *Vida*, this image concentrates on the different means by which the basins of the fountains are filled. One basin is filled by means of a complex system of conduits, representing human effort; the other is filled quietly and effortlessly from the source of the spring, representing the action of God in the soul without human activity being needed to achieve this fulfilment. The two ways of filling the basin

represent and convey (a) the "active aspect, the pleasurable experience of spiritual fulfilment resulting from recollection ("recogimiento") and contemplation and (b) the "passive" aspect, the peace and calm communicated to the soul "at source" by God.

This image, which also brings in the idea of expansion and increase, conveys the deep spiritual calm and silence of this stage of "oración", which lies beyond human understanding. But Teresa stresses that the physical side of human nature does share in the process: "Todo el hombre exterior goza de este gusto y suavidad." (*Moradas* 4.2,4). She goes on:

..... ni aquel contento y deleite se siente como los de acá en el corazón, digo en su principio, que después todo lo hinche; vasc revertido este agua por todas las moradas y potencias hasta llegar al cuerpo, que por eso dije que comienza de Dios y acaba en nosotros ..... (*Moradas* 4.2,4)

The process of expansion she describes, which seems to be inspired by an idea from the Psalms,<sup>58</sup> affects through to its very core or centre. Teresa later clarifies further the idea of the expansion of the soul in a succinct description that develops further her imagery of the fountain:

Así como se entiende claro un dilatamiento o ensanchamiento en el alma a manera de como si el agua que mana de una fuente no tuviese corriente sino que la misma fuente estuviese labrada de una cosa que mientras más agua manase más grande se hiciese el edificio ..... (*Moradas* 4.3,9)

This image is elaborated even further when Teresa goes on to contrast the quiet filling of the cistern through the will and grace of God, with the

torrents of abundant water which issue in flood as a consequence and carry with them the ship of her soul:

No parece sino que aquel pilar de agua que dijimos ..... que con tanta suavidad y mansedumbre digo sin ningún movimiento se henchía, aquí desató este gran Dios, que detiene los manantiales de las aguas y no deja salir la mar de sus términos, los manantiales por donde venía a este pilar del agua; y con un impetu grande se levanta una ola tan poderosa que sube a lo alto esta navecica de nuestra alma .....  
(*Moradas* 6.5,3)<sup>59</sup>

Through this development in her imagery of water, Teresa increases our sense of the irresistible power of God's spirit and grace. At these sublime levels of mystical experience as conveyed through the forcefulness of her imagery of water, the human soul is powerless and totally in the hands of God.

The idea of human powerlessness being challenged or aided by the omnipotence of God is deeply embedded in the Old Testament story of the Exodus from Egypt and the journey of the Hebrews to the Promised Land. This story makes widespread use of the imagery of water. Because of Pharaoh's stubborn refusal to let the Hebrews go, the waters of Egypt were polluted by the hand of God (Exodus 7,19); when the Egyptians pursued the Hebrews, by the hand of God the waters of the Red Sea were divided to allow them to escape (Exodus 14,21); when the Hebrews complained to Moses that they were thirsty in the wilderness, by the hand of God water came from the rock at Horeb (Exodus 17,6); then, as the Hebrews passed into the Promised Land, by the hand of God the waters of the Jordan separated to allow them dry passage (Joshua 3,14ff).



Teresa alludes to the power of God in terms of water, referring to the familiar biblical story to emphasize her point:

..... poderoso sois Vos, Señor, para que la gran mar se retire y el gran Jordán y dejen pasar los hijos de Israel ..... (*Moradas* 6.6,4)

Yet, paradoxically, in this very context in which God's power is being opposed to human helplessness, the level of intimacy, or union, between God and the soul is equally stressed. Again Teresa stresses that human effort at this level of spiritual experience is not productive: only God can do it. Human, physical tears, so deeply rooted in the emotional being, can be the outward and visible signs of God's activity within the soul – the water, as it were, overflowing through the spiritual into the physical body.

However Teresa highlights an important contrast between barren tears that are brought about by human will, and fertile tears that flow as a result of the action of God:

las lágrimas vénganse cuando Dios las enviare, no haciendo nosotras diligencias para traerlas; éstas dejarán esta tierra seca regada, y son gran ayuda para dar fruto, mientras menos caso hiciéremos de ellas, más, porque es agua que cae del cielo; la que sacamos cansándonos en cavar para sacarla, no tiene que ver con ésta ..... (*Moradas* 6.6,9)

At another level of the *Interior Castle*, Teresa describes the intimacy of union between God and the soul in terms of two sources of water combining. In trying to describe the spiritual marriage in these terms she combines elements of many of her previous images into one composite image full of mystical significances:

Acá (la unión) es como si cayendo agua del cielo en un río o fuente, adonde queda hecho todo agua, que no podrán ya dividir ni apartar cuál es el agua del río, o la que cayó del cielo; o como si un arroyico pequeño entra en la mar no habrá remedio de apartarse ..... (*Moradas* 7.2.4)

Many of these Teresian ideas and images are found in the Bible, and, indeed, in many other religious books. They are common to Judaeo-Christian literary and theological traditions and were used by early Christian theologians and writers in their attempts to explain theological doctrines. Consciously or unconsciously, Teresa draws upon these, and works them into a network of suggestive metaphors which she attempts to illustrate and reveal through the growing intensity of her spiritual experiences as she progresses on the *via mística*. The Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters at the Creation (*Genesis* 1)<sup>60</sup>; the River of Life proceeding from the throne of God (*Revelation* 22); the water streaming from the rock, as at Meribah (*Exodus* 17); the woman at the well (*John* 4); the blood and water streaming from the side of the crucified Christ (*John* 19) – all these biblical events and concepts would have been well-known to Teresa, through her reading, through sermons and spiritual conversations, through the recitation of the Hours and attendance at the Liturgy, and are woven into the complex pattern of her mystical imagery.

## VII

Water and Wine

Water in combination with wine has special significance in the history and message of the Christian religion. Christ transformed both the substance and the the significance of wine at the last supper when he instituted the Eucharist: "Et accipiens calicem gratias egit: et dedit illis, dicens: Bibite ex hoc omnes. Hic est enim sanguis meus novi testamenti, qui pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum"; "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, *Drink of it all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins*".<sup>61</sup> The Roman Catholic understanding is that at the consecration, when the priest repeats Christ's words over the bread and wine, the substance of the bread and wine "become" the body and blood of Christ while the accidents remain.<sup>62</sup> There is also an element of "transformation" in the Roman Catholic understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage: by divine grace husband and wife "become one flesh". Marriage involves union at two levels, at the physical, bodily level in the union of man and woman in sexual intercourse; and , secondly, a parallel spiritual union, in which man and wife are no longer two, but one: "Itaque iam non sunt duo, sed una caro. Quod ergo Deus coniunxit, homo non separet."; "So they are no longer two, but one flesh."<sup>63</sup> This idea of sacramental "transformation" has echoes and resonances in Teresa's imagery, when she

seems to describe the transformation of the soul in "oración".<sup>64</sup> One of the sources of her nuptial imagery, and of the image of wine, is the Song of Songs, on which she wrote what is now known as her *Meditaciones sobre los cantares*.<sup>65</sup> Wine in the *Song* is linked with love and with love-making; love is better than wine (*Song* 1.2 and 4.10), commented on by Teresa in *Cantares* 1.1 and 3.15; love is more memorable than wine (*Song* 1.4); kisses are like the best wine (*Song* 7.9); wine is drunk with milk (*Song* 5.1) and with spices (*Song* 8.2)

There is also a perceived relationship between the sacrament of marriage as the transformation of man and woman into one flesh (*Genesis* 2.23), and the transformation of water into wine (*John* 2.9). John, it will be recalled, describes as the first "sign" or miracle of Jesus the occasion at a wedding feast in Galilee when he turned water into wine. Thus water, wine and marriage of bride and bridegroom, and the concept of "transformation" (water into wine: "aquam vinum factam", and man and woman becoming one flesh "et erunt duo in carne una") are combined in the one biblical story.<sup>66</sup> In her use of water in conjunction with wine in her imagery, Teresa also manages to combine aspects of both stories from *Genesis* and *John*, and aspects of both sacraments, Marriage and Eucharist.

Wine in the scriptures, especially in references concerned also with water, is often connected with various degrees of abundance and intoxication. The story of Noah is narrated within the context of not only an excess of water but also one of wine: "coepitque Noe vir agricola

exercere terram, et plantavit vineam. Bibensque vinum inebriatus est, et nudatus in tabernaculo suo.” ; “Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and became drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent.”<sup>67</sup> Ezekiel uses the image of the vineyard in which the vines produce fruit because of the abundance of water: “Mater tua quasi vinea in sanguine tuo super aquam plantata est; fructus eius et frondes eius creverunt ex aquis multis.”; “Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard transplanted by the water, fruitful and full of branches by reason of abundant water.”<sup>68</sup> Isaiah combines a number of elements within his song of the vineyard of which there are resonances in Teresa’s imagery of water and the tending of the garden of the soul:

*Cantabo dilecto meo canticum patruelis mei vineae suae. Vinca facta est dilecto meo in cornu filio olei. Et sepivit eam, et lapides elegit ex illa, et plantavit eam electam; et aedificavit turrim in medio eius, et torcular extruxit in ea; et exspectavit ut feceret uvas, et fecit labruscas. Nunc ergo, habitores Ierusalem et viri Iuda, iudicate inter me et vineam meam...et nubibus mandabo ne pluant super eam imbrem...*

Let me sing for my beloved a love song concerning his vineyard: my beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He digged it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked to it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, o inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray between me and my vineyard...I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it...<sup>69</sup>

To assist her to express the mystical process of the soul’s developing love of God, Teresa also uses the metaphor of wine and the intoxication it produces, a metaphor deeply rooted in the tradition of mystical writers:

En esto se puede pasar algunas horas de oración, y se pasan; porque, comenzadas las dos potencias a emborrachar y gustar de aquel vino divino, con facilidad se tornan a perder de sí para estar más ganadas... (*Vida* 18,13).

Such an illustrative concept is in keeping with the Psalmist's comment:

"Potasti nos vino inebrianti."; "You have given us wine that makes us stagger".<sup>70</sup> In describing this state of spiritual intoxication with God:

"Muchas veces estaba así como desatinada y embriagada en este amor, y jamás había podido entender cómo era." (*Vida* 16,2), Teresa develops the image of inebriation to convey the intensification of the soul's rapture to the extent that its increasing spiritual inebriation as it imbibes the wine of God's love results in a state she equates with drunkenness: "¡Qué borracha debía de ir esta santa alma, embebida en que ninguno la estorbase de gozar de su Esposo...!" (*Fundaciones* 28,24).<sup>71</sup> The use of "gozar" in this context of the inebriating effects of God's love, is reminiscent and evocative of the love-making between bride and Groom in the Song of Songs, to which Teresa makes direct reference: "...dice la Esposa en los *Cantares* (1,3), llevóme el rey a la bodega del vino ... andaba buscando a su Amador por una parte y por otra..." (*Moradas* 5.1,12). This is the inner "bodega" to which God sometimes leads or puts the soul, which in another scheme of images Teresa describes as the innermost room of the interior castle. Even the newly transformed butterfly of Teresa's famous image used to convey the mystical effects of loving communion with God in the soul, is made restless as a result of drinking the divine wine:

... pues ver el desasosiego de esta mariposita con no haber estado más quieta y sosegada en su vida es cosa para alabar a Dios; y es que no sabe adonde posar y hacer su asiento, y como le ha tenido tal, todo lo que ve en la tierra le descontenta, en especial cuando son muchas las veces que la da Dios de este vino... (*Moradas* 5.2,8).

The nucleus of this system of images is already present in her earlier work, in which she describes how "...comenzadas las dos potencias (del alma) a emborrachar y gustar de aquel vino divino, con facilidad se tornan a perder de sí para estar muy más ganadas, y acompañan la voluntad, y se gozan todas tres." (*Vida* 18,13). The idea of grace being infused into the soul like wine being poured into a vessel is also used by Teresa in the same work when she is contrasting her unworthiness with the liberal generosity of the merciful God: "No pongáis, Criador mío, tan precioso licor en vaso tan quebrado, pues habéis ya visto de otras veces que le torno a derramar" (*Vida* 18,4).<sup>72</sup>

The culmination of Teresa's use of the imagery of wine – which is, as we have seen, to be equated, in its spiritual implication with the imagery of water – comes in the seventh mansion:

sino, esforzado con el esfuerzo que tiene el alma bebiendo del vino de esta bodega, adonde la ha traído su esposo y no la deja salir, redunda en el flaco cuerpo, como acá el manjar que se pone en el estómago da fuerza a la cabeza y a todo él. (*Moradas* 7.4, 11).

The wine of God's love, like the blood of Christ, gives strength to body and soul. As wine is drunk and taken into, and affects, the body, so Christ becomes the living force of the soul. This echoes St Paul's comment, "Vivo autem, iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus"; "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me..."<sup>73</sup>

Teresa's imagery of water is the more effective because it is complex, inter-related and progressive. The imagery builds up its own dynamic in conscious or unconscious cross-referencing, allusion and literary echoes, to reflect the various stages of "oración" which, like the varying images of water she employs, are only adequately understood when their interconnections are appreciated. Her scheme of water imagery is held together, above all, by the underlying desire which constantly impels Teresa to express in her writings the content and effects of her mystical experiences. These, by their nature, as she repeatedly reminds us, cannot be expressed directly in any other way but through analogies, illustrations and symbolism that characterize the figures of speech that collectively we call imagery. Like the individual frames of a film, the individual images of Teresa can stand in their own right, but viewed together they produce a more meaningful moving picture of her spiritual life in "oración".

Wine and water are both liquid images which stand in their own right, and yet, combined with each other and with nuptial imagery, the imagery of love, they convey profound theological meaning. John's Gospel records how, at the crucifixion, the theological scene of sacrificial love, a soldier pierced Christ's body with a spear, "et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua"; "at once there came out blood and water" (John 19.34). Water and blood are linked to the love inherent in Christ's sacrifice, as they are linked to new life in baptismal water and sacramental grace in the wine of Communion, the blood of Christ. The imagery of water is also combined



with that of fire, the secular and religious symbol of passionate love, and fire with nuptial imagery, the detail of which will be examined in Chapter Four.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> There is likely to be a connection between the biblical four rivers of Eden and Teresa's four waters.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 2, 5-6 (Biblia Vulgata). "...for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground, but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground". The Genesis story already has within it different ways of watering the garden of paradise: the "fons", and the one river dividing into four. The Vulgate text has been chosen because it was the official version of the Bible from which theologians and priests studied and on which commentaries were written.

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 2, 10

<sup>4</sup> "In sudore vultus tui vivescere pane, donec revertaris in terram de qua sumptus est: quia pulvis est et in pulverem reverteris." (Genesis 3, 19). The "bread of affliction" portrays the toil and effort of prayer. In Christian tradition, also, the eating of the Bread of the Eucharist, done within the context of prayer, is the highest liturgical act of "communion" with God.

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 2, 7

<sup>6</sup> In Parables Jesus uses imagery of common experience among his hearers to convey spiritual truths and descriptions of the kingdom of Heaven. The stories "become" the realities in the minds of his listeners. Teresa uses a similar technique to explain her own experiences.

<sup>7</sup> In John's Gospel Jesus says that he is "in" the world but not "of" it. "Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo." *Evangelium secundum Joannem* 18, 36. The Christian understanding is that Jesus is the divine Son of God - he originates from the Holy Trinity in Heaven, and he is the "Word made flesh". Human beings are body and spirit, and because of the Fall, their bodies return to dust.

<sup>8</sup> The story of the Baptism of Jesus is significant. The vision of the descent of the Spirit at the Baptism of Jesus comes to him while he is at prayer, just after he has been baptised in the water of the Jordan: "factum est autem cum baptizaretur omnis populus, et Iesu baptizato, et orante, apertum est caelum: et descendit Spiritus sanctus corporali specie sicut columba in ipsum: et vox de caelo facta est: Tu es filius meus dilectus, in te complacui mihi." (Biblia Vulgata, Lucam, 3, 21.) The context is "oración" (orante), in which there is a vision of heaven opened and a movement, or descent, of the Holy Spirit expressed in the imagery of the dove. Water is the other key image of the context here.

<sup>9</sup> "Hortus conclusus soror mea, sponsa, hortus conclusus, fons signatus": "A garden locked is my sister, my bride, a garden locked, a fountain sealed", (*Canticum* 4.12).

<sup>10</sup> The *Instrucción de novicios* gives evidence of this. "Consideren los hermanos en el Convento, como en el arca de Noe, amparados de los turbiones y avenidas que anegan a otros que andan fuera de ella, y que la Celda es su apartamento y retrete donde se han de retirar y guarecer, porque algunas savandijas, que dentro del arca hay, y ocasiones que fuera de la celda se ofrecen, no le piquen y lastimen." (*Instrucción* p.93). Teresa refers to the presence of *savandijas* in the outskirts of the castle (*Moradas* 1.1,6) and in the first rooms of the castle (*Moradas* 1.1,8), and advises her nuns to beware of them (*Moradas* 2.1,8).

<sup>11</sup> The Monastery, Paradise, and the Castle: Literary Images and Spiritual Development in St Teresa of Ávila, *BHS*, LXII (1985) pp 245-257

<sup>12</sup> Teresa calls St Joseph's convent "un cielo": "Esta casa es un cielo" (*Camino* 13.7).

<sup>13</sup> *Vida* 13.13; 9.1; 9.4

<sup>14</sup> Osuna, *Tercer abecedario*, 8.1

<sup>15</sup> *op cit*, 10.5

<sup>16</sup> In his parables Jesus uses the imagery of the growth and development of plants. The Parable of the Sower indicates the different rates of progress of different souls in relation

to how they cope with the world. The Parable of the Mustard Seed shows how even the smallest seed can grow into the biggest plant. (*Matthaeum* 13,31.)

<sup>17</sup> This is very much in line with the biblical cluster image of planting, watering and increase: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." (I Corinthians 3.6); "Ego plantavi, Apollo rigavit: sed Deus incrementum dedit."

<sup>18</sup> "Petite, et dabitur vobis; quacite, et invenitis. Pulsate, et aperietur vobis" (*Matthaeum* 7,7.)

<sup>19</sup> Note that the Genesis image contains the key idea of the cherubim with the flaming sword "which turned every way". Teresa develops the idea of movement in all directions in her castle imagery. The cherubim and the sword feature later in the imagery of the "transverberation".

<sup>20</sup> "And they heard the sound of the voice of God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Notice also the idea in Genesis of hearing the voice of God. This can often be a part of the mystical experience of "oración", known as locution or audition.

<sup>21</sup> *Santa Teresa de Jesús y el Islam*, p. 641

<sup>22</sup> "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High."

<sup>23</sup> *Actus Apostolorum* 7.48

<sup>24</sup> The scent they give off is an image of passivity in prayer. Once the flowers have been watered, they will flower and emit their perfume themselves.

<sup>25</sup> *De los comentarios de san Agustín, obispo, sobre los salmos*. Liturgia de las Horas según el rito Romano, II, 145.

<sup>26</sup> St John Chrysostom (347-407) brings together the imagery of life-giving waters and the banqueting table: "Moisés levantó, en aquel tiempo, sus manos hacia el cielo e hizo descender el pan de los ángeles, el maná; nuestro Moisés levanta hacia el cielo sus manos y nos consigue un alimento eterno. Aquél golpeó la roca e hizo correr un manantial; éste toca la mesa, golpea la mesa espiritual y hace que broten las aguas del Espíritu. Por esta razón, la mesa se halla situada en medio, como una fuente, con el fin que los rebaños puedan, desde cualquier parte, afluir a ella y abrevarse con sus corrientes salvadoras". (*De la catequesis de san Juan Crisóstomo, obispo*. Ibid., II, 136)

<sup>27</sup> *Psalmus* 35,9

<sup>28</sup> *Psalmus* 1,3

<sup>29</sup> Osuna, op cit Tr 10 c.5

<sup>30</sup> *Psalmus* 41,3

<sup>31</sup> Osuna, op cit Tr 11, c.4

<sup>32</sup> Pero Meogo, (13<sup>th</sup> - 14 cent.) *Antología de la poesía española medieval*, (Barcelona: Editorial Iberia, 1966) p. 162

<sup>33</sup> *Psalmus* 41,8

<sup>34</sup> *Psalmus* 62,1

<sup>35</sup> *Psalmus* 64,10

<sup>36</sup> *Psalmus* 77,15

<sup>37</sup> *Psalmus* 77,20

<sup>38</sup> *Psalmus* 142,6

<sup>39</sup> *Apocalypsis* 7,17

<sup>40</sup> *Apocalypsis* 21,6

<sup>41</sup> *Apocalypsis* 22,1

<sup>42</sup> *Canticum* 8.7.

<sup>43</sup> 2 ad Corinthios 4,7: "Habemus autem thesaurum istum in vasis fictilibus: ut sublimatas sit virtutis Dei, et non ex nobis."; "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that the transcendent power belongs to God, not to us".

<sup>44</sup> These words, which Teresa claims to be of divine origin, resemble Galatians 2.20: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me...".

<sup>45</sup> "En el santísimo sacramento de la Eucaristía están "contenidos verdadera, real y substancialmente el Cuerpo y la Sangre junto con el alma y la divinidad de nuestro Señor Jesucristo, y por consiguiente, Cristo entero. (Cc. De Trento:DS 1651).....". "Mediante la

*conversión del pan y del vino en su Cuerpo y Sangre, Cristo se hace presente en este sacramento.*" (*Catecismo*, 1374-1375)

<sup>46</sup> Osuna, op cit, Tr 11, c. 2

<sup>47</sup> In the Garden of the Resurrection, Christ is thought by Mary Magdalene, shedding tears, to be the gardener. The idea of God as the gardener is subtly validated. "Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?'" Supposing him to be the gardener, ..." (John 20.15ff).

<sup>48</sup> The biblical book of *Job* is the classical exposition of the ideas of suffering, failure and conflict in the human condition. Interestingly, within the imagery of *Job* there are images of agricultural irrigation, similar to Teresa's fourth water, "Qui dat pluviam super faciem terrae, et irrigat aquis universa"; "He gives rain upon the earth and sends water upon the fields" (Job 5,10), and parallels to the image of clouds and the formation of rain. Clouds themselves signify the presence of God: "Nubes latibulum eius ..... et circa cardines caeli perambulat"; "Thick clouds enwrap him ..... and he walks on the vaults of heaven" (Job 22,14). The presence of God "in" the water is accompanied by the idea of the creative action of God in drawing up the vapours: "Que aufert stillas pluviae, et effundit imbres ad instar gurgitum, que de nubius fluunt, quae praetextunt cuncta desuper." "For he draws up the drops of water, he distils his mist in rain which the skies pour down, and drop upon man abundantly" (Job 36,28). Teresa was familiar with the content of *Job* which she quotes in the vernacular in *Vida* 5.8: "traía muy ordinario estas palabras de Job en el pensamiento y decíalas: *Pues recibimos los bienes de la mano del Señor, ¿por qué no sufriremos los males?*".

<sup>49</sup> St Paul describes the end of the world in similar terms, "And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air..."; "...et mortui, qui in Christo sunt, resurgent primi. Deinde nos, qui vivimus, qui relinquimur, simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Christo in aera ..." (1 ad Thessalonicenses 4.16).

<sup>50</sup> Teresa appears to have picked up on technical, philosophical terminology in this paragraph, which reads more like a treatise than an informal talk to nuns: "...como es Señor de todos los elementos y del mundo, y como el agua procede de la tierra, no hayáis miedo que mate este fuego de amor de Dios; no es de su jurisdicción. Aunque son contrarios, es ya Señor absoluto; no le está sujeto." (*Camino* 19.4).

<sup>51</sup> Evangelium secundum Lucam 3,16

<sup>52</sup> Psalmus 1,3 This verse is referred to by Osuna: "...y si quieres que el árbol de tu cuerpo fructifique, plántalo cerca del corrimiento de las aguas de tus ojos, y en su tiempo dará fruto..." (*Tercer abecedario*, Tr 10 c.5).

<sup>53</sup> Ezechiel 19,10

<sup>54</sup> Jeremias 17,8

<sup>55</sup> See Luke 7,37 ff. Mary Magdalene washed Jesus' feet with her tears, dried them with her hair, kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment. Teresa alludes to this Gospel story in *Moradas* 7.4,13.

<sup>56</sup> "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean"; "Et effundam super vos aquam mundam, et mundabimini ab omnibus iniquamentis vestris." (*Ezechiel* 36,25)

<sup>57</sup> An echo of Jeremiah 2,13

<sup>58</sup> She quotes directly from Psalm 118,32: "dilataste cor meum" in *Moradas* 4.2,5

<sup>59</sup> There are ideas here combined from the story of the ark and the Flood, and from the Psalms; "Et clausi sunt fontes abyssi, et cataractae caeli: et prohibita sunt pluviae de caelo."; "the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained..." (Genesis 8.2). "Forsitan aqua absorbuisset nos. Torrentem pertransivit anima nostra..."; "Then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us..." (Psalmi 123.4). Noah's ark is referred to in the *Instrucción de novicios*: see footnote 10 above.

<sup>60</sup> Referred to in Osuna: "Primero que el Espíritu Santo viniese sobre las aguas, se dice que la tierra estaba vacía y vacua, porque la tierra de nuestros corazones se ha de evacuar

de toda criatura para que reciba mejor la venida del que todo lo hinche, que es Dios..." (*Tercer abecedario* 1<sup>r</sup> 4, c. 5).

<sup>61</sup> Evangelium secundum Matthaeum 26,27 ff

<sup>62</sup> Teresa, in *Las moradas*, tries to explain the difference between the presence of God in the soul during the higher reaches of "oración" and the presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist; "No os habéis de engañar pareciéndonos que esta certidumbre queda en forma corporal como el cuerpo de nuestro Señor Jesucristo está en el Santísimo sacramento, aunque no lo vemos; porque acá no queda así sino de sola la divinidad." (*Moradas* 5; 1.11).

<sup>63</sup> Evangelium secundum Matthaeum 19,6.

<sup>64</sup> One of her most profound images of the mystery of such transformation is, as we have seen, that of the silk worm becoming, in the cocoon, a beautiful butterfly. *Moradas* 5,2.

<sup>65</sup> First edition c.1566; Second edition between 1572-1575. At the time of writing it was prohibited to publish and read the holy scriptures in the vernacular; Teresa called the work "*mis meditaciones*". The autograph editions were ordered to be burned by her Confessor (Diego de Yanguas), but copies survived.

<sup>66</sup> Biblia Vulgata: Evangelium secundum Ioannem, 2.1 ff

<sup>67</sup> Genesis 9,20

<sup>68</sup> Ezechiel 19,10

<sup>69</sup> Isaías 5,1-6

<sup>70</sup> Psalmus 59,5

<sup>71</sup> The Catholic prayer *Anima Christi*, attributed to St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) contains the line "Blood of Christ, inebriate me". The word "inebriate" is understood to carry the two meanings of "fill" and "intoxicate".

<sup>72</sup> NB "Habemus autem thesaurum istum in vasis fictilibus"; "We have this treasure in earthen vessels..." (2 ad Corinthios 4,7).

<sup>73</sup> Epistola B. Pauli Apostoli ad Galatas 2,20. Teresa quotes this in *Vida* 6,9. She also refers to this passage in *Cuentas de Conciencia* 3,10 (dated Avila 1563), and 42, (dated Sevilla, 1575). The reference is also referred to in *Instrucción de novicias* p. 167.

## CHAPTER 4

### Imagery of the Castle

#### Introduction

Imagery of the Castle is exploited and elaborated by Teresa throughout her masterpiece *Las moradas* as its other title, *Castillo interior*, makes evident, in order to convey to her readers the nature of the mystical experiences of her soul as it advances in its love-relationship with God. In this work, she begins with the idea or image of the soul as a castle, “considerar nuestra alma como un castillo todo de un diamante o muy claro cristal”, but then develops it into a comprehensive and complex metaphorical system of castle rooms to give expression to the growth and development of her soul as it explores and expands its direct knowledge of its divine Creator.<sup>1</sup> She begins the *Castillo interior o Las moradas* by saying that she had been looking for an appropriate point from which to begin to record and interpret her experiences of God, and that the image of the castle came to her, providing a foundation on which to build.

... se me ofreció lo que ahora diré para comenzar con algún fundamento (*Moradas* 1;1.1).

By this means, the castle image becomes the basis on which she constructs her descriptions and interpretations of her soul's interior journey of exploration in search of God in its innermost chambers. From this basic point of departure she elaborates with extraordinarily creative talent a

complex system of imagery that is probably the most subtly constructed of all her metaphorical systems.

# I

## The Castle : a palace of experiential exploration

The first three *moradas* or “mansions” of the Castle roughly signify and convey the earlier stages of prayer, known traditionally as meditation, the prayer of recollection, and the way of purgation. In meditation there are elements of reflection, reasoning or non-mystical mental meditation<sup>2</sup>, together with affection, or the opening of the heart to the divine. Thus in the preliminary stages of recollection the soul begins to collect together its faculties and enters within itself to be with God, detaching itself from the exterior world, and withdrawing its senses from external stimuli. The soul, with its higher part – Spirit – of Memory, Understanding and Will, and its lower part – “animal soul” – endowed with its five (exterior) senses, and its interior senses of imagination (ie, the power of creating images) and fancy – undergoes a purgation in these early stages as it strives to detach itself from the world of the senses, and aspires to communion with the the divine. In the first three *moradas* of the Interior Castle, the spiritual development of the soul proceeds along these lines – in humility, and in its practice of prayer and meditation on how to achieve an exemplary life, the soul is constantly under attack from the things of this world to which it is still attracted. In this state of conflict the soul becomes aware of itself as a castle

of many rooms, containing, at its very centre, the sanctuary of God's presence.

The castle image begins as one castle, which is made of one diamond.

... considerar nuestra alma como un castillo todo de un diamante o muy claro cristal adonde hay muchos aposentos ... (*Moradas* 1;1.1)<sup>3</sup>

There is a sense, therefore, of sparkling brightness and multiple facets or spaces, and, already the prospect of exploration in the use of the verb "considerar" and the "muchos aposentos" and, indeed, of translucence.

The imagery of the castle is clearly going to be used by Teresa to assist her to reflect thoughtfully and record her soul's exploratory journeying as it strives mystically to experience and be unified with the Divine Spirit. From the outset, the image is involved with both human and divine attributes.

The castle is the human soul – "nuestra alma" – but as such is also an image of heaven: "hay muchos aposentos así como en el cielo hay muchas moradas ..." (*Moradas* 1;1.1). The familiar passage in John's Gospel probably inspired Teresa here: "In domo patris mei mansiones multae sunt."; "In my Father's house there are many mansions."<sup>4</sup> Teresa's image of the castle, with its human and divine dimensions, also reminds us that in Christian teaching the human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit: "An nescitis quoniam membra vestra, templum sunt Spiritus sancti, qui in vobis est, quem habetis a Deo, et non estis vestri? ... portate Deum in corpore vestro"; "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?"<sup>5</sup> Teresa emphasises the presence



of God in the castle of the soul by showing that the soul is the place where God delights to dwell:

... no es otra cosa el alma del justo sino un paraíso adonde dice él tiene sus deleites. (*Moradas* 1:1.1).

"Paraíso" signifies the place where God is present, as well as recalling the original "garden" of Eden, the very "soil" from which the human body was formed into which God breathed His spirit to give it life. Thus "alma", "paraíso" and "castillo" become almost interchangeable terms in the metaphorical language of mysticism which Teresa employs. Teresa further emphasises the mystical importance of this spiritual soul-castle by reference to the superlative qualities of the nature of God:

... qué tal os parece que será el aposento adonde un rey tan poderoso, tan sabio, tan limpio, tan lleno de todo los bienes se deleita? (*Moradas* 1:1.1)

The fundamental problem Teresa faces, and of which she is constantly aware, is that any image or analogy is inadequate to express her mystical experiences of the nature of God. She acknowledges this difficulty of ineffability, common to all who attempt to write about mystical experience:

No hallo yo cosa con qué comparar la gran hermosura de un alma y la gran capacidad (*Moradas* 1:1.1),

and also the fact that the human intellect alone cannot understand, or express in words, the depth of the mystery involved:

... apenas deben llegar nuestros entendimientos, por agudos que fuesen, a comprenderla, así como no pueden llegar a considerar a Dios ... (*Moradas* 1:1.1).

But at the same time she knows how to present and elaborate her imagery so as to communicate at least some semblance of what her human soul has experienced of the divine, that experience itself being infinitely less than what is, in God, yet to be experienced.

Her repeated use of the verb "considerar" in such passages brings home to the reader the impossibility of conveying the totality of her soul's experiences. Yet through the imagery she uses she can offer the nearest thing to a record of the experience that her intellect can provide for the readers. The relationship between the metaphorical record of the experience and the experience itself is something akin, in Teresa's opinion, to the relationship between man and God as it is traditionally and theologically understood and believed by the Christian Churches. The image of the Creator resides in the created: "... él mismo dice que nos crió a su imagen y semejanza" (*Moradas* 1:1.1).<sup>6</sup>

Just as the human reflects and reproduces the image and likeness of God, so does Teresa's imagery of the castle reflect and reproduce the image and likeness of Teresa's mystical experiences. It is, then, at one further remove, the likeness of a likeness. By its nature, and because of the problem of ineffability, Teresa's journey of exploration into the soul and into the mystery of God cannot be fully described any more than it can be fully understood:

No hay para qué nos cansar en querer comprender la hermosura de este castillo (*Moradas* 1:1.1).

Intellectual or analytical enquiry into God, such as is implied in the opening lines of *Las moradas*, as Teresa humbly acknowledges, (“considerar nuestra alma ... considerar a Dios”), cannot succeed entirely even with the assistance of imagery, and even though God actually and mysteriously resides in the soul in terms of image and likeness. Nevertheless, through her creative imagery of the castle Teresa does enable us to achieve what is, given the essentially inexpressible nature of her journey of “oración”, a remarkable degree of insight, which is intuitive as well as intellectual, into the nature of her mystical relationship with God.

From the outset, Teresa stresses the inherent beauty and dignity of the human soul. Because it is made in the likeness of God it therefore shares something of His divine dignity, whatever its human imperfections:

Hay la diferencia de él a Dios que del Criador a la criatura, pues es criatura, basta decir que es hecha a su imagen para que apenas podamos entender la gran dignidad y hermosura del ánima. (*Moradas* 1:1.1)

Teresa conveys the beauty and dignity of the castle-soul to the reader through portraying it as a diamond or crystal, and as endowed therefore with sparkling beauty and crystal clarity. There are striking links with the imagery of *Revelation*: “Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God... (*Revelation* 22.1); “... having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal...” (21.11); “the wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass.” (21.18). Garcilaso de la Vega uses similar imagery to describe water: “Corrientes aguas, puras, cristalinas” (Égloga

I,239-240), “y de la blanca espuma que movieron las cristalinas ondas se cubrieron” (Égloga 3, 375-376).<sup>7</sup> Camoes describes a palatial edifice made of crystal:

Tomando-o pela mao, o lrva e guia  
Para o cume dum monte alto e divino  
No qual ua rica fábrica se erguia,  
De cristal toda e de ouro puro e fino. (*Os Lusíadas*, Canto IX, 87).

Covarrubias explains the link between water, ice and stone:

“El vidrio se llama en griego *ualos* sive *uelos*, que es propiamente el cristal, por ser como tenemos dicho yelo, de agua congelada con excesivo rigor. El cristal de roca se saca de su cantera, donde se cria y congela. Hacíanse, como también hoy se hacen, vasos preciosos, perlucidos y transparentes de que se servían los príncipes y ricos hombres...” (*Tesoro* 367).

Teresa observed such items in the house of the Duchess of Alba: “...entráis en un aposento de un rey o gran señor, o creo camarín los llaman, adonde tienen infinitos géneros de vidrios y barro...” (*Moradas* 6;4.8).

The material value and tangible brightness of the diamond or crystal conveys at least something of the spiritual, intangible and immaterial value and brightness of the castle-soul. Therefore, again, there is a sacramental element in the resemblance of soul and diamond: the diamond is the outward, visible sign of the inward, invisible spiritual beauty of the soul.

Conventional as the images of light and brightness used in the opening lines of *Las moradas* are within Christian art and theology, Teresa handles them with masterly skill and discipline and sets up a scheme of imagery which will be developed throughout the work to portray the presence and nature of God. “Un diamante ... muy claro cristal ... el cielo ... un paraíso

... deleites ... tan limpio ... hermosura ... gran dignidad ...": these elements are here methodically and rhythmically inter-related to emphasise the beauty of God, and, therefore, the beauty of the soul made in his image. In her choice of imagery Teresa reflects the Catholic theological understanding of the doctrine of Man. Although the soul shares in the image and likeness of God's perfect beauty, the soul also shares the fallen nature of all humanity and therefore there is a conflict within it between its fallen, imperfect human nature and its desire to love and be loved by God in His perfection. Man's origin was the paradise of the Garden, and his destiny will be the paradise of Heaven, but in the present, in the life of the world, the soul experiences spiritual confusion and blindness, and a propensity to give greater value to the physical side of experience, rather than to the spiritual, or to achieving, through self-knowledge, a correct balance between its human and divine nature:

¿ No es pequeña lástima y confusión que por nuestra culpa no entendamos a nosotros mismos ni sepamos quién somos ? (*Moradas* 1:1.2)

While emphasising the beauty and clarity of the diamond-castle-soul, Teresa highlights the contrast between the beauty of the soul and fallen human nature: "Ignorancia ...bestialidad ...grosería ... gusanos tan llenos de mal olor ...", descriptions which help to convey her picture of human beings who do not nourish their spiritual nature, but rather concentrate on their physical, bodily nature.<sup>8</sup> In the upper reaches of mystical experience the soul shares the quality of higher spiritual beings such as angels, but in

its fallen nature it approximates, as Teresa illustrates, more to the lower nature of beasts.

Even within the human being there is, therefore, the paradox of united extremes: the beautiful crystal-castle-soul is differentiated from the ordinary daily life of the body. Human nature and divine nature are seen to be poles apart. Body and soul are distinct, as God and the human creature are distinct, and yet, paradoxically, body and soul form at the same time a unity, and God resides in the human soul, immanent and yet transcendent.

Teresa regrets that frequently as human beings we

No procuramos saber qué cosa somos, sino que nos detenemos en estos cuerpos y así a bulto, porque lo hemos oído y porque nos dice la fe sabemos que tenemos almas. (*Moradas* 1:1.2)

For Teresa, to attempt the exploration of the soul-castle is important. She urges, therefore, again her readers that they “procurar saber”, or, “considerar”:

Mas que bienes puede haber esta alma o el gran valor de ella, pocas veces lo consideramos ... Pues consideremos que este castillo tiene ... muchas moradas. (*Moradas* 1:1.2 & 3)

From the very start Teresa has noted that there has to be movement inwards into the castle-diamond. The human soul has to enter into itself on an interior journey to God. The castle imagery is ideal both in its transparency and in its many-faceted structure to convey the intricacies of the soul's mystical nature and faculties. Transparency, achieved by the material from which the castle is made, *diamante* or *cristal*, solves the problem inherent in the *palmito* image (*Moradas* 1;2,8), of having to peel

through layers to get to the centre. The layers hide or obscure the centre, whereas it is possible, in the castle, to see beyond the present rooms into the rooms of higher mystical experience. Thus the rooms are not “como cosa enhilada”, in rows preventing sight, knowledge or access : “aquel sol resplandeciente que está en el centro del alma no pierde su resplandor y hermosura, que siempre está dentro de ella, y cosa no puede quitar su hermosura.” (*Moradas* 1;2.3). At the same time, the multi-faceted structure of the castle enables the possibility of an infinite variety of experience. The “muchas moradas” in the soul-castle, as Teresa portrays and explores them, are not constructed in a linear progression, are multi-dimensional, giving a sense of unlimited spatial capacity: “unas en lo alto, otras en bajo, otras a los lados” (*Moradas* 1:1.3), and, therefore, there is potentiality for movement in all directions. The multi-dimensional construction of the castle, lending depth, height and breadth to the process of “consideración”, conveys the key truth that the journey of the soul along the mystical way is rarely if ever made in straightforward progression, but takes the soul in its search for spiritual experiences and development along many different ways and into numerous diverse chambers of its being.

The image of this castle soul with its multi-dimensional construction, and its numerous rooms is not, of course, a product of Teresa's literary creativity, but, as we have already noted, has biblical precedents. There are also Islamic examples of this imagery, as Luce López-Baralt has argued. However, it was the Biblical texts that were constantly being transmitted to

the attention of religious communities through the daily recitation of the Offices, and through sermons, the Liturgy, and *lectio divina*.

A similar image is present, for example, in *Ezekiel*. A likely source, conscious or unconscious, of Teresa's scheme of castle-imagery, Ezekiel writes of his visions of God's presence in a temple containing many rooms: "et ecce murus forinsecus in circuitu domus undique; (40.5)<sup>9</sup> ... Et eduxit me ad atrium exterius: et ecce gazophylacia ... in atrio per circuitum (40.17)<sup>10</sup> ... Et introduxit me in atrium interius ... mensuras superiores (40.32)<sup>11</sup> ... Latera autem, latus ad latus, ... et erant eminentia, quae ingrederentur per parietem domus, in lateribus per circuitum ... (41.6)<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, in his visions, Ezekiel moves from the outside to the middle of this temple, observing a number of rooms at different levels, and finding God at the centre: "Et elevavit me spiritus, et introduxit me in atrium interius; et ecce repleta erat gloria Domini domus" (43.5).<sup>13</sup>

The quality of crystal clarity possessed by Teresa's castle-soul is one that is found in the New Testament book *Revelation*, in its description of the city of God:

"Et erat structura muri eius ex lapide iaspide: ipsa vero civitas aurum mundum simile vitre mundo" (21.18) ... "et platea civitatis aurum mundum, tanquam vitrum perlucidum" (21.21).<sup>14</sup>

The Psalms contain a number of castle or fortress images which provide an affirmation and background validation of Teresa's imagery, portraying God as enthroned at the centre of the castle-soul, and thereby making heaven present in the soul:



Ya sabéis que Dios está en todas partes. Pues claro está que adonde está el rey, allí dicen está la corte; en fin, que adonde está Dios, es el cielo. Sin duda lo podéis creer, que adonde está su Majestad, está toda la gloria. Pues mirad que dice San Agustín que le buscaba en muchas partes y que le vino a hallar dentro de sí mismo. *Camino* 28.2).

The Lord God, as portrayed in the Psalms, is present in many ways:

- enthroned in heaven;

The one enthroned in heaven (2,4)  
Qui habitat in caelis(2,4)

I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and glory (63,2)  
Sic in sanctuario contempler te, ut videam potentiam tuam et gloriam tuam (62,3)

How lovely is your dwelling place (84, 1)  
Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine (83,2)

You whose throne is in heaven (123,1)  
Qui habitas in caelis (122,1)

-present in his temple as a place of holiness:

The Lord is in his holy temple ; the Lord is on his heavenly throne. (11,4)  
Dominus in templo sancto suo; dominus in caelo sedes eius (10,5)

We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple (65,4)  
Satiemur bonis domus tuae, sanctitate templi tui (64,5)

Holiness adorns your house (93,5)  
Domum tuam decet sanctitudo (92,5)

-or in a fortress, a place of refuge:

A stronghold in times of trouble (9,9)  
Adiutor in opportunitatibus, in tribulatione(9,10)

The Lord is my rock, my fortress (18,1)  
Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum, (17,3)

He is a shield for all who take refuge in him (18,30)  
Protector est omnium sperantium in se (17,31)

The Lord is the stronghold of my life (27,1)  
 Dominus protector vitae mea (26,1)

Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear (27,3)  
 Si consistant adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum (26,3)

The Lord is my strength and my shield (28,7)  
 Dominus adiutor meus et protector meus (27,7)

The Lord is the strength of his people (28,8)  
 Dominus fortitudo plebis suae (27,8)

A strong fortress to save me (31,3)  
 Fortitudo mea et refugium meum es tu (30,4)

He is their stronghold in time of trouble (37,39)  
 Protector eorum in tempore tribulationis (36,39)

You are God my stronghold (43,2)  
 Deus, fortitudo mea (42,2)

Tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces (48,13)  
 Numerate turres eius. Considerate propugnacula eius, percurrite arces eius (47,13)

You, O God, are my fortress, my loving God. (59,9)  
 Deus, susceptor meus es (58,10)

You have been my refuge, a strong tower (61,3)  
 Quia praesidium es mihi, turris fortis (60,4)

However, though Teresa borrows and uses similar ideas from such biblical sources, she develops her imagery of *Las Moradas* as the book progresses into a profoundly personalised scheme, enriching them with spiritual interpretations directly derived from her own mystical experiences of God within the castle of her individual soul.

In Teresa's scheme, God is present at the centre of the castle, in its innermost room:

... en el centro y mitad de todas éstas tiene la más principal, que es adonde pasan las cosas de mucho secreto entre Dios y el alma.  
(*Moradas* I:1.3)

Teresa clarifies her description of this central chamber in its relation to the others through what is a simple, natural comparison:

Pues tomemos ahora a nuestro castillo de muchas moradas; no habéis de entender estas moradas una en pos de otra como cosa enhilada, sino poned los ojos en el centro que es la pieza o palacio adonde está el rey, y considerad como un palmito que para llegar a lo que es de comer tiene muchas coberturas que todo lo sabroso cercan.  
(*Moradas* I:2.8)

Again the verb “considerar” insistently encourages the reader to reflect carefully on the levels and layers of meaning within the imagery. The sub-image of the “palmito” is carefully chosen. “Lo sabroso” indicates the way in which even the sense of taste, and, indeed, the idea of eating, can convey something of the mystical enjoyment which the soul has when it experiences communion with God. There is, of course, an intentionally made association here between the presence of God enjoyed by the soul in its innermost self, and the presence of God in the eucharistic bread and wine eaten in the sacrament of Holy Communion.<sup>15</sup> The image of the “palmito” adds further layers of meaning to Teresa’s castle imagery, illustrating, as it does, the necessity for the soul to persist in penetrating through the different levels, layers or chambers of its being until it reaches the centre room where God resides. The reader is drawn from being an external observer and encouraged to experience Teresa’s perception of the imagery “from within”, to appreciate something of the spiritual vision that the light at the centre gives:

Así, acá, en rededor de esta pieza están muchas, y encima lo mismo; porque las cosas del alma siempre se han de considerar con plenitud y anchura y grandeza, pues no le levantan nada, que capaz es de mucho más que podremos considerar, y a todas partes de ella se comunica este sol que está en este palacio. (*Moradas* 1:2.8)<sup>16</sup>

The image of God residing at the centre of the castle of the soul is similar to that used by Ezekiel in describing his visions of the Temple of the Lord God. But in Teresa's castle imagery, the light which emanates from the centre (Ezekiel's "glory of the Lord filling the Temple") is already present in the other castle rooms though in differently perceived intensities, depending on the spiritual state of the journeying soul. However, giving a profound and penetrating interpretation of the traditional ideas of the darkness of evil and the brightness of the good, Teresa shows that sin can obscure the soul's spiritual perception of the castle's brilliancy:

Os quiero decir que consideréis qué será ver este castillo tan resplandeciente y hermoso ... cuando cae en un pecado mortal. (*Moradas* 1:2.1)

At the centre of the castle is the splendour and beauty of the light of God:

el mismo sol que le daba tanto resplandor y hermosura todavía en el centro de su alma ... (*Moradas* 1:2.1),

which the soul, itself the castle of crystal or diamond, can potentially reflect: "con ser tan capaz para gozar de su Majestad como el cristal para resplandecer en él sol". However, sin hinders and obstructs the soul's spiritual capacity to view the splendours of this vision, for sin is evil and the Devil is the essence of darkness:

el intento de quien hace un pecado mortal ... es ... hacer placer al demonio que, como es las mismas tinieblas, así la pobre alma queda hecha una misma tiniebla. (*Moradas* 1:2.1)

Since the human being has freedom of will, the human soul can choose to become either one with God, or one with the Devil, adopting and reflecting either the light of God in his goodness, or the darkness of the Devil's wickedness. The castle, then, is perceived by the soul in various degrees of light or dark according to the soul's own spiritual state. The castle, itself, of course, always has at its centre the bright sun of God, even if the soul fails to perceive God's resplendent presence:

aquel sol resplandeciente que está en el centro del alma no pierde su resplandor y hermosura, que siempre está dentro de ella, y cosa no puede quitar su hermosura. (*Moradas* 1:2.3)

## II

### The Castle: a journey of spiritual progress and perception.

Although there are many individual rooms of mystical experience, and the exploration of "oración" can go in any direction, inwards, outwards, upwards or downwards, spiritual development is represented in *Las moradas* as an inward-moving journey towards the centre of the soul/castle, where God resides. Although the soul's spiritual journey should move inwards towards the centre, sin, as we have seen, can impede the journey. Teresa conveys sin's interference with the soul's vision of God through a simple but effective image:

Mas si sobre un cristal que está al sol se pusiese un paño muy negro, claro está que, aunque el sol dé en él, no hará su claridad operación en el cristal. (*Moradas* 1:2;3)

The "cristal" here is not only the "cristal" of the castle. Additionally, it signifies or reminds the reader of the image of the water of grace. Water shares with crystal the characteristic of a transparency which can be dirtied, suggesting the idea of grace that can be negated by sin. It is clearly Teresa's underlying intention to encourage the reader to appreciate this additional significance, and she drives home its importance by her admonition: "¿Cómo es posible que entendiendo esto no procuráis quitar esta pez de este cristal?" (*Moradas* 1:2.4). Whilst the light is visible and the soul is in the state of grace and perception, the castle-soul's life advances and progresses. When sin encroaches, the castle-soul is thrown into disarray:

... qué es ver a un alma apartada de ella (esta luz); cuáles quedan los pobres aposentos del castillo; qué turbados andan los sentidos, que es la gente que vive en ellos y las potencias que son los alcaides y mayordomos y maestresalas, con qué ceguedad, con qué mal gobierno. (*Moradas* 1:2.4)

Teresa has added a great deal to the initial image of the castle-soul. The soul's "sentidos" and "potencias" are now personified, seen inhabiting its rooms, just as the human spirit resides in the body. The "alcaides, mayordomos y maestresalas", the people who work in a castle, are the "potencias" of the soul; the "gente" are the "sentidos". In elaborating her imagery, Teresa offers new insights for the "consideración" of the reader into what happens as the soul journeys towards mystical union. Using terminology associated with the external world of the senses, Teresa presents the soul as a complex, inhabited and complete entity, pointing, in

so doing, at the wholeness of physical and spiritual life of a human being as understood by Catholic theology. Teresa also wants to make the reader aware through the apparently objective castle imagery she employs, that the soul whose experiences she records on its journey through its self-interior castle is any human soul – i.e. the reader's soul as much and as well as Teresa's.

In emphasising that the castle is the soul itself, Teresa seems to create the paradoxical idea of the soul trying to enter a room it is already in: “parece que digo algún disparate; porque, si este castillo es el ánima, claro está que no hay para qué entrar, pues se es el mismo” (*Moradas* 1,1;5). Yet it is through this seeming paradox that Teresa is able to clarify the nature of the journey. You can be in a place in different ways: “va mucho de estar a estar”. So the soul's journey within itself starts outside itself, because both the soul's perception of the castle, and the soul's ability to perceive and explore itself, can vary greatly: “...que hay muchas almas que se están en la ronda del castillo, que es donde están los que le guardan y que no se les da nada de entrar dentro ni saben qué hay en aquel tan precioso lugar ni quién está dentro ni aunque piezas tiene” (*Moradas* 1,1;5). The soul may be aware of its castle, but may be unaware of the spiritual treasures within it. In other words, the human being may be aware that he/she has a soul, but may be unaware of its potential or nature.

Even the imagery of the exterior of the soul-castle is elaborated by Teresa. The human soul is under pressure from external matters affecting its

human body and life in the physical world, and is distracted and troubled by spiritual temptations, perceived as ugly reptilian creatures keeping it occupied and away from any possible entry points into the castle-world of its own spirituality. Although God's light continues to shine within the depths of the castle-soul of each person, the individual's perception of that divine brilliance may be so dim that it seems to be occupied and exiled even in the world outside the city of God, almost unaware of His presence. Even though by nature the human soul and being are so spiritually rich, "con ser de natural tan rica y poder tener su conversación no menos que con Dios..." (*Moradas* 1,1;6), through their worldly concerns they are spiritually sick and paralysed:

"... que hay almas tan enfermas y mostradas a estarse en cosas exteriores que no hay remedio ni parece que pueden entrar dentro de sí, porque ya la costumbre la tiene tal de haber siempre haber tratado con las sabandijas y bestias que están en el cerco del castillo que ya casi está hecha como ellas" (*Moradas* 1,1;6).<sup>17</sup>

For Teresa the human soul which does not actively respond to the presence of God is closer to the bestial world of sense rather than of spirit. To be truly itself, and to avoid this "caer en semejante bestialdad" (*Moradas* 1,1;7), the soul must enter the castle of itself and converse with God who resides at its centre. Teresa describes the point of entry, the door to the castle-soul, as "oración", and also, as "consideración": "... la puerta para entrar en este castillo es la oración y consideración ..." (*Moradas* 1,1;7). The attempt at "oración" is sufficient to create the door or entry whereby the soul can go into its own self. At the initial stages of its journey,



the soul is accompanied by aspects of the world outside. Those aspects, which are portrayed as “tantas sabandijas” (*Moradas* 1;1.8), still have a blinding, detracting influence on the soul’s perception of itself, of its castle. Those attempting “oración” at this stage have spiritual intentions but are caught up with worldly living: “En fin, entran en las primeras piezas de las bajas; mas entran con ellos tantas sabandijas que ni le dejan ver la hermosura del castillo, ni sosegar. Harto hacen en haber entrado”. (*Moradas* 1,1;8) As it attempts to explore within itself the mystery of union with God, through prayer, the soul is moving inwards, but it cannot yet see with the clarity of spiritual vision that comes in later rooms.

In entering the door of prayer the soul opens up its journey towards self-knowledge and humility, and to its centre, where it will be united with God.<sup>18</sup> In the previous section we discussed the secondary image of the “palmito” and how it is used to give to the reader a deeper understanding of the soul’s progress through the castle of its own self. Another such secondary image which similarly enhances the reader’s perceptions of the soul’s journey within the castle is that of the honey bee. The soul is like a bee working in the hive:

“la humildad siempre labra como la abeja en la colmena de miel ... mas consideremos que la abeja no deja de salir a volar para traer flores; así el alma en el propio conocimiento, créame y vuele algunas veces a considerar la grandeza y majestad de su Dios; aquí hallará su bajeza mejor que en sí misma y más libre de las sabandijas ...” (*Moradas* 1,2;8).

The “palmito” shows the castle’s basic overall three-dimensional construction. The honey bee image shows how much the soul can move

upwards and outwards, responding to its growing perception of the majesty of God, and, at the same time, in so doing, perceives more clearly its own baser nature. By such "consideración" the soul spiritually escapes the grasp of worldly thoughts and concerns, the "sabandijas", which normally get in the way of the soul's progress into its more interior self. The initial journey in this vast castle, whose numerous rooms "no consideren pocas piezas sino un millón..." (*Moradas* 1,2;12), is interrupted and hindered by numerous stumbling blocks. These difficulties encountered are caused by the weaknesses of human nature, and the work of the Devil. "... de muchas maneras entrán almas aquí, unas y otras con buena intención; mas, como el demonio siempre la tiene tan mala, debe tener en cada una muchas legiones de demonios para combatir que no pasen de unas a otras" (*Moradas* 1,2;12). In the first rooms, in which the soul is at the beginning of its journey, it is still so absorbed in worldly concerns that its God-given senses and faculties, the "sentidos" and "potencias" which are the servants of the castle-soul, ("vasallos del alma"), are easily overcome, even if the good intention to progress is there. As is appropriate, given the castle imagery being used, the struggle within the soul to overcome its worldly concerns is described as a fight or a battle: "... estas almas son vencidas... las que se vieren en este estado han menester acudir a menudo... a Dios ... y a sus Santos para que ellos peleen por ellas, que sus criados poca fuerza tienen para se defender..." (*Moradas* 1,2;12).

The contrast and conflict between the world outside and the world inside the soul-castle is at its greatest in the first rooms. The light of God is present, but is obscured by the snakes, vipers and lizards, its human urges, weaknesses and sins, which have entered with the soul into its castle. To clarify the state of the soul which cannot see clearly in these first rooms, Teresa uses a secondary image which is as effective in its different way, as have been her secondary images of the "palmito" and the honey bee. This is the image of the person who has his/her eyes clogged with dirt.<sup>19</sup> Though the room is bright with sunlight, he/she is prevented from seeing it. Like dirt in the human eye, attachments to the life of the world prevent the soul from perceiving the castle's beauty. The castle is not deficient in beauty, but the soul is unable to perceive the beauty which is actually there. As dirt blocks the eyes of a human being's physical vision, so the creatures of its worldly senses and desires block the soul's spiritual vision of God's light.

Habéis de notar que en estas moradas primeras aún no llega casi nada la luz... no por culpa de la pieza ... sino porque, con tantas cosas malas de culebras y víboras y cosas emponzoñosas que entraron con él, no le dejan advertir a la luz; como si uno entrase en una parte adonde entra mucho sol y llevase tierra en los ojos que casi no los pudiese abrir." (*Moradas* 1,2;14)

Even within the Castle precincts, therefore, progress in perception can be thwarted.

To convey movement and progress in perception is a principal purpose of Teresa's scheme of imagery, and she uses spatial dimension concepts from the physical world order (movement upwards, inwards, outwards) as

well as terms and concepts related to human sight and vision (allusions to light, fire, brilliance, darkness) in order to express her ideas about spiritual progress (or, indeed, at times, regress) on the interior journey of "oración". Teresa succeeds in expressing the soul's developing spirituality in terms of humankind's physical senses and experiences with consummate literary artistry.

### III

#### The Castle: a place of spiritual battle

The idea or image of spiritual progress as a battle is common to the chivalric romances which Teresa read in her youth, and to many religious writers.<sup>20</sup> Bernardino de Laredo, in *Subida del monte Sión*, refers to the spiritual life as a combat of love in which many blows are struck. He likens the combat between God and the soul, wherein, however, the blows are of love, to the battles in which kings with their batteries and munitions vanquish and conquer other kings.<sup>21</sup> In a similarly spiritual context, Francisco de Osuna refers to the martyr knight reeling under the blows that were to bring him victory: "con tanto amor y fortaleza como sufre el caballero mártir los golpes que le han de causar victoria".<sup>22</sup>

In her *Vida*, Teresa makes a conscious transition from the image of a gardener (*hortelano*) to that of a castle governor (*alcaide*): "hele aquí el hortelano hecho alcaide" (*Vida* 20,22). In another passage of the same book her martial imagery is likewise unmistakable, and considerably more developed:

porque aunque esté un alma en este estado, no ha de fiar de sí para salir a combatir, porque hará harto en defenderse. Aquí son menester armas para defenderse de los demonios, y aun no tienen fuerzas para pelear contra ellos... (*Vida* 19,14).

In *Las moradas*, in developing her castle imagery naturally, Teresa alludes to the soul's journey and development in terms of combat or battle, which within the castle is certainly not confined to the first room. Because the soul's entire journey is a spiritual battle to overcome fallen human nature, in which if progress is possible, so too is regression, as Teresa warns the reader, the castle's more inner rooms can also become places of conflict. "Mirad que en pocas moradas de este castillo dejan de combatir los demonios" (*Moradas* 1,2;15). On all sides there is a continuing threat to the soul's successful development:

... procure dar de mano a las cosas y negocios no necesarios... que es cosa que le importa tanto para llegar a la morada principal... y aun estar sin mucho peligro en la que está, aunque haya entrado en el castillo; porque entre cosas tan ponzoñosas una vez u otra es imposible dejarle de morder (*Moradas* 1,2;14).

In order to distinguish between the state of the soul in the second as opposed to the first "morada" of the castle, Teresa has recourse to a secondary image, which, like other secondary images she has employed, is concerned with one or more of the physical senses and faculties. As we have seen, she has a particular fondness for imagery to do with sight and blindness though perhaps in the image of the palmito the senses of touch and taste are also involved. Teresa suggests that the state of a soul in the first *morada* is that of being both deaf and mute, whereas, on progressing to the second *morada* the soul acquires the sense of hearing.<sup>23</sup> By this she means that as the soul enters the second *morada*, its spiritual perceptions of God increase in sensitivity. At the same time, however, the soul becomes

more sensitive to the intensity of the battle within it between its spiritual longings and its still human inclinations and weaknesses. This secondary image helps the reader to understand that progression within the soul-castle involves greater degrees of suffering as well as potential delights: the journey of the soul continues to be a hard-fought battle. "Es terrible la batería que aquí dan los demonios de mil maneras y con más pena del alma..." (*Moradas* 2,1;3). Awareness of suffering is increased. The soul's increase in spirituality brings an increased perception of the difficulties inhibiting its further progress: "...es más trabajo que no lo oír," which in the second "morada" is conveyed as a heightened awareness of the noise of battle outside, and inside, the castle. "Aquí está el entendimiento más vivo y las potencias más hábiles; andan los golpes y la artillería de manera que no lo puede el alma dejar de oír..." (*Moradas* 2,1;3). Through this vivid imagery, the reader is being made aware of the nature of the castle, which is revealed to the soul in proportion to the soul's spiritual advance. The soul is the castle, so the imagery contains within itself the essence, however veiled to the perception, of the spiritual journey. The struggle of the soul to make progress is succinctly expressed: "...qué es la baraúnda que aquí ponen los demonios y las aflicciones de la pobre alma que no sabe si pasar adelante o tornar a la primera pieza..." (*Moradas* 2,1;4), which also vividly conveys the soul's uncertainty and indecision as it experiences the confusion of battle, around and within the castle, as to whether or not to continue on its journey.

The nature of the castle is being revealed to the soul in proportion to the progress made as the soul travels within itself. The soul, like the reader, is thereby becoming more aware of its own interior nature. The process by which, as it is explored, the castle emerges is expressed by Teresa in a secondary image which is also found in the Bible.<sup>24</sup> In her *Vida* she says that the entire foundation of prayer must be established on humility:

“Lo que yo he entendido es que todo este cimiento de la oración va fundado en humildad, y que mientras más se abaja un alma en la oración, más la sube Dios” (*Vida* 22,11).

Teresa repeats this at the end of the *Moradas*:

“... porque todo este edificio, como he dicho, es su cimiento humildad, y si no hay ésta muy de veras, aun por vuestro bien no querrá el Señor subirle muy alto, porque no dé todo en el suelo. Así que, hermanas, para que lleve buenos cimientos, procurad ser la menor de todas y esclava suya ... poniendo piedras tan firmes que no se caiga el castillo.” (*Moradas* 7,4:8).

For Teresa, then, the virtue of humility provides the sure, rock-hard foundation needed by the soul to build successfully on its spiritual experiences to arrive at the completion of itself – the soul-castle.

In *Moradas* 7;4,8, she compares the castle, to a house built on either rock, or sand. The house built on sand will fall. The castle likewise must have firm foundations, and this means the soul must embark upon its spiritual exploration of the castle for the right reasons, and not simply to get something in return: “...que no se acuerde que hay regalos en esto que comienza, porque es muy baja manera de comenzar a labrar un tan precioso y grande edificio; y si comienzan sobre arena, darán con todo en el



suelo...”(*Moradas* 2,1;7). This does not imply that the castle itself will fall, but rather that the soul blinded by personal ambitions will be unable to complete its journey of exploration through it; in that case, it is the journey that is built on sand, not the castle. If, on the other hand, the moral intention of the exploratory soul is humble, then although the castle will be subjected to warfare and storms, progress within the castle will be made. The firm foundations that enable a successful journey are: faith and trust and incorporation into the will of God, not self will: “... si erramos en el principio, queriendo luego que el Señor haga la nuestra (voluntad) y que nos lleve como imaginamos ¿qué firmeza puede llevar este edificio?” (*Moradas* 2,1;8).

Warfare, conflict, strife, battle and suffering are part of the process of exploring the castle of the soul, but that should not be an excuse not to start on this journey of self-discovery, which is necessary if the human soul is to experience heaven: “la puerta para entrar en este castillo es la oración, pues pensar que hemos de entrar en el cielo y no entrar en nosotros conociéndonos y considerando nuestra miseria y lo que debemos a Dios pidiéndole muchas veces misericordia, es desatino” (*Moradas* 2,1;11).<sup>25</sup> Turning back because of fear of failure is a temptation that is constantly threatening the soul. Although an initial effort and act of will (a faculty of the soul) is needed to enter into the castle of itself, the soul cannot continue through its seven mansions relying on its own powers, but needs to have faith, and a real trust in God: “... no os desaniméis, si alguna vez cayéreis,

para dejar de procurar ir adelante; que aun de esa caída sacará Dios bien...  
(*Moradas* 1,2;8).

The soul that has both the strength of will to start the exploration and the faith to allow God's will to be done will make the best progress through the castle on its journey of exploration in search of God at its centre.:

"Toda la pretensión de quien comienza oración... ha de ser trabajar y determinarse y disponerse con cuantas diligencias pueda a hacer su voluntad conformar con la de Dios ... en esto consiste toda la mayor perfección que se puede alcanzar en el camino espiritual" (*Moradas* 2,1;8).

The early stages are full of battles, inside and outside the castle, and these battles which involve both defence and attack have to be well fought and won for there to be progress towards achieving the final victory of union with God. It is through engaging in such battles that the soul is able to advance into the rooms that are those of the *terceras moradas* :

"A los que por la misericordia de Dios han vencido estos combates, y con la perseverencia entrado a las terceras moradas ¿qué les diremos, sino bienaventurado el varón que teme al Señor?" (*Moradas* 3,1;11)

Success in entering into the third *moradas* is through difficulties and depends on God's help in the battles. Teresa highlights this in her image: "se me quiebran las alas para decir cosa buena".<sup>26</sup> The struggle is difficult and painful, but God carries the soul through: "... de las almas que han entrado a las terceras moradas, que no las ha hecho el Señor pequeña merced en que hayan pasado las primeras dificultades, sino muy grande..." (*Moradas* 3,1;5). The winning of those battles is vital to further progress:

“Aquí veréis, hermanas, lo que importa vencer las batallas pasadas...”

(*Moradas* 3,1;1).

The souls who pass into the third mansions have acquired the right attitude to be able to go still further inwards and to discover more of the spiritual structure and essence of their castles: “no hay por qué se les niegue la entrada hasta la postrera morada, ni se la negará el Señor, si ellas quieren, que linda disposición es para que las haga toda merced” (*Moradas* 3,1;5). Teresa insistently reminds the reader of the importance of the virtue of humility to achieve the successful exploration of the castle-soul. Selfish desire might build its own illusory castle, but that is all it will be. The desire for rewards is destructive of humility and therefore of the progress of the soul. In this connection she draws a comparison between the saints in heaven as servants, and the souls within their castles likewise as servants or vassals, but contrasting – evidence of her own humility – the purity of intention which motivated the saints:

Estas almas ... no pueden poner a paciencia que se les cierre la puerta para entrar adonde está nuestro rey y por cuyos vasallos se tienen, y lo son. Mas aunque acá tenga muchos el rey de la tierra no entran todos hasta su cámara. Entrad, entrad, hijas mías, en lo interior; pasad adelante de vuestras obrillas que por ser cristianas debéis todo eso y mucho más y os basta que seáis vasallos de Dios; no queráis tanto que os quedéis sin nada. Mirad los santos que entraron a la cámara de este rey; y veréis la diferencia que hay de ellos a nosotros (*Moradas* 3,1;6).<sup>27</sup>

The saints have trodden the same road as the souls of many lesser mortals that have embarked upon the journey of “oración”, but the saints had no ambitions for personal reward and thus reached the innermost dwelling

place of the Lord God. Unselfish love, or “charity”, closely related to humility, is equally important. Such love may be proved by works, but the works themselves are not necessary; apart from their being the fruits of love:

... este amor ... no ha de ser fabricado en nuestra imaginación, sino probado por obras; y no penséis que ha menester vuestras obras, sino la determinación de nuestra voluntad (*Moradas* 3,1;7).

The human will of the soul has, of course, to be obedient to God’s will.

The soul’s own unguided will is not capable of achieving its goal:

... que no está el negocio en tener hábito de religión o no, sino en procurar ejercitar las virtudes y rendir nuestra voluntad a la de Dios en todo, y que el concierto de nuestra vida sea lo que su Majestad ordenare de ella, y no queramos nosotras que se haga nuestra voluntad sino la suya (*Moradas* 3,2:6).<sup>28</sup>

Obedience to the will of God, like the virtue of “charity”, i.e. unselfish love, implies and requires absolute humility: “el caminar que digo es con una grande humildad”. (*Moradas* 3,2,8)

On entering the rooms of the third *moradas* the soul’s own efforts, so important when it started on its inward journey, matter less in achieving further progress. That further progress will depend greatly on God’s generosity: “... siempre da mucho más que merecemos con darnos contentos harto mayores que los podemos tener en los que dan los regalos y distraimientos de la vida ...” (*Moradas* 3,2;9). The dangerous attractions of the world are still sufficiently powerful to knock the journeying soul off

course, or stay its progress entirely, but spiritually focussed souls are aware that the gifts of God are worth infinitely more than worldly pleasures, and are aware too that to experience these gifts to the full they need to advance inwards, which is also spiritually speaking upwards into as yet unexperienced rooms. But at this higher stage of "oración" it is not effort or action on the part of the humble and faithful soul that can enable its further progress. Rooms nearer the centre of the soul-castle are entered by invitation, which is a gift from God.

Teresa portrays the rooms of the inner palace as becoming increasingly more beautiful, and the sounds and sights more subtle, in proportion to their proximity to the king's presence. This stage, the *moradas cuartas*, is for Teresa the borderline between natural and supernatural, and the stage at which the problem of ineffability increases: "comienzan a ser cosas sobrenaturales" (*Moradas* 4;1.1). The origin of mystical experience at this level is God, and the soul is lifted up to experience varying degrees of divine ecstasy. Former levels of experience in "oración" had human activity, preparation and mental meditation, and the feelings and emotions of human nature as starting points:

comienzan de nuestra natural mismo y acaban en Dios. Los gustos comienzan de Dios y siéntelos el natural y goza tanto de ellos como gozan los que tengo dichos y mucho más. (*Moradas* 4;1.4).

The landscape of imagery at this level is closer than ever to the Song of Songs, to which Teresa makes explicit reference: "que algunas veces me acuerdo haber oído esto que dice la esposa en los Cantares..." (*Moradas*

4;1.12). In accordance with the physical, erotic imagery of the Song, “todo el hombre exterior goza de este gusto y suavidad.” (*Moradas* 4;2.1). It is God who is calling and leading the soul. As, in the Song of Songs, “Introduxit me in cellam vinariam; ordinavit in me charitatem.”: “he brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love” (*Song* 2.4), so, “sin artificio se va labrando el edificio para la oración” (*Moradas* 4;3.1) and “no está la cosa en pensar mucho, sino en amar mucho” (*Moradas* 4;1.7), “y dejarse a sí en los brazos del amor” (*Moradas* 4;3.8).<sup>29</sup>

According to Teresa, the size of the castle is increased by divine consolations in the same way as, according to her image explaining “dilatasti cor meum” (*Moradas* 4;2.5 & Psalm 119.32), a water basin grows larger as more water flows in. At this level, “oración” is the “tasting” of heaven on earth, “gozar del cielo en la tierra” (*Moradas* 5;1.2), an actualising of the experience of the Pater noster, “Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo, et in terra”; “thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. The “sabandijas”, representing the lower part of the soul, cannot now enter these rooms, and the “higher part”, (memory, understanding, will) cannot influence or prevent the flow of God’s grace into the soul. (*Moradas* 5;1.5).

Again Teresa refers explicitly to the Song of Songs:

... dice la Esposa en los *Cantares* (1.3), llevóme el rey a la bodega del vino o metióme, creo que dice. Y no dice que ella se fue; y dice también que andaba buscando a su Amado (*Cantares* 2.4; 3.2). Esta entiendo yo es la bodega adonde nos quiere meter el Señor cuando quiere y como quiere; mas por diligencias que nosotros hagamos, no podemos entrar.

Su Majestad nos ha de meter y entrar él en el centro de nuestra alma.”  
(*Moradas* 5;1.12)

Teresa points out that God’s “movement” in these interior regions of the castle is effected supernaturally as Christ did when, after his resurrection, he left the tomb without moving the stone, and also when he entered the locked room where the disciples were gathered (John 20.19).<sup>30</sup>

Imagery and biblical allusions are subtly being employed to indicate the way in which the castle-soul has the capacity to enlarge and be transformed at this level of “oración”. The boundaries (the walls of the rooms) are not restrictive barriers, they are flexible. In the original idea of the castle the walls were made of diamond or glass, (*Moradas* 1;1.1), concepts which denote solidity and hardness. Teresa has subtly introduced the idea of the basin being made of material which expands according to what it is given to hold (*Moradas* 4;2.6 and 4;3.9)). So the substance of the walls has more of the properties of water. In the process of refining her imagery, Teresa has moved from the four ways of obtaining or receiving water in her *Vida*, to the two ways of holding it (“dos pilones”) in *Las moradas*, and then focusses on the process and implications of the “enlargement”, or transformation, of the soul-castle.

The process leads on to the complexity of the silkworm image. In a way, it is a developmental re-working of the “palmito” image. Instead of working progressively on the “palmito” from the outside, stripping off the layers to arrive at the tasty kernel centre, we now begin with tiny eggs, like a peppercorn seed: “es a manera de granos de pimienta pequeños”

(*Moradas* 5;2.2). As the mulberry tree begins to flourish the seed begins to come to life. “comienza esta simiente a vivir; que hasta que hay este mantenimiento de que se sustentan, se está muerta” (*Moradas* 5;2.2).

Teresa possibly has in her mind two biblical ideas<sup>31</sup>. First, she uses the general Christian idea of the dead coming to life at the resurrection, which reworks the idea of God breathing the breath of life into Adam, made of the dust of the ground, having established the garden in which he could live; secondly the idea, developed in I Corinthians 15, of a seed being planted, which comes to life only after it has apparently died. The parallel with Adam is here explicitly referred to.:

...Quomodo resurgunt mortui? ... tu quod seminas non vivicatur, nisi prius moriatur. Et quod seminas, non corpus, quod futurum est, seminas, sed nudum granum...seminatur corpus animale, surget corpus spiritale... Factus est primus homo Adam in animam viventem, novissimus Adam in spiritum vivificantem. ;“... how are the dead raised ? ... What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body which is to be , but a bare kernel...It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body... The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.” (I ad Corinthios 15.35ff)

The image develops the idea of change and transformation relating to the bodily structure and appearance of the emerging creature. The seed is transformed into the ugly caterpillar, which creates its cocoon, and then eventually emerges as a gracious butterfly. Thus Teresa is conveying the idea of the ugliness of sin and death being transformed by “oración” into the grace of holiness and eternal life. As water (grace) was poured into the basin which transformed in size to hold it, so grace poured into the cocooned caterpillar results in its transformation. The winged butterfly is



able to fly, a symbol of liberation and movement in all directions, an idea intensified by comparison with the image of the caterpillar, imprisoned and motionless in the cocoon. The caterpillar and the butterfly are inextricably linked, in so far as they are the same being, yet the developmental transformation is somehow permanent. The biblical conundrum posed by Nicodemus, "Quomodo potest homo nasci, cum sit senex ? numquid potest in ventrem matris suae iterato introire et renasci ?"; "How can a man be born when he is old ? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb ?" (Ioannem 3.4ff), is echoed and re-written by Teresa: "...adónde irá la pobrecica, que tornar adonde salió no puede..." (*Moradas* 5;2.9). The reply of Jesus, "...nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua, et Spiritu sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei"; "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God", is inherent in Teresa's imagery of the water of grace being necessary to enter into the higher regions of the castle-soul. Jesus' final words to Nicodemus refer to the crucifixion: "et sicut Moyses exaltavit serpentem in deserto, ita exaltari oportet Filium hominis."; "and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up." (Ioannem 3.14). Teresa also makes reference the crucifixion in relation to the ongoing life of the butterfly: "... de una manera o de otra ha de haber cruz mientras vivimos.." (*Moradas* 5;2.9). This imagery applies comfortably both to the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and also to Teresa's parallel vision of the way in which "oración" gives life, the life of Christ, to the castle-soul.<sup>32</sup> The

image of the castle-soul and the butterfly are interchangeable, but, as with the two "pilonos" the one image, by contrast and comparison, gives meaning and depth to the other.

The dichotomy between spiritual and physical is always present in Teresa's imagery. Her attempt to describe the spiritual expansion of the castle soul results in a stream of images which refer to the physical world of sense, yet point towards the inexpressible world of spiritual experience. Teresa solves the problem of trying to show how God, absolute and infinite spirit, acts on the castle-soul, imagery tied up with the finitude and restrictions of the sense world, by the further image of seal and wax:

"... quiere que sin que ella entienda cómo, salga de allí sellada con su sello; porque verdaderamente el alma allí no hace más que la cera cuando imprime otro el sello; que la cera no se le imprime a sí, sólo está dispuesta, digo blanda; y aun para esta disposición tampoco se ablanda ella, sino que se está queda y lo consiente. ¡Oh bondad de Dios, que todo ha de ser a vuestra costa! Sólo queréis nuestra voluntad y que no haya impedimento en la cera." (*Moradas* 5;2.12).<sup>33</sup>

This image of sealing wax is used within the context, quoted by Teresa, of the Song of Songs, in which the Bride says that God brought her into the cellar of wine and set charity in her.<sup>34</sup> Within the wax image there are echoes of nuptial imagery, for example, the requirement of consent for marriage, "volo", ("lo consiente") and of the lack of impediment, "no haya impedimento".

The image of the butterfly is, again, at this level of "oración" interchangeable with the image of a dove. In *Moradas* 5;2.2 Teresa refers to the "*mariposica*" which emerges from the cocoon; she begins her next

chapter with a subtle change: “Pues tornemos a nuestra *palomica*” (*Moradas* 5;3.1). The dove, of course, features in the Song of Songs, as well as being a symbol in the New Testament of the Holy Spirit.<sup>35</sup>

The spiritual aspect of the image of engagement and marriage is applied to the nature of the castle in respect of the relationship between God and the soul. In the area of the castle-soul described as “union” love (of the soul) is united to love (of God). However, this is not a permanent state of union. Even at this elevated stage of “oración” the soul can easily be returned to the worldly dimension. Teresa refers to the founders of religious Orders (Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans) as if they are castles giving refuge and grace to vast numbers of souls.<sup>36</sup> As with the castle-soul, enclosed monasteries and the religious orders, temptation is a constant feature of spiritual life: “porque no hay encerramiento tan encerrado adonde él (el demonio) no pueda entrar ni desierto tan apartado adonde deje de ir.” (*Moradas* 5;4.8). Teresa stresses the idea that the interior castle of the spirit, therefore, is constantly vulnerable to attack from the outside world of sense. The structure and substance of the castle is of such a nature that it allows spiritual growth and enlargement, and yet, can also permit the opposite, a falling back to the former degrees and states.

The sixth *moradas* consider the trials and dark night of the spirit. The imagery of the Song of Songs is quoted from the start: “adonde el alma ya queda herida del amor del Esposo” (*Moradas* 6;1.1).<sup>37</sup> The imagery is laden with paradox. The soul suffers pain which gives it sweet enjoyment:

“... parece le llega a las entrañas esta pena y que cuando de ellas saca la saeta el que la hiere, verdaderamente parece que se las lleva tras sí, según el sentimiento de amor siente” (*Moradas* 6;2.4).<sup>38</sup> The soul suffers from the great heat of a fire, but the spirit lingers in the pain, because the sensation is so wonderful. Inevitably, the primary sense for imagery of pain is touch and feeling, but also, by contrast, other sense experiences are suggested, such as hearing “se da a sentir como a los oídos una gran voz” (*Moradas* 6;2.7) and smell, “como si de presto viniese un olor tan grande que se comunicase por todos los sentidos” (*Moradas* 6;2.8). Teresa uses these images to show how God moves, acts and manifests his presence within the castle. Visual imagery is also used to denote the dimension of God’s communication and union with the soul in the castle.<sup>39</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Teresa, at the beginning of *moradas quintas*, reminds us that the purpose of the Carmelite Order is prayer and contemplation, "este tesoro, esta preciosa margarita ... en el alma cavar hasta hallar este tesoro escondido" (*Moradas* 5;1. 2).

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish verb is "considerar". Covarrubias defines it as "tener advertencia, pensar bien las cosas, reparando en ellas". The Latin origin of the word is almost a term of augury, *con* and *sidus*, *sideris*, a star.

<sup>3</sup> Teresa had referred to the idea of a diamond in *Vida* 40,10: "Digamos ser la Divinidad como un muy claro diamante, muy mayor que todo el mundo."

<sup>4</sup> *Ioannem* 14,2ff. Osuna refers to this, quoting in the vernacular: "Voy a aparejar el lugar para vosotros, y si fuere y os aparejare el lugar, vendré otra vez y tomaros he para mí mismo, por que donde estuviere yo estéis vosotros". (*Tercer abecedario* Tr.17, c.4).

<sup>5</sup> *I ad Corinthios* 6,19. Osuna refers to this: "Los que han entrado dentro en sí por esta puerta no deben salir del santuario de Dios, donde ya entraron; mas emparedarse y encerrarse cuanto más pudiesen en sí mismos, que son templo de Dios, según dice San Pablo, en el cual deben morar y no salir fuera..." (*Tercer abecedario* Tr.9, c. 2).

<sup>6</sup> NB *Genesis* 1,26. "Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram."; "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

<sup>7</sup> Garcilaso is undoubtedly using the Petrarchian epithet 'cristalino'. Whatever the source, the imagery is part of the tradition in which Teresa is writing.

<sup>8</sup> *Moradas* 1;1.2

<sup>9</sup> "And behold there was a wall all around the outside of the temple area".

<sup>10</sup> "He brought me into the outer court; and behold there were chambers ... round about the court".

<sup>11</sup> "Then he brought me to the inner court ... its side rooms..."

<sup>12</sup> "And the side chambers were in three stories, one over another..."

<sup>13</sup> "The Spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple."

<sup>14</sup> "The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass." (21.18). "and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass." (21.21).

<sup>15</sup> NB *Psalmus* 33,9. "O taste and see how gracious the Lord is". "Gustate et videte quoniam suavis est Dominus". John's Gospel refers to Jesus as the "bread of life" that needs to be "eaten": "Ego sum panis vitae" (*Ioannem* 6,48). "Nisi manducaveritis carnem filii hominis, et biberitis eius sanguinem, non habebitis vitam in vobis"; "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." (6,53).

<sup>16</sup> "Este sol": In *Revelation* 22,5 God is described as the light of the temple, "the Lord God will be their light"; "Dominus Deus illuminabit illos."

<sup>17</sup> The "cerco del castillo" seems to be at the line distinguishing introspection (self-knowledge) and prayer. The soul becomes aware of its fallen nature, and of its need to progress beyond the self-realisation of its state, imprisoned in sinfulness in the world of sense, into the higher state of spiritual liberty in the presence of God.

<sup>18</sup> "Poned los ojos en el centro que es la pieza o palacio adonde está el rey." (*Moradas* 1;2.8).

<sup>19</sup> In Mark's Gospel Jesus cures a blind man with spittle. He regains his sight progressively. First he sees men "like trees, walking". Then, after Jesus lays his hands on him, he sees clearly. "Et apprehensa manu caeci, eduxit eum extra vicum: et expuens in oculos eius impositis manibus suis, interrogavit eum si quid videret. Et aspiciens, ait: Video homines velut arbores ambulantes. Deinde iterum imposuit manus super oculos eius: et coepit videre: et restitutus est ita ut clare videret omnia"; "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the village; and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his

hands upon him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said "I see men, but they look like trees, walking." Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and saw everything clearly." (*Marcum* 8, 23 ff). John has a similar story in which Jesus spits on the ground and makes clay out of the spittle with which he anoints the man's eyes and tells him to wash in the pool of Siloam, after which he receives his sight. (*Ioannem* 9, 1ff).

<sup>20</sup> *Vida* 2.1

<sup>21</sup> "el combate del ánima enamorada y sean los golpes de amor" (*Subida* 3.9 & 10).

<sup>22</sup> *Tercer abecedario*, Tr. 1 c. 5

<sup>23</sup> According to Mark's Gospel Jesus cures a deaf-mute, using spittle: "Et adducunt ei surdum, et mutum, et deprecabantur eum, ut imponat illi manum. Et apprehendens eum de turba seorsum, misit digitos suos in auriculas eius: et expuens, tetigit linguam eius: et suspiciens in caelum, ingemuit, et ait illi: Ephphetha, quod est adaperire. Et statim apertae sunt aures eius, et solum est vinculum linguae eius, et loquebatur recte. (*Marcum* 7,32-35). (See also Note 6).

<sup>24</sup> Luke's story contrasts the man building on rock with the one building on earth without foundations: "similis est homini aedificanti domum, quid fodit in altum, et posuit fundamentum super petram: inundatione autem facta, illisum est flumen domui illi, et non potuit eam movere: fundata enim erat super petram. Qui autem audit, et non facit, similis est homini aedificanti domum suam super terram sine fundamento: in quam illisus est fluvius, et continuo cecidit: et facta est ruina domus illius magna"; "He is like a man building a house, who dug deep, and laid the foundation upon rock; and when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house, and could not shake it, because it had been founded upon the rock. But he who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation; against which the stream broke, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great." (*Lucam* 6,48-49). Matthew's story has the wise man building on rock and the foolish man on sand: (*Matthaeum* 7,24-27). Teresa's imagery contains echoes of both.

<sup>25</sup> Another reference to the line between introspective self-knowledge and prayer. See footnote 17 above.

<sup>26</sup> The image of flight, which will be discussed in Chapter Five, is used to indicate progress in "oración"

<sup>27</sup> The reference to the king's "cámara" is reminiscent of the imagery of the Song of Songs. "Introduxit me in cellam vinariam"; "He brought me to the banqueting house" (*Canticum* 2.4).

<sup>28</sup> An allusion to the Pater noster, "fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo, et in terra", "thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." (*Matthaeum* 6.10), and also to Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, "verumtamen non mea voluntas, sed tua fiat."; "nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." (*Lucam*, 22.42). Osuna provides a vernacular translation of the Lord's Prayer in *Tercer abecedario* Tr. 16, c. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Compare "laeva eius sub capite meo, et dextera illius amplexabitur me."; "O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me!" (*Canticum* 2.6).

<sup>30</sup> In Christian tradition the stone was moved from the entrance to the tomb not for Christ to get out, but to enable the disciples to enter it. (NB Matthew 28.2, Luke 24.2, or, Mark 16.4)

<sup>31</sup> There are additional possible biblical sources. Jesus uses the parable of the mustard seed to describe the kingdom of heaven. The mustard seed "is the smallest of seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches" (*Matthew* 13.31ff). This contains the notion of growth and transformation. Jesus also likens the mustard seed to faith. "...if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'move from here to there', and it will move..." (*Matthew* 17.20ff).

<sup>32</sup> Later, in *Moradas* 5;3.4 Teresa refers to Jesus restoring life to the dead Lazarus who comes forth from the tomb "his hands and feet bound with bandages and his face wrapped in a cloth" (*John* 11.44), reflecting both the wrapping up of the caterpillar in the cocoon

(*Moradas* 5;2.2), and the wrappings left in the empty tomb of Jesus after his resurrection (John 20. 6ff). Furthermore, San Juan de la Cruz refers to the spiritual resurrection of the soul, emerging from the tomb of darkness, as Jonah emerged from the fish in which he had undergone a transformation: "... absorbiéndola en una profunda y honda tiniebla, que el alma se siente estar deshaciendo y derritiendo en la haz y vista de sus miserias con muerte de espíritu cruel; así como si tragada de una bestia, en su vientre tenebroso se sintiese estar digiriéndose, padeciendo estas angustias, como Jonás en el vientre de aquella marina bestia; porque en este sepulcro de oscura le conviene estar para la espiritual resurrección que espera. (*Noche oscura* 2.6,1). The "wrapping" parallel is seen in Jonah 2.4-7, quoted by San Juan: "cercáronme las aguas hasta el alma, el abismo me ciñó, el piélago cubrió mi cabeza, a los extremos de los montes descendí; los cerrojos de la tierra me encerraron para siempre." (*Noche oscura* 2.6,3).

<sup>33</sup> This is a commonplace image in both secular and spiritual literature. Note the biblical idea of mountains melting like wax at the presence of God. The mountain is, itself, like Carmel, a place of meeting with God. Cf Psalm 97.5 The Liturgy of Confirmation includes the notion of the candidate being "sealed with the seal of the Holy Spirit".

<sup>34</sup> Song of Songs 2.4 Note also 8.4: "set me as a seal upon your heart."

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Matthew 3.16: "Baptizatus autem Iesus, confestim ascendit de aqua, et ecce aperti sunt ei caeli: et vidit spiritum Dei descendentem sicut columbam, et venientem super se. Et ecce vox de caelis..."; "And when Jesus was baptised, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove; and lo, a voice from heaven ...", and Song of Songs 2.14: "Columba mea, in foraminibus petrae, in caverna maceriae, ostende mihi faciem tuam, sonet vox tua in auribus meis..."; "O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice...".

<sup>36</sup> *Moradas* 5;4.6

<sup>37</sup> "...vulneraverunt me...quía amore languco"; "They wounded me...I am sick with love" (Song 5.7ff). Osuna gives a vernacular translation of 5.7: "Halláronme las guardas que cercaban la ciudad; hiriéronme y llagáronme; quitáronme mi manto las guardas de los muros." (*Tercer abecedario* Tr. 3, c. 2).

<sup>38</sup> An image similar to the episode of the transverberation (*Vida* 29.13).

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, *Moradas* 6;4.8 "... está tan embebida en gozarle que le basta tan gran bien, algunas veces gusta que se desembeba y de presto vea lo que está en aquel aposento; y así queda, después que torna en sí, con aquel representársele las grandezas que vio, mas no puede decir ninguna ni llega su natural a más de lo que sobrenatural ha querido Dios que vea."

## CHAPTER 5

### The Imagery of Fire and Marriage

#### Introduction

Fire as an image has been used freely and widely by both secular and religious authors down the centuries and throughout the world as a conventional image for love and passion. It is often used to convey the idea of physical and sexual passion. The mystics, like Santa Teresa, use it and indeed use too the physical love-relationship between husband and wife to communicate the nature and intensity of this spiritual love for and union with God.

In the New Testament St Paul's writings are quite matter-of-fact and explicit about sexuality, telling husbands and wives that their bodies belong to each other and that they should therefore not deprive each other of sexual intercourse.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, St Paul talks of the need for some people to get married, because of their burning sexual needs in terms of "It is better to marry than to burn": "*Melius est enim nubere, quam uri.*"<sup>2</sup> Teresa, it will be seen, subtly associates imagery of fire and metaphors of the physical relationship between husband and wife joined in sacramental marriage and elaborates these associations in order to describe the intimate relationship between the soul and God in "oración".

In both Testaments of the Christian Bible the image of fire is also used as a descriptive image of God, or of the presence of God. The Book of



Daniel describes the vision of the "Ancient of days": "thronus eius flammae ignis, rotae eius ignis accensus. Fluvius igneus rapidusque egrediebatur a facie eius."; "...his throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him ..."<sup>3</sup>

The images of light and fire in the Psalms are both a literary antecedent and a theological validation for Teresa's writing. The effects of prayer and of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul are described by Teresa in terminology found in the Psalms. There is the fire of passion, parallel to the sexual imagery of the Song:

*My loins are filled with burning (38,7)*  
*Lumbi mei pleni sunt inflammatione (37,8)*

*My heart grew hot within me, and as I meditated, the fire burned (39,3)*  
*Concaluit cor meum intra me; et in meditatione mea exardescet ignis (38,4)*

*The sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion...*  
*(19,5)*  
*Et ipse tanquam sponsu procedens de thalamo suo (18,6)*

There is the cleansing, consuming power of fire:

*A fire devours before him (50,3)*  
*Ignis consumens praecedit eum (49,3)*

*A fire consumes the forest, or a flame sets the mountains ablaze (83,14)*  
*Sicut ignis qui comburit silvam, et sicut flamma comburens montes (82,15)*

There is the basic image of mental, intellectual or spiritual enlightenment:

*The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes (19,8)*  
*Praeceptum Domini lucidum, illuminans oculos (18,10)*

*The Lord is my light (27,1)*  
*Dominus illuminatio mea (26,1)<sup>4</sup>*

*Send forth your light and your truth ... let them bring me to your holy mountain*

*Emitte lucem tuam, et veritatem tuam; ipsa me deduxerunt, et adduxerunt in montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua (42,3)<sup>5</sup>*

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path (119,105)*

*Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum, et lumen semitis meis (118,105)<sup>6</sup>*

*Make your face shine upon your servant (119,135)*

*Faciem tuam illumina super servum tuum (118,135)*

Fire is also used to describe God's angels and ministers:

*Flames of fire, his servants (104,4)*

*Et ministros tuos ignem ardentem (103,4)*

In Daniel, there are other illustrative references to fire, notably in the story of the three young men's faith and spiritual love for God which was tried and tested in the burning, fiery furnace, as Osuna mentions in his

*Tercer abecedario espiritual:*

Solamente quiero traer una figura do se muestran las bendiciones y gracias que los tales deben hacer al Señor. Dice el profeta Daniel, que, estando tres varones en medio del fuego que había mandado encender el rey Nabucodonosor, descendió un ángel que apartó la llama del fuego e hizo que en el medio del horno estuviere como un airecico de rocío muy templado, que soplaba para deleitar los tres varones que habían sido echados en el fuego, el cual no los tocó ni en un cabello, ni les dio fatiga alguna ni les causó enojo...<sup>7</sup>

The earliest traditions of theophany in Hebrew literature portray the God who loves his people as revealing his presence in the burning bush, a fire which, as in Daniel's image of the fiery furnace, burned but did not consume. Teresa makes specific reference to the burning bush in the *Moradas*: "Ni tampoco Moisés supo decir todo lo que vio en la zarza, sino

lo que quiso Dios que dijese" (*Moradas* 6;4,7). The light is too bright to be comprehended.<sup>8</sup> Elijah, regarded in the sixteenth century as the founder of the Carmelite Order, brings down "the fire of the Lord" to consume the sacrifice in the contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel.<sup>9</sup> Finally, Elijah is described as having been assumed into heaven in a "chariot of fire".<sup>10</sup>

In Christian literary tradition, the Holy Spirit is portrayed as fire, as, for example, when tongues of fire appeared around the heads of the Apostles when the Holy Spirit descended on them at Pentecost: "And there appeared to them tongues of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit..."; "Et apparuerunt illis dispartitae linguae tanquam ignis, seditque supra singulos eorum: et repleti sunt omnes Spiritu sancto..." (*Actus Apostolorum* 2,3). Teresa refers to the fire of the Holy Spirit as making the soul come alive in her image of the silkworm: "Entonces comienza a tener vida este gusano cuando con la calor del Espíritu Santo se comienza a aprovechar del auxilio general que a todos nos da Dios..." (*Moradas* 5;2,3), an image repeated in the *Instrucción de novicios*: "..... y una como semilla de aquella primera doctrina, que, fomentada con el calor del Espíritu Santo, baste para retoñecer..." (*Instrucción*, prólogo, 1.23).

Teresa adopts and adapts these complex ideas from biblical sources to create her developed and inter-related imagery of fire, using the characteristics associated with this living element- warmth, light, intense

pain even- to convey the experience described as the living flame of love felt by her soul for God and by God for the soul, at its most consuming, fulfilling and ecstatic: the consummation of the Spiritual Marriage of the Bride (the soul) to the Bridegroom (God).

There are many examples in the Bible of the use of sexual imagery to represent the nature of the relationship between God and his people, or between God and individuals, part of the tradition of nuptial imagery used by mystics and other writers over centuries. The book of Ezekiel has several:

I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love (Ezekiel 6,8)  
Et vidi te; ecce tempus tuum, tempus amantium..

Your breasts were formed ... you were naked (16,7)  
Pervenisti ad mundum muliebrem, ubera tua intumuerunt... et eras nuda

You were insatiable (16,28)  
Nec sic es satiata

Your bosom was caressed and your young breasts fondled (23,21)  
Quando subacta sunt ...ubera tua, et confractae sunt mammae pubertatis tuae<sup>11</sup>

Likewise, the book of Hosea uses sexual imagery to portray the relationship between God and his people:

Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her (Hosea 2.14)  
Propter hoc ecce ego lactabo eam, et ducam eam in solitudinem, et loquar ad cor eius.<sup>12</sup>

Go again, love a woman who is beloved of a paramour and is an adulteress; even as the Lord loves the people of Israel. (Hosea 3.1)  
Adhuc vade, et dilige mulierem dilectam amico et adulteram, sicut diligit Dominus filios Israel.

Therefore your daughters play the harlot, and your brides commit adultery (4.13)  
 Ideo fornicabuntur filiae vestrae, et sponsae vestrae adulterae erunt.

...you have played the harlot ... you have loved a harlot's hire...(9.1)  
 ...quia fornicatus es... dilexisti mercedem...

Undoubtedly the greatest general source for nuptial imagery is the traditional exegesis of the Song of Songs. For example, St Bernard (c.1090-1153), referred to and quoted on numerous occasions in the *Instrucción de novicios*, writing a sermon on the *Song*, says: "... este amor total equivale a las bodas místicas, porque es imposible que el que así ama sea poco amado, y en esta doble correspondencia de amor consiste el auténtico y perfecto matrimonio."<sup>13</sup> St Bonaventure (1218-1274), also frequently quoted in the *Instrucción*, likened the embrace of truth to that of the lover embracing the beloved; Hugh of St Victor (1096-1141) considered God the bridegroom and the soul as his bride, as did many other writers before and after. Such writers were using the language of the Song of Songs. The use of imagery of sexual love to convey the mystic union between God and the soul is a well-established practice in religious literature and tradition. The Song of Songs is an important source of imagery for Teresa, as she herself acknowledges in the following passage in which her debt to St Augustine is also recorded:

Así que, cuando no hay encendido el fuego que queda dicho en la voluntad ni se siente la presencia de Dios, es menester que la busquemos; que esto quiere Su Majestad, como lo hacía la esposa en los Cantares, y que preguntemos a las criaturas quién las hizo, como dice San Agustín, creo, en sus Meditaciones o Confesiones....  
 (*Moradas* 6,7;9)

There are several references and allusions to the Song of Songs in Teresa's writings, apart from *Meditaciones*, her commentary on it.<sup>14</sup> The nuptial imagery of the Song, and the centuries of theological exegesis of it, which is part of the background tradition in which Teresa writes and from which she draws, is elaborated and assimilated into her overall metaphorical scheme within her imagery of Fire and Marriage .

## I

Fire and Sexual Passion

Fire, like earth, air, and water is one of the four elements of the material universe and to some extent as such is interrelated with the other elements in Teresa's imagery, of which earth and water have already concerned us in this thesis. The dust of the earth is the basic stuff of creation, as we have seen, ("dust you are and to dust you shall return", *Genesis* 3,19), and the connections between earth/clay and water in Teresa's garden imagery were discussed in chapter 3. The biblical Garden of Eden, the primordial, perfect paradise, a basic concept from which Teresa draws, provides her with a number of ideas as to how to use the elements in association to elaborate her images for spiritual purposes. All the elements are present in that original Garden. There is, moreover, an obvious sexual dimension to the concept of the loss of innocence at the Fall, when the sensual nature and appetite of the first human beings is conveyed through their enjoyment of the forbidden fruit and clothing their nakedness. The element and image of fire is significantly used in *Genesis* when Adam and Eve are banished from the paradise garden of innocence into the fallen dimension in which they begin to create through the exercise of their carnal knowledge of each other their own family. It is then that God places to guard the Garden the Cherubim with the flaming sword: "He drove out the man; and at the east of

the Garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”; “Eiecitque Adam: et collocavit ante paradisum voluptatis cherubim et flameum gladium, atque versatilem, ad custodiendam viam ligni vitae”.<sup>15</sup> These and other allusions in the Bible influenced Teresa, whether consciously or not, in the development of her fire imagery and the associations it often has in her writings with the flames and wounds of love.

The literary background to such images of fire and passion is by no means all biblical and religious. There are echoes and resonances of the flaming sword seen in secular poetry, for instance, in Luis de Camões *Os Lusíadas*. Camões (1524-1580) is a good example of a European author contemporary to Teresa, but probably unknown to her, writing in a different language, but using identical imagery from a common inheritance. He refers in canto 9 of *Os Lusíadas*, published in 1572, to Cupid tipping his darts with gold, and of the flame of love burning even on the waters, and of the passionate moaning of the nymphs who have been wounded by his dart:

Mal haverá na terra quem se guarde  
Se teu fogo imortal nas águas arde.

Assim Vénus propós; e o filho inico  
Para lhe obedecer, já se apercebe:  
Manda trazer o arco ebúrneo rico,  
Onde as setas de ponta de ouro embebe...

Despede nisto o fero moco as setas,  
Uma após outra: geme o mar com os tiros;  
Direitas pelas ondas inquietas  
Algumas vao, e algumas fazem giros;  
Caem as ninfas, lancam das secretas  
Entranhas ardentíssimas suspiros;



Cai qualquer, sem ver o vulto que ama,  
Que tanto como a vista pode a fama.<sup>16</sup>

This imagery of Cupid with gold-tipped dart, inflicting wounds of love, is commonplace in secular love poetry from Petrarch onwards, and is used by many writers, including Teresa, for religious purposes. Camoes describes earthly sexual passion "Que Amor te ferirá, gentil donzela" ... "Que todo se defaz em puro amor"<sup>17</sup>; Teresa uses similar literary images to describe not sexual passion, but the inner experiences of "oración" when the soul is filled with love for God and a burning desire to consummate that love through union. San Juan de la Cruz whose poetry both influenced and was influenced by Santa Teresa uses the secular, even sexual image of wounding in the *Cántico espiritual* to convey the spiritual love between the Soul-Bride and the Lord-Bridegroom.

¿Adónde te escondiste,  
Amado, y me dejaste con gemido?  
Como el ciervo huiste  
habiéndome herido;  
salí tras tí clamando, y eras ido.<sup>18</sup>

The image of the wound of love is both Petrarchan and biblical. In the Bible and the teaching of the Catholic Church the concepts of love and wounding are combined; Christ accepts the wounds he receives with love. The wounds to his hands, feet and side, the wounds from his flogging, and from his crown of thorns are seen to be symbols of his love. As human sin wounds Christ with indescribable pain, so Christ's divine love "wounds" the sinner with indescribable joy. The Song refers to the wound of love:

“vulnerasti cor meum, sor mea, sponsa; vulnerasti cor meum” (*Song* 4.9); “vulneraverunt me” (*Song* 5.7).<sup>19</sup> In his prose exposition of this verse, San Juan de la Cruz not only assists us to understand his own choice of imagery, but also that of Teresa, in whose work, most notably *Las moradas*, there are parallel allusions.

Para más declaración de este verso, es de saber que, allende de otras muchas diferencias de visitas que Dios hace al alma con que la llaga y levanta en amor, suele hacer unos escondidos toques de amor que, a manera de saca de fuego, hieren y traspasan el alma y la dejan toda cauterizada con fuego de amor, y éstas propiamente se llaman *heridas de amor*, de las cuales habla aquí el alma. Inflaman éstas tanto la voluntad y en afición, que se está el alma abrasando en fuego y llama de amor; tanto, que parece consumirse en aquella llama, y la hace salir fuera de sí y renovar toda y pasar a nueva manera de ser, así como el ave fénix, que se quema y renace de nuevo. De lo cual, hablando David, dice: *Fue inflamado mi corazón, y las venas se mudaron, y yo me resolví en nada, y no supe.* (Psalmus 72,21 ff)<sup>20</sup>

Most noteworthy in this passage of San Juan are the allusions to fire and burning, as well as to light, transformation, and flight, as he seeks to explain the image of the wounded deer, that is the soul wounded with love for God, in that particular verse from the *Cántico*. Teresa combines and develops similar ideas, associating wounds, arrows, fire, burning, illuminating, being consumed and being reborn in attempting to convey both the agony and the ecstasy of the soul's love-relationship with God.

At the beginning of the *Moradas sextas* Teresa refers specifically to the soul's wound of love in the same context of Soul-Bride / Bridegroom-God imagery that is central to the *Cántico espiritual* of San Juan.: “Pues vengamos con el favor del Espíritu Santo a hablar en las sextas moradas,

adonde el alma ya queda herida del amor del Esposo..."(*Moradas* 6.1,1).

The image of the wound is laden with paradox - it causes suffering, and yet it is intensely pleasurable: "Siente ser herida sabrosísimamente, mas no atina cómo ni quién la hirió; mas bien conoce ser cosa preciosa... es harta pena, aunque sabrosa y dulce ..."(*Moradas* 6.2,2). The wound penetrates deep into "las entrañas": "sé que parece le llega a las entrañas esta pena y que cuando de ellas saca la saeta el que le hiere, verdaderamente parece que se las lleva tras sí, según el sentimiento de amor siente" (*Moradas* 6.2,4). Furthermore the pain of the wound is described in terms both of fire and light:

Estaba pensando ahora si sería que en este fuego del brasero encendido que es mi Dios, saltaba alguna centella y daba en el alma de manera que se dejaba sentir aquel encendido fuego, y como no era aún bastante para quemarla y él es tan deleitoso, queda con aquella pena, y, al tocar, hace aquella operación; y paréceme es la mejor comparación que he acertado a decir. Porque este dolor sabroso -y no es dolor - no está en un ser... (*Moradas* 6.2,4)

Towards the end of *Moradas sextas* Teresa again combines the imagery of fire, light, flight in relation to the experience of being "wounded":

... en un momento puede llegar a un alma a lo más subido que se dice aquí... esto parece un fuego que está humeando y puédesse sufrir, aunque con pena -, andándose así el alma abrasándose en sí misma acaece muchas veces por un pensamiento muy ligero o por una palabra que oye de que se tarda el morir, venir de otra parte, no se entiende de dónde ni cómo, un golpe o como si viniese una saeta de fuego; no digo que es saeta mas cualquier cosa que sea, se ve claro que no podía proceder de nuestro natural. Tampoco es golpe, aunque digo golpe; mas agudamente hiere y no es adonde se sienten acá las penas, a mi parecer, sino en lo muy hondo e íntimo del alma... (*Moradas sextas* 11,1-2).

There are biblical parallels which incorporate these features common to the writings of both Santa Teresa and San Juan. The Psalms contain allusions to both wounding and deer, within the context of the prayerful love of the soul for God:

*As the deer pants for streams of water so my soul pants for you, o God (42,1)*  
*Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus (41,1)*<sup>21</sup>

*As with a deadly wound in my body (42,10)*  
*Dum confringuntur ossa mea (41,11)*

*My heart is wounded within me (109,22)*  
*Et cor meum sauciatum est in me (108,22)*

*He makes my feet like the feet of a deer (18,33)*  
*Qui perfecit pedes meos tanquam cervorum (17,34)*

The Psalms also contain reference to arrows and flame-tipped arrows:

*He makes ready his flaming arrows (7,13)*  
*Sagittas suas ardentibus effecit (7,14)*

*He shot his arrows (18,14)*  
*Et misit sagittas suas (17,15)*

*Your arrows have pierced me (38,2)*  
*Sagittae tuae infixae sunt mihi (37,2)*

The book of Job, in describing Job's unfortunate state, uses the basic image: "Quia sagittae Domini in me sunt." ; "The arrows of the Almighty are in me."<sup>22</sup> Later a short passage uses a combination of images similar to those found in Teresa, in the passages just quoted: "...et irruet in arcum aereum. Eductus, et egrediens de vagina sua, et fulgurans in amaritudine sua" ; "a bronze arrow will strike him through. It is drawn forth and comes out of his body, the glittering point comes out of his gall."<sup>23</sup> The biblical

reference is, however, predicting descriptively what literally and physically will happen, rather than imaginatively conveying a spiritual experience.

The passage in Teresa's *Vida* describing what has become known as the Transverberation, which, in its allusions, has similarities to the passage in Job, is essentially different in its meaning. For like the passages quoted from the *Moradas sextas*, Teresa is conveying, through a complex association of metaphors, her soul's union in the Spiritual Marriage with God:

Quiso el Señor que viese aquí algunas veces esta visión: veía un ángel cabe mí hacia el lado izquierdo en forma corporal, lo que no suelo ver sino por maravilla. Aunque muchos veces se me representan ángeles, es sin verlos, sino como la visión pasada que dije primero. Esta visión quiso el Señor le viese así. No era grande sino pequeño, hermoso mucho, el rostro tan encendido que parecía de los ángeles muy subidos que parecen todos se abrasan (deben ser los que llaman querubines, que los nombres no me los dicen; mas bien veo que en el cielo hay tanta diferencia de unos ángeles a otros, y de otros a otros, que no lo sabría decir). Vefale en las manos un dardo de oro largo, y al fin del hierro me parecía tener un poco de fuego. Este me parecía meter por el corazón algunas veces y que me llegaba a las entrañas; al sacarle me parecía las llevaba consigo, y me dejaba toda abrasada en amor grande de Dios. Era tan grande el dolor, que me hacía dar aquellos quejidos, y tan excesiva la suavidad que me pone este grandísimo dolor, que no hay desear que se quite ni se contenta alma con menos que Dios. No es dolor corporal, sino espiritual, aunque no deja de participar el cuerpo algo, y aun harto. Es un requiebro tan suave que pasa entre el alma y Dios, que suplico yo a su bondad lo dé a gustar a quien pensare que miento (*Vida*, 29,13).

Within this passage, so full of metaphors, Teresa employs a number of features common to possible sources already mentioned. The Genesis account of the Garden of Eden, as we have already noted, has the cherubim with the flaming sword standing guard over the Garden at the boundary between innocence and knowledge gained at its loss. Osuna refers to the

angel cleaving the fire in Daniel's description of the three young men in the furnace.<sup>24</sup> The overall impression of Teresa's image here, certainly on the twenty-first century mind, is of its erotic content, for there are recognisable parallels with human sexual intercourse and its effects in her description: burning passion, ("rostro tan encendido"); penetration ("me llegaba a las entrañas"); orgasm ("me hacía dar aquellos quejidos"); and post-coital relaxation ("me dejaba toda abrasada en amor grande"). Teresa is using this imagery instinctively because the natural processes and experiences during physical love-making in marriage are the nearest equivalents to her spiritual experiences and, therefore, the most expressive means available to communicate to others in her writings the nature of what happens to her soul-bride when it is joined to her divine Bridegroom in the Spiritual Marriage. It is worth remembering in this context Teresa's own choice to be a nun rather than be a wife and mother. For a woman in sixteenth-century Spain the alternatives were matrimony or the convent: either to become a human wife and biological "madre" in matrimony, or to become a spiritual bride of Christ and spiritual "madre" as a nun. Within Teresa's world of spiritual experience the imagery of sexual love is not intended to be sexual or sexually arousing in the prurient sense. Imagery of love and sexual fulfilment in marriage offers simply the best parallels she can conceive to convey her loving spiritual relationship with God, the Husband of her soul. Teresa makes this absolutely clear in the Seventh *moradas*:

... entiendo que hay grandísima diferencia de todas las pasadas a las de esta morada, y tan grande del desposorio espiritual al matrimonio

espiritual, como le hay entre dos desposados a los que ya no se pueden apartar. Ya he dicho que aunque se ponen estas comparaciones, porque no hay otras más a propósito, que se entienda que aquí no hay memoria de cuerpo más que si el alma no estuviese en él, sino sólo espíritu... (*Moradas* 7,2;2).

Though she has perceived that the sexual activity and intercourse between husband and wife within the sacrament of marriage parallel or reflect her own spiritual experiences, and she has used these parallels and reflections to attempt to explain the otherwise inexplicable, she emphasises that the spiritual fulfilment of mystical love reached through "oración" is far and away beyond the physical and emotional experience of marital intercourse, which is but a dim reflection of the joys of Spiritual Marriage-Union achieved between the soul and God:

Ya tendréis oído muchas veces que se desposa Dios con las almas espiritualmente. ¡Bendita sea su misericordia, que tanto se quiere humillar! Y aunque sea grosera comparación, yo no hallo otra que más pueda dar a entender lo que pretendo que el sacramento del matrimonio; porque, aunque de diferente manera, porque en esto que tratamos jamás hay cosa que no sea espiritual – esto corpóreo va muy lejos y los contentos espirituales que da el Señor y los gustos, al que deben tener los que se desposan, van mil leguas lo uno de lo otro – porque todo es amor con amor y sus operaciones son limpiísimas y tan delicadísimas y suaves que no hay cómo se decir, mas sabe el Señor darlas muy bien a sentir (*Moradas* 5,4;3).

Spiritual Marriage is, like earthly matrimony, consummated, and Teresa attempts to explain, in terms of the sexual union of husband and wife, the spiritual union at the highest level of the soul with God:

"Cuando nuestro Señor es servido haber piedad de lo que padece y ha padecido por su desco esta alma que ya espiritualmente ha tomado por Esposa, primero que se consuma el matrimonio métela en su morada, que es ésta séptima..." (*Moradas* 7,1;3)

The transverberation imagery is, furthermore, another example of the reversal technique which Teresa uses as her images undergo transformation. Thus, whereas it was the wounded Christ which originally awoke spiritual devotion in her, "... ví una imagen ... Era de Cristo muy llagado y tan devota ... el corazón me parece se me partía," (*Vida* 9.1), now it is God who wounds Teresa. The roles have been reversed in a re-writing of the original image, and, as in marriage, the soul and Christ have become, as it were, "one flesh".



## II

### Fire and Water

Fire and water are frequently used images in secular love poetry to express the anguish of love. Garcilaso de la Vega (1501-1536), for example, a contemporary of Teresa, combines in his *First Eclogue* the elements of fire and water to convey his torments of unrequited love:

y al encendido fuego en que me quemo  
 más helada que nieve, Galatea!...  
 salid, sin duelo, lágrimas corriendo.<sup>25</sup>

Then, in *Soneto XIII* Garcilaso, inspired by Apollo's love for Daphne, who spurned the god's affection and escaped him through her transformation into a laurel tree, describes the tree as being made to grow, watered by the tears Apollo sheds for love: "crecer hacía este árbol, que con lágrimas regaba". This represents a secular version of Teresa's imagery illustrating, as discussed in an earlier chapter, the growth of spiritual love through the waters of grace, the effect of which may be tears. In *Soneto XVIII*

Garcilaso illustrates the suffering of love with reference to wax, which transforms from its solid form to liquid, as indeed water does when fire or heat melt ice, the symbol of frigidity. In this sonnet Garcilaso conveys the icy, chill effect of being close to the woman he loves, because she does not respond, and, in contrast, how he burns with passion when he is at a distance from her, and his ardour is not cooled by her indifference: "Si a vuestra voluntad yo soy de cera ....yo soy de lejos inflamado ... y

encendido...luego siento helado”<sup>26</sup>. The icy fire is the principal Petrarchan paradox. This paradox is also used by Teresa in a religious context:

¡Oh, válgame Dios, qué cosa tan hermosa y de tanta maravilla, que el fuego enfría! Sí, y aun hiela todas las affecciones del mundo cuando se junta con el agua viva del cielo, que es la fuente de donde proceden las lágrimas que quedan dichas, que son dadas y no adquiridas por nuestra industria. Así que, a buen seguro que no deja calor en ninguna cosa del mundo para se detenga en ellas, si no es para si puede pegar este fuego, que es natural suyo no se contentar con poco, sino que, si pudiese, abrasaría todo el mundo. ( *Camino de perfección* 19.5)

In *Soneto V* Garcilaso uses the idea of “dying” of love “por vos he de morir, y por vos muero”, a similar idea to that used by Teresa in her poem *Vivo sin vivir en mí*: “que muero porque no muero”. Of course the biblical idea that the supreme love of Christ is mediated through his death is a background idea undoubtedly evoked in the minds of Teresa and her nuns when considering this verse.

In Catholic teaching, understood by Teresa, and used in her writings, fire and water are symbols of the Holy Spirit. The symbolism of water signifies the action of the Holy Spirit in Baptism. As human gestation before physical birth takes place in the waters of the womb, so, it is understood, “new birth” into divine life is given through the waters of baptism. As, according to 1 Corinthians 12.13, all are baptised “by the one Spirit”, so, “all are made to drink of one Spirit.” In Catholic teaching, accurately reflected in Teresa’s writings, the Spirit is the living water coming from Christ crucified, its source: “... unus militum lancea latus aperuit, et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua.”; “...one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water” (John

19.34); “Et tres sunt, qui testimonium dant in terra: Spiritus, et aqua, et sanguis.”; “There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood”(I John 5.8). The living water is understood to well up into eternal life in the baptised: “... sed aqua quam ego dabo ei, fiet in eo fons aquae salientis in vitam aeternam”; “... the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life...” (John 4.14); “Qui credit in me ... flumina de ventre eius fluent aquae vivae”; “He who believes in me ... out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water...” (John 7.38); “Ego sitienti dabo de fonte aquae vitae...”; “To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life...” (Revelation 21.6).

While the symbol of water signifies birth and the fruitfulness of life given by the Holy Spirit, fire is one of the most expressive images and symbols in Christian tradition signifying transforming energy of the action of the Holy Spirit, “the living flame of love”. The prayer of Elijah, who “arose like fire” and whose “word burned like a torch” (Sirach 48.1), brought down fire from heaven on the sacrifice on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18.38). In Catholic theology, this event is seen as a figure of the fire of the Holy Spirit, who transforms what he touches. John the Baptist, who goes before Jesus “in spiritu et virtute Eliae”, “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1.17), proclaims Jesus as “ipse vos baptizabit in Spiritu sancto et igni”; “one who will baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Luke 3.16). At Pentecost the Holy Spirit rests on the apostles as “linguae tanquam ignis”; “tongues of fire” (Acts 2.3).

In *Subida del monte Sion*, Bernardino de Laredo significantly associates fire and water in images used to describe the way of “oración” in passages which would have been familiar to Teresa from her reading of this influential book:

esta ánima que contempla no reconoce en sí misma otra cosa sino sola la centella del amor, que está vivísima en ella; la cual, comparándola al incendio del amor en el cual está ocupada, es como una gota de agua en el golfo de la mar....<sup>27</sup>

Laredo goes on to say:

... y el corazón, por quien se ha aquí de entender el incendio del amor que ha de estar vivo en el ánima de cualquier contemplativo, así se ha de derramar muy junto y súbitamente en el amor infinito como un vaso boca abajo derrama muy junta su agua.<sup>28</sup>

In her imagery, Teresa develops further such associations between fire and water in suggestive ways. The fire of spiritual love can be so intense that the tears of joy which well up by God’s grace and are shed by the soul, instead of assuaging it can actually make the fire burn more fiercely, which, however, increases the soul’s intensity of joy:

Queda el alma de esta oración y unión con grandísima ternura, de manera que se querría deshacer; no de pena, sino de unas lágrimas gozosas, hállase bañada de ellas sin sentirlo, ni saber cuándo ni cómo las lloró; mas dale gran deleite ver aplacado aquel ímpetu del fuego con agua que le hace más crecer. Parece esto algarabía y pasa así. (*Vida*, 19,1)

Here the elements of fire and water are combined to convey the soul’s loving union with God: tears, produced by the waters of divine grace, have sexual overtones – they are “gozosas”...bañadas de ellas”; and the effect of water on fire is to increase spiritual development and growth – “hace más

crecer". The fire of the Holy Spirit and the waters of divine grace acting in combination within the soul infuse it with spiritual ecstasy.

Fire shares with water the property of cleansing. Fire burns away sins in purgatory—a process that has to be undergone by the imperfect soul on its journey towards heaven, just as indeed, the soul must undergo comparable suffering in its attempt to enter the seventh mansions. It seems too that the more intense the love-relationship between God and the soul, the more extreme the suffering that the soul must experience. Thus Teresa wonders: "¿qué debía de pasar San Pablo y la Magdalena y otros semejantes, en quien tan crecido estaba este fuego de amor de Dios? Debía ser un continuo martirio" (*Vida*, 21,7). But the rewards brought by entry into the seventh *moradas* outweigh beyond measure the spiritual suffering by the fire and water of God's loving grace that has to be endured to make possible the consummation of the Spiritual Marriage between the purified soul and God.

Bien es que lo mucho cueste mucho; cuánto más que, si es purificar esta alma para que entre en la séptima morada, como los que han de entrar en el cielo se limpian en el purgatorio, es tan poco este padecer, como sería una gota de agua en la mar.... (*Moradas* 6,11.6).

The combination of fire and water imagery in the context of the passion of love for God is succinctly expressed by Teresa in a passage from her *Exclamaciones* and is a good example of the way in which her ideas and metaphors are accumulated and undergo a process of transformation in which one image enhances another:

¡Oh piadosa y amoroso Señor de mi alma!; también decís Vos: *venid a mí todos los que tenéis sed, que yo os daré a beber*. Pues, ¿cómo puede

dejar de tener gran sed el que está ardiendo en vivas llamas en las codicias de estas cosas miserables de la tierra? Hay grandísima necesidad de agua para que en ella no se acabe de consumir; ya sé yo, Señor mío, de vuestra bondad que se la daréis; Vos mismo lo decís; no pueden faltar vuestras palabras. Pues si, de acostumbrados a vivir en este fuego y de criados en él, ya no lo sienten ni atinan de desatinados, a ver su gran necesidad, ¿qué remedio, Dios mío? Vos vinisteis al mundo para remediar tan grandes necesidades como éstas; comenzad, Señor; en las cosas más dificultosas se ha de mostrar vuestra piedad. Mirad, Dios mío, que van ganando much vuestros enemigos; habed piedad de los que no la tienen de sí; ya que su desventura los tiene puestos en estado que no quieren venir a Vos, venid Vos a ellos, Dios mío: yo os lo pido en su nombre y sé que como se entiendan y tornen en sí y comiencen a gustar de Vos, resucitarán estos muertos.

¡Oh Vida, que la dais a todos!; no me neguéis a mí esta agua dulcísima que prometéis a los que la quieren; yo la quiero, Señor, y la pido y vengo a Vos; no os escondáis, Señor, de mí, pues sabéis mi necesidad y que es verdadera medicina del alma llagada por Vos. ¡Oh Señor, qué de maneras de fuegos hay en esta vida! ¡Oh con cuánta razón se ha de vivir con temor! Unos consumen el alma, otros la purifican para que viva para siempre gozando de Vos. ¡Oh fuentes vivas de las llagas de mi Dios; cómo manaréis siempre con gran abundancia para nuestro mantenimiento y qué seguro irá por los peligros de esta miserable vida el que procure sustentarse de este divino licor! (*Exclamaciones* 9).

Imagery of water ("Hay grandísima necesidad de agua") and fire ("qué de maneras de fuegos hay en esta vida") is combined with imagery of the thirst and burning of nuptial passion, ("gran sed", "ardiendo en vivas llamas") to portray the difference between the beauty of heaven ("siempre gozando de vos") compared with the misery of earth ("estas cosas miserables de la tierra", "los peligros de esta miserable vida"). The Incarnation, symbol of the uniting of the spiritual being of God with the physical being of man, and also of the union of the soul with God in "oración", heals and transforms the breach between the soul and God, and transforms the soul: ("Vos vinisteis al mundo para remediar tan grandes necesidades"). Fire is both the fire of the pain of the human condition

("ardiendo en vivas llamas de las codicias de estas cosas miserables de la tierra"), and the transforming fire of the Holy Spirit, ("otros la purifican para que viva para siempre gozando de Vos"). The imagery of wounding and wine, evocative of the *Song of Songs*, completes the scheme, ("es verdadera medecina del alma llagada por Vos", "¡Oh fuentes vivas de las llagas de mi Dios!", "¡qué seguro irá... el que procure sustentarse de este divino licor!")

The dating of the "exclamaciones", ranging from 1559 to 1579, is a question of debate among scholars and raises the difficulty of trying to place this writing chronologically in relation to her other works. However, the process of cumulative image transformation in which one image modifies and enhances another, and which is further enhanced by the implicit or explicit biblical allusions, evoking further dimensions and insights to the metaphorical scheme within the mind of the reader, seems to be a constant feature in Teresa's writing. The further dimensions and insights referred to are controlled by the boundaries of the reader's knowledge of biblical and Catholic doctrine, and yet, in terms of literary accomplishment, are a feature of Teresa's artistic originality.

### III

#### Fire and light and transformation

Teresa's imagery of fire appears to have as many layers of significances as does her water imagery. As we have seen with the water imagery she describes different ways of watering the garden of the soul, similarly through the imagery of fire she shows, using the different properties of fire, how the soul is variously affected in its love-relationship with God.

One of the primary characteristics of fire is that it diminishes darkness, for it is light-bringing. Within Christian theological writings light and prayer are closely linked. St John Chrysostom (d. 407) refers to this association: "y así como los ojos del cuerpo se iluminan cuando contemplan la luz, así también el alma dirigida hacia Dios se ilumina con su inefable luz ... La oración es luz del alma, verdadero conocimiento de Dios, mediadora entre Dios y los hombres. Hace que el alma se eleve hasta el cielo y abrace a Dios con inefables abrazos..."<sup>29</sup>

Carmelites were taught by Teresa that spiritual perfection, like light, radiates outwards from the centre of the soul, the quality of the interior influencing the exterior:

"Procure principalmente (como dice nuestra Madre Teresa) enseñar el interior, y que de allí salga y redunde el resplandor e ilustre a las acciones exteriores, como pasó en la Transfiguración del Señor, la luz de cuyas vestiduras, que según dice el Evangelista, era más que la del sol,



comunicada primero de la gloria interior del alma a los miembros exteriores del cuerpo del por el consiguiente se extendió (como dicho es, a las vestiduras) para que así no sea la virtud que tuvieren superficial, mas teniendo allá dentro su raíz y fundamento, sea más estable y duradera.” (*Instrucción de novicios*, 1, p.22).

At more profound levels of spiritual experience images of fire can convey the idea of change, indeed of transformation. In using the imagery of fire in this way Teresa provides a parallel to her image of the silkworm being transformed into the butterfly. Using the idea of metal being tried in fire, which is common in the Bible: “Et probavit me quasi aurum quod per ignem transit”,<sup>30</sup> Teresa seems to be saying that in the process of “oración”, the fire of the Holy Spirit touches the soul and changes it: “No me parece sino que sale el alma del crisol como el oro, más afirmada y clarificada para ver en sí al Señor” (*Vida* 30.14). The extent of this change within the soul, just as the effect of fire upon iron depends upon the former’s degree of heat, is determined by the intensity of its love-experience with God:

... un fuego pequeño también es fuego como un grande, y ya se ve la diferencia que hay de lo uno a lo otro. En un fuego pequeño, primero que un hierro pequeño se hace ascua, pasa mucho espacio; mas si el fuego es grande, aunque sea mayor el hierro, en muy poquito pierde del todo su ser, al parecer. (*Vida* 18,7)

Teresa elaborates the image of fire further. Fire, being the symbol of the Holy Spirit, is also the symbol of the soul itself. So “oración” can result in the soul changing to become its spiritual self:

“... el alma alguna vez sale de sí misma, a manera de un fuego que está ardiendo y hecho llama, y algunas veces crece este fuego con

ímpetu. Este llama sube muy arriba del fuego, mas no por eso es cosa diferente, sino la misma llama que está en el fuego" (*Vida* 8,2).

Towards the end of *Las moradas* Teresa uses a number of images of fire and light similar to this one, which despite their apparent simplicity convey the complex and profound ideas of the merging of the soul in God as a process which, paradoxically, allows the soul to retain its essential identity. Such images used in close proximity to each other, have, by their accumulation, a greater intensity of impact and significance. So Teresa writes:

Digamos que sea la unión, como si dos velas de cera se juntasen tan en extremo que toda la luz y la cera es todo uno; mas después bien se puede apartar la una vela de la otra, y quedan en dos velas, o el pábilo de la cera. (*Moradas* 7,2;4)

Then she reinforces this idea with another apparently simple image, based, like the previous one, on her personal observation of an everyday occurrence: "... o como si en una pieza estuviesen dos ventanas por donde entrase gran luz; aunque entra dividida se hace todo una luz." (*Moradas* 7,2;4). To these she adds the simplest of water images, to clarify and emphasize further this same paradoxical truth about the transformation of the soul, that it involves merging without any loss to the soul of its essence but on the contrary a gain, enabling its self-fulfilment. Because the reader already has knowledge of her imaginative scheme of water imagery, derived from her *Vida*, he/she will appreciate here, as *Las moradas* moves to its conclusion, the deeper spiritual significances of the image which follows:

Acá es como si cayendo agua del cielo en un río o fuente, adonde queda hecho todo agua, que no podrán ya dividir ni apartar cuál es el agua del río o lo que cayó del cielo; o como si un arroyico pequeño entra en la mar, no habrá remedio de apartarse... (*Moradas* 7,2;4)

Throughout her writings, Teresa has developed her imagery, which in *Las moradas* matures further and deepens in meanings as the castle is explored. As a result, in describing the sublimest state of the soul in the seventh *moradas* she can use the simplest of images and nevertheless successfully communicate the most profound experiences of her soul in "oración". Because Teresa has been throughout her writings a very methodical teacher, using, then repeating the images creatively in slightly different ways, combining them, developing them, her readers have acquired in the process of reading Teresa the insights and new perspectives needed to understand their full spiritual profundity.

In *Moradas séptimas* images of earth, air, fire and water are skilfully accumulated and creatively inter-related to convey the multi-faceted, multi-dimensional experience of "oración" as the spiritual marriage is consummated. Images which have been used and developed in earlier writings of Teresa and/or previous parts of this work reappear in one form or another to help express the ecstasy of transformation as God and soul become one. The soul is shown to have undergone the death of self and its joyful resurrection in Christ: "esta mariposica ya murió, con grandísima alegría de haber hallado reposo y que vive en ella Cristo" (*Moradas* 7,3.1). Thus the two (Christ and the soul) have become one, and the greatest favour that God gives is granted – the soul lives the life of God's Son: "porque no

nos puede su Majestad hacérsenos mayor regalo, que es darnos vida que sea imitando a la que vivió su Hijo tan amado" (*Moradas* 7;4,4). At this stage of transformation in union the fire of love is seen to be raging : "así como un fuego no echa la llama hacia abajo sino hacia arriba, por grande que quieran encender el fuego" (*Moradas* 7;3,8). Overflowing waters are given to the wounded hart: "aquí se dan las aguas a esta cierva, que va herida, en abundancia" (*Moradas* 7;3,13). The battle outside the castle is at its fiercest: "qué más guerra les hace desde allí..."(*Moradas* 7;4,10). Yet within this multi-dimensional palace of love there is rest and the joy of fulfilment: "Una vez mostradas a gozar de este castillo, en todas las cosas hallaréis descanso....Aunque no se trata de más de siete moradas, en cada una de éstas hay muchas: en lo bajo y alto y a los lados, con lindos jardines y fuentes, y laborintios y cosas tan deleitosas, que desearéis deshaceros en alabanzas del gran Dios, que le crió a su imagen y semejanza" (*Moradas*, Conclusión, 3).

## IV

Fire and flight, expansion and transformation

The imagery of movement is an important element of Teresa's scheme. Her view of the universe is of course limited to the sixteenth-century scientific, philosophical and theological understanding. Covarrubias gives us an interesting insight into these matters in his definition of "cielo":

*Latine CAELUM, uno nomine dicitur tota illa mundi pars, quae est supra elementum ignis, quam philosophii aethera appellant, ita dictum a celando, hoc est occultando, quod inferiora omnia celet, et tegat, sive a stellarum imagine, quae in eo quodammodo celatae apparent. Varro caelum quasi "koilon", hoc est cavum dictum putat, et sic per ae, diphtongum, scribendum videretur. Ya tengo advertido que no estoy obligado a que los romancistas me perciban enteramente en todo, y habiendo de cumplir con mi instituto de dar las etimologías de los vocablos para acudir a sus fuentes, sería más que turbar el agua, porque la perdería; cada uno tome lo que pudiere. También advierto que yo no me meteré en averiguar el número de los cielos, ni sus movimientos, ni si su materia es corruptible o no; quédese para los filósofos, y principalmente para los teólogos, que corrigen los errores, tantos y tan grandes, que los gentiles tuvieron errantes *toto caelo*. 2. Tómase **cielo** unas veces por el aire, 3. Otras por los orbes celestes, 4. Y últimamente por el lugar de los bienaventurados.<sup>31</sup>*

Clearly, there was a background world view and perception of cosmology in terms of the Ptolomaic universe with its concentric spheres, and the elements of earth, air, fire and water. This is incorporated by secular and religious authors in their literature. Covarrubias makes a further interesting comment later in the same definition of "cielo" when explaining the proverb "Hacer del cielo cebolla":

**Hacer del cielo cebolla**, cuando nos dan a entender una cosa por otra. Nació el proverbio de que los astrólogos, buscando algún ejemplo casero y manual para darnos a entender cómo los cielos y sus orbes están contiguos unos con otros, y como los mayores

contienen dentro de sí los menores, hasta el cielo de la luna, que es el postrero, ponen la semejanza de los cascos de la cebolla, que están unos dentro de otros, y da ocasión de reir que una cosa tan grande como los cielos, los comparemos a una cosa de poca consideración como una cebolla; pero nuestro entedimiento es a veces tan ratero en las cosa de las tejas arriba, que buscan los que enseñan símiles acomodados a nuestra capacidad.<sup>32</sup>

Teresa's image of the "palmito" has a similar multi-layered structure:

"... y considerad como un palmito que para llegar a lo que es de comer tiene muchas coberturas que todo lo sabroso cercan" (*Moradas* 1.2,8 ). The idea of movement towards the centre of a globe-like structure is an important concept.

Parallels in secular contemporary literature show that such ideas come from a common inheritance. Camoes uses the image of a transparent globe consisting of a series of spheres:

Faz-te mercee, barao, a Sapiencia  
Suprema de, coós olhos corporais,  
Veres o que nao pode a va ciencia  
Dos errados e miseos mortais.

.....

Nao andam muito que no erguido cume  
Se acharam, onde um campo se esmeltava  
De esmeraldas, rubis, tais que presume  
A vista que divina chao pisava.  
Aqui um globo vem no ar, que o lume  
Claríssimo por ele penetrava  
De modo que a seu centro está evidente,  
Com a sua superfície, claramente

Qual a matéria seja nao se cnxerga,  
Mas enxerga-se bem que está composto  
De vários orbes, que a Divina verga  
Compos, e um centro a todos só tem posto.  
Volvendo, ora se abaixe, agora se erga,  
Nunca se ergue ou se abaixa, e un mesmo rosto  
Por toda a parte tem; e em toda a parte  
Comeca e acaba, enfim, por divina arte.

Uniforme, perfeito, em si sustido,  
Qual, enfim, o Arquetipo que o criou.  
Vendo o gama este globo, comovido  
De espanto e de desejo ali ficou.  
Diz-lhe a Deusa: O trasunto, reduzido  
Em pequeno volume, aqui te dou  
Do mundo aos olhos teus, para que vejas  
Por onde vás e irás e o que deséjas.

Ves aqui a grande máquina do Mundo,  
Etérea e elemental, que fabricada  
Assim foi do Saber, alto e profundo,  
Que é sem princípio e meta limitada.  
Quem cerca em derredor este rotundo  
Globo e sua superfície tao limada,  
É Deus: mas o que é Deus, ninguém o entende,  
Que a tanto o engenho humano nao se estende.

Este orbo que, primeiro, vai cercando  
Os outros mais pequenos que em si tem,  
Que está com luz tao clara radiando  
Que a vista cega e a mente vil também,  
Empírio se nomeia, onde logrando  
Puras almas estao daquele Bem  
Tamanho, que ele só se entende e alcanca,  
De quem nao há no mundo semelhança.<sup>33</sup>

The philosophical and theological world-view of the period was clearly a common factor in Camoes and Teresa's choice of images. Teresa makes a direct allusion to it:

...primero que se consuma el matrimonio espiritual métela en su morada, que es esta séptima; porque así como la tiene en el cielo, debe tener en el alma una estancia adonde solo su Majestad mora, y digamos: otro cielo... ..en metiendo el Señor al alma en esta morada suya, que es el centro de la misma alma, así como dicen que el cielo empíreo adonde está nuestro Señor no se mueve como los demás... (*Moradas* 7.1,3 & 7.2,9).

Teresa sometimes refers to the idea of a location somewhere between heaven and earth. This idea is found in the Bible, for example:

... et vidi; et ecce similitudo quasi aspectus ignis; ab aspectu lumborum eius, et deorsum, ignis; et a lumbis eius, et sursum, quasi aspectus splendoris, ut visio electri. Et emissa similitudo manus apprehendit me in cinctu capitis mei, et elevavit me spiritus inter terram et caelum...<sup>34</sup>

...then I beheld, and, lo, a form that had the appearance of a man; below what appeared to be his loins it was fire, and above his loins it was like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming bronze. He put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven.

St Paul makes an interesting and mysterious reference to an ineffable experience of a "third heaven":

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know -- God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard many things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. (2 Corinthians 12. 2ff)

Scio hominem in Christo ante annos quatuordecim, sive in corpore nescio, Deus scit, raptum huiusmodi hominem sive in corpore, sive extra corpus nescio, Deus scit.: quoniam raptus est in paradysum: et audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui.

San Juan comments on this passage<sup>35</sup>:

Y así estas visiones no son de esta vida ... cuando se piensa que las vio San Pablo ... dice el mismo Santo; *sive in corpore nescio, sive extra corpus nescio; Deus scit*; esto es, que fue arrabado a ellas, y lo que vio dice que no sabe si era en el cuerpo o fuera del cuerpo; que Dios lo sabe. En lo cual se ve claro que se traspuso de la vida natural, haciendo Dios el cómo. (*Subida* 2.24,3)

Teresa uses and elaborates similar imagery, acknowledging the biblical precedents:

Otras veces parece anda el alma como necesitadísima, diciendo y preguntando a sí misma (Ps.41,4): *¿Dónde está tu Dios?* Es de mirar que el romance de estos verso yo no sabía bien el que era, y después que lo entendía me consolaba de ver que me los había traído el Señor a la memoria sin procurarlo yo. Otras me acordaba



de lo que dice San Pablo (Gal., 6,14), que está crucificado al mundo. No digo yo que sea esto así, que ya lo veo; mas parece que está así el alma, que ni del cielo le viene consuelo, ni está en él, sino como crucificado entre el cielo y la tierra....(*Vida* 20,11)

Here, the idea of suffering and loneliness is combined with the idea of being suspended in a location between earth and heaven. Such an idea is also found in Ezekiel:

The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven (8,3)  
Et elevavit me spiritus inter terram et caelum<sup>36</sup>

Teresa uses the image to describe the burning sensation of loneliness felt at times during spiritual experience:

Siente una soledad extraña porque criatura de toda la tierra no la hace compañía, ni creo se la harían los del cielo como no fuese el que ama, antes toda la atormenta más; vese como una persona colgada que no asienta en cosa de la tierra ni al cielo puede subir; abrasada con esta sed, y no puede llegar al agua; y no sed que puede sufrir sino ya en tal término que con ninguna se le quitaría ni quiere que se le quite si no es con la que dijo nuestro Señor a la Samaritana (Jn.4,7-13); y eso no se lo dan. (*Moradas* 6.11,5).

The Psalmist uses the image of a bird on a rooftop to express the idea of loneliness. Teresa, referring to this psalm, adopts the image as part of her scheme, and elaborates it:

Con esta comunicación crece el deseo y el extremo de soledad, en que se ve con una pena tan delgada y penetrativa que, aunque el alma se estaba puesta en aquel desierto, que al pie de la letra me parece se puede entonces decir, y por ventura lo dijo el real Profeta estando en la misma soledad, sino que a santo se la daría el Señor a sentir en más excesiva manera (Ps. 101,8): *Vigilavi, et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto*; y así se me representa este verso entonces que me parece lo veo yo en mí, y consuéleme ver que han sentido otras personas tan gran extremo de soledad, cuánto más tales. Así parece que está el alma, no en sí, sino en el tejado o techo de sí misma y de todo lo criado; porque aun encima de lo muy superior del alma me parece que está. (*Vida* 20,10)

Within this paragraph we can see those elements of the imagery which are adopted and elaborated in the wider network: the idea of being up and above, on the “roof”, as it were, of the soul conceived as a building (castle); being above “todo lo criado”, both in terms of physical and spiritual experience (levitation of the body and flight of the spirit); the idea of “pena” (pain, distress) “going inwards”, “penetrativa” ( evocative of a sexual aspect, and of the cherubim with the spear, or of the journey into the interior of the castle ); the idea of expansion and moving upwards and outwards, going beyond the present confines of bodily, material existence, into an experience of the highest regions of the soul, or spiritual experience “encima de lo muy superior del alma” (transformation, as in the sacramental transformation of physical bread into the spiritual body of Christ, or of the silkworm into a butterfly, from what crawls on the earth to what flies in the sky).

The image of a bird soaring is one of the ways Teresa, and others, describe the feelings and emotions of “oración”. Referring to Psalm 54. 7 (“Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbae, et volabo, et requiescam ? Ecce elongavit fugiens; et mansi in solitudine.” ; “Oh that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; I would wander afar, I would lodge in the wilderness.”), Teresa refers to the feelings of upward and outward movement:

¡Oh, válgame Dios, qué claro se ve aquí la declaración del verso, y cómo se entiende tenía razón, y la tendrán todos de pedir alas de paloma! Entiéndose claro es vuelo el que da el espíritu para

levantarse de todo lo criado, y de sí mismo el primero; mas es vuelo suave, es vuelo deleitoso, vuelo sin ruido. (*Vida* 20,24)

There are different degrees of flight within the imagery, indicating that Teresa conceives within the image of flight a gradation, a sense of development and expansion. Interestingly the image of flight is combined with the image of light:

... mas llegada aquí, que le da este Sol de Justicia, que la hace abrir los ojos, ve tantas motas que los querría tornar a cerrar; porque aún no es tan hija de esta águila caudalosa, que puede mirar este sol de en hito en hito: mas por poco que los tenga abiertos, vese todo turbia ..... cuando mira este divino Sol, deslúmbrale la claridad; como se mira a sí, el barro la tapa los ojos, ciega está esta palomita....

The imagery suggests two ideas. First that the soul can "move" like the body, to give itself a perspective to be able to perceive the "world" outside and beyond itself ("puede mirar este sol")<sup>37</sup>. Secondly, the soul itself "expands" or becomes "enlarged" by experience. The idea of dilation, and its opposite, contraction, is an important part of Teresa's overall scheme imagery: "Así como se entiened claro un dilatamiento o ensanchamiento en el alma a manera de como si el agua que mana de una fuente estuviese labrada de una cosa mientras más agua manase más grande se hiciese el edificio; así parece en esta oración...(Moradas 4.3,9).

The idea of dilation or expansion is common to imagery of water, to the ever increasing size of the Castle, and of the imagery of fire:

... a mi parecer, para aquí es en aquel ensanchamiento, que así parece: que, como comienza a producir aquella agua celestial de este manantial que digo de lo profundo de nosotros, parece que se

va dilatando y ensanchando todo nuestro interior....(*Moradas* 4.2,6)

... y sin artificio parece que se va labrando el edificio para la oración....(*Moradas* 4.3,1)

... el alma alguna vez sale de sí misma, a manera de un fuego que está ardiendo y hecho llama, y algunas veces crece este fuego con ímpetu. Esta llama sube muy arriba del fuego, mas no por eso es cosa diferente, sino la misma llama que está en el fuego. (*Vida* 18,2)

All attempts to define mystical experience in words and images fall short of their target. The totality of such sublime experience simply defies and eludes description. There is always something beyond the physical dimensions of human perception. The imagery of the elements of earth, air, water and fire can only hint at the experiences. Even so, Teresa's skilful elaboration of her metaphorical system is one of the greatest of literary achievements.

### Conclusion

This study has shown the complex process by which Teresa has elaborated clusters of images into a metaphorical scheme in which metaphors enhance each other and beget other metaphors. Teresa's debt to biblical imagery goes much further than the presence of image clusters similar to her own in biblical texts, although this in itself offers opportunity for further interesting and promisingly fruitful research, together with a parallel consideration of the nature and use of biblical language and quotations in the writings of the Fathers and of other spiritual and ecclesiastical authorities by whom Teresa was influenced, or whom she is known to have read. In fact, her debt to the Bible includes, as we have shown, the less immediately obvious theological dimension which the biblical imagery conveys, and which is further elaborated and extended for Teresa by the liturgy and teaching ministry of the sixteenth century Catholic Church, with its stringent regulation and attention to orthodoxy. The source of the imagery is not ultimately as important as the way in which biblical language and images are transmitted, and the way in which they are perceived, in the context of Catholic orthodoxy. This is an important aspect to the internal development of Teresa's metaphorical system which those who argue Jewish or Islamic sources have not adequately considered or discussed.

This theological dimension is part of the process by which Teresa's imagery is shaped and elaborated into her scheme. Her Catholic

perspective, and the theological standpoint from which she views and develops ideas, are Christocentric. The conversion or transformation of the soul through "oración" is viewed in terms of resurrection through death, or rebirth through death. This is clearly seen in the image of the silkworm dying in the cocoon to emerge with new life in a different form as a butterfly. It has been shown that this image can be seen as a re-writing of the biblical stories of Jonah emerging from the fish, or Lazarus emerging from the tomb, and of the story, which according to Catholic understanding is prefigured by these, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his emerging from the tomb three days after his death and burial.

Teresa's elaboration of the imagery of water, as has been shown, has a similar theological dimension which shapes the process by which her metaphorical scheme is enhanced. The cluster of water images, present in various biblical texts, is enhanced by the internal Christocentric dynamic in her attitudes and writing. For Teresa the waters are waters of Christ's Grace, clearly demonstrated by the christological implications of the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, a story which Teresa admits she was very fond of. In the story the waters are the waters that Christ gives: "The water that *I* shall give" (John 4.14). These waters transform the soul in imagery resonant with the Catholic doctrine of redemption, which, again, has a hidden theological dimension that shapes the development of Teresa's metaphorical scheme. The process is complex and sophisticated, because of the inter-relationship of different clusters of images. The Genesis account

of Adam in the Garden of Eden is, in Christian understanding, a figure of the second Adam, Christ, in the redemptive Garden of Gethsemane: "Et sicut in Adam omnes moriuntur, ita et in Christo omnes vivificabuntur."; "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Corinthians 15.22); "Factus est primus homo Adam in animam viventem, novissimus Adam in spiritum vivificantem."; "The first man, Adam, became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit." (I Corinthians 15.45). Teresa's approach to Old Testament texts is Christocentric and redemptive, in line with the teaching and tradition of the Church of her day. Her imagery, and the way she elaborates it, is similarly Christocentric and redemptive.

As we have seen, Teresa is attempting to show how the soul is transformed in "oración". She is therefore employing her own basic understanding of Christian theology and Catholic teaching to put her message across to her readers, who are either those to whom she owes canonical obedience, or nuns whom she is trying to encourage and inspire. In both cases they are people who are nurtured within the Catholic tradition of orthodoxy, and who, through their own memory and knowledge, will gain more from her imagery, because of its biblical parallels and the way in which they are interpreted by the Church, than people who are ignorant of, or less familiar with, Catholic teaching and biblical knowledge.

The complex and sophisticated imagery of the castle is similarly conceived and developed within a Christological mentality. The cluster of

images based on a castle, whatever their origin, as has been shown, is inter-linked with the other clusters of Teresian images, all of which are elaborated from the point of view of redemption, death and resurrection to new life. The castle is a Christian castle, because it is the Christian soul; it is a paradise garden, and a palace, because God is present at its centre; it is the soul of a person baptised with water and the Holy Spirit, made in the image and likeness of God; it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is also a place of exploration, because it is the context of pilgrimage and of the soul's journey towards God. The origin of the ideas concerning the layout or geography of the spiritual castle is not as important as the way in which the imagery is elaborated. Although some of the arguments of those who suggest the basic idea of the castle to originate in Islam or Judaism, or even to a specific geographical location in Spain are interesting, and even compelling, the cluster of castle images in the Christian Bible is equally compelling, and the Catholic theological perspective in which and into which the imagery is developed is clear. The Castle is the Christian soul exploring and developing spiritually.

The nuptial imagery of love and marriage is an important component of the overall metaphorical scheme. The same argument applies: the initial origins of the imagery are not as important as the subsequent working and shaping of them within the Catholic tradition. Of course the Catholic tradition involves the reading and interpretation of the Bible. It has been shown that there is much nuptial imagery within various books of the



Bible. Together with the Bible there is Tradition, the teaching of the Church which is transmitted through the great historical Christian authors, as well as through bishops, priests and theologians contemporary with Teresa, and through the experience of daily monastic spirituality, its Liturgy and the Offices, in the Carmelite tradition. Teresa is therefore the recipient of a great deal of reflective thinking and theological commentary, in addition to the secular literary, social and philosophical traditions inherited by her era. However, her use of what she inherits is conditioned by her discipline of spiritual and ecclesial obedience to the authority of the Catholic Church. Teresa's experience of "oración" is the experience of the love of God, and the experience is expressed with the intellectual and mental outlook and imagery of the Catholic tradition. Woven and elaborated in such a way that it is saturated with Christological, redemptive theology and significance, the result is a metaphorical system that has created masterpieces of mystical writing.

There remains a great deal of further research yet to be done on the relationship between the language and imagery of the Bible and Teresa's writings. Such research will need, as has been done in this study, to take careful account of the way in which such biblical language and imagery are transmitted to Teresa through the filters, checks and balances of Catholic orthodoxy, via the Fathers and other great spiritual writers of the Catholic church, as well as through, sermons, the Liturgy and the Offices. It will also have to evaluate the importance of the non-Catholic, non-orthodox

influences which inevitably encroach into the mind and memory of even the most conservative and loyal daughter of the Church, including influences from secular society, literature and folklore, and also from the other major religious and philosophical traditions present in sixteenth century Europe generally, and in Spain in particular.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I Ad Corinthios 7ff

<sup>2</sup> I Ad Corinthios 7,9

<sup>3</sup> Daniel 7,9 ff

<sup>4</sup> The vernacular translation is given in *Imitación de Cristo*: "El Señor es mi luz y mi salud..." (*Imitación*, 3.7).

<sup>5</sup> Translated in *Imitación*: "Envía tu luz y tu verdad que vengan sobre mí, porque soy tierra vana y vacía hasta que tu me alumbrés..." (*Imitación* 3.27).

<sup>6</sup> Translated in *Imitación*: "...para guiar mis pasos, una candela, que es tu palabra." (*Imitación* 4.11).

<sup>7</sup> *Tercer Abecedario*, Tr. 2, c. 8. The story of the "burning, fiery furnace" is found in Daniel, chapter 3.

<sup>8</sup> The story of the Burning Bush is found in Exodus, chapter 3.

<sup>9</sup> 3 Regum 18, 19 ff.

<sup>10</sup> 4 Regum 2: "Cumque pergerent, et incendentes sermocinarentur, ecce currus igneus, et equi ignei diviserunt utrumque; et ascendit Elias per turbinem in caelum."; "And as they still went on and talked, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

<sup>11</sup> Ezekiel 18.32 is quoted in the *Instrucción de novicios* (181) and *Tratado de oración* (103).

<sup>12</sup> Hosea 2.14 is quoted in the *Instrucción de novicios* (92)

<sup>13</sup> San Bernardo, Sermón 83.4 *Opera Omnia*, edición cisterciense, 2 (1958) p. 300 ff

<sup>14</sup> For example, *Vida* 27.10 ... *Moradas* 4;1.12 ... 5;1.12 ... 5;2.12 ... 6;4.10 ... 6;7.9 ... *Camino de perfección* 26.3 ... (Poem) *Sobre aquellas palabras 'Dilectus meus mihi'*.

<sup>15</sup> Biblia Vulgata, Genesis 3,24

<sup>16</sup> Luís de Camões, *Os Lusíadas*, Imprensa Nacional de Lisboa, 1971 pp.305-306

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid* p 318

<sup>18</sup> *Cántico espiritual*, Canción 1. San Juan de la Cruz, *Obras Completas*, (Editorial de Espiritualidad, Madrid, 1980) p. 680

<sup>19</sup> This text is referred to in Osuna *Tercer abecedario* 10,5

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 695. San Juan de la Cruz began the commentary on the *Canticle* in 1578-79, and finished it in 1584.

<sup>21</sup> This Psalm is quoted by Teresa, and applied to herself: "¡O cuántas veces me acuerdo – cuando así estoy – de aquel verso de David, *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum*, que me parece lo veo al pie de la letra en mí!" (*Vida* 29.11). The vernacular translation was available to her from the *Tercer abecedario*: "Así como el ciervo desea ir a las fuentes de las aguas, así esta ánima desea ir a ti, Dios." (*Tercer abecedario* Tr. 11, c. 4).

<sup>22</sup> Job 6,4

<sup>23</sup> Job 20, 24-25

<sup>24</sup> Daniel 3, referred to in *Tercer abecedario*, Tr 2 c.8.

<sup>25</sup> Garcilaso de la Vega, *Poesías castellanas completas*, ed. Elias L. Rivers, (Clásicos Castalia, Madrid, 1969), p 121

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p119 ff

<sup>27</sup> Bernardino de Laredo, *Subida del Monte Sión, Místicos Franciscanos Españoles*, Tomo II, ed. Juan Bautista Gomís, BAC, (Madrid), 1947, Parte III, c.27, p. 371

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, p.373

<sup>29</sup> *De las homilias del Pseudo-Crisóstomo. Homilia 6 sobre la oración. Liturgia de las Horas según el rito romano, II p. 59.* (Coeditores litúrgicos, Barcelona, 1992).

<sup>30</sup> Job 23, 10. The book of Ezekiel has further examples:

Silver, copper, iron, lead and tin into a furnace to melt it (22,20)

Argenti, et aeris, et stanni, et ferri, et plumbi in medio fornacis, ut succendam in ea ignem ad conflandum

As silver is melted in the furnace (22,22)  
 Ut conflatur argentum in medio fornacis

So its impurities may be melted (24,11)  
 Et consumatur rubigo eius

<sup>31</sup> Covarrubias, Diccionario 308

<sup>32</sup> Covarrubias, Diccionario 308

<sup>33</sup> Luis de Camões, *Os Lusíadas*, Imprensa Nacional (Lisboa, 1971) p 347 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Ezechiel 8,2 ff

<sup>35</sup> There is a passing reference to 2 Corinthians 12 in *Imitación*, specifically to verse 5, "I will not boast, except of my weaknesses"; "En ti me glorificaré y ensalzaré todos los días; de mi parte no hay de qué, sino en mis flaquezas." (*Imitación* 3.45). Teresa may be making reference to 2 Corinthians 12, perhaps to verse 9, in her *Vida*: "... y así enviaba Su Majestad el esfuerzo, y le ponía en mi flaqueza." (*Vida* 35. 10).

<sup>36</sup> The sketch, thought to be drawn by San Juan, of the crucified Jesus seen from above, comes to mind. The picture is reproduced on the cover of San Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas*, Editorial de la Espiritualidad, (Madrid, 1980). The idea was later the inspiration for Salvador Dalí's "Crucifixion".

<sup>37</sup> NB *Vida* 21,5: "... mas llegada a Vos, subida en esta atalaya adonde se ven verdades..." NB also *Moradas* 4,3,2: "Dicen que el alma *se entra dentro de sí* y otras veces que *sube sobre sí*."

## APPENDIX I

Imagery in the Psalms with echoes in Teresa's writings: (in Psalm Order for reference)

He is like a tree planted by streams of water. (1,3)  
 Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum, (1,3)

The one enthroned in heaven (2,4)  
 Qui habitat in caelis(2,4)

Let the light of your face shine upon us o Lord (4,6)  
 Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine. (4,7)

O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony (6,2)  
 Sana me, Domine, quoniam conturbata sunt ossa mea (6,3)

I am worn out from groaning (6,6)  
 Laboravi in gemitu meo (6,7)

O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts (7,9)  
 Scrutans corda et renes, Deus iuste (7,10)

He makes ready his flaming arrows (7,13)  
 Sagittas suas ardentibus effecit (7,14)

A stronghold in times of trouble (9,9)  
 Adiutor in opportunitatibus, in tribulatione(9,10)

Flee like a bird to your mountain (11,1)  
 Transmigre in montem sicut passer (10,2)

The Lord is in his holy temple ; the Lord is on his heavenly throne. (11,4)  
 Dominus in templo sancto suo; dominus in caelo sedes eius (10,5)

Like silver refined in the furnace of clay, purified seven times (12,6)  
 Argentum igne examinatum, ... purgatum septuplum (11,7)

What is vile is honoured among men (12,8)  
 Cum se extollunt vilissimi hominum (11,9)

My heart rejoices in your salvation (13,5)  
 Exsultabit cor meum in salutari tuo (12,6)

God is present in the company of the righteous (14,5)  
 Dominus in generatione iusta est (13,6)

Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? (15,1)  
*Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo?* (14,1)

Apart from you I have no good thing (16,2)  
*Bonum mihi non est sin te* (15,2)

Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken (16,8)  
*Quoniam a dextris meis est, non commovebor* (15,8)

You will fill me with joy in your presence. (16,11)  
*Adimplebis me laetitia cum vultu tuo* (15,11)

Keep me as the apple of your eye, hide me in the shadow of your wings  
 (17,8)  
*Custodi me ut pupilam oculi. Sub umbra alarum tuarum protege me.* (16,8)

In righteousness I shall see your face (17,15)  
*Ego autem in iustitia apparebo conspectui tuo.* (16,15)

The Lord is my rock, my fortress (18,1)  
*Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum,* (17,3)

From his temple he heard my voice (18,6)  
*Exaudit de templo sancto suo vocem meam* (17,7)

He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind  
 (18,10)  
*Et ascendit super cherubim, et volavit; volavit super pennas ventorum*  
 (17,11)

Out of the brightness of his presence (18,12)  
*Prae fulgore in conspectu eius ...* (17,13)

He shot his arrows (18,14)  
*Et misit sagittas suas* (17,15)

You save the humble, but bring low those whose eyes are haughty (18,27)  
*Quoniam tu populum humilem salvum facies, et oculos superborum humiliabis* (17,28)

You...keep my lamp burning (18,28)  
*Tu illuminas lucernam meam* (17,29)

He is a shield for all who take refuge in him (18,30)  
*Protector est omnium sperantium in se* (17,31)

He makes my feet like the feet of a deer (18,33)  
 Qui perfecit pedes meos tanquam cervorum (17,34)

The heavens declare the glory of God (19,1)  
 Caeli enarrant gloriam Dei (18,1)

The sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion...  
 (19,5)  
 Et ipse tanquam sponsus procedens de thalamo suo (18,6)

The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes (19,8)  
 Praeceptum Domini lucidum, illuminans oculos (18,10)

The joy of your presence (21,6)  
 Laetificabis eum in gaudio cum vultu tuo (20,7)

You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear (21, 9)  
 Pones eos ut clibanum ignis in tempore vultus tui (20,10)

I am a worm and not a man (22,6)  
 Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo (21,7)

All my bones are out of joint (22,14)  
 Et dispersa sunt omnia ossa mea (21,15)

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters  
 (23,2)  
 In loco pascuae ibi me collocavit, super aquam refectionis educavit me  
 (22,2)

You prepare a table before me (23,5)  
 Parasti in conspectu meo mensam (22,5)

For he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers (24,2)  
 quia ipse super maria fundavit eum, et super flumina praeparavit eum (23,2)

who seek your face...(24,6)  
 quaerentium faciem dei Jacob (23,6)

King of glory (24,7)  
 Rex gloriae (23,7)

Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways (25,6)  
 Delicta iuventutis meae, et ignorantias meas ne memineris (24,7)

I am lonely and afflicted (25,16)  
 Quia unicus et pauper sum ego (24,16)

I love the house where you live, o Lord, the place where your glory dwells  
 (26,8)  
 Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae, et locum habitationis gloriae tuae  
 (25,8)

The Lord is my light (27,1)  
 Dominus illuminatio mea (26,1)

The Lord is the stronghold of my life (27,1)  
 Dominus protector vitae mea (26,1)

Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear (27,3)  
 Si consistant adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum (26,3)

To gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple (27,4)  
 Ut videam voluptatem Domini, et visitem templum eius (26,4)

He will keep me safe in his dwelling (27,5)  
 Protexit me in abscondito tabernaculi sui.(26,5)

I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (27,13)  
 Credo videre bona Domini in terra viventium (26,13)

... be strong and take heart, and wait for the Lord (27,14)  
 Expecta dominum, viriliter age, et confortetur cor tuum, et sustine  
 Dominum.(26,14)

The Lord is my strength and my shield (28,7)  
 Dominus adiutor meus et protector meus (27,7)

The Lord is the strength of his people (28,8)  
 Dominus fortitudo plebis suae (27,8)

The voice of the Lord is over the waters (29,3)  
 Vox Domini super aquas (28,3)

The Lord sits enthroned over the flood (29,10)  
 Dominus super diluvium sedet (28,10)

A strong fortress to save me (31,3)  
 Fortitudo mea et refugium meum es tu (30,4)



My strength fails, my bones grow weak (31,10)  
 Infirmata est in paupertate virtus mea; et ossa mea conturbata sunt.(30,11)

Be strong and take heart (31,24)  
 Viriliter agite, et confortetur cor vestrum (30,25)

O taste and see that the Lord is good (34,8)  
 Gustate, et videte quoniam suavis est Dominus (33,9)

...humbled myself with fasting (35,13)  
 humiliabam in ieiunio animam meam (34,13)

refuge in the shadow of your wings (36,7)  
 in tegmine alarum tuarum (35,8)

You give them drink from your river of delights (36,8)  
 Et torrente voluptatis tuae potabis eos (35,9)

For with you is the fountain of life (36,9)  
 Quoniam apud te est fons vitae (35,10)

The meek will inherit the land (37,11)  
 Mansueti haereditabant terram (36,11)

Better the little the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked (37,16)  
 Melius est modicum iusto, super divitias peccatorum multas (36,16)

The law of his God is in his heart (37,31)  
 Lex Dei eius in corde ipsius (36,31)

He is their stronghold in time of trouble (37,39)  
 Protector eorum in tempore tribulationis (36,39)

Your arrows have pierced me (38,2)  
 Sagittae tuae infixae sunt mihi (37,2)

My wounds fester and are loathsome (38,5)  
 Putruerunt et corruptae sunt cicatrices meae (37,6)

My loins are filled with burning (38,7)  
 Lumbi mei pleni sunt inflammatione (37,8)

My heart grew hot within me, and as I meditated, the fire burned (39,3)  
 Concaluit cor meum intra me; et in meditatione mea exardescet ignis (38,4)

Each man's life is but a breath (39,5)  
 Ut halitus tantum pertransit homo (38,6)

Man bustles about ... heaps up wealth and knows not who will gather  
 (39,6)  
 Sed et frustra conturbatur, thesaurizat et ignorat cui congregabit ea (38,7)

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire (40,2)  
 Et eduxit me de lacu miseriae et de luto faccis (39,3)

Your law is within my heart (40,8)  
 Et legem tuam in medio cordis mei (39,9)

As the deer pants for streams of water so my soul pants for you, o God  
 (42,1)  
 Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima  
 mea ad te, Deus (41,1)

My soul thirsts for God (42,2)  
 Sitivit anima mea ad Deum (41,3)

As with a deadly wound in my body (42,10)  
 Dum confringuntur ossa mea (41,11)

Deep calls to deep in the roar of the waterfalls, all your waves and breakers  
 have swept over me (42,7)  
 Abyssus abyssum invocat, in voce cataractum tuarum, omnia excelsa tua, et  
 fluctus tui super me transierunt (41,8)

You are God my stronghold (43,2)  
 Deus, fortitudo mea (42,2)

Send forth your light and your truth ... let them bring me to your holy  
 mountain  
 Emitte lucem tuam, et veritatem tuam; ipsa me deduxerunt, et adduxerunt in  
 montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua (42,3)

The light of your face (44,3)  
 Illuminatio vultus tui (43,4)

He knows the secrets of the heart (44,21)  
 Ipse enim novit abscondita cordis (43,22)

Truth, humility and righteousness (45,4)  
*Veritatem, et mansuetudinem, et iustitiam* (44,5)

All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia (45,8)  
*Myrrha, et aloe, et casia fragrant vestimenta tua* (44,9)

Out of the ivory palaces (45,8)  
*Ex aedibus eburneis* (44,9)

King's daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand  
 did stand the queen in gold of Ophir (45,9)  
*Filiae regum obviam veniunt tibi, Regina adstat ad dexteram tuam ornata  
 auro ex Ophir* (44,10)

So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty (45,11)  
*Et concupiscet rex pulchritudinem tuam* (44,12)

There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the  
 holy place of the tabernacles of the most high (46,4)  
*Fluminis rivuli laetificant civitatem Dei, Sanctissimum tabernaculum  
 Altissimi* (45,5)

The God of Jacob is our refuge (46,7)  
*Praesidium nobis est Deus Iacob* (45,8)

For the Lord most High is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth  
 (47,2)  
*Quoniam Dominus excelsus, terribilis, Rex magnus super omnem terram*  
 (46,3)

God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness (47,8)  
*Deus sedet super sedem sanctam suam* (46,9)

God is known in her palaces for a refuge (48,3)  
*Deus in arcibus eius ses probavit munimen tutum.* (47,4)

Tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces  
 (48,13)  
*Numerate turres eius. Considerate propugnacula eius, percurrite arces eius*  
 (47,13)

For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person  
 perish, and leave their wealth to others (49,10)  
*Videbit enim mori sapientes, pariter interire insipientem et stultum,  
 relinquere alienis divitias suas* (48,11)

Man ... is like the beasts that perish (49,20)  
 Homo... similis est pecudibus quae pereunt. (48,21)

For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away (49,17)  
 Neque enim, cum morietur, quidquam tollet secum (48,18)

God shines forth (50,2)  
 Deus affulsit (49,2)

A fire devours before him (50,3)  
 Ignis consumens praecedit eum (49,3)

You teach me wisdom in the inmost place (51,6)  
 In praecordiis sapientiam me doces (50,8)

Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow (51,7)  
 Lava me, et super nivem dealbabor (50,9)

Create in me a pure heart, O God (51,10)  
 Cor mundum crea mihi, Deus (50,12)

I am like an olive tree (52,8)  
 Ego autem sicut oliva virens in domo Dei (51,10)

Oh that I had the wings of a dove, I would fly away (55,6)  
 O si habcrem pennas sicut columba, avolarem et quiescerem (54,7)

I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings (57,1)  
 Et in umbra alarum tuarum sperabo (56,2)

You, O God, are my fortress, my loving God. (59,9)  
 Deus, susceptor meus es (58,10)

You have given us wine that makes us stagger (60,3)  
 Potasti nos vino inebrianti (59,5)

You have been my refuge, a strong tower (61,3)  
 Quia praesidium es mihi, turris fortis (60,4)

I long to take refuge... in the shelter of your wings (61,4)  
 Confugiam sub tegmen alarum tuarum (60,5)

My soul finds rest in God alone (62,1)  
In Deum tantum quiescit anima mea (61,2)

He is my fortress (62,2)  
Praesidium meum (61,3)

Though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them (62,10)  
Opibus, si crescant, ne adhaeseritis corde (61,11)

Earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land, where there is no water. (63,1)  
Sollicite te quaero; te sinit anima mea, desiderat te caro mea, ut terra arida et sitiens, sine aqua (62,2)

I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and glory (63,2)  
Sic in sanctuario contempler te, ut videam potentiam tuam et gloriam tuam (62,3)

My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods (63,5)  
Sicut adipe et pinguedine repleatur anima mea (62,6)

I sing in the shadow of your wings (63,7)  
Et in umbra alarum tuarum exulto (62,8)

We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple (65,4)  
Satiemur bonis domus tuacae, sanctitate templi tui (64,5)

You care for the land and water it, you enrich it abundantly (65,9)  
Visitasti terram et irrigasti eam, multum locupletasti eam (64,10)

The streams of God are filled with water, you enrich it abundantly (65,9)  
Flumen Dei repletum est aquis, parasti cibum illorum (64,9)

You drench its furrows ... you soften it with showers (65,10)  
Sulcos eius irrigasti ... imbribus eam molliasti (64,11)

The hills are clothed with gladness (65,12)  
Et colles exultatione se cingunt (64,13)

You refined us like silver (66,10)  
Igne nos examinasti, sicut examinatur argentum (65,10)

We went through fire and water (66,12)  
Transivimus per ignem et aquam (65,12)

As smoke is blown in the wind ... as wax melts before the fire (68,2)  
*Sicut deficit fumus ... sicut fluit cera a facie ignis* (67,3)

Extol him who rides on the clouds (68,4)  
*Iter facite ei qui ascendit super occasum* (67,5)

The rebellious live in a sun-scorched land (68,6)  
*Rebelles tantum degunt in torrida terra* (67,7)

The heavens poured down rain (68,8)  
*Caeli stillarunt* (67,9)

You gave abundant showers, o God, you refreshed your weary inheritance  
 (68,9)  
*Pluviam copiosam demisisti, Deus, in hereditatem tuam* (67,10)

The wings of my dove are sheathed with silver, its feathers with shining  
 gold (68,13)  
*Alae columbae nitebant argento, et pennae eius flavore auri* (67,14)

...him who rides the ancient skies above (68,33)  
*...qui vehitur per caelos, caelos antiquos* (67,34)

... whose power is in the skies (68,34)  
*...potentia eius in nubibus* (67,35)

I sink in the miry depths ... I have come into deep waters, the floods engulf  
 me (69,2)  
*Immersus sum in limo profundi ... veni in altum aquarum, et fluctus  
 obruunt me* (68,3)

My throat is parched (69,3)  
*Raucae factae sunt fauces meae* (68,4)

Do not let.... the pit close its mouth over me (69,15)  
*Neve occludat super me puteus os suum* (68,16)

You are my rock and my fortress (71,3)  
*Esto mihi petra refugii, arx munita*

He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth  
 (72,6)  
*Descendet ut pluvia super gramen, sicut imbres qui irrigant terram* (71,6)

I was a brute beast before you (73,22)

Ut iumentum factus sum apud te (72,23)

Afterwards you will take me into your glory (73,24)  
Et cum gloria suscepisti me (72,24)

Being with you, I desire nothing on earth (73,25)  
Et a te quid volui super terram? (72,25)

God is the strength of my heart (73,26)  
Deus cordis mei, et pars mei (72,26)

You O God are my King from of old (74,12)  
Deus autem rex noster ante saecula (73,12)

It was you who opened up springs and streams (74,15)  
Tu dirupisti fontes et torrentes, tu siccasti fluvios (74,15)

Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts (74,19)  
Ne tradideris vulturi vitam tuturis tuo (75,19)

You are resplendent with light, more majestic than mountains (76,4)  
Illuminans tu mirabiliter a montibus aeternis (75,5)

The clouds poured down water (77,17)  
Viderunt te aquae, Deus (76,17)

Thy way was through the sea, thy path through great waters (77,19)  
In mare via tua, et semitae tuae in aquis multis (76,20)

Make your face shine upon us (80,3)  
Et ostende faciem tuam (79,4)

A fire consumes the forest, or a flame sets the mountains ablaze (83,14)  
Sicut ignis qui comburit silvam, et sicut flamma comburens montes  
(82,15)

How lovely is your dwelling place (84, 1)  
Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine (83,2)

My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord (84,2)  
Concupiscit, et deficit anima mea in atria Domini (83,3)

The sparrow... the swallow (84,3)  
Passer... turtur... (83,4)

Blessed are those who dwell in your house (84,4)

Beati qui habitant in domo tua (83,5)

They make it a place of springs, the autumn rains also cover it with pools  
(84,6)

Fontem faciem eam, ac benedictionibus vestiet eam pluvia prima (83,7)

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God (84,10)

Elegi abiectus esse in domo Dei mei (83,11)

The Lord God is a sun and shield (84,11)

Nam sol et clipeus est Dominus (83,12)

All my fountains are in you (87,7)

Omnes fontes mei sunt in te (86,7)

He is more awesome than all who surround him (89,7)

Magnus et terribilis super omnes qui in circuitu eius sunt (88,8)

You have been our dwelling place (90,1)

Refugium factus es nobis (89,1)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the  
Almighty (91,1)

Qui degis in praesidio Altissimi, qui sub umbra Omnipotentis commoraris  
(90,1)

¡cuán venturosa es el alma que merece de estar debajo de esta sombra aun  
para cosas que se pueden acá ver! (*Cantares* 5,3)

"...estar toda engolfada y amparada con una sombra y manera de nube de la  
divinidad..." (*Cantares* 5,4)

"...en esta sombra de la Divinidad (que bien dice sombra, porque con  
claridad no la podemos acá ver, sino debajo de este nube..." (*Cantares* 5,4)

He is my refuge and my fortress (91,2)

Refugium meum et arx mea (90,2)

He will cover you with feathers and under his wings you will find refuge  
(91,4)

Pennis suis proteget te, et sub alas eius confugies (90,4)

If you make the Most high your dwelling (91,9)

Altissimum posuisti refugium tuum (90,9)

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree (92,12)

Iustus ut palma florebit (92,13)

You are from all eternity (93,2)



A saecula tu es (92,2)

Holiness adorns your house (93,5)  
Domum tuam decet sanctitudo (92,5)

The Lord knows the thoughts of man (94,11)  
Dominus scit cogitationes hominum (93,11)

We are the people of his pasture (95,7)  
Et nos populus pascuae eius (94,7)

Splendour and majesty are before him (96,6)  
Maestas et decor praecedunt eum (95,6)

Clouds and thick darkness surround him (97,2)  
Nubes et caligo in circuitu eis (96,2)

Fire goes before him (97,3)  
Ignis ante ipsum praecedet (96,3)

The mountains melt like wax (97,5)  
Montes sicut cera fluxerunt (96,5)

Light is shed upon the righteous and joy in the upright in heart (97,11)  
Lux orta est iusto, et rectis corde lactitia (96,11)

He sits enthroned between the cherubim (99,1)  
Qui sedet super cherubim (98,1)

The Lord our God is holy (99,9)  
Sanctus Dominus Deus noster (98,9)

Whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, him will I not endure (101,5)  
Superbo oculo, et insatiabili corde, cum hoc non edebam (100,5)

My days vanish like smoke (102,3)  
Defecerunt sicut fumus dies mei (101,4)

My bones burn like glowing embers (102,3)  
Et ossa mea ut ignis ardent (101,4)

I have become like a bird alone on the housetops (102,7)  
Factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto (101,8)

Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy Name (103,1)

Benedic, anima mea, Domino, et omnia intra me sunt nomini sancto eius.  
(102,1)

Your youth is renewed like the eagle's (103,5)  
Renovabitur ut aquilae iuventus tua (102,5)

As for man, his days are like grass (103,15)  
Homo, sicut foenum dies eius (102,15)

You are clothed with splendour and majesty (104,1)  
Maiestatem et decorem indutus es (103,1)

He wraps himself in light as with a garment (104,2)  
Amictus lumine sicut vestimento (103,2)

He ... rides on the wings of the wind (104,3)  
Qui ambulat super pennas ventorum (103,3)

Flames of fire, his servants (104,4)  
Et ministros tuos ignem ardentem (103,4)

He makes springs pour water into the ravines (104,10)  
Qui emittis fontes in convallibus (103,10)

The birds of the air nest by the waters (104,12)  
Super ea volucres caeli habitabunt (103,12)

He waters the mountains (104,13)  
Rigans montes de superioribus suis (103,13)

The trees of the Lord are well-watered (104,16)  
Saturantur arbores Domini (103,16)

When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust (104,29)  
Auferes spiritum eorum, et deficient, et in pulverem suum revertentur  
(103,29)

When you send your Spirit, they are created and you renew the face of the  
earth (104,30)  
Emittes spiritum tuum, et creabuntur; et renovabis faciem terrae (103,30)

Seek his face always (105,4)  
Quaerite faciem eius semper (104,4)

He spread out a cloud as a covering (105,39)

Expandit nubem in protectionem eorum (104,39)

He opened the rock and water gushed out, like a river it flowed in the desert (105,41)

Dirupit petram, et fluxerunt aquae, abierunt in sicco flumina (104,41)

He satisfies the thirsty (107,9)

Quia satiavit animam inanem (106,9)

He turned the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into flowing springs (107,35)

Posuit desertum in stagna aquarum, et terram sine aqua in exitus aquarum (106,35)

My heart is wounded within me (109,22)

Et cor meum sauciatus est in me (108,22)

He will drink from a brook beside the way (110,7)

De torrente in via bibet (109,7)

The one who sits enthroned on high (113,5)

Deus noster, qui in altis habitat (112,5)

Who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of water (114,8)

Qui convertit petram in stagna aquarum, et rupem in fontes aquarum (113,8)

The Lord protects the simple hearted (116,6)

Custodiens parvulos Dominus (114,6)

I will lift up the cup of salvation (116,13)

Calicem salutaris accipiam (115,13)

It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man (118,8)

Bonum est confidere in Domino, quam confidere in homine (117,8)

They swarmed around me like bees, but they died out as quickly as burning thorns (118,12)

Circumdederunt me sicut apes, et exarserunt sicut ignis in spinis (117,12)

The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation (118,14)

Fortitudo mea et laus mea Dominus, et factus est mihi in salutem (117,14)

The Lord is God, and he has made his light shine upon us (118,27)  
Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis (117,26)

And seek him with all their heart (119,2)  
In toto corde exquirunt eum (118,2)

I seek you with all my heart (119,10)  
In toto corde meo exquisivi te (118,10)

You rebuke the arrogant (119,21)  
Incepisti superbos (118,21)

When thou shalt enlarge my heart (119,32)  
Cum dilatasti cor meum (118,32)

Renew my life in your righteousness (119,40)  
In acquitate tua vivifica me (118,40)

I have sought your face with all my heart (119,58)  
Deprecatus sum faciem tuam in toto corde meo (118,58)

The earth is filled with your mercy (119,64)  
Misericordia tua, domine, plena est terra (118,64)

The law... is more precious... than silver and gold (119,72)  
Bonum mihi lex oris tui super millia auri et argenti (118,72)

My soul faints with longing (119,81)  
Deficit desiderio auxilii tui anima mea (118,81)

How sweet are your promises to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth  
(119,103)  
Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua! Super mel ori meo. (118,103)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path (119,105)  
Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum, et lumen semitis meis (118,105)

I stand in awe of your laws (119,120)  
A judiciis tuis timui (118,120)

I open my mouth and pant, longing for your commands (119,131)  
Os meum aperui, et attraxi spiritum, quia mandata tua desiderabam  
(118,131)

Make your face shine upon your servant (119,135)  
Faciem tuam illumina super servum tuum (118,135)

I lift up my eyes to the hills (121,1)  
 Levavi oculos meos in montes (120,1)

Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem (122,2)  
 Stantes erant pedes nostri in atriis tuis, Ierusalem (121,2)

You whose throne is in heaven (123,1)  
 Qui habitas in caelis (122,1)

Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers (124,7)  
 Anima nostra sicut passer erepta est de laqueo venantium (123,7)

With you there is forgiveness (130,4)  
 Quia apud te propitiatio est (129,4)

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits (130,5)  
 Speravit anima mea in Domino (129,5)

My heart is not proud, O Lord (131,1)  
 Domine, non est exaltatum cor meum (130,1)

I have stilled my quieted soul (131,2)  
 Composui et pacavi animam meam (130,2)

Like a weaned child is my soul within me (131,2)  
 Sicut parvulus in gremio matris suae (130,2)

By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept (137,1)  
 Super flumina Babylonis illic sedimus et flevimus (136,1)

Though the Lord is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he  
 knows from afar (138,6)  
 Quoniam excelsus Dominus, et humilia respicit, et alta a longe cognoscit  
 (137,6)

O Lord you have searched me, and you know me (139,1)  
 Domine probasti me, et cognovisti me (138,1)

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I go from your presence?  
(139,7)

Quo ibo a spiritu tuo? Et quo a facie tua fugiam? (138,7)

If I rise on the wings of the dawn (139,12)

Si summam pennas aurorae (138,9)

Darkness is a light with you (139,12)

Quia tenebrae non obscurabuntur a te (138,12)

My soul thirsts for you like a parched land (143,6)

Anima mea sicut terra sine aqua tibi (142,6)

My spirit faints with longing (143,7)

Defecit spiritus meus (142,7)

He is my loving God, my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer (144,2)

Misericordia mea, et refugium meum, susceptor meus, et liberator meus  
(143, 2)

Our sons... will be like well-nurtured plants (144,12)

Quorum filii sicut novellae plantationes (143,12)

The glorious splendour of your majesty (145,5)

Magnificentiam gloriae sanctitatis tuae (144,5)

The glory of your kingdom (145,11)

Gloriam regni tui (144,11)

His understanding has no limits (147,5)

Et sapientiae eius non est numerus (147,5)

The Lord sustains the humble (147,6)

Suscipiens mansuetos Dominus (147,6)

He supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills (147, 8)

Qui operit caelum nubibus, et parat terrae pluvium, qui producit in  
montibus foenum (146,8)

He crowns the humble with salvation (149,4)

Exaltabit mansuetos in salutem (149,4)

## APPENDIX II

Imagery in the Psalms with echoes in Teresa's writings (classified by images used).

### Water imagery

He is like a tree planted by streams of water. (1,3)  
Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum,

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters (22,2)  
In loco pascuae ibi me collocavit, super aquam refectiois educavit me

For he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers (24,2)  
quia ipse super maria fundavit eum, et super flumina praeparavit eum (23,2)

The voice of the Lord is over the waters (29,3)  
Vox Domini super aquas (28,3)

The Lord sits enthroned over the flood (29,10)  
Dominus super diluvium sedet (28,10)

You give them drink from your river of delights (36,8)  
Et torrente voluptatis tuae potabis eos (35,9)

For with you is the fountain of life (36,9)  
Quoniam apud te est fons vitae (35,10)

My soul thirsts for God (42,2)  
Sitivit anima mea ad Deum (41,3)

Deep calls to deep in the roar of the waterfalls, all your waves and breakers have swept over me (42,7)  
Abyssus abyssum invocavit, in voce cataractum tuarum, omnia excelsa tua, et fluctus tui super me transierunt (41,8)

There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high (46,4)  
Fluminis rivuli laetificant civitatem Dei, Sanctissimum tabernaculum Altissimi (45,5)

Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow (51,7)  
Lava me, et super nivem dealbabor (50,9)

Earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land, where there is no water. (63,1)

Sollicite te quacro; te sinit anima mea, desiderat te caro mea, ut terra arida et  
siliens, sine aqua (62,2)

The streams of God are filled with water, you enrich it abundantly (65,9)  
Flumen Dei repletum est aquis, parasti cibum illorum (64,9)

You drench its furrows ... you soften it with showers (65,10)  
Sulcos eius irrigasti ... imbribus eam mollisti (64,11)

We went through fire and water (66,12)  
Transivimus per ignem et aquam (65,12)

Extol him who rides on the clouds (68,4)  
Iter facite ei qui ascendit super occasum (67,5)

The heavens poured down rain (68,8)  
Caeli stillarunt (67,9)

You gave abundant showers, o God, you refreshed your weary inheritance (68,9)  
Pluviam copiosam demisisti, Deus, in hereditatem tuam (67,10)

I sink in the miry depths ... I have come into deep waters, the floods engulf me  
(69,2)  
Immersus sum in limo profundi ... veni in altum aquarum, et fluctus obruunt  
me (68,3)

My throat is parched (69,3)  
Raucae factae sunt fauces meae (68,4)

He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth  
(72,6)  
Descendet ut pluvia super gramen, sicut imbres qui irrigant terram (71,6)

It was you who opened up springs and streams (74,15)  
Tu dirupisti fontes et torrentes, tu siccasti fluvios (74,15)

The clouds poured down water (77,17)  
Viderunt te aquae, Deus (76,17)

Thy way was through the sea, thy path through great waters (77,19)  
In mare via tua, et semitae tuae in aquis multis (76,20)

They make it a place of springs, the autumn rains also cover it with pools (84,6)  
Fontem faciem eam, ac benedictionibus vestiet eam pluvia prima (83,7)



All my fountains are in you (87,7)  
 Omnes fontes mei sunt in te (86,7)

He makes springs pour water into the ravines (104,10)  
 Qui emittis fontes in convallibus (103,10)

He waters the mountains (104,13)  
 Rigans montes de superioribus suis (103,13)

The trees of the Lord are well-watered (104,16)  
 Saturantur arbores Domini (103,16)

He satisfies the thirsty (107,9)  
 Quia satiavit animam inanem (106,9)

He turned the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into flowing  
 springs (107,35)  
 Posuit desertum in stagna aquarum, et terram sine aqua in exitus aquarum  
 (106,35)

He will drink from a brook beside the way (110,7)  
 De torrente in via bibet (109,7)

Who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of water (114,8)  
 Qui convertit petram in stagna aquarum, et rupem in fontes aquarum (113,8)

By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept (137,1)  
 Super flumina Babylonis illic sedimus et flevimus (136,1)

My soul thirsts for you like a parched land (143,6)  
 Anima mea sicut terra sine aqua tibi (142,6)

He supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills (147, 8)  
 Qui operit caelum nubibus, et parat terrae pluvium, qui producit in montibus  
 foenum (146,8)

#### Castle Imagery

The one enthroned in heaven (2,4)  
 Qui habitat in caelis(2,4)

A stronghold in times of trouble (9,9)  
 Adiutor in opportunitatibus, in tribulatione(9,10)

The Lord is in his holy temple ; the Lord is on his heavenly throne. (11,4)  
 Dominus in templo sancto suo; dominus in caelo sedes eius (10,5)

Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? (15,1)  
 Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo? (14,1)

The Lord is my rock, my fortress (18,1)  
 Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum, (17,3)

From his temple he heard my voice (18,6)  
 Exaudit de templo sancto suo vocem meam (17,7)

He is a shield for all who take refuge in him (18,30)  
 Protector est omnium sperantium in se (17,31)

I love the house where you live, o Lord, the place where your glory dwells (26,8)  
 Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae, et locum habitationis gloriae tuae (25,8)

The Lord is the stronghold of my life (27,1)  
 Dominus protector vitae mea (26,1)

Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear (27,3)  
 Si consistant adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum (26,3)

To gaze upon the beauty of the lord and to seek him in his temple (27,4)  
 Ut videam voluptatem Domini, et visitem templum eius (26,4)

He will keep me safe in his dwelling (27,5)  
 Protexit me in abscondito tabernaculi sui. (26,5)

The Lord is my strength and my shield (28,7)  
 Dominus adiutor meus et protector meus (27,7)

The Lord is the strength of his people (28,8)  
 Dominus fortitudo plebis suae (27,8)

A strong fortress to save me (31,3)  
 Fortitudo mea et refugium meum es tu (30,4)

He is their stronghold in time of trouble (37,39)  
 Protector eorum in tempore tribulationis (36,39)

You are God my stronghold (43,2)  
 Deus, fortitudo mea (42,2)

Out of the ivory palaces (45,8)  
 Ex aedibus eburneis (44,9)

Tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces (48,13)  
 Numerate turres eius. Considerate propugnacula eius, percurrite arces eius  
 (47,13)

You, O God, are my fortress, my loving God. (59,9)  
 Deus, susceptor meus es (58,10)

You have been my refuge, a strong tower (61,3)  
 Quia praesidium es mihi, turris fortis (60,4)

He is my fortress (62,2)  
 Praesidium meum (61,3)

I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and glory (63,2)  
 Sic in sanctuario contemplant te, ut videam potentiam tuam et gloriam tuam  
 (62,3)

We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple (65,4)  
 Satiemur bonis domus tuae, sanctitate templi tui (64,5)

You are my rock and my fortress (71,3)  
 Esto mihi petra refugii, arx munita

How lovely is your dwelling place (84, 1)  
 Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine (83,2)

Blessed are those who dwell in your house (84,4)  
 Beati qui habitant in domo tua (83,5)

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God (84,10)  
 Elegi abiectus esse in domo Dei mei (83,11)

You have been our dwelling place (90,1)  
 Refugium factus es nobis (89,1)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the  
 Almighty (91,1)  
 Qui degit in praesidio Altissimi, qui sub umbra Omnipotentis commoratur (90,1)

He is my refuge and my fortress (91,2)  
 Refugium meum et arx mea (90,2)

Holiness adorns your house (93,5)  
 Domum tuam decet sanctitudo (92,5)

Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem (122,2)  
 Stantes erant pedes nostri in atriis tuis, Ierusalem (121,2)

You whose throne is in heaven (123,1)  
 Qui habitas in caelis (122,1)

He is my loving God, my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer (144,2)  
 Misericordia mea, et refugium meum, susceptor meus, et liberator meus (143, 2)

#### Angels & arrows

He makes ready his flaming arrows (7,13)  
 Sagittas suas ardentibus effecit (7,14)

He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind (18,10)  
 Et ascenit super cherubim, et volavit; volavit super pennas ventorum (17,11)

He shot his arrows (18,14)  
 Et misit sagittas suas (17,15)

Your arrows have pierced me (38,2)  
 Sagittae tuae infixae sunt mihi (37,2)

He sits enthroned between the cherubim (99,1)  
 Qui sedet super cherubim (98,1)

Flames of fire, his servants (104,4)  
 Et ministros tuos ignem ardentem (103,4)

#### Flight

Flee like a bird to your mountain (11,1)  
 Transmigre in montem sicut passer (10,2)

Keep me as the apple of your eye, hide me in the shadow of your wings (17,8)  
 Custodi me ut pupilam oculi. Sub umbra alarum tuarum protégé me. (16,8)

He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind (18,10)  
 Et ascenit super cherubim, et volavit; volavit super pennas ventorum (17,11)

refuge in the shadow of your wings (36,7)  
 in tegmine alarum tuarum (35,8)

Oh that I had the wings of a dove, I would fly away (55,6)  
 O si haberem pennas sicut columba, avolarem et quiescerem (54,7)

I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings (57,1)  
 Et in umbra alarum tuarum sperabo (56,2)

I long to take refuge... in the shelter of your wings (61,4)  
 Confugiam sub tegmen alarum tuarum (60,5)

I sing in the shadow of your wings (63,7)  
 Et in umbra alarum tuarum exulto (62,8)

Extol him who rides on the clouds (68,4)  
 Iter facite ei qui ascendit super occasum (67,5)

The wings of my dove are sheathed with silver, its feathers with shining gold (68,13)  
 Alae columbae nitebant argento, et pennae eius flavore auri (67,14)

...him who rides the ancient skies above (68,33)  
 ...qui vehitur per caelos, caelos antiquos (67,34)

... whose power is in the skies (68,34)  
 ...potentia eius in nubibus (67,35)

The sparrow... the swallow (84,3)  
 Passer... turtur... (83,4)

He will cover you with feathers and under his wings you will find refuge (91,4)  
 Pennis suis proteget te, et sub alas eius confugies (90,4)

I have become like a bird alone on the housetops (102,7)  
 Factus sum sicut nycticorax in domicilio (101,7)

Your youth is renewed like the eagle's (103,5)  
 Renovabitur ut aquilae iuventus tua (102,5)

He ... rides on the wings of the wind (104,3)  
 Qui ambulat super pennas ventorum (103,3)

The birds of the air nest by the waters (104,12)  
 Super ea volucres caeli habitabunt (103,12)

The one who sits enthroned on high (113,5)  
 Deus noster, qui in altis habitat (112,5)

They swarmed around me like bees, but they died out as quickly as burning thorns (118,12)  
 Circumdederunt me sicut apes, et exarserunt sicut ignis in spinis (117,12)

If I rise on the wings of the dawn (139,12)  
 Si summam pennas aurorae (138,9)

### Fire, Heat & Light

Let the light of your face shine upon us o Lord (4,6)  
 Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine. (4,7)

Out of the brightness of his presence (18,12)  
 Prae fulgore in conspectu eius ...(17,13)

You...keep my lamp burning (18,28)  
 Tu illuminas lucernam meam (17,29)

The sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion... (19,5)  
 Et ipse tanquam sponsus procedens de thalamo suo (18,6)

The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes (19,8)  
 Praeceptum Domini lucidum, illuminans oculos (18,10)

You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear (21, 9)  
 Pones eos ut clibanum ignis in tempore vultus tui (20,10)

The lord is my light (27,1)  
 Dominus illuminatio mea (26,1)

My loins are filled with burning (38,7)  
 Lumbi mei pleni sunt inflammatione (37,8)

My heart grew hot within me, and as I meditated, the fire burned (39,3)  
 Concaluit cor meum intra me; et in meditatione mea exardescet ignis (38,4)

Send forth your light and your truth ... let them bring me to your holy mountain  
 Emitte lucem tuam, et veritatem tuam; ipsa me deduxerunt, et adduxerunt in  
 montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua (42,3)

The light of your face (44,3)  
 Illuminatio vultus tui (43,4)

God shines forth (50,2)  
 Deus affulsit (49,2)

A fire devours before him (50,3)  
 Ignis consumens praecedit eum (49,3)

We went through fire and water (66,12)  
Transivimus per ignem et aquam (65,12)

The rebellious live in a sun-scorched land (68,6)  
Rebelles tantum degunt in torrida terra (67,7)

The wings of my dove are sheathed with silver, its feathers with shining gold (68,13)  
Alae columbae nitebant argento, et pennae eius flavore auri (67,14)

You are resplendent with light, more majestic than mountains (76,4)  
Illuminans tu mirabiliter a montibus aeternis (75,5)

Make your face shine upon us (80,3)  
Et ostende faciem tuam (79,4)

A fire consumes the forest, or a flame sets the mountains ablaze (83,14)  
Sicut ignis qui comburit silvam, et sicut flamma comburens montes (82,15)

The Lord God is a sun and shield (84,11)  
Nam sol et clipeus est Dominus (83,12)

Fire goes before him (97,3)  
Ignis ante ipsum praecedet (96,3)

The mountains melt like wax (97,5)  
Montes sicut cera fluxerunt (96,5)

Light is shed upon the righteous and joy in the upright in heart (97,11)  
Lux orta est iusto, et rectis corde laetitia (96,11)

My bones burn like glowing embers (102,3)  
Et ossa mea ut ignis ardent (101,4)

He wraps himself in light as with a garment (104,2)  
Amictus lumine sicut vestimento (103,2)

Flames of fire, his servants (104,4)  
Et ministros tuos ignem ardentem (103,4)

They swarmed around me like bees, but they died out as quickly as burning thorns (118,12)  
Circumdederunt me sicut apes, et exarserunt sicut ignis in spinis (117,12)

The lord is God, and he has made his light shine upon us (118,27)  
Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis (117,26)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path (119,105)  
 Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum, et lumen semitis meis (118,105)

Make your face shine upon your servant (119,135)  
 Faciem tuam illumina super servum tuum (118,135)

Darkness is a light with you (139,12)  
 Quia tenebrae non obscurabuntur a te (138,12)

### Love & Marriage

The sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion... (19,5)  
 Et ipse tanquam sponsus procedens de thalamo suo (18,6)

The joy of your presence (21,6)  
 Lactificabis eum in gaudio cum vultu tuo (20,7)

To gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple (27,4)  
 Ut videam voluptatem Domini, et visitem templum eius (26,4)

As the deer pants for streams of water so my soul pants for you, o God (42,1)  
 Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus (41,1)

My soul thirsts for God (42,2)  
 Sitivit anima mea ad Deum (41,3)

So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty (45,11)  
 Et concupiscet rex pulchritudinem tuam (44,12)

Earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land, where there is no water. (63,1)  
 Sollicite te quacro; te silit anima mea, desiderat te caro mea, ut terra arida et sitiens, sine aqua (62,2)

Being with you, I desire nothing on earth (73,25)  
 Et a te quid volui super terram? (72,25)

I seek you with all my heart (119,10)  
 In toto corde meo exquisivi te (118,10)

I have sought your face with all my heart (119,58)  
 Deprecatus sum faciem tuam in toto corde meo (118,58)



My soul faints with longing (119,81)  
Deficit desiderio auxilii tui anima mea (118,81)

How sweet are your promises to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth  
(119,103)  
Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua! Super mel ori meo. (118,103)

My soul thirsts for you like a parched land (143,6)  
Anima mea sicut terra sine aqua tibi (142,6)

My spirit faints with longing (143,7)  
Defecit spiritus meus (142,7)

#### Crucible, refining silver or gold

Like silver refined in the furnace of clay, purified seven times (12,6)  
Argentum igne examinatum, ... purgatum septuplum (11,7)

You refined us like silver (66,10)  
Igne nos examinasti, sicut examinatur argentum (65,10)

#### Deer & wounding

O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony (6,2)  
Sana me, Domine, quoniam conturbata sunt ossa mea (6,3)

I am worn out from groaning (6,6)  
Laboravi in gemitu meo (6,7)

He makes my feet like the feet of a deer (18,33)  
Qui perfecit pedes meos tanquam cervorum (17,34)

All my bones are out of joint (22,14)  
Et dispersa sunt omnia ossa mea (21,15)

I am lonely and afflicted (25,16)  
Quia unicus et pauper sum ego (24,16)

My strength fails, my bones grow weak (31,10)  
Infirmata est in paupertate virtus mea; et ossa mea conturbata sunt. (30,11)

My loins are filled with burning (38,7)  
Lumbi mei pleni sunt inflammatione (37,8)

As the deer pants for streams of water so my soul pants for you, o God (42,1)  
 Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus (41,1)

As with a deadly wound in my body (42,10)  
 Dum confringuntur ossa mea (41,11)

My heart is wounded within me (109,22)  
 Et cor meum sauciatum est in me (108,22)

#### Wine & Banquet

You prepare a table before me (23,5)  
 Parasti in conspectu meo mensam (22,5)

O taste and see that the Lord is good (34,8)  
 Gustate, et videte quoniam suavis est Dominus (33,9)

You have given us wine that makes us stagger (60,3)  
 Potasti nos vino inebrianti (59,5)

My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods (63,5)  
 Sicut adipe et pinguedine repleatur anima mea (62,6)

We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple (65,4)  
 Satiemur bonis domus tuae, sanctitate templi tui (64,5)

How sweet are your promises to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth (119,103)  
 Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua! Super mel ori meo. (118,103)

## Appendix III

Imagery in the book Ezekiel with echoes in Teresa's writings

I saw visions of God (1,1)

Vidi visiones Dei

An immense cloud with flashing lightening and surrounded by brilliant light (1,4)

Et nubes magna, et ignis involvens, et splendor in circuitu eius

The centre of the fire looked like glowing metal (1,4)

Et de medio eius, quasi species electri, id est, de medio ignis

Gleamed like burnished bronze (1,7)

Et scintillae quasi aspectus aeris candentis

Their wings were spread out upwards (1,11)

Pennae eorum extentae desuper

Like burning coals of fire or like torches (1,13)

Aspectus eorum quasi carbonum ignis ardentium, et quasi aspectus lampadarum

Fire moved back and forth (1,13)

Splendor ignis, et de igne fulgur egrediens

They sparkled like chrysolite (1,16)

Et aspectus rotarum et opus earum quasi visio maris

Sparkling like ice and awesome (1,22)

Quasi aspectus crystalli horribilis

I heard the sound of their wings, like the roar of rushing waters (1,24)

Et audiebam sonum alarum, quasi sonum aquarum multarum

Throne of sapphire (1,26)

Quasi aspectus lapidis saphiri similitudo throni

He looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire ... brilliant light surround him (1,27)

Et vidi quasi speciem electri, velut aspectum ignis ... ignis splendentis in circuitu

Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him (1,28)

Velut aspectum arcus cum fuerit in nube in die pluviae

The appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord (1,28)

Haec visio similitudinis gloriae Domini (2,1)

It tasted as sweet as honey (3,3)

Factum est in ore meo sicut mel dulce

The hardest stone, harder than flint (3,9)

Ut adamantem et ut silicem

A loud rushing sound (3,13)

Et vocem commotionis magnae

The glory of the Lord was standing there (3,23)

Et ibi gloria Domini stabat

Their silver and gold will not be able to save them in the day of the Lord's wrath (7,19)

Argentum eorum, et aurum eorum, non valebit liberare eos in die furoris Domini

I will put an end to the pride of the mighty (7,24)

Et quiescere faciam superbiam potentium

The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven (8,3)

Et elevavit me spiritus inter terram et caelum

There before me was the glory of the God of Israel (8,4)

Et ecce ibi gloria Dei Israel

I saw a hole in the wall ... I dug into the wall... I saw ... crawling things ... detestable animals (8,8)

Et ecce foramen unum in pariete... Et cum fodissem parietem... et ingressus vidi, et ecce omnis similitudo reptilium et animalium, abominatio...

In the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims ... a stone of sapphire (10,1)

In firmamento quod erat super caput cherubim, quasi lapis sapphirus

Burning coals from among the cherubim (10,2)

Prunis ignis quae sunt inter cherubim

The glory of the Lord rose from above the cherubim (10,4)  
Et elevata est gloria Domini desuper cherub

The cloud filled the temple and the court was full of the radiance of the glory of the Lord (10,4)  
Et repleta est domus nube, et atrium repletum est splendore gloriae Domini

The sound of the wings ... like the voice of God (10,5)  
Et sonitus alarum cherubim ... quasi vox Dei

The wheels sparkled like chrysolite (10,9)  
Species rotarum erat quasi visio lapidis chrysolithi

The cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground (10,19)  
Et elevantia cherubim alas suas, exaltata sunt a terra coram me

I realised that they were cherubim (10,20)  
Et intellexi quia cherubim essent

The Spirit lifted me up (11,24)  
Et spiritus levavit me

The fire burns both ends and chars the middle (15,4)  
Utramque partem eius consumpsit ignis, et medietas eius redacta est in favillam

Although they have come out of the fire, the fire will yet consume them (15,7)  
De igne egredientur, et ignis consumet eos

I made you grow like a plant of the field (16,7)  
Multiplicatam quasi germen agri dedi te

I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love (16,8)

Your breasts were formed ... you were naked (16,7)  
Pervenisti ad mundum muliebrem, ubera tua intumuerunt... et cras nuda

You were insatiable (16,28)  
Nec sic es satiata

A great eagle with powerful wings (17,3)  
Aquila grandis magnarum alarum

... fertile soil. He planted it ...by abundant water (17,5)

et tulit de semine terrae, et posuit illud in terra pro semine ... super aquas multas

... good soil by abundant water (17,8)  
in terra bona super aquas multas

Birds of every kind will nest in it (17,23)  
Et universum volatile sub umbra frondium eius nidificabit

Make you a new heart and a new spirit (18,31)  
Et facite vobis cor novum, et spiritum novum

Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, planted by the water; it was fruitful and full of branches because of abundant water (19,10)  
Mater tua quasi vinea in sanguine tuo super aquam plantata est; fructus eius et frondes eius creverunt ex aquis multis

Fire consumed them (19,12)  
Ignis comedit eam

... desert, in a dry and thirsty land (19,13)  
in desertum, in terra invia et sitiendi

Fire spread from one of its main branches and consumed its fruit (19,14)  
Et egressus est ignis de virga ramorum eius, qui fructum eius comedit

A land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands (20,6)  
In terram quam provideram eis, fluentem lacte et melle, quae est egregia inter omnes terras

The blazing flame will not be quenched (20,47)  
Non extinguetur flamma succensionis

You will be fuel for the fire (21,32)  
Igni erit cibus

Silver, copper, iron, lead and tin into a furnace to melt it (22,20)  
Argenti, et aeris, et stanni, et ferri, et plumbi in medio fornacis, ut succendam in ea ignem ad conflandum

As silver is melted in the furnace (22,22)  
Ut conflatur argentum in medio fornacis

You are a land that has had no rain or showers (22,24)

Tu es terra immunda, et non compluta in die furoris

Your bosom was caressed and your young breasts fondled (23,21)  
Quando subacta sunt ...ubera tua, et confractae sunt mammae pubertatis  
tuae

So its impurities may be melted (24,11)  
Et consumatur rubigo eius

Because of your wealth your heart has grown proud (28,5)  
Et elevatum est cor tuum in robore tuo

You were Eden, the garden of God, every precious stone adorned you  
(28,13)  
In deliciis paradisi Dei fuisti, omnis lapis pretiosus operimentum tuum

You were anointed as a guardian cherub (28,14)  
Tu cherub extentus, et protegens

You walked among the fiery stones (28,14)  
In medio lapidum ignitorum ambulasti

Your heart became proud on account of your beauty (28,17)  
Et elevatum est cor tuum in decore tuo

The waters nourished it (Assyria), deep springs made it grow tall, their  
streams flowed all around its base and sent their channels to all the trees of  
the field (31,4)  
Aquae nutrierunt illum; abyssus exaltavit illum; flumina eius manabant in  
circuitu radicum eius, et rivos suos emisit ad universa ligna regionis.

Spreading because of abundant waters (31,5)  
Et elevati sunt rami eius prae aquis multis

The cedars in the garden of God could not rival it (31,8)  
Cedri non fuerunt altiores illo in paradiso Dei

No tree in the garden of God could match its beauty (31,8)  
Omne lignum paradisi Dei non est assimilatum illi

The envy of all the trees of Eden in the garden of God (31,9)  
Et aemulata sunt eum omnia ligna voluptatis, quae erant in paradiso Dei

I held back its streams and its abundant waters were restrained (31,15)

Et prohibui flumina eius, et coercui aquas multas

All the trees were well-watered (31,16)

Universa quae irrigabantur aquis

The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops (34,27)

Et dabit lignum agri fructum suum, et terra dabit germen suum

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean (36,25)

Et effundam super vos aquam mundam, et mundabimini ab omnibus iniquamentis vestris

In visions of God he took me... (40,2)

In visionibus Dei adduxit me...

I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze (40,3)

Et ecce vir cuius erat species quasi species aeris

*Reference to the East Gate/Outer Court (40,6)*

Et venit ad portam quae respiciebat viam orientalem

I saw some rooms that had been constructed all round the court (40,17)

Et ecce gazophylacia, et pavimentum stratum lapide in atrio per circuitum; triginta gazophylacia in circuitu pavimenti

*Reference to the North Gate (40,20)*

*Reference to the South Gate (40,24)*

*Reference to the Inner Court (40,28)*

*Reference to rooms for the priests (40,45)*

*Reference to the Outer and Inner Sanctuaries (41,1)*

The side rooms were on three levels one above another, thirty on each level (41,6)

Latera autem, latus ad latus, bis triginta tria; et erant eminentia, quae ingrederentur per parietem domus, in lateribus per circuitum

The place is holy (42,13)

Haec sunt gazophylacia sancta

... to separate the holy from the common (42,20)

dividentem inter sanctuarium et vulgi locum

I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east (43,2)



Et ecce gloria Dei Israel ingrediebatur, per viam orientalem

His voice was like the roar of rushing waters and the land was radiant with his glory (43,2)

Et vox erat ei quasi vox aquarum multarum et terra splendebat a maiestate eius

Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. (43,5)

Et elevavit me spiritus, et introduxit me in atrium interius; et ecce repleta erat gloria Domini domus

Describe the temple ... let them consider the plan ... make known to them then design of the temple ... its arrangement, its exits and entrances (43,10)  
Ostende domui Israel templum ... figuram domus et fabricae eius, exitus et introitus

The gate is to remain shut (44,2)

Porta haec clausa erit; non aperietur

I looked and saw the glory of the Lord filling the temple (44,4)

Et vidi, et ecce implevit gloria Domini domum Domini

They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table (44,16)

Ipsi ingredientur sanctuarium meum, et ipsi accedent ad mensam meam

Then the man brought me through the entrance at the side of the gate, which belonged to the priests... (46,19)

Et introduxit me per ingressum qui erat ex latere portae, in gazophylacia sanctuarii ad sacerdotes

In the four corners of the outer court were enclosed courts (46,22)

In quatuor angulis atrii atriola disposita

I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple towards the east (47,1)

Et ecce aquae egrediabantur subter limen domus ad orientem

*Reference to the River from the temple 47,1 ff*

I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river (47,7)

Ecce in ripa torrentis ligna multa nimis ex utraque parte

Where the river flows, everything will live (47,9)

Et omnis anima vivens, quae serpit quocumque venerit torrens, vivet

Every month they will bear fruit because the water from the sanctuary flows to them (47,12)

Per singulos menses afferet primitiva, quia aquae eius de sanctuario egredientur

## Appendix IV

## Imagery in the Book of Ezekiel (classified by images used)

Crucified between heaven and earth

The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven (8,3)  
Et elevavit me spiritus inter terram et caelum

The Spirit lifted me up (11,24)  
Et spiritus levavit me

Hell (See Teresa's vision of hell, *Vida* 32)

I saw a hole in the wall ... I dug into the wall... I saw ... crawling things ... detestable animals (8,8)  
Et ecce foramen unum in pariete... Et cum fodissem parietem... et ingressus vidi, et ecce omnis similitudo reptilium et animalium, abominatio...

Garden and Water

I made you grow like a plant of the field (16,7)  
Multiplicatam quasi germen agri dedi te

... fertile soil. He planted it ...by abundant water (17,5)  
et tulit de semine terrae, et posuit illud in terra pro semine ... super aquas multas

... good soil by abundant water (17,8)  
in terra bona super aquas multas

Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, planted by the water; it was fruitful and full of branches because of abundant water (19,10)  
Mater tua quasi vinea in sanguine tuo super aquam plantata est; fructus eius et frondes eius creverunt ex aquis multis

... desert, in a dry and thirsty land (19,13)  
in desertum, in terra invia et sitiendi

A land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands (20,6)  
In terram quam provideram eis, fluentem lacte et melle, quae est egregia inter omnes terras

You are a land that has had no rain or showers (22,24)  
 Tu es terra immunda, et non compluta in die furoris

You were Eden, the garden of God, every precious stone adorned  
 you (28,13)  
 In deliciis paradisi Dei fuisti, omnis lapis pretiosus operimentum  
 tuum

The waters nourished it (Assyria), deep springs made it grow tall,  
 their streams flowed all around its base and sent their channels to  
 all the trees of the field (31,4)  
 Aquae nutrierunt illum; abyssus exaltavit illum; flumina eius  
 manabant in circuitu radicum eius, et rivos suos emisit ad universa  
 ligna regionis.

Spreading because of abundant waters (31,5)  
 Et elevati sunt rami eius prae aquis multis

The cedars in the garden of God could not rival it (31,8)  
 Cedri non fuerunt altiores illo in paradiso Dei

No tree in the garden of God could match its beauty (31,8)  
 Omne lignum paradisi Dei non est assimilatam illi

The envy of all the trees of Eden in the garden of God (31,9)  
 Et aemulata sunt eum omnia ligna voluptatis. quae erant in  
 paradiso Dei

I held back its streams and its abundant waters were restrained  
 (31,15)  
 Et prohibui flumina eius, et coercui aquas multas

All the trees were well-watered (31,16)  
 Universa quae irrigabantur aquis

The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the ground will yield  
 its crops (34,27)  
 Et dabit lignum agri fructum suum, et terra dabit germen suum

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean (36,25)  
 Et effundam super vos aquam mundam, et mundabimini ab  
 omnibus iniquamentis vestris

I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple  
 towards the east (47,1)  
 Et ecce aquae egrediebantur subter limen domus ad orientem

*Reference to the River from the temple 47,1 ff*

I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river (47,7)  
 Ecce in ripa torrentis ligna multa nimis ex utraque parte

Where the river flows, everything will live (47,9)  
 Et omnis anima vivens, quae serp̄it quocumque venerit torrens,  
 vivet

Every month they will bear fruit because the water from the  
 sanctuary flows to them (47,12)  
 Per singulos menses afferet primitiva, quia aquae eius de  
 sanctuario egredientur

Castle

The cloud filled the temple and the court was full of the radiance  
 of the glory of the Lord (10,4)  
 Et repleta est domus nube, et atrium repletum est splendore gloriae  
 Domini

*Reference to the East Gate/Outer Court (40,6)*  
 Et venit ad portam quae respiciebat viam orientalem

I saw some rooms that had been constructed all round the court  
 (40,17)  
 Et ecce gazophylacia, et pavimentum stratum lapide in atrio per  
 circuitum; triginta gazophylacia in circuitu pavimenti

Reference to the North Gate (40,20)

*Reference to the South Gate (40,24)*

*Reference to the Inner Court (40,28)*

*Reference to rooms for the priests (40,45)*

*Reference to the Outer and Inner Sanctuaries (41,1)*

The side rooms were on three levels one above another, thirty on  
 each level (41,6)

Latera autem, latus ad latus, bis triginta tria; et erant eminentia,  
 quae ingrederentur per parietem domus, in lateribus per circuitum

The place is holy (42,13)  
 Haec sunt gazophylacia sancta

... to separate the holy from the common (42,20)

dividentem inter sanctuarium et vulgi locum

I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east (43,2)  
Et ecce gloria Dei Israel ingrediebatur, per viam orientalem

His voice was like the roar of rushing waters and the land was  
radiant with his glory (43,2)  
Et vox erat ei quasi vox aquarum multarum et terra splendebat a  
maiestate eius

Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court  
and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. (43,5)  
Et elevavit me spiritus, et introduxit me in atrium interius; et ecce  
repleta erat gloria Domini domus

Describe the temple ...let them consider the plan ... make known  
to them then design of the temple ... its arrangement, its exits and  
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Ostende domui Israel templum ... figuram domus et fabricae eius,  
exitus et introitus

The gate is to remain shut (44,2)  
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They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my  
table (44,16)  
Ipsi ingredientur sanctuarium meum, et ipsi accedent ad mensam  
meam

Then the man brought me through the entrance at the side of the  
gate, which belonged to the priests... (46,19)  
Et introduxit me per ingressum qui erat ex latere portae, in  
gazophylacia sanctuarii ad sacerdotes

In the four corners of the outer court were enclosed courts (46,22)  
In quatuor angulis atrii atriola disposita

#### Angels Arrows

The glory of the Lord rose from above the cherubim (10,4)  
Et elevata est gloria Domini desuper cherub

The cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground (10,19)  
Et eleuantia cherubim alas suas, exaltata sunt a terra coram me

I realised that they were cherubim (10,20)  
Et intellexi quia cherubim essent

You were anointed as a guardian cherub (28,14)  
Tu cherub extentus, et protegens

#### Flight

Their wings were spread out upwards (1,11)  
Pennae eorum extentae desuper

I heard the sound of their wings, like the roar of rushing waters (1,24)  
Et audiebam sonum alarum, quasi sonum aquarum multarum

In the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims ... a stone of sapphire (10,1)  
In firmamento quod erat super caput cherubim, quasi lapis sapphirus

Burning coals from among the cherubim (10,2)  
Prunis ignis quae sunt inter cherubim

The sound of the wings ... like the voice of God (10,5)  
Et sonitus alarum cherubim ... quasi vox Dei

A great eagle with powerful wings (17,3)  
Aquila grandis magnarum alarum

Birds of every kind will nest in it (17,23)  
Et universum volatile sub umbra frondium eius nidificabit

#### Fire Heat Light

An immense cloud with flashing lightening and surrounded by brilliant light (1,4)  
Et nubes magna, et ignis involvens, et splendor in circuitu eius

The centre of the fire looked like glowing metal (1,4)  
Et de medio eius, quasi species electri, id est, de medio ignis

Gleamed like burnished bronze (1,7)

Et scintillae quasi aspectus aeris candentis

Like burning coals of fire or like torches (1,13)

Aspectus eorum quasi carbonum ignis ardentium, et quasi aspectus  
lampadarum

Fire moved back and forth (1,13)

Splendor ignis, et de igne fulgur egrediens

They sparkled like chrysolite (1,16)

Et aspectus rotarum et opus earum quasi visio maris

Sparkling like ice and awesome (1,22)

Quasi aspectus crystalli horribilis

Throne of sapphire (1,26)

Quasi aspectus lapidis saphiri similitudo throni

He looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire ... brilliant light  
surround him (1,27)

Et vidi quasi speciem electri, velut aspectum ignis ... ignis  
splendentis in circuitu

Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so  
was the radiance around him (1,28)

Velut aspectum arcus cum fuerit in nube in die pluviae

The appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord (1,28)

Haec visio similitudinis gloriae Domini (2,1)

The glory of the Lord was standing there (3,23)

Et ibi gloria Domini stabat

There before me was the glory of the God of Israel (8,4)

Et ecce ibi gloria Dei Israel

The wheels sparkled like chrysolite (10,9)

Species rotarum erat quasi visio lapidis chrysolithi

The fire burns both ends and chars the middle (15,4)

Utramque partem eius consumpsit ignis, et medietas eius redacta  
est in favillam



Although they have come out of the fire, the fire will yet consume them (15,7)

De igne egredientur, et ignis consumet eos

Fire consumed them (19,12)

Ignis comedit eam

Fire spread from one of its main branches and consumed its fruit (19,14)

Et egressus est ignis de virga ramorum eius, qui fructum eius comedit

The blazing flame will not be quenched (20,47)

Non extinguetur flamma succensionis

You will be fuel for the fire (21,32)

Igni crit cibus

You walked among the fiery stones (28,14)

In medio lapidum ignitorum ambulasti

#### Love Marriage

I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love (16,8)

Your breasts were formed ... you were naked (16,7)

Pervenisti ad mundum muliebrem, ubera tua intumuerunt... et eras nuda

You were insatiable (16,28)

Nec sic es satiata

Your bosom was caressed and your young breasts fondled (23,21)

Quando subacta sunt ... ubera tua, et contractae sunt mammae pubertatis tuae

#### Crucible

Silver, copper, iron, lead and tin into a furnace to melt it (22,20)

Argenti, et aeris, et stanni, et ferri, et plumbi in medio fornacis, ut succendam in ea ignem ad conflandum

As silver is melted in the furnace (22,22)

Ut conflat argentum in medio fornacis

So its impurities may be melted (24,11)  
Et consumatur rubigo eius

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