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ARTÍCULOS

¿Fue Jesús el Mesías esperado? Pues no y sí

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Resumen: Este artículo aborda cómo Jesús acabó siendo considerado mesías cuando su actuación y enseñanza no se corresponden con las expectativas que se pueden recuperar de los textos en los que encontramos definida a esta figura. El judaísmo del segundo templo fue extremadamente complejo y convivían diferentes expectativas escatológicas, una de las cuales fue la esperanza en un mesías. La dificultad surge al tratar de perfilar una imagen definida del mesías, dada la escasez y disparidad de las fuentes. El proceso, por el que Jesús llegó a ser considerado el mesías, parte de cómo la causa de la condena como "rey de los judíos" fue interpretada desde su resurrección como confesión de fe: "Jesús es el mesías", aunque para ello sus discípulos tuvieron que reelaborar el significado del término mesías.

Palabras Clave: Jesús, Mesías, judaísmo, Cristología, Rey de los judíos, Escatología.

Was Jesus The Expected Messiah? No and Yes

Abstract: This article discusses how Jesus came to be regarded as a messiah when his actions and teaching do not correspond to the expectations that can be retrieved from the texts in which we find this figure defined. Second Temple Judaism was extremely complex and different eschatological expectations coexisted, one of which was the hope for a messiah. The difficulty arises in trying to outline a

definite image of the messiah, given the paucity and disparity of sources. The process by which Jesus came to be regarded as the messiah starts from how the cause of his condemnation as "king of the Jews" was interpreted from his resurrection as a confession of faith: "Jesus is the messiah", although to do so his disciples had to rework the meaning of the term Messiah.

Key Words: Jesus, Messiah, Judaism, Christology, King of the Jews, Eschatology.

I. LA PREGUNTA

¿Fue Jesús el mesías esperado? Pues no y sí. La respuesta es doble y requiere explicación. Por un lado Jesús no fue el mesías esperado por los judíos de su tiempo (mesías[esct]), porque la imagen que presentan los evangelios de Jesús no responde a esas expectativas mesiánicas[1]. Y por otro lado sí fue el mesías esperado, eso sí, solo para sus discípulos, aunque para ello tuvieron que reelaborar el contenido de este título en profundidad (mesías[crist]). Vamos a desarrollar esta paradoja[2].

II. EL MESÍAS ESPERADO

Jesús no fue el mesías esperado según la imagen del mesías que podemos recuperar del siglo I CE (mesías[esct]) por varias razones. Primera, la esperanza en un mesías[esct] futuro no aparece en el AT. Segunda, no somos capaces de restablecer una imagen coherente de esta expectativa en el siglo I CE, porque las fuentes son escasas y porque estas fuentes no coin-

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[1] Este artículo despliega una notación específica para referirse a los diferentes significados de la palabra *māšîᵃh*, mesías. Se trata de una palabra polisémica que fue adquiriendo distintos significados a lo largo del tiempo (widening): ungido (mesías[ung]), rey (mesías[rey]), mesías escatológico (mesías[esct]) y mesías "cristiano" (mesías[crist]). Solo en su contexto es posible identificar cuál de estos significados cristaliza para ese enunciado concreto en el que aparece la palabra.

[2] Un repaso al estado de la investigación sobre el mesías en D. HAMIDOVIC, «Messianism» en *Oxford bibliographies*. Oxford: OUP, 2023 y S. LUCASS, *The concept of the Messiah in the scriptures of Judaism and Christianity*, T&T Clark, London 2011, 4-18.

ciden en sus rasgos. Tercera, no somos capaces de saber cuánto de esperado era este mesías[esct]. Cuarta, ese mesías[esct] que se esperaba era imaginado en muchos casos como rey, guerrero, vencedor… es decir, no coincide con los rasgos que reflejan los evangelios de Jesús[3]. A continuación, desarrollamos estos aspectos.

1. La palabra *māšîᵃh* en el AT

Lo primero a destacar es que la expectativa judía de un mesías[esct], es decir un personaje escatológico que cambiará el curso de la realidad de Israel y que sería un rey de la dinastía davídica (que es la imagen más cercana a la que aparece en el NT y una de las posibles[4]) no aparece como tal en el AT[5]. Es decir, aunque la palabra hebrea מָשִׁיחַ *māšîᵃh* (mesías) aparece 39x en el AT, no tiene el significado de mesías[esct], sino solamente el de "ungido"[6] (mesías[ung]). La palabra *māšîᵃh* es un adjetivo aplicado al rey la gran mayoría de las veces (Sal 2,7), tres veces al sumo sacerdote (Lev 4,3), dos a los profetas (1 Cron 16,22) y una vez a Ciro (Is 45,1).

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[3] Para Collins, Jesús no encaja en el típico perfil del mesías davídico, dado que su sufrimiento, muerte y el ser proclamado como Hijo de Dios son novedosos en el judaísmo. J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls (ed.)*, Doubleday, New York ²2010, 19 y 229.

[4] Para Horsley no se puede hablar de un mesías escatológico, es decir en el sentido de los eventos finales de la historia. Prefiere hablar de agentes salvíficos. Critica que se proyectan elementos cristianos sobre los textos del judaísmo. R. A. HORSLEY, "'Messianic' Figures and Movements in First-Century Palestine", en J. H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.) *The Messiah: developments in earliest Judaism and Christianity*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1992, 276-295, 277.

[5] "En cuanto a la expectación mesiánica, faltan en el AT los conceptos de *māšāḥ* y *māšîᵃh*". F. HAHN, "Χριστός", en H. BALZ – G. SCHNEIDER (eds.), *EDNT* vol. 2, Sígueme, Salamanca 1998, 2118-2142, 2122.

[6] S. MOWINCKEL, *He that cometh: The messiah concept in the old testament and later Judaism*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 2005, 4. La palabra *māšîᵃh* aparece como adjetivo y posteriormente como sustantivo que se forma como participio pasivo (forma nominal *qatil* con significado en voz pasiva). Acontece 39 veces en el AT, pero ninguna con el sentido de figura escatológica. Los mesías del AT son figuras del presente. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, "Esperanzas mesiánicas en los escritos de Qumrán", en F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – J. TREBOLLE BARRERA (eds.), *Los hombres de Qumrán: literatura, estructura social y concepciones religiosas*, Trotta, Madrid 1993, 187-224, 189.

Texto	Morfología	Significante	Significado	Referente	Explicación
1 Sam 2,10	sustantivo	*māšîᵃh*	Ungido	Rey	Remite a la unción como ritual.
Sal 2,2	sustantivo	*māšîᵃh*	Ungido	Rey	Remite a la unción como ritual.
Lev 4,5	adjetivo	*māšîᵃh*	Ungido	Sacerdote	Evoca la elección de Dios para una misión.
1 Cro 16,22	sustantivo	*māšîᵃh*	Ungido	Profeta	Evoca la elección de Dios para una misión.
Sal 105,15	sustantivo	*māšîᵃh*	Ungido	Profeta	Evoca la elección de Dios para una misión.
Is 45,1	sustantivo	*māšîᵃh*	Ungido	Ciro	Agente de Dios que media su salvación.

Así en Sal 2,2 y 1 Sam 2,10 el significante *māšîᵃh* significa ungido y se usa como referente para señalar al rey[7]. En este contexto la palabra evoca al ritual de la unción. En Lev 4,5 el mismo significante *māšîᵃh* significa ungido, pero ahora apunta, señala o caracteriza al sumo sacerdote. En Is 45,1 *māšîᵃh* vuelve a significar ungido y se utiliza para referirse a Ciro, evocando que ha sido elegido como un agente que media la salvación que trae Dios.

La palabra mesías[ung] evoca la elección de una persona para una misión en favor del pueblo y en el caso del rey sería el equivalente a la coronación[8]. La palabra "ungido" evoca en este sentido un relato: Dios, a través de un profeta, manifiesta su elección de una persona para una mi-

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[7] Muchos de los errores al tratar el tema del mesías proceden de una falta de claridad semántica, dado que no se distingue entre: 1) el significante, 2) el concepto o significado y 3) el referente al que apunta. Cfr. C. K. OGDEN – I. A. RICHARDS, *The meaning of meaning: a study of the influence of language upon thought and of the science of symbolism*, Harcourt, Brace & World, New York [7]1945, 11. N. RIEMER, *Introducing semantics*, CUP, Cambridge 2010, 16. Schreiber realiza un acertada definición de los términos semánticos denotación, significado y referencia, que luego aplica en su estudio del mesías. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König: Titel und Konzeptionen der königlichen Gesalbtenerwartung in frühjüdischen und urchristlichen Schriften*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2000, 23-27.

[8] "La unción real se convirtió muy pronto en un acto sagrado en el marco del acontecimiento de la entronización, que se realizaba en un lugar sagrado ante Yahvé". K. H. RENGSTORF, "χριστός", en L. COENEN – E. BEYREUTHER – H. BIETENHARD (eds.), *Diccionario teológico del Nuevo Testamento II*, Sígueme, Salamanca [3]1990, 381-388, 303.

sión en favor del pueblo, y se materializa con la unción con aceite de la persona. El aceite hace su rostro resplandeciente y lleno de vida, de energía, signo de la presencia del Espíritu en la persona, que ahora debe desarrollar una tarea en favor del pueblo. Esta acción de elección hace referencia fundamentalmente a la ceremonia de "coronación" del rey, un rito que desapareció seguramente antes del destierro babiblónico.

No tiene por tanto la palabra *māšîᵃh* en el AT esa connotación de mesías salvador futuro (mesías[esct])[9]. La palabra se aplica en la mayoría de ocasiones al rey[10], lo que llevará por metonimia a que en muchos casos su significado sea el de rey (mesías[rey]).

Son otros textos que aparecen en el AT (2 Sam 7,12; Is 11,2; Jer 23,5-6), en los que no aparece la palabra *māšîᵃh* y que en muchos casos sostienen la esperanza en la promesa davídica[11], los que suscitarán en los siglos II BCE-I CE nuevas interpretaciones en circunstancias históricas complejas[12], y que harán que la palabra *māšîᵃh* se llene de un nuevo significado para designar al mesías salvador (mesías[esct]). Este mesías[esct] sería "una figura humana real que trae liberación al pueblo de Israel, paz y prosperidad"[13]. Para Collins la palabra "mesías" se refiere como mínimo a una

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[9] "Le Messie n'est pas dans la Bible hébraïque" en M. Hadas-Lebel, "Les débuts de l'idée messianique", en D. Hamidović (ed.) *Aux origines des messianismes juifs*, Brill, Leiden 2013, 93-100, 93-94.

[10] M. De Jonge, "Messiah", en D. N. Freedman (ed.) *ABD* vol. 4, Doubleday, New York 1992, 777-787, 787.

[11] M. V. Novenson, *Christ among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism*, OUP, New York 2012, 58. Cfr. la importancia de 2 Sam 7 en el desarrollo de la esperanza mesiánica en S. Schreiber, *Gesalbter und König*, 537.

[12] Cfr. la tabla donde se presentan los textos bíblicos y las circunstancias históricas en las que se vieron interpretadas en G. S. Oegema, *Der Gesalbte und sein Volk Untersuchungen zum Konzeptualisierungsprozeß der messianischen Erwartungen von den Makkabaërn bis Bar Koziba*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1994, 291-296. Para Oegema y Stuckenbruck, todos los textos mesiánicos son el producto de reinterpretación de textos de la Escritura a la luz de la experiencia de sus autores. Cfr. M. V. Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism: An Ancient Jewish Political Idiom and its Users*, OUP, New York 2017, 184.

[13] J. A. Fitzmyer, *The One who is to come*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, 181. L. L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period. Vol. 4. The Jews under the Roman Shadow (4 BCE–150 CE)*, T&T Clark, London 2021, 272. Para Oegema: "Un mesías es una figura sacerdotal, real o de otro tipo que desempeña un papel liberador en el final de los tiempos". G. S. Oegema, *The anointed and his people: messianic*

figura que juega un papel autorizado en el final de los tiempos, normalmente el rey escatológico[14].

2. Fuentes

Las fuentes literarias (que son las únicas que disponemos) para recomponer esta imagen fragmentada del mesías[esct] son algunos documentos del siglo I BCE como los textos de Qumran, SalSol 17-18, *Las Parábolas de Enoch* (1 Enoch 37-71); y de alrededor del año 70 CE los apócrifos 4 Esd y 2 Bar, escritos después de la destrucción del Templo[15]. Para un conjunto de autores, como Charlesworth, Fitzmyer, De Jonge o Collins, ni los textos samaritanos, ni Filón (*Conf.* 14.62-64 y *Praem.* 29.162-165), ni Josefo (*Guerra* 6.312-313), ni la Mishnah (m.Ber. 1.5 y m.Sota 9.15), ni el Talmud (b. Sanh. 96b–99a), ni los targumes permiten acceder al mesías. Charlesworth y De Jonge no aceptan como textos que se puedan utilizar para recomponer una imagen de lo que significaba la palabra mesías en los siglos I BCE-I CE *Los Testamentos de los doce patriarcas, Jubileos, Asunción de Moisés, Antigüedades de Pseudo Filón, Oráculos Sibilinos* y *3 Baruch*. Son

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expectations from the Maccabees to Bar Kochba, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield 1998, 24. Novenson señala que las definiciones varían en cada estudioso. M. V. NOVENSON, *The Grammar of Messianism*, 26. Un análisis de estas definiciones del mesías en A. CHESTER, *Messiah and exaltation: Jewish messianic and visionary traditions and New Testament Christology*, WUNT 207, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2007, 193-205.

[14] Para Collins, mesías como término escatológico se puede referir a varios tipos de figuras: rey, profeta, sacerdote, y mesías celestial J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star*[2], 17. No así para Brown para quien "el término Mesías, con mayúscula, es un concepto preciso que se reserva para el rey ungido de la dinastía de David, que establecería en el mundo el reino definitivo querido por Dios para Israel … el mesianismo, tal como lo estudiaremos aquí, supone la liberación otorgada en el marco de una institución, la monarquía". R. E. BROWN, *Introducción a la Cristología del Nuevo Testamento*, Sígueme, Salamanca 2001, 173.

[15] El proceso de redacción de 4 Esd y 2 Bar fue complejo, absorbieron materiales anteriores y en la etapa anterior a la redacción final se vieron influidos el uno por el otro, como demuestran los múltiples paralelos entre las dos obras. M. HENZE, "4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: Literary Composition and Oral Performance in First-Century Apocalyptic Literature", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131:1 (2012) 181–200, 197-199. Cfr. los diferentes estudios en M. HENZE – G. BOCCACCINI (eds.), *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: reconstruction after the fall* (Leiden 2013).

textos en los que no aparece el mesías o han sido interpolados por los cristianos[16].

En algunos textos de Qumran, SalSol 17-18, 1 Enoch 37-71, 4 Esd y 2 Bar se han interpretado textos del AT donde no aparecía la palabra mesías (2 Sam 7,12; Dn 7,9-14; Gn 49,10; Num 24,17, etc.) para elaborar una imagen del mesías escatológico (mesías[esct]) desde las circunstancias concretas que estaban viviendo los autores[17]. La dificultad para recuperar una imagen coherente del mesías[esct] surge de que los mismos textos del AT sufrieron diferentes interpretaciones, lo cual es señal de que estas expectativas no eran uniformes, ni las interpretaciones unívocas[18].

En la siguiente tabla se puede comprobar cómo los textos del AT suscitaron nuevas interpretaciones mesiánicas en nuevos contextos.

Texto	Interpretación
Gn 49,10	Gn 49,10[LXX]; 4Q252 fr 1,1 = 4QpGen
Num 24,7	Filón, *Praem* 95 [Claudio]; Filón *Vita Moses* 290 [rey mesías como Moisés]; 1QSb 2,22-5,29

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[16] J. H. CHARLESWORTH, "From Messianology to Christology: Problems and Prospects", en *The Messiah: developments in earliest Judaism and Christianity*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1992, 3-35, 14-16. M. DE JONGE, "Messiah", 782-787.

[17] Collins subraya que existían textos del AT con promesas davídicas, pero no cristalizaron en expectativas mesiánicas hasta que las circunstancias históricas no actuaron como catalizadores de nuevas interpretaciones. J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star*[2], 51. Para Horsley los movimientos mesiánicos y proféticos del segundo templo son movimientos de resistencia al imperio romano. R. A. HORSLEY, "From Messianology", 294. Bühner distingue entre dos tipos diferentes de textos mesiánicos: 1) "textos mesiánicos de primer orden", en los cuales se habla de una figura salvífica escatológica de Dios en su contexto inicial (SalSol 17; 4Q174) y 2) "textos mesiánicos de segundo orden", que sólo fueron sometidos a una relectura mesiánica en el curso de su historia de recepción (Sal 2,7; 2 Sam 7). R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie: Übermenschliche Aspekte eschatologischer Heilsgestalten im Frühjudentum*, WUNT 2 523, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2020, 26-27.

[18] Cfr. las tablas de Oegema donde se presentan las diferentes interpretaciones de los textos del AT en los textos intertestamentarios así como los significados de la palabra: G. S. OEGEMA, *Der Gesalbte*, 291-296 y 297-301. Para Bühner resulta extremadamente dudoso, incluso en el caso de Qumrán, que las expectativas de figuras escatológicas de salvación atestiguadas en diversos textos puedan relacionarse con una figura común a ellos. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 336.

Num 24,17	CD 7,19-21 [cfr. Am 9,11]; 1QM 11,6-7; Nm 24,17[LXX]; Josefo, *Guerra* 6.310 [Vespasiano]; Bar Kokba [hijo de la estrella y.Ta'an. 4:8]; b. Sanh. 93b; TestLevi 18,2-9
2 Sam 7,12	4QFlor 1,10-12 [4Q174]
Sal 2,1-7	4QFlor 1,18; SalSol 17,23-30
Am 9,11	4QFlor = 4Q174 1,11-13 es la rama que surgirá y salvará a Israel. CD 7,14-21, la cabaña סֻכָּה es identificada con los libros de la Torah
Is 11,1-5	4Q161 (retoño de David no mesías); 4Q285, 4QpIsaᵃ, 1QSb; SalSol 17,21-32 y SalSol 18,6-84; Esd 13,10; 1 Enoch 48,10-49,4; Rom 15,8-12
Dn 7,13-14	1 Enoch 53,3

Se puede desarrollar el caso de Gn 49,10. La LXX interpreta el cetro y el bastón de Judá como promesa de un jefe y guía; y en Qumran el texto suscita la venida del mesías[esct], el retoño de David aludiendo a Is 11,2 y Jer 33,15-17.

Gn 49,10 TM	Gn 49,10 LXX	4Q252 5.1-3
No se apartará de Judá el cetro ni el bastón de mando de entre sus pies, hasta que venga el que le pertenece, y al que harán homenaje los pueblos.	No faltará un *jefe* salido de Judá ni *guía* salido de sus muslos, hasta que llegue lo que le está reservado y él será lo que esperan las naciones.	No se apartará un soberano de la tribu de Judá (Gn 49,10). Mientras que Israel tenga el dominio, no faltará quien se siente sobre el trono de David (Jer 33,17). Pues la vara (Gn 49,10) es la alianza de la realeza, los millares de Israel son los pies, hasta que venga el Mesías de Justicia, el retoño de David (Jer 33,15). Pues a él y a su descendencia les ha sido dada la alianza de la realeza sobre su pueblo por todas las generaciones eternas.

El surgimiento de las expectativas mesiánicas fue muy tardío. No hay evidencia de mesianismo en el periodo entre el 500 y 200 BCE[19]. El término no aparece en las primeras etapas de Enoch. De hecho, los Macabeos no tienen ningún interés en el Mesías[20]. Hay algunas trazas de mesianismo en el periodo macabeo, pero no era prominente ni extendido. Se ha hablado de la "etapa del vacío mesiánico"[21] en la época helenística, que es cuando se escribieron la mayoría de los textos pseudoepigráficos[22]. Algo parecido se puede decir sobre la esperanza en un rey de la descendencia de David. Hay una ausencia de interés en Daniel sobre las promesas a David[23]. No aparece ninguna conexión con las profecías sobre la descendencia de David en los Macabeos[24]. Tampoco hay un interés por la restauración de la dinastía de David en 1 Enoch. Solo con la comunidad de Qumran encontramos un grupo que tiene un cierto interés en el mesianismo y en el siglo I BCE con los SalSol[25].

El auge de estas expectativas realmente mesiánicas tiene que ver con la conquista de Roma de Israel en el año 63 BCE[26]. Otros momentos sig-

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[19] "El siglo II BCE, denominado por Hengel como el primer clímax de la apocalíptica judía, no contiene una expectativa mesiánica en el sentido de una restauración de la línea davídica". J. J. Collins, *The scepter and the star²*, 40.

[20] "Those who placed their hopes in the institutions and leaders of their day, whether the High Priests, the Ptolemies, or the Maccabees, had little interest in messianism". J. J. Collins, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", en J. Neusner (ed.) *Messiah in context: Israel's history and destiny in formative Judaism*, University Press of America, Lanham 1988, 97-110, 106.

[21] Expresión de J. Becker, *Messiaserwartung im Alten Testament*, Katholisches Bibelwerk, Stuttgart 1977, 74.

[22] J. J. Collins, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", 106. J. H. Charlesworth, "The Concept of Messiah in the Pseudoepigrapha", en W. Haase (ed.) *ANWR* vol. 2.19.1, Gruyter, Berlin 1979, 188-218, 218.

[23] J. J. Collins, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", 100. J. J. Collins, *The scepter and the star²*, 45.

[24] "It is clear that the author did not wait for a Davidic descendant to gain the salvation of Israel". "The issue here is whether 1 Maccabees sees the Hasmonean dynasty as a full-fledged replacement for the Davidic dynasty." J. J. Collins, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", 104.

[25] J. J. Collins, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", 106. L. L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period. Vol. 3. The Maccabaean Revolt, Hasmonaean Rule, and Herod the Great (175-4 BCE)*, T&T Clark, London 2021, 277.

[26] Para Yarbro Collins la conquista de Judea por Pompeyo y Roma proveyó de un ímpetu a las esperanzas de una restauración de la monarquía Davídica. A. Y. Collins, "Jesus as Messiah", en *Mark: A commentary*, Hermeneia 55, Fortress Press, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, 53-72, 53.

nificativos fueron la muerte de Herodes (4 BCE), que dio lugar al alzamiento de Simón y Atronges (Josefo, *Guerra* 2.57-60) como posibles pretendientes reales; y en la guerra judía (66-70 CE) es posible que Simon Bar Giora, Juan de Giscala y Menahem (*Guerra* 2.443-448) se presentaran como pretendientes reales y posiblemente mesiánicos[27].

Si analizamos los textos de Qumran se puede decir que la espera del mesías no es un tema central entre los miembros de la *yahad* y resulta difícil reconstruir qué expectativa mesiánica existía entre ellos[28]. Sí parece que esperaban a un mesías de Aaron (sacerdotal) y a un mesías de Israel (regio)[29], seguramente como reacción a los reyes hasmoneos que aunaron el cargo de rey con el de sumo sacerdote (Aristóbulo I y Alejandro Janeo[30]). Pero en Qumran aparecen otras muchas expectativas escatológicas y se espera la acción salvífica de los ángeles.

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[27] C. A. Evans, "Messianic Claimants of the First and Second Centuries", en *Jesus and his contemporaries: comparative studies*, Brill, Leiden 1995, 53-81.

[28] Las opiniones son variadas. Autores como Charlesworth, Grabbe o Horsley ven una escasa presencia del mesías en Qumran. Sin embargo, para John Collins es un tema central. J. H. Charlesworth, "From Messianology", 25. L. L. Grabbe, *HJJST 3*, 277. Para Horsley el término mesías aparece infrecuentemente en Qumran. Las figuras mesiánicas aparecen en frases que se refieren al tiempo del cumplimiento, pero no son agentes de salvación. R. A. Horsley, "From Messianology", 279. Para Hogeterp el mesianismo de Qumran no se puede reducir al concepto político de un gobernante escatológico futuro. A. L. Hogeterp, *Expectations of the End: A Comparative Traditio-Historical Study of Eschatological, Apocalyptic and Messianic Ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, Brill, Leiden 2009, 425, 445-458. Cfr. los análisis de S. Schreiber, *Gesalbter und König*, 199-245 y J. Zimmermann, *Messianische Texte aus Qumran: Königliche, priesterliche und prophetische Messiasvorstellungen in den Schriftfunden von Qumran*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 1998.

[29] "El mesías de Aaron e Israel" se encuentra en CD 12,23; 14,19; 19,10; 20,1. Esta idea tiene su precedente en Zac 4,14 "los dos hijos del aceite". La espera de un mesías de Aaron expresa la insatisfacción con el actual ejercicio del cargo. J. J. Collins, *The scepter and the star²*, 92 y 108. Para Theissen, aunque la espera de un mesías rey es la más frecuente, se encuentran textos con los tres tipos de 'ungidos' del antiguo testamento, ahora como personajes mesiánicos en sentido escatológico: rey (4Q252), sumo sacerdote (1QS 9,9-11) y profeta escatológico (CD 6,11; 4Q521 2,2 cfr. Dt 18,18). G. Theissen – A. Merz, *El Jesús histórico: un manual*, Sígueme, Salamanca 1999, 584-585.

[30] Para Josefo es Aristóbulo I, el primero que asumió el título real, y "se puso la diadema en la cabeza" (Josefo, *Ant*. 13.301). Sus monedas reflejan ese título. Tanto los textos de Qumran como SalSol contienen una polémica contra los hasmoneos. K. Atkinson, "Perceptions of the Temple Priests in the Psalms of Solomon", en E. Bons – P. Pouchelle (eds.), *The Psalms of Solomon: language, history, theology*, SBL Press, Atlanta 2015, 79-96, 84-91.

Entre los apócrifos del AT se puede señalar que en SalSol 17-18 sí aparece la espera de un mesías real davídico, que por un lado traerá la destrucción de los enemigos y por otro lado parece que actuará con el poder de su boca[31]. En *Las Parábolas de Enoch* (1 Enoch 37-71) el personaje central es el "hijo del hombre", y en dos casos parece que se le caracteriza como ungido (48,2; 52,4)[32]. Por su parte 4 Esd[33] y 2 Bar[34] presentan diferentes rasgos del mesías[esct], pero no es una figura central en estos textos[35]. Como conclusión se puede afirmar que no se puede elaborar una imagen coherente del mesías[esct] desde las escasas fuentes que disponemos[36].

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[31] Para Hadas-Lebel, SalSol 17 contiene la primera atestación del mesías[esct]. M. HADAS-LEBEL, "Les débuts de l'idée messianique", 95. Para De Jonge en SalSol 17,32 la expresión actúa como calificación más que como título, mientras que SalSol 18,5 se ha convertido en una expresión fija que denota al rey davídico designado por Dios para dar un giro al destino de Israel. M. DE JONGE, "Messiah", 783. Para Waschke la orientación mesiánica del SalSol 17 ha sido modelada por los salmos reales del AT. E.-J. WASCHKE, *Der Gesalbte: Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2001, 139. Cfr. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 161-190.

[32] Las *Parábolas* no utilizan la expresión "hijo del hombre" como un título mesiánico formal ni indican que ese título fuera mesiánico. G. W. E. NICKELSBURG – J. C. VANDERKAM, *1 Enoch 2: A commentary on the book of 1 Enoch Chapters 37-82*, Hermeneia, Fortress, Minneapolis 2012, 116. Sobre la figura del hijo del hombre en Dn y en la literatura intertestamentaria cfr. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 177-196.

[33] La figura redentora de 4 Esd es denominada mesías en 7,26 y 12,32 y siervo en 7,29; 13,32. 37. 52 y 14,9, pero no es presentado como rey. Cfr. la presentación del mesías en 4 Esd en M. E. STONE, *Fourth Ezra: a commentary on the book of Fourth Ezra*, Hermeneia, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1990, 207-213 y M. E. STONE, "The Question of the Messiah in 4 Ezra", en J. NEUSNER – E. S. FRERICHS – W. S. GREEN (eds.), *Judaisms and their messiahs at the turn of the Christian era*, CUP, Cambridge 1987, 209-224. El mesías de 4 Esd es una figura humana y al mismo tiempo se la dibuja como sobrehumana, prexistente y celestial. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 171.

[34] El mesías aparece en 2 Bar 29,3; 30,1; 39,7; 40,1; 70,9 y 72,1 y presenta una figura salvífica con los rasgos de un mesías-guerrero e "hijo del hombre-juez" de los últimos días. G. S. OEGEMA, "2 Baruch, the Messiah, and the Bar Kochba Revolt", *Arc: The Journal of the School of Religious Studies* 39 (2011) 55–66, 61.

[35] G. W. E. NICKELSBURG – M. E. STONE, "The Agents of Divine Deliverance", en G. W. E. NICKELSBURG – M. E. STONE (eds.), *Early Judaism: Texts and Documents on Faith and Piety*, Fortress, Minneapolis 2009, 159–199, 193.

[36] Para Bühner, cualquier suposición de un desarrollo lineal de la idea mesiánica debe rechazarse por simplista. También subraya que la datación exacta de demasiados textos es muy controvertida, lo cual implica ser precavidos. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 336.

3. Difusión de las expectativas

Además, no es posible conocer hasta qué punto esta esperanza en un mesías[esct] estaba presente en el pueblo. Es claro que los poderosos, sumos sacerdotes, saduceos y herodianos rechazaban esta expectativa. Josefo es testigo del deseo judío por una teocracia, gobernada por los sumos sacerdotes[37]. Las expectativas de un mesías eran poco importantes entre los grupos educados de la sociedad[38]. Asimismo, cuarenta de los textos apócrifos del AT no hacen referencia al mesías[39], y como se ha señalado, esta esperanza no es un tema central entre los textos de Qumran. Son las clases intelectuales las que han producido esta literatura que ha llegado hasta nosotros, y se nos escapa qué pudo pensar la mayoría de la gente, pero autores como Mowinckel, Theissen, Horsley o Collins creen que esta esperanza formaba parte del judaísmo común, mientras que para Green y Sanders no[40]. Lo que es significativo es que son muy escasos los textos que hablan de un mesías[esct], un dato que puede ser interpretado de diferentes modos. Para Green esta escasez de textos, unido a la cantidad de textos intertestamentarios que no desarrollan la idea de un mesías, significa que esta idea estaba muy poco extendida[41]. Para Theissen "las esperanzas me-

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[37] Para Josefo, rey y tirano no andan muy lejos, cfr. Josefo, *Guerra* 2.84, 88.

[38] R. A. HORSLEY, "From Messianology", 279.

[39] W. HORBURY, *Messianism among Jews and Christians: twelve biblical and historical studies*, T&T Clark, London 2003, 38-39, n. 11.

[40] G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *El Jesús histórico*, 587-588. También R. A. HORSLEY, "From Messianology", 278. Para Collins estas esperanzas formaban parte del judaísmo común. J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star*[2], 18. "In the time of Jesus the Jews were awaiting a Messiah". S. MOWINCKEL, *He that cometh*, 3. "The expectation of the messiah was not the rule". E. P. SANDERS, *Judaism: practice and belief, 63 BCE-66 CE*, Trinity Press International, Philadelphia 1992, 295.

[41] "The term 'messiah' has scant and inconsistent use in early Jewish texts. Most of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha, and the entire Apocrypha, contain no reference to 'the messiah'. Moreover, a messiah is neither essential to the apocalyptic genre nor a prominent feature of ancient apocalyptic writings". W. S. GREEN, "Introduction: Mesiah in Judaism: Rethinking the Question", en J. NEUSNER (ed.) *Messiah in context: Israel's history and destiny in formative Judaism*, University Press of America, Lanham 1988, 1-13, 2. Para De Jonge: "As is well-known there are only remarkably few places where this expression occurs in our period, even if we expand it to include the first century B.C. and the first seventy years of the first century A.D. Even more remarkable, perhaps, is that we hardly find any oc-

siánicas estaban vivas en el pueblo, probablemente más vivas de lo que aparece en las fuentes. Pero el pueblo tuvo siempre menos oportunidades de expresar sus expectativas en textos que la clase superior, que ya por sus propios intereses aspiraba a controlar la agitación mesiánica[42]".

El judaísmo del segundo templo fue extremadamente complejo y convivían diferentes expectativas escatológicas, las ideas de la resurrección y el alma inmortal, la esperanza en la acción de otras figuras salvíficas divinas (los arcángeles Miguel y Gabriel, el "hijo del hombre" [1 Enoch], "hijo de Dios[43]" [4Q246], etc.), así como la evolución e interconexión de estas ideas. Grabbe ha señalado la complejidad de este judaísmo del segundo templo en el que conviven diversas realidades: escatología, magia, astrología, misticismo, gnosticismo, seres angélicos, la sabiduría y el logos como hipóstasis divinas, el mesianismo, el papel del "hijo del hombre", etc[44]. El problema del mal subyace a muchas de estas reflexiones. Y "puesto que el mal deriva de fuentes sobrenaturales, debe ser vencido por la intervención divina[45]". Así, las soluciones fueron diversas y se desarrollaron en géneros literarios diferentes (sapiencial, apocalíptica, escatología, etc.)[46].

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currence of the absolute use of the term 'the Messiah', i.e. without a following genitive or possessive pronoun. This basic fact shows a relative unimportance of the term in the context of Jewish expectations concerning the future, at least in the Jewish sources at our disposal for this period". M. DE JONGE, "The Use of the Word 'Anointed' in the Time of Jesus", *Novum Testamentum* 8:2-4 (1966) 132-148, 133-134.

[42] G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *El Jesús histórico*, 587-588. También R. A. HORSLEY, "From Messianology", 278.

[43] Sobre la figura escatológica del "hijo de Dios", en 4Q174, 4Q246. cfr R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 274-322.

[44] L. L. GRABBE, *HJJST 4*, 198.

[45] G. W. E. NICKELSBURG, "Salvation without and with a Messiah: Developing Beliefs in Writings Abscribed to Enoch", en J. NEUSNER (ed.) *Messiah in context: Israel's history and destiny in formative Judaism*, University Press of America, Lanham 1988, 49-68, 51. Para Sanders, la figura de un mesías no es algo común en el material que refleja expectativas escatológicas. Ahora bien, sí existía una esperanza escatológica: la expectación de que Dios vindicaría y restauraría a Israel. E. P. SANDERS, *Jesús y el judaísmo*, Trotta, Madrid 2004, 187.

[46] No toda expectativa escatológica o salvífica era mesiánica. Para Mowinckel, "es concebible una escatología sin mesías, pero no un mesías separado de una esperanza futura". S. MOWINCKEL, *He that cometh*, 8.

4. Características

Existe un consenso entre los estudiosos en que no se puede realizar una síntesis de las características de este mesías[esct] desde los diferentes textos[47]. Hasta donde podemos conocer se puede afirmar que no existía un concepto unificado de lo que significaba mesías[esct] en el siglo I CE[48]. Para Grabbe no hay una idea de escatología y mesianismo convincente que pueda explicar incidentes, movimientos o ideología en el judaísmo de este tiempo[49]. Los escasos textos que contienen referencias al mesías[esct] no revelan una imagen coherente[50]. A continuación ofrecemos una presentación de diferentes características del mesías[esct] en diferentes textos pseudoepigráficos[51]:

Característica	Textos en los que aparece
¿Se puede discernir la ascendencia del Mesías	SalSol 17,21-34 y 4 Esd 12,31-34. Solo en estos dos textos se dice que desciende de David.

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[47] "The eschatological use of Messiah involves considerable variety. The anointed one may be a king or a priest, or even a supernatural figure as in the Similitudes of Enoch". J. J. COLLINS, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", 97. Lo mismo señala Stuckenbruck después de analizar SalSol, 1 Hen, 4 Esd y 2 Bar. L. T. STUCKENBRUCK, "Messianic Ideas in the Apocalyptic and Related Literature of Early Judaism", en S. E. PORTER (ed.) *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, 90-113, 112. Schreiber realiza una presentación sintética. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 537-554.

[48] J. H. CHARLESWORTH, "From Messianology", 13.

[49] L. L. GRABBE, *HJJST 4*, 144.

[50] J. H. CHARLESWORTH, "From Messianology", 14. En tiempos de Jesús no existía una doctrina normativa sobre el mesías. N. A. DAHL, "Messianic Ideas and the Crucifixion of Jesus", en J. H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.) *The Messiah: developments in earliest Judaism and Christianity*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1992, 382-403, 389. También lo afirma O. CULLMANN, *Cristología del Nuevo Testamento*, Sígueme, Salamanca 1998, 171.

[51] J. H. CHARLESWORTH, "From Messianology", 19-24. Ver la lista de J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star²*, 78. Cfr. la sección "§ 29 Mesianismo" en E. SCHÜRER – G. VERMES – F. MILLAR – M. BLACK, *Historia del pueblo judío en tiempos de Jesús, 175 a.C.-135 d.C. Vol II. Instituciones políticas y religiosas*, Cristiandad, Madrid 1985, 631-714. Esta sección está basada en patrones extraídos de 2 Bar y 4 Esd, donde está desarrollada esta expectativa. Una lista parecida en J. KLAUSNER, *The Messianic Idea in Israel, from its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah*, Macmillan, New York 1955, 385. Es una descripción distorsionada dado que se retrotraen esas características al siglo I CE. J. J. COLLINS, "Messianism in the Maccabean Period", 95. M. V. NOVENSON, *Christ among the Messiahs*, 36.

¿Es un guerrero[52]?	2 Bar 72,6 con la espada. Vs SalSol 17,21-33 y 4 Esd 13,4-11, solo con la palabra (Is 11,4) y no la espada.
¿Derrotará a las naciones?	1 Enoch 45,2; SalSol 17,21. 24.
¿Purificará Jerusalén?	Solo en SalSol 17,21-33.
¿Condenará a los pecadores?	SalSol 17,25 y 4 Esd 12,32.
¿Es presentado como un rey?	Rey en SalSol 17,21-33, mientras que en 17,45 es Dios quien es rey.
¿Será el juez escatológico?	Juez en SalSol 17,21-33; 4 Esd 12,31-34; 2 Bar 40,1-2. Pero en 4 Esd 7,31-44, el juicio comienza después de que el mesías muera.
¿Reunirá el Mesías a un pueblo santo?	SalSol 17,21-23. Vs 4 Esd 7,140, solo unos pocos.
¿Inaugurará una nueva era?	SalSol 17,26. 44;.4 Esd 7,31-44. El mesías aparece, inaugura el periodo mesiánico y muere.
¿Asistirá a la resurrección de los muertos?	1 Enoch 61,5.
¿Establecerá un reino de paz?	SalSol 17,21-32. Sí. 2 Bar 36-40 y 4 Esd 7, será un reino finito, entre dos eras. 1 Enoch 38; 2 Bar 73, reino escatológico y eterno.
¿Será humano?	4 Esd 12,31-34, viene de la descendencia de David. 4 Esd 13,3-14,9, asciende del mar. 1 Enoch 71,14.

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[52] Collins acentúa el carácter violento del mesías[esct]. La destrucción de los impíos es un elemento standard para él. Cita 4Q246 (donde el hijo de Dios traerá la paz con una victoria militar); SalSol 17,22-24 y 4 Esd 12,32-33; 13,27-28. 35-38. J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star²*, 228 y 78. Para Schreiber, la característica decisiva del gobernante davídico ungido del tiempo del fin es su función militar. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 542. Schürer cita resonancias bélicas en 1 Enoch 46,4-6, pero se trata del hijo del hombre. E. SCHÜRER – G. VERMES – F. MILLAR – M. BLACK, *Historia II*, 679. Para Yarbro Collins la figura humana que emerge del mar (4 Esd 13,8-11) también será victoriosa en la batalla. A. Y. COLLINS, "Jesus as Messiah", 62. Esta figura está basada en Dn 7 y tiene un número de puntos en común con el hijo del hombre de las *Parábolas*. ¿Pero por qué no se le llama aquí "hijo del hombre"? se pregunta L. L. GRABBE, *HJJST 4*, 268.

La figura mesiánica principal que aparece en los textos que nos hablan de un mesías[esct] es la de un futuro rey terrenal y aparece especialmente SalSol 17-18[53]. Para Grabbe en el siglo I BCE emerge el concepto de un mesías celestial (11QMelq 2,9. 17-18[54]; 4 Esd 12,31-34, *Parábolas* de Enoch y posible 2 Bar)[55].

5. Conclusión

La palabra hebrea *māšîᵃh* fue adquiriendo nuevos significados, de ser un adjetivo que significa ungido (mesías[ung]), pasó a convertirse en un sustantivo y un título que hacía referencia en muchos casos al rey (mesías[rey]), ungido por Dios para una misión en favor del pueblo. La realeza como institución y la dinastía davídica terminaron con la conquista de Babilonia en el 587 BCE. Hasta el siglo II BCE no aparecerá un nuevo rey judío, que ya no es ni de la dinastía de David ni es ungido, sino coronado con la imposición de una diadema. El hecho de que estos reyes hasmoneos concentraran el cargo de rey con el de sumo sacerdote provocó la reacción de algunos sectores, como se ve en Qumran, que ahora anhelan un mesías[esct] sacerdotal y otro real. En el siglo I BCE, con la conquista de Roma de Israel, la palabra *māšîᵃh* se carga de un nuevo significado; se trata de un personaje escatológico que cambiará el curso de la realidad de Israel y un rey de la dinastía davídica (mesías[esct]). El contenido de este título es difícil de definir dada la escasez y diferencias entre las fuentes y tampoco podemos conocer cuánto de extendida estaba esta expectativa, la cual convivía con muchas otras. Este es el contexto en el que surge el movimiento de Jesús. Vamos a desarrollar a continuación en cómo Jesús se acabó convirtiendo en el mesías[crist].

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[53] L. L. GRABBE, *HJJST 3*, 277 y 279. Para Lucass, los orígenes del concepto del mesías se desarrollaron a partir del rol de rey. S. LUCASS, *The concept of the Messiah*, 160.

[54] En 11QMelq 2,9 el mensajero de Is 52,7 es identificado con el ungido de Is 61,1. J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star²*, 133-134. Para Bühner en 11QMelch, Melquisedec es una figura escatológica de salvación que aparecerá en los últimos días para asumir funciones tanto liberadoras y gobernantes como juzgadoras y se le identifica como mesías. Es una figura angélica y celestial pero subordinada a Dios R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 230 y 247.

[55] L. L. GRABBE, *HJJST 4*, 273. M. E. STONE, *Fourth Ezra*, 212.

III. JESÚS EL MESÍAS

La segunda respuesta a la pregunta por la que comenzábamos es que Jesús sí fue el mesías esperado, pero vamos a llamarle mesías[crist], dado que el título mesías sufrió una profunda relaboración por parte de los primeros discípulos de Jesús[56]. Después de la muerte de Jesús el título mesías se convirtió en un título honorífico aplicado a Jesús, hasta tal punto que su traducción griega (χριστός Cristo[57]) se acabó convirtiendo en parte de su nombre (Jesús Cristo en 1 Tes 1,1) e incluso en un nombre propio (Cristo en 1 Cor 15,3). De hecho, en Pablo el término Cristo es siempre un título o nombre propio (excepto Rom 9,5), lo cual refleja lo rápido que la comunidad judeocristiana reelaboró el término[58]. Es más, el término "cristianos" fue el que identificaba a sus seguidores (Hch 11,26)[59]. En hebreo

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[56] "En todo el NT el mesianismo ya no está bajo el signo de la expectación, sino bajo el del cumplimiento. En todas partes se habla del acontecimiento de Cristo en perfecto". K. H. RENGSTORF, "χριστός", 383. El motivo "promesa-cumplimiento", que presenta a Jesús como una figura anunciada, es quizás el mayor logro de la apologética del NT. W. S. GREEN, "Mesiah in Judaism", 4.

[57] La palabra griega χριστός era un adjetivo que significaba untado, blanqueado, pintado y no se aplicaba a personas. Aparece como adjetivo neutro en Esquilo, *Prometheus Vinctus* 480 y Euripides, *Hippolytus* 516. En Josefo, *Ant.* 8.137 se refiere a una pared pintada. Esta palabra griega fue la utilizada por los traductores de la LXX para traducir *māšîᵃh*, con lo que la palabra χριστός adquirió nuevos significados procedentes del hebreo *māšîᵃh*, significando ahora ungido, o rey. En el siglo I CE en SalSol 17,32 χριστός es un sustantivo, un calco semántico de *māšîᵃh* con el significado de agente salvador escatológico y se ha transformado en un título. En Pablo la palabra se ha convertido en un nombre propio u honorífico y solo en un caso es un título (Rom 9,5). Solo en una comunidad discursiva judía podía ser entendido el término ungido aplicado a una persona. LSJ, 1170. F. HAHN, "Χριστός", 2140. K. H. RENGSTORF, "χριστός", 381.

[58] Coinciden los autores en señalar que el término Cristo es en Pablo o bien un título honorífico (Dahl), o *cognomen* (Hengel). M. HENGEL, "Christos in Paul", en *Between Jesus and Paul: studies in the earliest history of Christianity*, SCM, London 1983, 65-77, 68. N. A. DAHL, "The Messiahship of Jesus in Paul", en *The crucified Messiah, and other essays*, Augsburg, Minneapolis 1974, 37-47; 170-172, 37. Hengel recuerda que en muy pocos años fue elaborada la mayor parte de la teología cristiana, de manera que ya antes de las cartas de Pablo estaba fijado este título. M. HENGEL, *El Hijo de Dios: el origen de la cristología y la historia de la religión judeo-helenística*, Sigueme, Salamanca 1978, 12-13.

[59] Los seguidores de Jesús son llamados cristianos en Antioquía, incluso antes de que Agripa I, sea rey de toda Judea. M. HENGEL, "Jesus, the Messiah of Israel", en *Studies in Early Christology*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh 1995, 1-72, 7-8.

y en griego una frase atributiva no necesita del verbo ser, sino que son frases nominales, así que "Jesús Cristo", es una confesión teológica: "Jesús (es) el Cristo[60]", cuyas evocaciones son múltiples, tanto en el terreno político como en el religioso. Después de la resurrección de Jesús, los discípulos reelaboraron el contenido del título mesías y le atribuyeron una nueva dignidad mesiánica a Jesús: la de mesías[crist] paciente cuya muerte tuvo una significación soteriológica (1 Cor 15,3)[61].

Dos hechos parecen claros. Primero: ni los textos del AT por sí mismos, ni las expectativas mesiánicas que circulaban en su tiempo, ni el ministerio de Jesús, ni su resurrección son capaces de explicar por sí mismas que Jesús haya sido denominado mesías. Segundo, no es entendible que este título se aplicara a Jesús después de su muerte si él de alguna manera no hubiera aceptado al menos implícitamente este título. Jesús debió tener una cierta conciencia mesiánica y seguramente rehusó aceptar de manera pública el título de mesías[esct], a la vez que realizó gestos proféticos que pudieron reflejar esa conciencia y que ya reimaginaban el contenido, el concepto y el significado de la palabra mesías.

1. Cómo llegó Jesús a ser mesías[crist]

El desencadenante de que Jesús acabe siendo denominado mesías no arranca de una lectura del AT, ya que como se ha señalado, los textos del AT no contenían la profecía de un mesías[esct]. Para Dahl la aplicación del título de mesías a Jesús no puede tener su origen en el estudio de la Escritura, sino que es el mesianismo de Jesús lo que subyace a esas interpretaciones. El AT fue reinterpretado para llenar de contenido el título mesías[crist] para poder aplicarlo a Jesús, pero este no fue el comienzo del proceso.

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[60] Jesús Cristo es una confesión que expresa que Jesús fue el Mesías. J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star*[2], 2.

[61] Para Schreiber aparece ya en Pablo una nueva denotación para el sustantivo χριστός como representante de Dios. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 420. En este sentido, la siguiente afirmación de Neusner es equívoca y refleja la confusión a la hora de presentar el tema del mesías: "Is Jesus the Christ? If so, then Judaism falls. If not, then Christianity fails". Esta frase no tiene en cuenta los diferentes significados de la misma palabra: mesías[esct] y mesías[crist] y por ello resulta ambigua. J. NEUSNER, *Jews and Christians: the myth of a common tradition*, SCM, London 1991, 49.

Tampoco se puede decir que el título mesías sea la expresión necesaria de la convicción de que Jesús es el portador escatológico de la salvación. La escatología judía no conocía una única figura salvífica, sino varias, como el sacerdote escatológico, el profeta como Moisés, Elías redivivus, etc. Eran figuras paralelas al mesías[esct], no precursoras. Lo que permanecía constante eran las afirmaciones escatológicas de la Escritura. Las funciones que se perciben en la escatología judía no tienen nada que ver con el retrato de Jesús en el NT[62].

Tampoco el ministerio público de Jesús permite inferir que era el mesías, ya que sus palabras (anuncio del reino, parábolas, etc.), y sus obras (milagros, exorcismos, comidas con los pecadores) no tienen relación ninguna con las funciones que se pueden extraer de las expectativas mesiánicas de los textos de Qumran (excepto 4Q521), de las *Parábolas de Enoch*, SalSol 17-18, 4 Esd y 2 Bar[63]. Por ello las acciones y palabras de Jesús chocan con lo que se podría esperar del mesías[esct]. Jesús fue un profeta y maestro que anunció el reino de Dios, fue pacífico, realizó milagros, luchó contra el sufrimiento de los otros y acogió en silencio el suyo, murió solo, crucificado y fracasado, sin haber traído un cambio real salvífico al pueblo de Israel (Lc 24,21)[64]. No existe un relato de su unción, y el gesto de la mujer en Mc 14,3, Jesús lo interpreta como preparación a su sepultura y no como unción[65].

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[62] N. A. DAHL, "The crucified Messiah", 26-27. La contextualización de las ideas neotestamentarias dentro de los primeros discursos judíos no puede consistir en buscar un eslabón perdido o encontrar un precursor directo. Tales intentos acaban por subestimar la contingencia histórica, así como la creatividad teológica del movimiento primitivo de Jesús. El desarrollo de la cristología neotestamentaria es análoga, pero no paralela, a los desarrollos que tienen lugar en el judaísmo intertestamentario. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 338.

[63] Según Charlesworth, Jesús no cumple ninguna de las funciones que se podrían suponer al mesías: juzgar a los impíos (SalSol 17; 4 Esd 12; 2 Bar 40); destruirlos (SalSol 17,18; 4 Esd 12); liberar al pueblo, etc. J. H. CHARLESWORTH, "From Messianology", 7. También S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 493-494 y J. J. COLLINS, *The scepter and the star²*, 19 y 229.

[64] Yarbro Collins ha subrayado cómo Jesús es presentado simultáneamente bajo los rasgos de Moisés como maestro e intérprete de la ley; de Elías y Eliseo como profetas que realizan milagros; y de David como rey. Marcos presenta un complejo retrato de Jesús como profeta, mesías y maestro. A. Y. COLLINS, *Mark: A commentary*, Hermeneia 55, Fortress Press, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, 42-84.

[65] A. Y. COLLINS, "Jesus as Messiah", 71. Solo en Hch 10,38 se afirma que Jesús fue ungido con el Espíritu Santo.

Que se haya aplicado el título mesías a Jesús por influjo de su resurrección es improbable históricamente. De Elías, Enoch y Melquisedec se afirmaba que habían sido exaltados al cielo, pero esto no les hacía mesías[66]. De la resurrección se puede inferir que Jesús vive y ha sido exaltado al cielo, pero no que es el mesías[esct]. La cruz y la resurrección se convirtieron en los acontecimientos más importantes de la vida de Jesús y pusieron nueva luz a todo lo demás. Pero para interpretar la vida de Jesús como orientada a la cruz y la resurrección, el título de mesías hubiera sido inadecuado, ya que no hay documentos anteriores al NT acerca de un mesías que padece[67], y menos aún documentos sobre alguien que llegara a ser mesías en virtud de una resurrección, la cual no se esperaba para una sola persona antes del fin de los tiempos. El título de mesías tuvo que estar asociado ya antes a Jesús, si había de pervivir después de pascua. Ese título no podía interpretar la cruz y la resurrección; pero la cruz y la resurrección confirman esta presunción mesiánica[68].

El hecho determinante de que Jesús fuera proclamado como mesías por sus seguidores fue su muerte en la cruz a manos del poder romano con un título irónico que reflejaba su condena como pretendiente a "rey de los judíos" (Mc 15,26)[69]. Para Dahl: "que Jesús fuera crucificado como rey de los judíos no es un motivo dogmático que se ha historificado en los relatos de la pasión, sino que es un hecho histórico que se ha convertido en central en la formulación del primer dogma cristiano"[70]. Lo más seguro es que los primeros cristianos interpretaran, partiendo de sus expectativas ya anteriores, que la muerte en la cruz de Jesús reflejaba su pretensión e identidad como "rey", es decir mesías[rey]. Esta pretensión se vería confirmada por el título de la cruz y por su resurrección, lo cual les hizo asumir

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[66] Elías y Enoch fueron llevados al cielo vivos, y no fueron llamados Mesías. M. HENGEL, "Jesus, the Messiah of Israel", 13.

[67] Para Yarbro Collins, el sufrimiento y el rechazo no forman parte del retrato del mesías, pero tal vez sí del profeta. A. Y. COLLINS, "Jesus as Messiah", 69.

[68] G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *El Jesús histórico*, 591.

[69] La mayor parte de los especialistas opinan que aplicarse el título de rey era un delito contra la *Lex Iulia de maiestate*, que llevaba aparejada la pena de muerte. R. E. BROWN, *La muerte del Mesías I: Desde Getsemaní hasta el sepulcro*, Verbo Divino, Estella 2006, 848. Una interesante presentación del proceso por el que Jesús llegó a ser denominado mesías en S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 490-496.

[70] N. A. DAHL, "The crucified Messiah", 28.

que Jesús era el mesías[71]. La confesión de Jesús como Mesías no es la re-judaización del mensaje y de la persona de Jesús, sino la radical cristiani-zación del título de mesías[72].

Pero este título otorgado a Jesús tuvo que ser reimaginado y su con-tenido reelaborado desde la lectura de las Escrituras, convirtiéndose en el título mesías[crist], un título que significa ahora rey de la descendencia de David (Mt 1,1; Rom 1,3; 2 Sam 7,11-14) y que se entrelaza con los títulos de "hijo del hombre[73]" (Dn 7,13, el título más usado por Jesús) e Hijo de Dios[74] (que puede que refleje su conciencia más profunda, cf. 2 Sam 7,13

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[71] "A través de la crucifixión, el viejo Mesías fue puesto a descansar, y a través de la resurrección nació uno nuevo… Los acontecimientos han provocado la corrección radical del concepto". J. WELLHAUSEN, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, Reimer, Berlin [2]1911, 91-92. Le sigue Dahl: "Solo queda una posibilidad, el título de mesías fue unido a Jesús por que fue condenado y crucificado como pretendiente mesiánico". N. A. DAHL, "The crucified Messiah", 28. También W. PANNENBERG, *Fundamentos de Cristología*, Sígueme, Salamanca 1974, 41. Para Schreiber no hay suficientes evidencias de la equivalencia entre rey y ungido en el siglo I CE. Sin embargo, más adelante afirma que la proximidad de los tí-tulos ungido y rey se atestigua explícitamente en el SalSol 17. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 492-494.

[72] Jesús es denominado por sus discípulos mesías[crist], pero apenas es denominado rey. El título de rey no aparece en Pablo referido a Jesús y es escaso en el evangelio de Mc. El proceso de elaboración por el que Jesús fue llamado mesías[crist] coincide o antecede a la co-ronación de Agripa como rey (38-44 CE). Agripa acuñó en sus monedas ese título y en algu-nas de ellas aparece su rostro con una diadema. Es posible que los cristianos evitaran el título de rey por varias razones: 1) Rey de los judíos era un título que evocaba a Herodes, Agripa I y II. 2) Les permite evitar presentarse como desafiantes al imperio dado que solo Roma puede declarar a uno como rey. 3) Evitar las connotaciones negativas de la palabra βασιλεύς/*rex* en un contexto romano, que identificaba al rey como un tirano. Para Schreiber, el título Cristo tiene en un medio helenístico una mayor apertura semántica que rey y está más abierto a una interpretación holística religiosa que el título de rey, que tiene connotacio-nes más políticas. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 496.

[73] "Hijo del hombre" es un modismo (es decir, una expresión fija cuyo significado no se deduce de las palabras que la forman), que nació como una metáfora (podía significar: yo, ser humano), que acabó no siendo reconocida como tal (metáfora muerta), y posteriormente se convirtió en un título que evocaba a Dn 7,13. Para Nickelsburg aunque el NT habla del hijo del hombre de Dn 7, la identidad de Jesús como hijo del hombre se construye desde la interpretación de Dn en las *Parábolas*. G. W. E. NICKELSBURG – J. C. VANDERKAM, *1 Enoch 2*, 75.

[74] Marshall señala que en Marcos los títulos Cristo, hijo del hombre e hijo de Dios se interpretan mutuamente. I. H. MARSHALL, "Jesus as the Messiah in Mark and Matthew", en

y Sal 2,7) y con los rasgos del siervo de Yahveh[75]. Es decir, se siguió el mismo proceso que se ha desarrollado anteriormente: las circunstancias históricas de la muerte de Jesús como pretendiente real motivaron interpretaciones novedosas de textos del AT. A ello unieron otras tradiciones, como las del hijo del hombre (Dn 7,13), el siervo sufriente (Is 42), etc., para configurar un nuevo retrato de lo que es el mesías[crist], que cuadra con la persona de Jesús[76].

Se ha de señalar que los cristianos interpretaron mesiánicamente pasajes que no eran claramente mesiánicos. Así pasajes sobre el profeta como Moisés (Dt 18,15), el sacerdote escatológico, el hijo del hombre (Dn 7,13), el siervo de Yahve (Is 42), el mensajero de la salvación (Is 52), "el que travesaron" (Zac 12,10), etc., fueron interpretados como referidos a la figura escatológica del mesías[77]. Si Mal 3 no fue aplicado a Jesús es porque ya se había aplicado a Juan Bautista.

Por tanto el título mesías[crist] es un nuevo significado para una palabra que ha ido evolucionado y aparece en un contexto diferente y en una comunidad discursiva diferente, la judeocristiana[78].

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S. E. PORTER (ed.) *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, 117-143, 143. Sobre la relación de los títulos Hijo de Dios y ungido, cfr. S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 497-512.

[75] Esta síntesis exegética encuentra un paralelo en la figura del "hijo del hombre" en *Las Parábolas* de Enoch donde se funden las tradiciones de Is 11; Sal 2; Is 42; Prov 8 y Dn 7. El "hijo del hombre" es un ser celestial y la encarnación de tres figuras paralelas de alto estatus célebres en la tradición religiosa de Israel: el rey davídico, el siervo de Yahveh y el hijo del hombre (Dn 7,13 y 1 Enoch 46,1-3), pero el autor de 1 Enoch las reelabora, siendo ahora figuras entronizadas. G. W. E. NICKELSBURG – J. C. VANDERKAM, *1 Enoch 2*, 118 y 44.

[76] Para Sandmel, los discípulos hicieron una alteración significativa en el patrón mesiánico, cambiándolo de un solo evento (la venida del mesías) a otro en dos partes, la preparación primero, y después de un intervalo, el clímax en su segunda venida (1 Cor 15,23). S. SANDMEL, *We Jews and Jesus: Exploring Theological Differences for Mutual Understanding*, OUP, Oxford 1965, 33. Para Bühner motivos y aspectos de las figuras escatológicas de salvación experimentan una extraordinaria condensación en el NT. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 338.

[77] N. A. DAHL, "The crucified Messiah", 27. Dahl cita a Edgar con una comparación con las interpretaciones rabínicas. S. L. EDGAR, "New Testament and Rabbinic Messianic Interpretation", *NTS* 5:1 (1958) 47-54.

[78] Schreiber describe este proceso como coser un paño nuevo sobre un vestido viejo o echar vino nuevo en odres viejos (Mc 2,21). S. SCHREIBER, *Gesalbter und König*, 491.

2. La elusiva aceptación del título por parte de Jesús

Como se ha señalado, esta aplicación del título mesías^{crist} a Jesús no se habría efectuado si él en su vida pública no hubiera dado señales de una aceptación implícita de este título[79]. Aquí de nuevo se nos presenta una realidad paradójica. Porque, por un lado, el centro de la vida de Jesús no fue presentarse como personaje mesiánico ni como aspirante a rey, sino el anuncio del Reino de Dios con gestos proféticos significativos como la elección de los Doce, las comidas con los pecadores, sus milagros y curaciones. Estos gestos no apuntan en una dirección mesiánica ya que ninguna de estas acciones concuerda con los rasgos deslavazados que tenemos de lo que se esperaba de un mesías^{esct}.

Pero por otro lado, se puede postular que seguramente Jesús tuvo una cierta conciencia mesiánica[80], a la vez que seguramente rehusó el uso

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[79] Aquí existen dos posturas. La primera, propone que Jesús no se identificó con el título de mesías y que fueron sus discípulos los que lo desarrollaron. Fue desencadenada por William Wrede y elevada a tesis por Bultmann. Wrede asumía acríticamente que los judíos esperaban la venida de un mesías. Este mesías era un revolucionario, patriota y político. Cfr. W. WREDE, *The Messianic secret*, James Clarke, Cambridge 1971, 30. Pero Wrede no utilizó las fuentes judías sino a Justino y Jn. No cita 1 Enoch, SalSol, 4 Esd, 2 Bar. Para Charlesworth se trata de una obra antijudía. Señala Hengel que existía en el siglo XIX una aversión inconsciente por la apocalíptica judía y la esperanza mesiánica. M. HENGEL, "Jesus, the Messiah of Israel", 23. Para Bultmann, quien sigue a Wrede y que tampoco estudió el judaísmo intertestamentario, Jesús es un profeta y no mesías. R. BULTMANN, "The Study of the Synoptic Gospels", en R. BULTMANN – K. KUNDSIN (eds.), *Form criticism: a new method of New Testament research*, Willett, Clark & company, Chicago 1934, 7-74, 71. La segunda postura asume que Jesús aceptó implícitamente este título, pero su identidad lo desbordaba. Ha sido defendida por Jeremias y muy especialmente por Hengel. J. JEREMIAS, *Teología del Nuevo Testamento*, Sígueme, Salamanca 1977, 290. Un resumen de su opinión en M. HENGEL – A. M. SCHWEMER, *Jesus and Judaism*, Baylor University Press, Waco 2019, 527-530. También lo acepta E. P. SANDERS, *Jesús y el judaísmo*, 337. Wrede murió joven y no pudo desarrollar sus ideas. Seguramente cambió su opinión sobre Jesús como no mesías influenciado por Bousset. Esto aparece en una carta escrita por Wrede a Adolph Harnack donde afirma: "El llamado secreto mesiánico no fue una invención de la comunidad, al contrario, se funda en la actividad de Jesús y en su comprensión mesiánica". H. ROLLMANN – W. ZAGER, "Unveröffentlichte Briefe William Wredes zur Problematisierung des messianischen Selbstverständnisses Jesu", *Journal for the history of modern theology* 8 (2001) 274-322. Cfr. M. HENGEL – A. M. SCHWEMER, *Jesus and Judaism*, 527 y 537.

[80] Detrás está la teoría de William Wrede sobre el secreto mesiánico, quien propuso que Marcos habría rellenado la contradicción de que Jesús no pretendió ser mesías con el título que se le otorgó.

público del título de mesías[esct] por varias razones (Mc 8,30). Primera, su identidad profunda de Hijo (Mc 1,10; 13,32) parece que desborda estas expectativas[81]. Segunda, el que algunas tradiciones (SalSol 17,22-24) consideren al mesías como un guerrero, podría estar en la raíz de su rechazo. Jesús, como el Bautista, fue un hombre pacífico, que rechazó la violencia. El hecho de que solo fue detenido Jesús es indicador de que sus discípulos no fueron considerados peligrosos (Mc 14,50).

Seis textos resultan significativos sobre la relación de Jesús con el título de mesías[crist]. Nos centramos principalmente en el evangelio de Marcos.

Primero, el título de cruz, donde se explicita irónicamente que ha sido ajusticiado como "rey de los judíos" (Mc 15,26), que ya hemos desarrollado y que fue el verdadero desencadenante de que Jesús acabe siendo denominado mesías[crist].

Segundo, la confesión de Pedro "tú eres el Cristo" (Mc 8,29-30) y la respuesta de Jesús, reflejo de un hecho histórico y aunque reelaborado teológicamente, deja entrever una implícita asunción del título por parte de Jesús[82], así como un rechazo a que se haga público.

Tercero, su elección de los Doce y el hecho de que él no es uno de los Doce puede reflejar parte de su conciencia mesiánica. Su dicho sobre los Doce como jueces de las doce tribus (Lc 22,29-30) coincide con SalSol 17,26 donde se señala que la misión del mesías[esct] es reunir al pueblo (de la dispersión) y juzgar a sus (doce) tribus. El dicho de Jesús trasfiere esta misión a los discípulos. Ellos forman un colectivo mesiánico. Para Theissen, Jesús reconvirtió la expectativa mesiánica orientada a una persona para enfocarla hacia un "mesianismo de grupo[83]".

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[81] Es novedoso en el marco del judaísmo el hecho de que Jesús se identifique como Dios, ya que ninguna de las figuras mesiánicas atestiguadas en los textos intertestamentarios pertenece a la realidad divina. R. A. BÜHNER, *Hohe Messianologie*, 339.

[82] Para Yarbro Collins, Jesús en Mc 8,29-30, Jesús acepta el título. A. Y. COLLINS, "Jesus as Messiah", 69. Cfr. A. Y. COLLINS, "Messiah and Son of Man in Mark 8,27-33", en H. J. DE JONGE – M. GRUNDEKEN (eds.), *The Gospels and their Receptions*, Peeters, Leuven 2022, 151-170.

[83] G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *El Jesús histórico*, 590. G. THEISSEN, *El movimiento de Jesús: historia social de una revolución de los valores*, Sígueme, Salamanca 2005, 50. También Sanders, "los discípulos formaron un grupo mesiánico". E. P. SANDERS, *Jesús y el judaísmo*, 422.

Cuarto, su entrada en Jerusalén montado en un burro (Mc 11,1-11) es un gesto profético y mesiánico[84], a la vez que una declaración de intenciones y un desafío político por dos razones: primera, su acto evoca la entrada de un rey en la ciudad (Zac 9,9; 1 Re 38,44) y segunda, porque declara que viene en son de paz[85]. Su acción en el templo (Mc 11,15-18), también podría ser interpretada como un gesto mesiánico, ya que parece que actúa con suma autoridad, lo que podría evocar al sacerdote mesiánico (alguien esperado en Qumran).

Quinto, en el juicio a Jesús aparecen varias referencias mesiánicas, las cuales han sido muy reelaboradas teológicamente por Marcos, que quiere subrayar que Jesús es realmente el mesías, el hijo de Dios. Primero en la pregunta del sumo sacerdote en donde se unen títulos muy importantes para el cristianismo, como Cristo e Hijo de Dios (Mc 14,61). Segundo Jesús responde afirmando sí "yo soy", eco de Ex 3,14, aceptando explícitamente esos títulos (Mc 14,62), a la vez que se identifica con el Hijo del Hombre (une en su respuesta las citas de Dn 7,13 y Sal 110,1)[86]. La relación del título "hijo del hombre" (evocando a Dn 7,13) con el de "mesías" revela una trasformación del concepto de mesías por parte de Jesús (cf. 1 Enoch 48,10; 52,4) y sugiere una reelaboración de la expectativa mesiánica.

Sexto, el comentario de Jesús sobre la relación del mesías con el hijo de David (Mc 12,35-37) refleja cómo para Marcos, Jesús es el mesías davídico, pero el título "Hijo de David" no manifiesta el núcleo de su misterio.

3. Conclusión

Los discípulos de Jesús, que eran conocedores de muchas de las expectativas salvíficas que existían en su tiempo (también la del mesías[esct]), después de la muerte y resurrección de Jesús volvieron a los textos del AT para poder interpretar la figura de Jesús. La acusación con la que fue ajusticiado Jesús

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[84] Para Sanders la entrada de Jesús en un burro en Jerusalén (con una cita como Zac 9,9 no usada en Qumran ni en los apócrifos del AT) parece que refleja una aspiración mesiánica. E. P. SANDERS, *Jesús y el judaísmo*, 438.

[85] Cfr. El análisis de Zac 9,9 y su relación con Gn 49,10-11 y 1 Re 38,44 en J. MARCUS, *El Evangelio según Marcos II. 8,22-16,8*, Sígueme, Salamanca 2011, 889-892.

[86] A. Y. COLLINS, "Jesus as Messiah", 71-72.

(como pretendiente real y mesiánico), así como el recuerdo de la velada y corregida aceptación del título mesías por parte de Jesús, les impulsó a interpretar en estas nuevas circunstancias los textos del AT. Este proceso dio como lugar a la reelaboración del título (mesías[crist]), que rápidamente se convirtió en una confesión de fe y en parte del nombre de Jesús (Jesús Cristo).

IV. CONCLUSIÓN FINAL

La palabra palabra hebrea *māšîᵃh* significaba originariamente ungido (mesías[ung]) y fue utilizada para designar principalmente al rey como figura elegida por Dios para una misión (mesías[rey]). Varios textos del AT, en los que no se nombra directamente la palabra mesías hacían referencia a las promesas de Dios a David, pero estaban relacionadas con el rey que gobernaba y no con un futuro hijo de David. Las circunstancias políticas que acontecieron en los siglos II y I BCE suscitaron nuevas interpretaciones de esos textos y surgió la esperanza en un personaje escatológico que cambiará el destino de Israel, imaginado en general como un rey de la dinastía davídica (mesías[esct]). El contenido de este título es difícil de definir dada la escasez y diferencias entre los textos en los que aparece esta esperanza (Qumran, Sal-Sol 17-18, 1 Enoch 37-71, 4 Esd, 2 Bar) y desconocemos la difusión y aceptación de esta expectativa, la cual convivía con muchas otras.

En este contexto plural de múltiples esperanzas de salvación se desarrolló el ministerio de Jesús, cuyas palabras y actividad no coinciden con los rasgos que se pueden recuperar del mesías[esct]. Por tanto, se puede afirmar que Jesús no fue ese mesías[esct] esperado por algunos judíos en el siglo I CE, pero su crucifixión como pretendiente a "rey de los judíos", su resurrección que confirmaba su identidad y misión, y su velada aceptación de este título, obligaron a los primeros discípulos a volver a los textos del AT, para reelaborar el contenido de un título que permitía expresar la salvación que Jesús traía al pueblo de Israel[87]: Jesús es el mesías[crist] descen-

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[87] Al nombrar a Jesús como Cristo y presentarlo según lo profetizado y como esperado, no algo completamente nuevo, sino algo recientemente restaurado y cumplido, los primeros cristianos situaron el origen del mesías no en el presente sino en el pasado israelita y así establecieron la Escritura hebrea como una secuencia de auGURIOS. W. S. GREEN, "Mesiah in Judaism", 5-6.

diente de David (Mt 1,1), el hijo de Dios por el que nosotros podemos salvarnos (Hch 4,12) y en el que se cumplen las promesas de Dios a su pueblo (Jer 23,5). Comenzaba este artículo con la pregunta de si Jesús fue el mesías esperado y su respuesta ha sido matizada: Jesús no fue el mesías[esct] pero sí el mesías[crist].

'To recover my gravity' between the Origin and the Originary: Spirituality as The Originating Project of 'Religatio' in The Dynamicity of Communion and Participation

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Abstract: This essay is a programmatic study with the aim of proposing a new model for the comprehension and development of Spirituality. Using the key notion of 'Religatio', from an Augustinian inspiration, Spirituality is presented as a project in history, parting from the Mystery, which is Origin as well as Originary (or the same Origin at the end and as a goal) after the enriching experience, which is mediation. The result is a vigorous presentation of the essence of Spirituality in its metaphysical pretension, historical realization, and sacramentological or experiential mediation. All these would open new horizons of comprehension.

Keywords: Spirituality, Project, *Religatio*, History, Presence, Mystery, Mystagogy, Archeology, Betweenness, Mediation, Modality, Eschatology, Origin, Originary, Encounter, Gift, Integrity, Life, Existence, Experience, Excess, Ecstasy, Metaphysics, Salvation, Gravity, Sacrament.

Recuperar mi gravedad' entre el Origen y lo Originario: La espiritualidad como proyecto originario de la "religatio" en la dinamicidad de la comunión y la participación

Resumen: Este ensayo es un estudio programático con la finalidad de proponer un nuevo modelo por la comprensión y desarrollo de la espiritualidad. Empleando la noción clave de 'Religatio', desde una inspiración agustiniana, la espiritualidad se presenta como un proyecto en la historia, partiendo del Misterio, que es origen y originario (o el mismo

origen al final y como meta) tras la experiencia enriquecedora, que es mediación. El resultado es una presentación vigorosa de la esencia de la espiritualidad en su pretensión metafísica, realización histórica y mediación sacramentológica o experiencial. Todo ello abrirá nuevos horizontes de comprensión.

Palabras clave: Espiritualidad, Proyecto, Religatio, Historia, Presencia, Misterio, Mistagogía, Arqueología, Estado de entremedio, Mediación, Modalidad, Escatología, Origen, Originario, Encuentro, Don, Integridad, Vida, Existencia, Experiencia, Exceso, Estasis, Metafísica, Salvación, Gravedad, Sacramento.

A la memoria de Bruno Secondin y Raquel Sánchez .

'Amor meus, pondus meum'
St. Augustine, *Confessiones* 13, 9,10

'Je pris l'un de mes guerriers, posai un revolver dans sa main droite et, m'efforçant de retrouver la gravité que je mettais dans mes amusements, tirai quelques coups de feu imaginaires. Dieu que j'étais ridicule.
D'ou vient que les enfants, eux, sont rarement puérils?
J'avais totalement désappris à jouer et me sentais incapable de pénétrer avec sérieux dans un univers de fiction qui fût le mien.'

A. Jardin, *Le petit sauvage*

Spirituality as a *project* (a historical enterprise, thus a projection to be realized within history) is captured in terms of '*Religatio*', a notion so dear to the Augustinian tradition (given that tradition is that which is permanent in history or *historical* in as much as it is transmitted, shared, passed on in order to relink, to reconnect man with the Absolute of God.[1] '*Religatio*' is effectively executed in Spirituality, inevitably *in medias res* or in the middle or betweenness of things (which is the inevitableness of history). All these things taken together, which constitute the betweenness

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[1] St. Augustine, *De vera religione*, 39, 72. This essay clearly parts from an Augustinian inspiration without pretending to be an investigation into the thought of the Doctor from Hippo. It can be affirmed that the likes of Augustine who have penetrated into the religious have found the 'real' which is the object of Metaphysics, in as much as Metaphysics concerns itself with the real of reality, with reality in as much as it is real, cfr. M. Eliade, *The Sacred and The Profane*, New York: Hardcourt, Brace and Company, 1959, 96.

or historicity, form the narrative of history. Such a narrative consists of the unfolding of experience. Spirituality, in its projection as '*Religatio*' unfolds in accompaniment, initiation, leading into the effectively lived Mystery or presence of the Transcendent in the Immanent, of the Absolute (goal of all history) who allows Himself to be experienced as God (the Absolute as goal of Spirituality). This same Absolute comes into history by being experientiable in his integrity (as Absolute Spirit) as sacrament (mediation, by being in between amidst the things), transforming it into a liturgy or celebration of life[2], which is the effectively (profoundly, not only intimately[3], which all denote personally or the property of the self, but above all *integratedly*) lived Mystery in all its historical dimensions.[4]

Mystery: Waying as Exodus, Transcendence as Excess and Ecstasy. Spiritual Life According to the Presence in Terms of Fulfillment

Because the Mystery is in history, using Scriptural terms, we can state that Spirituality is a Way, a Waying, an Exodus, a celebration of life. It is not a fixed or established way but an experience, an ongoing celebration. Hence, a Waying. In this light, it is a *Pasch* or a passing over. Passing over means excessiveness, beyondness from one's prison of finitude and culpability. To pass over is being *in medias res* or existence or going beyond it to enter into an adventure, which is Spirituality, toward the Promised Land.[5] The Pasch or Passover, because it is excessiveness, beyondness, ecstasy, seeks to transfigure this existence, this being *in medias res*, this rootedness (because to exist is to be rooted in time and space) into being important, being there for someone, for something, to be alive (because from the root, realization or the actualization of the real as reality, of real as reality in life takes place). The real is above all an act, it is esse, the act

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[2] Cfr. G. Westphal, 'La présence du Seigneur', in : B. Brotte et al., *La parole dans la liturgie*, Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1970, 145-154.

[3] Acknowledgement is due to the reflections of J. M. Bernal which have given me stimulus to think along these lines and is an excellent point of departure for further studies, 'La celebración litúrgica como experiencia íntima de Dios', in: *Phase* 114 (1979), 473-493.

[4] The erudition and keenness of insights of H. de Lubac on this regard are truly remarkable, cfr. *The Splendor of the Church*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999, 51-83.

[5] Cfr. L. Bouyer, *Le mystère pascal*, Paris : Éditions du Cerf, 1957.

of living, which is the act of perfecting oneself. This life is growing, maturing, developing to being there for someone, being someone for the goal: the Absolute, the already perfect act, the real in itself as reality, the reality in itself as real, the act in its supreme instance. All Spiritual Life parts from the unthematized radicality, the inevitable starting point of situatedness, and proceeds to the experience, the mediation of the real as reality of reality as the real in life. The Absolute in life is not just there but is Presence: the act in its realization, for it is the act of bringing forth life. Presence is being present for someone, giving Himself to someone, thematizing Himself in giving meaning. This is, in effect, life according to the Presence: the Absolute made present in history in the Mystery, God who fulfills Himself, perfects His being the Absolute as He is made experientiable as the very Way that man must trod on and accompanies man in the Mystery. To be experientiable is to make the radical situatedness grow, mature, develop from being situated and just found in order to be encounterable, not just findable which is the radicality of existence or being there which abstracted ontologically becomes the idea, the greatest extent of which is the System or reduction of all experience to the realm of ideas. To be experientiable is to be a Way: a Way of mediation, a Way of encounter or growing, maturing, developing from findedness into encounter. Because the Way is a Promise that has to be fulfilled. However, this Way is a challenge which consists in being a Waying. It is a Promise to be fulfilled in Waying which means fulfilling in being present in history.[6] Nevertheless, this being present of the Absolute in integrity as Spirit, its being *in medias res* to call man from existence to life in the Spirit, is already fulfillment. However, this fulfillment must be lived out, undertaken in order to be effectively, permanently, finally fulfilled (attainment of the goal in eschatology) in history.

   Presence constitutes the praxis, not in the sense of that which is opposed to theory, but that which is the very execution of Spirituality in the middle of things by being in the middle of things, *in medias res*. Presence is the very mediation of the transcendental Absolute in immanent history which opens up as effectivity in history by being a narrative, by being a developing Way to be travelled. Being in the middle, in between things is the very constitutionality of this execution. Historicity, which is the be-

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[6] Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, *Sur la pratique de la présence de Dieu*, Second Letter.

tweenness in the mediation of experience (in as much as Experience is the mediation of the real to be reality in realities and of reality in realities to be real), has its realization as history. Spirituality as history has its realization in the Waying toward transcendence (which is the Holiness of the Absolute to which the Spirit as Person is called to be in communion and to be in participation), equated with meaning which has been lost and thus there is a need to reconnect, relink with it. Such reconnecting, relinking (religatio) would bring about the transfiguration of *existence* (or being there perhaps with a tinge of Heideggerianism) into *life* (or being there for someone and being someone).

Spirituality, in view of this, is a way that is wayed by man as he effectively (personally or specifically in his integrity) experiences, i.e., as he effectively participates in history, takes part in its events as the mediation of the Absolute onward to the Absolute, which is the *Origin* (the object of study of Archeology), as well as (and above all) the goal or the *Originary* (the object of study of Eschatology).[7] Archeology and Eschatology converge as the betweenness of Spirituality, in as much as it is Waying or constant constitution of the Way; Spirituality is always being *in medias res* but always moves forward (Eschatology) parting from the Origin (Archeology). Spirituality is being *in medias res* in motion, middleness among realities in movement. This motion is the movement from mere existence (being there) into life (being there for someone, for something or being important). Spirituality in as much as what is Spiritual is constituted as a Way, that is in constant Waying in the journey, path, way of history, which is the Way of Experience, whose discourse is an Experienciology, This, in turn, is transmitted, made into a tradition, made permanent and vibrant as Mystagogy. Tradition is the Origin that originates. By originating, the Origin services, opens up a path of initiation, communication, accompaniment to itself as the goal or the Originary. That which originates traces the path to itself as the goal, as the Originary to experience its novelty in its being ancient as Origin, in its novelty which is its Beauty expanded in the Charity of everyday living in Communion and Participation.

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[7] Some of the reflections in a previously published essay of mine have found their way into the present study: 'Creativity, Art, Mystagogy: Logos as and in the End of Waiting from the Origin. Hoping Toward the Originary', in: *Estudio Agustiniano* 57 (2022), 613-649.

Encounter: Reconciliation Point, Wisdom, Metaphysical Projection

Mystery is the transcendental in history[8]but present within immanent history such that it is the point of encounter[9] of the transcendental and the immanent. It is ambiance that opens up as the living out of the dynamics of the transcendent in the immanence of the life of man. Immanence is the conditionality of man in history that allows him to participate in the Holiness of the transcendental Absolute. This participation is called Glory by which Life elevates itself from mere existence. Mystery opens up for man this Participation which is a way of ecstasy, of transcending the vicious circle of existence (of being there) into the freedom of meaning of living (being there for someone and something that transcends oneself and calls for excess, ecstasy), which is being important to someone, which is being loved or meaningful and it with a purpose (which is the effectivity of having reached the Holiness of the Absolute who approaches man in his immanence full of His Glory or key to participation in His transcendence), with a goal that is beyond the vicissitudes of thrownness and absurdity. As the poet writes of this ecstatic other or transcendental one (Absolute) with whom man relates in order to be in integrity: 'Help me to exist (*existir*)/help yourself to exist/Oh inexistent one (*inexistente*) for whom I exist/Oh sensed one (*presentida*) that senses me/the dreamed one (*soñada*) who dreams me'.[10]

Hence, Spirituality is all about life and not just existence. Spirituality is the transfiguration of the existence (being there of man) characterized by rationality in the betweenness of things into a relationality (being important to someone and someone, not ust something, to someone) which is the dynamic specificity of life, inasmuch as life is the response to the call of

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[8] Cfr. P. Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History. Questions of Interpretation and Method*, rev. ed. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000. Also: K. Waaijman, 'Spirituality. A Multifaceted Phenomenon. Interdisciplinary Explorations', in: *Studies in Spirituality* 17 (2007), 1-114.

[9] I acknowledge the powerful influence of the notion of encounter expounded by authors such as E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of Encounter with God*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963; J. Martín Velasco, *El encuentro con Dios*, Madrid: Caparrós Editores, 1995; J. Rof Carballo, *El hombre como encuentro*, Madrid: Ediciones Alfaguara, 1973; X. Pikaza, *Experiencia religiosa y cristianismo*, Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1981.

[10] O, Paz, 'Piedra de toque', in: Idem., *Libertad bajo palabra*, 3rd ed., Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995, 134.

integrity. Spirituality is this relationality, given that relationality is to be in between or in mediation as a *Person* (as a living specificity), to be in integrity (*Spirit* is man in the way of integrity) with the Absolute, who is the real that is reality, reality that is real, in the Supreme instance. The Absolute aids man, goes beyond existence (hence, it is inexistent) because it is not reduced to the ontological symbolism of existence or being. The Absolute, because it is real as reality, reality as real in its Supreme Instance, offers a liberating path of specificity and integrity, of being Person and Spirit, like Himself. This path is the purpose of existence in as much as is perceived, sensed, experienced or becomes life and not just an ontological abstraction or reduced to the imperialist ontological symbol of Being, which certain philosophical currents or schools have imposed to bring about an imperialist monistic system that does not take into account life's challenges, with all its joys and sorrows, pleasures and hardships, with all its laughter and tears, with all its vicissitudes in all their concreteness within which, in medias res, a path to integrity (Spirit) and specificity (Person) is opened as a way of Communion (Spiritual Fullness) and Participation (Personal Fullness).

Integrity is a gift, which only a specificity can receive. This capacity to receive of specificity is called property which in turn opens up as capacity to relationality. This opening up to relationship is what we call ownership and the act of relationality is called engagement Relationality is mediated by the gift, which is the point of encounter of the engagement within the way. Relationality is the call, motive and openness of and celebration of the real, amid the countless voices in existence, in as much as the vocation, the call is reality as real, of the real as reality, amidst things which we usually think of in a collective and monistic way (as Being). Relationality is the notion of engagement that breaks away with the imperialism of ontology and goes back by hearing and responding to the call of Metaphysics, of the real as reality, of reality as the real in the mediation of experience. Concreteness, which is the convergence of integrity and specificity that develops as property, becomes the very possibility of the happening, of the celebration, of the liturgy, which is the work of experience as mediation of the real as reality, of the reality as the real, breaking away from the imperialist tyranny of ontology.[11] *Life* (being there for

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[11] C. Vagaggini, *Il senso teologico della liturgia*, 4th ed. Rome: Paoline 1965, 623.

someone and someone, not just something, and thus an excess, a going beyond, surpassing all means and the state of being just a means, to a goal with oneself as the goal surpassing oneself in transcendence) is a celebration, a work, a liturgy and not just an event or happening, which is that which characterizes *Existence* (simply being there). Liturgy opens up as the dialogue (word that penetrates because it is shared) of doxology (the Logos of praise which is the discourse of the meeting of Holiness and Glory, of transcendental and immanent, in Communion and Participation) because of the oneness and many in the Communion and Participation brought about by Metaphysics, the path of transcendence within the Mystery, whereas an event only can lead to the dead end of monologue (the monopoly or hoarding of the Logos) of logopathy (sickness of the Logos), proper to ontology which brings about the monism of dictatorships and oppression. Monologue ties down the Logos as a verb, as an action to represent itself and dictate its own representations, in conformity with the abstraction of the verb in terms of Being and its ideal, monolithic, totalizing and totalitarian domain, eliminating all pluralities which are the diffusion of goodness in Charity. A dialogue allows the Logos to be dynamic in many voices, going to concreteness, specificity and contexts which are the conditions for reality to be real, for the real to be reality in the mediation of experience, open to infinity in transcendence in Charity to all in their plurality.

From a Christian viewpoint, Christ is the necessary reconciling point of history, which since the so-called fall (which is not historical but a metaphysical condition highlighting man's finitude and culpability[12]) has been separated into two main currents: the profane and the sacred.[13]   In turn, from a metaphysical (directional)-spiritual (integrational and specific) viewpoint, the existential struggle to reconcile profane and the sacred can be viewed as that dynamic tension between being and non-being.[14] Such a ten-

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[12] Cfr. P. Ricouer, *Fallible Man*, rev. ed., New York: Fordham University Press, 1986.

[13] This significant insight can be found in: H. U. von Balthasar, *Theólogie de l'histoire*, Paris: Éditions du Parole et Silence, 2016, 121. Aside from Von Balthasar, M. Eliade's reflections on the sacred-profane polarity are insightful, especially for the notion wherein the sacred takes a space within the cosmos or within the profane realm, which have somewhat inspired us in our notion of Mystery in these reflections, *The Sacred and The Profane*, 63-64.

[14] My undying gratitude to P. Tillich for this exceptional intuition, 'Existential Analyses and Religious Symbols', in: H. A. Basilius (ed.), *Contemporary Problems of Religion*,

sion is metaphysical, not just ontological, for such a tension commences with the strife between the real and unreal. Such a tension is caused by the penchant to reduce everything to ontology, to the monism of Being instead of opening up to Communion and Participation, of the One and the Many which is doxology. Man, who as St. Ignatius tells us, was created to 'praise, make reverence and serve God, our Lord, and through this to save his soul and other things on the face of the earth were created for man'[15], because of his finitude and culpability, finds himself existentially distantiated from the Absolute. Existence (being there) is called to transfigure, fulfill, perfect itself into Life (being there for someone). Transfiguration is the developmental task of Spirituality which is Metaphysical in projection and realization in this betweenness of history, in the middle of the beginning and the end or the Origin and the Originary, as the very fulfillment of Philosophy or Love of Wisdom. Wisdom in itself is the Metaphysical, for it is living with the real in as much as it is reality, with reality in as much as it is real in experience (and not just which is 'being there'). The experientiable in man brings about wisdom or the experiential plenitude of the Communion[16] and Participation in the Absolute amidst the integrity and specificity of the real in as much as it is reality, of reality in as much as it is real. Communion and Participation has as its referential point which is the Absolute in its experientiability or mediation within immanent human history as Mystery or Presence of the Transcendent in the Immanent which opens itself as encounter. This encounter, historically, is salvation.[17] Transfiguration inevitably celebrates itself as '*Religatio*', the developmental projection toward encounter with that which is beyond one's ego, one's finitude and culpability which are the prison of existence. Such a prison is built with wall of the ego, of monism that makes the One the imperialist measure of everything, imposing this measure to everyone. This prison is made up of the repetitive monologue (ontology) of being. Being of beings is the existential and totalitarian

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Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1956, 38-44. The classic study of A. Thatcher, famed for its thoroughness, has proven quite useful in our comprehension of this notion found in Tillich's thought, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

[15] St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, 23.

[16] For the moment, I will take into consideration the significative contribution of J. D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, London-New York: T&T Clark, 2009.

[17] Cfr. J. McIntyre, *The Shape of Soteriology*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992; P. Fiddes, *Past Event and Present Salvation*, London: DLT, 1989.

monopoly of the ego that reduces everything to the totality of being there as being of beings. It cannot tolerate the real of reality, the real of reality with its poverty, sufferings, tensions that are infinite voices, who are properties of their owners who are integral. These voices, these interlocking experiences must be lived in in dialogue and not in fusion but in encounter and in journeying forward which is carried out in respect, in Charity, in an unceasing call to Service, for Charity always seeks to perfect itself in Service.

Narratively speaking, this encounter is a history of salvation.[18] Thus Philosophy in as much as it is Spirituality in its origins, develops itself as

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[18] Cfr. O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964; Idem., *Salvation in History,* New York: Harper & Row, 1967. Indeed, there is the experiential tension between the "already" and the "not yet" in the New Testament such that the balance between life (identified with salvation as and in history) and existence has to be found. This can be attained in Spirituality and its history. Taking the debate between Bultmann and Cullmann, we can highlight the experiential in history over the act of revelation (*offenbarung*) as proposed by Bultmann and, even, Pannenberg. History is the background, the container for the experiential content in its dynamism which unfolds towards the encounter, in which the conceptual (often viewed as theoretical) coincides with the practical in an experiential living out which goes beyond mere acceptance, understanding or *vorverstiindnis*. Cfr. on this regard: R. Bultmann, *History and Eschatology. Gifford Lectures*, Edinburgh: University Press, 1975. Also: J. G. Williams, 'Possibility in Principle. Possibility in Fact: A Criticism of Bultmann's Distinction', in: *Journal of Bible and Religion* 33 (1965), 321-328. Events are mediational events by which the Absolute makes itself experiential as God and thus become the point of mediation for the communion and participation on the part of finite and culpable man in his quest for integrity or to be a spirit in Spirituality. It is not just a question of a series of divine events but Spirituality is itself the event, the experience made up of a sequence of happenings. In fact, it is beyond being an event. It is a celebration, wherein the event goes beyond its ego and becomes festive, i.e., excessive, transcending. We cannot deny that the core essential content of Salvation History goes beyond the empirical historical consideration or knowledge of what a divine event is, even from an epistemological viewpoint. An epistemology of relationality can prove to be crucial in unlocking the kernel toward its eschatological unfolding or development by which Man and God become fully related, with God as the goal, the originary goal in Spirituality. The Christ-event is key to understanding this mediation which we have termed as encounter or point of encounter. I have benefited on this regard especially from the studies of M.R. Playoust, 'Oscar Cullmann and Salvation History', in: *Heythrop Journal* 12 (1971), 29-43; X. PIkaza, *Dios y el tiempo. El pensamiento de Oscar Cullmann*, Madrid: Clies, 2014. Likewise, on the tension of the already and the not yet, cfr. J. Mouroux, *Le mystère du temps. Approche théologique*, Paris: Aubier, 1962. On the question of historicity of salvation, cfr. I. Ellacuría, 'Historicidad de la salvación cristiana', in: I. Ellacuría & J. Sobrino (eds.), *Mysterium liberationis. Con-*

a Spirituality in the fulfillment of existence in Life. Spirituality is the true project of Philosophy in as much as it is the path from the Mystery to Transcendence (Metaphysics). That being so, Spirituality is the Way of Love of Wisdom and is thus 'Religatio'. Spirituality is the journey towards the Absolute which presents itself as a Gift. The Absolute as Gift opens to the receiver, who is man, a projection by being the Origin of this projection and is the goal at the same time thus constituting its own originary projection. In the search for meaning from existence, given that the projection is a Giving, (attainment of the Origin as the goal through a process of perfection, growth, development, evolution), Spirituality is the journey toward Salvation. Salvation is the very secret of the Gift in its Givenness which constitutes the very call to excess, to ecstasy, to beyondness *in medias res*. Such movement of the Gift in its very call is the turning to the One, the Absolute.[19] Moreover, in view of this, the History of Philosophy[20] is, in effect, the History of Spirituality, the human search for encounter, i.e., the History of Salvation, the human search for the realization of this encounter.

In the Christian *tradition* (specific experiential context transmitted and shared within history throughout its phrases), Christ alone gives meaning to this encounter. He Himself is this encounter. He gives meaning and directionality to this encounter. He is the '*gravitas*' of which Augustine speaks, the '*gravité*' which Jardin searches for in his narrative, both of which we have cited as the epigraphs of our musings in these pages. The '*gravitas*' or '*gravité*' is something to be recovered. Gravitas is seriousness, the pull, the force of the vocation which springs out of Beauty, which is the call of all reality as real, of all the real as reality to itself, to its Order, to live out this Order in Harmony in Communion and Participation amidst the strife and tension of differences, particularities, contexts. Th aforementioned is in conformity with the Christian vision of Spirituality.[21]

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ceptos fundamentals de la teología de la liberación, vol. I, Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 1990, 323-372.

[19] Plotinus*, Enneads* IV, 8, 1; Ibid., VI, 9, 10.

[20] I have found very enriching on this regard the work of E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience,* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999.

[21] Cfr. E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ: The Christian Experience in the Modern world*, London: SCM, 1980; J. Martín Velasco, *La experiencia cristiana de Dios*, Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 1995; A. González, *Teología de la praxis evangélica. Ensayo de una teología fundamental,*

Christianity means to go back to the Origin, which is the Originary or the Origin at the end of the goal (in the realization that the Gift is the Giver who is the Absolute who constantly gives Himself in History by means of the mediation which is experience in sacramentological terms). Christianity parts from the primordial break, narrated as the fall, which in metaphysical-experiential terms indicates the finitude and culpability of man in relationality with the Absolute who is God, the Supreme Metaphysical. God is not just the Supreme Principle or Absolute. God is the Absolute who is relational, relationable, reachable in His Integrity (Spirit) through the Way, and the way is always what is between the start and the end, called Spirituality, which is not a fixed or static doctrine but is a Waying or constant experiencing in history. This relationality (which presupposes the Integrity, that constitutes Spirit, and Specificity in as much as it is Proper or Personality) is hinged on the gift wherein there is no devolution. However, given the excessiveness, the ecstasy, the generosity of the encounter that happens in the Waying, the gift which is the living out of integrity in man or Spirituality has to be, not returned, but shared, developed, passed on (as tradition). This is how we come to know of Spirituality and study it as a discipline, establish its epistemology or scientific stature. The data that comes from the concrete unfolding of Spirituality in its diverse schools, movements, currents helps us build our historical narrative which gathers its momentum as it discourses on the point of encounter. In other words, Spiritual Tradition, as the Waying of the Spirit in life which is passed on, in its concrete unfolding and deployment in history, forms the narrative elements of our Spiritual History and is part and parcel of the larger historical narrative that we all are building, that we are all cultivating in the present as Culture. Culture, after all, is the cultivation of the point of encounter with a view to permanence in Tradition.

This point of encounter, *in medias res* or within the various elements or things, which is historical for it is experiential, is rooted in the very nature of Spirituality, from the Latin '*spiritualitas'*, which expresses the Greek '*pneumatikos'* or living by 'being led by the Spirit' or 'living by the Spirit'

Santander: Editorial Sal Terrae, 1999; J.I González Faus, *La humanidad nueva. Ensayo de cristología*, Santander: Editorial Sal Terrae, 1984; A. Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition, vol. 1: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, 2nd ed., Westminster: John Knox Press, 1965; B. Forte, 'L'esperienza di Dio in Gesù Cristo', in: *Concilium* 31 (1995), 273-274.

which contrasts with what is carnal.[22] To be carnal, in the Paulinian sense, signifies to be 'fleshy', i.e., to be opposed to the higher things, to seek only to imprison oneself in one's ego, to remain in this shell that goes against excess or transcendence, and to remain mundane. It is, in effect, to be selfish, to be monistic, closed into one's egoistic self and its pleasures and not to be open to encounter which is always an opening up to transcendence, to the other, which is excessiveness[23] against the flesh. To be flesh, egoist is to go against integration.[24] Flesh is reduction of everything to its monistic, one-sided, enclosed desires. Spirit is man in his integrity; it is man called to be in Communion with the Absolute by being the Absolute in Participation, which is not static but is dynamic such that even along the Way, by Waying, man becomes Spirit in Spirituality. The key to integrity, given that Spirituality is the Waying of Integrity, is openness to encounter of the self, to be constituted as such, in relation (by being a Person or by being specific in being proper, by owning oneself always in relation to alterity) to the Other (who is always a transcendental Person in His Integrity as Spirit in relation to our intimate subjectivity). This relationality has at its maximum referent or ultimate instance in the Supreme Other or Transcendental which is the Absolute and God is the Absolute in Person, with whom it is possible to have a Personal (actual, real, specific, proper, owned, even with mediations

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[22] Special acknowledgement is due to S. Tugwell for these significant insights which have proved to be pivotal in my own reflections, *The Way of Imperfection*, Springfield: Templegate Publishers, 1985, vii. For the Pauline notion behind this thesis of Tugwell, I have taken into great consideration the study of J. Harley, 'Paul's Use of Pneumatikos (Spiritual)' in: http://www.ttgst.ac.kr/upload/ttgst_resources13/20123-141.pdf. Also: R. A. Horsley, 'Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos. Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians' in: *The Harvard Theological Review* 69 (1976), 269-288. For a more comprehensive survey of the notion of Spirituality in the New Testament, cfr. S. Parsons, 'Christian Life in the New Testament' in: E. de Cea (ed.), *Compendium of Spirituality*, Vol. I, New York: Alba House, 1995, 1-15.

[23] For this insight, acknowledgement is due to this eye-opening work on comparative mysticism of S. Breton, *Deux mystiques de l'excès: J.-J. Surin et Maître Eckhart*, París, Cerf, 1985.

[24] For the present reflections, the essay of R. Pannikar has proven quite helpful: 'Anima mundi-vita hominis-spiritus Dei: Some Aspects of a Cosmotheandric Spirituality' in: E. Schadel (ed.), *Actualitas omnium actuum. Festschrift für Heinrich beck zum 60. Geburstag*, Frankfurt-Bern-New York-Paris: Peter Lang, 1989, 341-370. Also by the same author: 'Aporías en la filosofía comparativa de la religión', in: J. Gómez Caffarena & J. M. Mardones (eds.), *Cuestiones epistemológicas. Materiales para una filosofía de la religión*, vol.1, Barcelona: Anthropos, 1992, 85-115.

but nevertheless, direct) Relationship made effective in Engagement, i.e., in the dynamicity of Communion and Participation.

This living out of encounter, given that encounter is to find oneself in the betweenness, is Spirituality, whose finality is to make this immanent man participate in Communion with the transcendent Absolute. So much so, this man becomes involved in this living out in his integrity and constitutes himself in this living out, in this Waying as Spirit. This is more than just knowledge. It is wisdom: involving the true being [25] which is integrity of man as participant and communicant of the Absolute which is Truth in as much as this same Truth is lived out in history. This living out signifies permanence through desire, the permanence in the permanent discourse of desire, which is prayer (dialogue or doxology with the Absolute who comes as God in experience, '*in medias res*'), that makes man persist in such a pursuit.[26] This drive is the concretion of '*Religatio*' which necessitates not just historical development but phenomenological unfolding so that the unfolding facts may become fully experientiable events in their concretion as moments within the global mediation of experience in their threshing out as particular experiential moments. This drive, as '*Religatio*' in history, is the pursuit of Spirituality in and of its perfection, of its realization which is the coming to full circle of '*Religatio*' in the plenitude of Communion and Participation. This drive goes beyond the distinction between the sacred and profane and history.[27]

In Spirituality, all these divisions blend into the integral realm (for integration is to be in between in constant journeying to completeness). Spirituality is man becoming the integral man in history, i.e., Spirit is involved in the intertwining of life in history[28]. In this intertwining or converging to produce encounter, is found true wisdom, the true metaphysics, the true directionality of human existence (being there) in the process of being human life (being there for a purpose and for someone), or the life in the spirit, life in transcendence within the immanence of human history, in this world (that

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[25] Plato, *Philebus* 59d. Also: *Republica* 490b, Ibid., 505ab; Ibid., 537d; *Phaedo* 247e; Ibid., 245a; *Timaeus* 52c.

[26] St. Augustine, *Enarrationes in psalmo*, 37, 14.

[27] Cfr. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, 2 vols., Paris : Garnier, 1936.

[28] Cfr. M. Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968,130-155.

which exists or is the house) which man by cultivation of himself as spirit (culture) converts into the home. This conversion into a home necessarily involves 'people's ways of viewing things, the ways in which they try to make sense of the practicalities of Christian living'[29]…In other words, this conversion (which is a transcending movement or an *excessus* in as much as it is turning about or '*conversio*' is a movement of ecstasy or transcending, '*metanoia*' in Greek, or leaving oneself or going out) by turning around, which presupposes integrity, is a Way of Life that has to be constantly realized in a Waying, in a mediating, i.e., in an experiencing, since experience is mediation. '*Conversio*' is the effectivity of the transfiguration in Spirituality. '*Conversio*' or turning around is the constant Waying of the Way of Life, Spirit is life that is peculiar, specific, proper. Spirit is Personal life. Life is proper to Spirit. Animals and plants, though they may have souls or vital principles or life principles, only 'exist' but they are alive in as much as they are part of this world of life of Man which by life, in the metaphysical drive of Spirituality, is constantly being transfigured, celebrated as home.

Man, as being, is in the world. But he does not just exist. He lives. He strives to live for he is Spirit, not just spiritual. Spirit, which goes beyond the symbol of being and into the very real of the reality and the very reality of the real in experience (mediation that makes encounter possible given that experience is being in the happening of the middle but constantly opening up to the celebration, the liturgy which is a call to *excessus*) means dwelling in a home. Life in the Spirit, which is the crux of Spirituality in its quest to be an established knowledge or episteme by offering a metaphysical way (of transcendence) by means of encounter (which is immanent constitution of man as spirit in history)[30], goes beyond factuality of the house which is the world and enters into the level of creation (of making this house into a home in the continuous pilgrimage that is constant shifting from existence to life with a geography whose only North Star is the Absolute in as much as it is communicable, participable, live-

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[29] S. Tugwell, *Ways of Imperfection*, viii.

[30] In the present reflections, I take as my starting point some fundamental insights in my previous essay: 'Completely Control His Master: The Epistemological Basis of Spirituality Within Metaphysics as Transcendental Projection' in: *Studium* 62 (2022), 475-497. Also: R. Zas Friz de Col, 'The Future of the Study of Spirituality', in: *Studies in Spirituality* 28 (2018), 5-18.

able), generation of a marked identity, i.e., that of man in his integrity in history in meaningful relationship with the Absolute, the very crux of encounter or the constitution of integrity.[31]

Such constitution necessarily opens itself to a project, captured by the term 'Religatio' which can be accomplished through the sacramentality of the traces, of the presence in this world.[32] These traces are the concreteness which are drives or modalities.[33] These modalities are the coordinates of the experiential mediation in the betweenness of the Way of Spirituality which is waying in mediation toward Communion and Participation. As such, they define the dynamicity of the *projectionality* of the Project of Spirituality which is 'Religatio' in the betweenness of history which is a constant call from Existence (being there) to life (being there for someone and something). In effects these modalities are the concrete modes of historical realization, in history which denote a recognition: the acknowledgement of the experiential imperative and necessity to undertake the project, to commit to it, to give oneself wholly (integrally) to this mission, foundational in immanence and sublime in transcendence. This foundationality is always a call, a vocation to sincerity, to honesty with respect to what we can call with Tillich as 'The Ground of Being'[34], better yet, 'The Ground of Reality (of realities) in as much as it is Real, The Ground of the Real in Reality (in realities) . Such a grounding can only be achieved in experience, as mediation of the real as reality, of reality as real.

This commitment to the project necessarily involves a recognition of its necessity, with a three-fold moment of a) grasping, b) accepting, c) bearing witness.[35]

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[31] Cfr. A. Child, *Making and Knowing in Hobbes, Vico and Dewey*, vol 16, number 13, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953.

[32] E. Levinas, *De Dieu qui vient à l'Idée*, Paris : Vrin, 1982, 107. For the notion of meaning, I have found inspiration in the study of K. Löwith, *Meaning in History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.

[33] In the field of Spirituality, concreteness has been especially emphasized by contemporary authors such as Ch. A. Bernard, *Teologia spirituale*, 6th ed., Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 2002; F. Ruiz Salvador, *Caminos del espíritu*, 5th ed, Madrid: Editorial de Espiritualidad, 1998.

[34] See the thought-provoking exposition of J. A.T. Robinson, *Honest to God*, London: SCM Press, 1963, 45-63.

[35] I have adapted these three notions from P. Ricouer, *The Course of Recognition*, Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 2005, 12.

Drivenness as Modalities: Concreteness for the Encounter, Concreteness for 'Religatio'. The Movement of Commitment to 'Religatio' from Grasping to Bearing Witness Through Accepting.

By these drives or modalities of concreteness, the liturgy (experiential life celebration)[36] of the Mystery[37] (that of the living and effective presence of the Transcendent Absolute in the Immanence of man which sacramentally, because it is incarnated and effective in history, calls man to Communion and Participation in every day realities) becomes the concrete realization of '*Religatio*'. Such concrete realization is not just an event or happening. It is an originating. As stated, it is a celebration, a public one wherein everyone is called to community and Participation (hence a liturgy). Liturgy is the celebration of man being Spirit, transfiguring ontological facticity in his metaphysical aspiration to the Absolute in terms of Communion and Participation.[38] It is *sacramental* because it involves concrete things, not abstracted monistic essences, but the real in reality, reality in the real as they are plural in the world which become *signs*[39] (as they point out toward the Transcendent in terms of 'religatio) and *symbols* (in as much as they stand in for the transcendent creating a living experiential ambiance)[40] wherein from Mystery (Transcendence in Immanence) there is a move to Mysticism (Immanence in Transcendence) and even to the perfection of Mysticism in Spirituality by means of a Way of the Spirit whose projection is '*Religatio*' and whose realization involves a Spiritual Drive. Celebrations go beyond happenings, events because they originate. By originating, celebrations are Service. They do not only

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[36] Cfr. Several Authors, *Anamnesis*, Vols. I & II, Turin: Marietti, 1974 & 1978; C. Vagaggini, *Il senso teologico della liturgia*, 4th ed. Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1965; Y. Congar, 'L'ekklesia ou communaut'e chrétieen, sujet intégral de l'action liturgique, in : Several Authors, *La liturgie après Vatican II*, París : Éditions du Cerf, 1967,242-282.

[37] Cfr. above all: E. Ruffini & E. Lodi, '*Mysterium*' e '*Sacramentum*'. *La sacramentalità negli scritti dei Padri e nei testi liturgici primitivi*, Bologna : EDB, 1987

[38] Inspirational indeed is the pioneering essay of S. Marsili, 'La liturgia primaria esperienza spirituale cristiana', in: T. Goffi & B. Secundin (eds.), *Problemi e prospettive della spiritualità*, Brescia, Queriniana, 1983, 249-276.

[39] P. Ricouer, *From Text to Action*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press,1991, 149-150.

[40] Cfr. L.M. Chauvet, *Symbole et sacrament. Une relecture sacramentelle de l'existence chrétienne*, Paris : Les Éditions du Cerf, 1987.

commemorate but open up toward the goal, which is the Origin rediscovered at the end, as the Originary.

The sacramentality described above indicate the *grasping*, the knowing of the project. It is a knowing that is not characterized by pretensions of domination or capturing but of relating with the Absolute in its transcendence which has become experiential in man's immanent history as the sacramental. Hence, opening up the Mystery, wherein the Liturgy is celebrated experientially as Communion and Participation within the realm of mediation which is the sacramental, wherein the Absolute becomes sacramental, mediated, reachable to man as Mystery which is cause, motive, ambiance of the celebration of life, is a different kind of knowing.[41] It is not a knowing of *being there* but of *being important there* to someone. This is wisdom. It is more than just knowledge as cognition. It is experience. It is mediation. To be important is to be beyond being there, it involves *excessus*, ecstasy: transcendence within immanence, communicant and participant with the Absolute as Mystery. It is not the mre scientific (*scientia*) knowledge of *existence*, but the sapiential (*sapientia*) mediation of *life*. It is a grasping that goes beyond, that is excessive, that is intensified. From this grasping, comes the *acceptance* which is not only intensified but is pushed to execution by being a *drive*, which is the motor of life, of being important not just there but in company, for someone. Company, 'for-ness' signify calling, gifting, toward Communion and Participation.

Such a drive, which is the push, given the primordial call or vocation, toward the fullness of experienciology, becomes concrete in terms of making the event of history a realization of the '*Religatio*' Projection of Spirituality, i.e., making history a Way of the Spirit, in accordance with the modalities of being in the world, as expounded, but being in the immanent world toward the transcendental. This drive, because it is in effect the execution of the acceptance, has three dimensions: a) *relinking* or act in work, b) *rereading* or happening in the word, and c) *rebinding* as invitation to the liturgy.

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[41] See on this regard the suggestive reflections of J. Daniélou, 'The Sacraments and History of Salvation', in: *Letter and Spirit* 2 (2006), 203-215.

A) Relinking or 'religatio' as act in work

'*Religatio*' denotes an act. It is a work (liturgy), done first and foremost by man, in as much as he aspires to be reconnected to what is transcendental or to what he considers to be the ultimate value in his life. Relinking is the dimension of '*Religatio*' that denotes man's personal involvement. To be personal is to be unique, peculiar, distinct in the will to be by acting. Acting is provoked by curiosity, the desire to know. This desire to know is a search for meaning which is a finite and culpable search. So it is not just a desire to know facts, or to have certain knowledge (episteme) which are constructs but it is a desire to have integral and specific knowledge (wisdom) which is experiential, which means the act of mediation. In light of this, within this immanent history of ours, relinking consists in waiting, in expectation of fulfilment whose opening is a coming, an *advent*. Such a desire to know presupposes a trust in one's capacity to know, hence the expectation that opens itself up as a way, an adventure, a going toward, a seeking which presupposes consent. Expectation is movement within finitude. It is the openness to *excessus*, to ecstasy.

By relinking, by expectation, by working, man opens up the thematization of Spirituality by reading himself and opening himself up to being a spirit in *excessus*, which is by curiosity, which is by desire to know in finding oneself *in medias res*, in the betweenness of the way of history which is the way of experience and its constant openness in *excessus* as a waying toward the Absolute. This relinking reveals that existence is a concatenation whose being there only has sense, meaning, importance in the rediscovery of the Originary, which is the Origin that awaits as the goal. As it awaits, it has had taken the initiative in Fulfilling itself, as the Promise that Comes and that is Faithful all the Way, in the Waying. Reading is going, it is making oneself a '*viator*', an opener of ways, opening up with desire an itinerary to know. Thematization is marking the itinerary into geographies and its coordinates.

This desire to know can only be executed in the act of creating a path, which is the historical concretization of '*excessus'*, towards a relinking with the Absolute starting with expectation, waiting which becomes concrete in the curiosity of investigation, as '*istoria*' (history) is, first and foremost, investigation. And this expectation, curiosity initially treats the issue of being

a spirit as a Problem in which man discovers himself, and his quest for mean-
ing, as a Problem, i.e.,a *'proballein'* or man is 'put forth', from *pro* 'before'
and *ballein* 'to throw' and this throwing creates a trajectory, an itinerary, a
way, a path. To be a problem means to put oneself in the fray, in the fighting
ring. It means struggle. History as a search for meaning is a struggle. To be
a problem is to set out for knowledge, starting with a vision. Vision is the
fundamental articulation of 'love of wisdom', of Philosophy.[42] Such a vision
starts in solitude. Vision is the curiosity of solitude ,enhanced by care of the
self and care of the surrounding reality, such that an itinerary is constructed
within this surrounding reality, involving oneself (specificity in property) in
its quest for development, growth and maturity as Spirit by which the wait-
ing develops, grows and matures as Hope.

Man perfects himself only by work and only by work toward knowl-
edge can he become Spirit. Work is the commitment, the option, the *asce-
sis* of commitment toward *excessus*, which is a call of grace, from the
Origin of the Mystery or *mysticism*. Spirituality, therefore, is the relinking
of man in the point of betweenness, in the meeting point, in the point of
encounter, given a primordial fault or separation or breach. Work is the
ascesis, the effort of man in his immanence toward transcendence. It is
man's openness to transcendence by being 'spirit' in specificity, property
(owning oneself and one's acts) or 'person'. To be Spirit in the dynamic
experiential process called Spirituality is openness to relinking with the
absolute. This openness is, above all, a work that starts as investigation
(*istoria*) in order to sift through details and opinions (doxa) toward a cer-
tainty (episteme) of Communion and Participation into meaning. Work
is investigation out of curiosity to seek the Absolute and live its truth in
order to formulate a *Creed*. Work is to love this liveable truth of the Ab-
solute which is opening to wisdom. Work is love of wisdom, Philosophy.
The Creed is one's certain belief (episteme), the ground, the foundation
(Philosophy, because it is love of wisdom, is laying down and formulation
and presentation of grounds, foundations as models for living reality). The
Creed is openness to set firmer foundations, in a constant Waying of laying
the foundations immanently by moving toward transcendence in *excessus*.
This constant Waying is the execution of the Metaphysical, i.e., the path

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[42] Plato, *Republica*, II 376 b.

to transcendence in immanence. It is the path of Perfection. Love of wisdom is the openness of such grounds, models to history, to the investigation. Love of wisdom is to take the problematic bull by the horns and to investigate its strength, its weakness in order to find meaning in the work, which is a task (*faena, tarea*), which is a struggle (*lidia*).

Openness is investigation. Investigation is questioning one's situation in the world and the meaning of the same. Questioning itself is the vocation to build links, bridges, ways, itineraries. Investigation always has the finality of relinking with the Truth of the matter. Investigation is encountering the Mystery first of all as a question whose response is not merely knowledge but a process of finding meaning as wisdom, of going beyond being there to being there for someone, eventually being there with someone (in the Absolute sense, in terms of Communion and Participation) with one's whole life in which one constructs an itinerary. *Istoria* is first and foremost inquiry into the Truth of one's situation and set out the path, itinerary, way toward it, not by talking about the way (*meta odos*) but setting the same way as an investigation, as a search for meaning which is search for truth. Such an openness in history, rooted in relationality to the other[43], is *a) subjective* or on the part of man who establishes himself as the knowing subject, b) *global* in its scope of investigation, c) *systematic* in its execution and development d) *formal* in its reach as transfiguration through relinking by investigation is its means of development e) *linguistic* in its nature because it seeks Communion, which can only realize itself in being communicative and consequently participative; and f) *criteriological* since at the outset all investigation seeks to separate *doxa* or opinion from *episteme* or certain knowledge.

To work is to approach, from the immanence of *in medias res*, the Absolute in its transcendence, to be relinked, to reconnect, to re-establish the relationship, according to the determination of the Absolute, or that which has set in the original sense this determination[44] to be attained in *religatio*

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[43] I acknowledge the influence of the work of P. Ricouer on this regard, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. This commentary has proven to be helpful in my attempt to digest and understand this Ricouerian opus: F. Dosse, *Paul Ricoeur, Michel de Certeau. L'histoire: entre le dire et le faire,* Paris : L'Herne, 2006.

[44] I have benefited on this regard from the work of M. de Certeau, Cf. P. Favre, *Mémorial*, M. de Certeau (ed.), Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960; J.-J. Surin, *Guide spirituel pour la perfection*, M. de Certeau (ed.), Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 1963.

or in the *Originary*, i.e., the *Origin* as the finish line, the goal, the end which presupposes a waying of excess, of ecstasy, of overflowing, Absolute generosity. Relinking consists in the construction of ways, itineraries, traditions to contextualize, home and transmit these traditions as living and permanent ways or itineraries. Such a construction necessarily signifies: a) *willingness* which is translated as a will to adventure, made concrete in listening, receiving, b) *desire* to give oneself and not just to give, c) *discernment* to interiorize the investigation as an exploration of one's depth or capacity of response to the call of the Absolute, since Spirituality is a response to a call, from the betweenness of the Way in its concreteness and contextualization as a path that links the start with the end, and d) *determination* to imply oneself in an integrated manner to this interiorization which is the building of character, that of the Spirit which is man working on the relinking.

Tradition, as stated, is the permanence of the gift with the challenge of not returning, but of giving back or going back to the Origin, but at the end or as the goal (*Originary*) and to go forth and share the gift, because of its sheer excessiveness and overflowingness which is the very root of sacramentality given that sacramentality is excessiveness in ecstasy in taking the initiative for encounter, in initiation, communication, accompaniment in the experience, made historical in Mystery: which is point of encounter in Mystagogy, which is the full realization of Spirituality which in history must be consistently and constantly transmitted as tradition by Mystagogy which is the going back to the Giver in receiving the Gift. This going back consists in transmitting the Gift because of its excessive generosity. This is because the Giver, in the Gift, is ecstasy the overflowing of wisdom in love, calling out to love. Spirituality is love of wisdom. It is love for the gift. Thus, this gift must not be returned. Instead, it must be given, it must be shared: as an option of life (Ascesis) rooted in the foundation or Origin which is, at the same time, the goal, end or Originary in a continuous exodus or waying (Spirituality). All of which part and go toward the gift by giving it in life, in a life of wisdom (of living according to the gift) nourished and nourishing with the Generosity of the Absolute made communicable and participable in Love. This giving of the gift, this continuous work makes the permanence (tradition) effective, hence, truly sacramentological. This Permanent Effectivity is the gist of Mystagogy.

Such a continuous work, an exodus from a primordial fault of separation of man from the Absolute, which is the active dimension of '*Religatio*', signifies the continuity of Mystagogy, with man working on his relinking by accepting the invitation by conscientiously taking part in the process of initiation, communication and accompanying (Mystagogy) in the act of self-giving which is the construction of ways, itineraries, traditions in one's existence to transfigure it into life, life in the Spirit. Only in the Spirit can one truly have life. Life is the primordial act of the spirit which is primarily executed as a quest, as an itinerary, as an adventure. Relinking is the act of transitioning from existence or being there to life or being there for a purpose and for somebody. Relinking is making an exodus, a going out, in faith, searching for the Absolute. Such a search seeks to call out for the Attributes of the Absolute. '*Salí tras ti clamando*', 'I went out calling for you'[45], as St. John of the Cross writes describing the commencement and forging of the itinerary.

B) Rereading or 'Religatio' as Happening in the Word

Work, as the execution of an investigation, in itself brings about an event, a happening that must not only be there (exist) but be significant (life). Hence, there is a need for action to make this transfiguration to significance happen. This transfiguration can only be a celebration. Action, by which man out of curiosity, out of his desire to know, opens up into a happening. An Act is a happening that rereads the thematization of man in being Spirit, out of his integral desire to know which is conjoined to his acting by which he takes place as a happening and opens himself experientially as a narrative. With narrative, the solitude of the ego necessarily opens itself up as solidarity, which awaits this coming, this approach such that the care of the curiosity of solitude opens itself up as service. Service is the very root of celebration. In fact, all liturgy, all celebrations are services. Rereading is the service of the act. By rereading, the text becomes

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[45] St. John of the Cross, *Cántico espiritual* (Poem), 1. For the moment, I have made use of the study of C. Thompson for this insight, *The Poet and the Mystic. A Study of the Cantico Espiritual of San Juan de la Cruz*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. Also: E. Pacho, *Vértice de la poesía y de la mística. El 'Cántico Espiritual' de san Juan de la Cruz*, Burgos: Editorial Monte Carmelo, 1983.

alive. It ceases to just being there or just being a happening or a fact or event in history and becomes executed, i.e., becomes a celebration, becomes a liturgy, a service for others, so that others may benefit in the transmission, passing on (tradition) in its effectivity by Mystagogy. In Mystagogy, man, in his calling to be spirit and person, responds to the initiative of service of the Absolute to man. This response is man's participation in this work, service of the Absolute and marks his own fuller communion with the same Absolute.

All investigation centers on happenings and all investigation is a happening. Knowledge in its foundational fullness, which is a critical problem, is a vision. A vision is the foundation of a happening. However, this vision has to develop into the happening of knowledge which is wisdom. From the investigation, the narrative is derived. And the narrative is about the celebration, the event becoming a liturgy. Narratives are not about facts but how these facts develop. Narratives are not about existence but about lives. These happenings are the opening up of one's thematization and reading of oneself to the reading of the one who comes to give significance to the Exodus with the Covenant. The Exodus is the penetration of man, the immanent questor, into the transcendent by means of an investigation, wherein the thematization opens up man within the itinerary of his creation to become Spirit in order to receive the Coming of the Absolute as God, whose coming is His Act of Serving Mankind, effectively making the rereading, constituting the celebration, the liturgy happen not as a fact but as a celebration; not as a mere factual recitation which is a monologue (enumeration of facts) but a *doxology* (praise of the celebration), opening up more channels for the Logos, by dialogue.

All investigation is carried out by going out. Investigation is necessarily an exodus, an *excessus* or ecstasy from comfort zones of innocence, which characterizes solipsism and egoism. Rereading is opening up of man as spirit in order to receive this Coming of the Absolute as God, in terms of Fulfillment and Fullness of Faithfulness, correspondingly allowing Mysticism which is the Covenant by which the Transcendent Absolute as God enters into the immanence of human history as Mystery, which is cognitively and experientially captured as Revelation. Because it is revelation and living out of the mystical, Mystery is when the 'love of wisdom' matures, develops, grows into the 'wisdom of love' which is the excess of the love of wisdom which is the acceptance of existence into a life-transfiguring process or 'wisdom of love'.

Narratives presuppose knowledge and live it experientially to be wisdom, to be the path that is trodden upon which discovers that in its searching or going, there is a coming. Because of this coming, this searching or going discovers that in its finite initiative of work, ascesis or effort, there is an infinite initiative of grace. Henceforth, the work unleashes the itinerary in terms of freedom. Man's work of relinking is in effect opening up to the coming of the Absolute, by freely letting it enter effectively in the intimacy of one's immanent existence so that it may become life. Such an opening up to the coming, to the advent is commitment. It is commitment to history because history is an advent of narrative that proceeds from the curiosity of the adventure and that becomes a commitment to history. In this commitment, made concrete in Service, one sets himself apart to receive the experiential coming of the Absolute as God, to serve Man as Supreme Spirit in Person, in 'graces and gifts from this Supreme Goodness'.[46] This coming, with all graces and gifts, is that of Justice, i.e., the Justice of God toward His Creatures which configurates the bindingness of the covenant in the Word. This justice, which is metaphysical, as it is the fullness of the real in reality, is the affirmation that the coming of God is His means, His transfigurative being *in medias tres*. His sacramentological and experiential means of being present as Mystery, which is His Mystagogy, His allowing Himself to be experienced, His Experienciology. Therefore, Metaphysics is Justice, it is Theodicy, the Justice of the Absolute in its Experiential Presence in Person (God) in History as Mystery. This very Presence is the very whatness of the Absolute as God. This Presence is Fulfillment, Faithfulness, for being Personal, specific, whose specific means

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[46] St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, 20. A 'Pauline' Spiritual Exercise has proven insightful in reading this spiritual classic of the founder of the Jesuits, cfr. J. A. Fitzmeyer, *Spiritual Exercises Based on Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1995. St. Ignatius has been helpful for me in understanding the notion of God as coming in man0s approaching and arriving to God in order to serve Him, as stated by the Saint himself in this paragraph of his classic opus. This opens up the notion that God is the one who takes the initiative so that man could approach Him. God is the one who comes. For the notion of the coming of God, I have always found helpful E. Jüngel, *God s Being is in Becoming. The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001. Above all, St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*. The entire opus speaks of man' search and arrival to Spiritual Matrimony, presupposing the initiative of God who in His Faithfulness comes to man, invites Him.

is the coming, the fulfillment of the Promise, especially in the Incarnation: the root of all sacramentology for being the Absolute as God placing Himself in the Service of man and this Service is the very basis of the service of man to God, the Liturgy. This Liturgy commences with the Absolute as Beauty, the Origin of Charity which perfects itself in history as the Good and that must walk this history by being the Truth that guides and provides (in terms measured epistemologically as conformity, correspondence, coherence, usage) in Service so that this Charity may be diffused in the Truth of the same history as Goodness, the Perfection of Beauty in its Originating force toward the Originary which is the Absolute in Beauty that has perfected, fulfilled itself in fullness as the God, Yaweh, who brings about the Good, in his Metaphysical Justice. Beauty is the Principle and the Goal, founded in and fueled by Truth, brought about to Perfection in Goodness so that all that is many, in their thingness by which they are real in reality, reality in real, may be in experience be One in Communion and Participation.

Freedom is the primordial condition of Spiritualty and is based on the exercise (work or exercise or ascesis) in terms of rereading wherein man, with a vocation as Spirit, which cannot be separated from the response as Person, and is perfected in the opening up man's existence in terms of life as a rereading of his situation, wherein the constructed itineraries, ways, bridges to be crossed or to be trod upon become effectively openings not just for man's active pursuit of the Absolute but for its coming which is expected in hope. Freedom is only exercised in hope. And from a Christian tradition, this freedom is a rediscovery from the curiosity to know one's destiny, from the primordial fault, which is rooted in one's Origin from God and from the original fall. Thereupon, freedom is the maturity of curiosity, of investigation, of inquiry from nostalgia, nostalgia for the Absolute which comes as God. With freedom, 'istoria' or history, which commences as an investigation, inquiry out of curiosity wherein man becomes the very problem of knowledge, becomes a narrative, better yet experiential narratives of salvation, because of the coming of the Word which is the happening of revelation or the Absolute, in its coming as God, allows itself to be experienced by man as God, which is the Absolute in Person, in his quest for integrity.

Curiosity is going toward a goal. Curiosity is the assumption of the question with the commitment of building an itinerary. It is seeking. But

hoping, which happens in the narrative of experience in rereading the thematization of man being a Spirit, discovers beyond the domain of the question, by living out the response: that the Absolute is the response for it comes as God, in the paradox and in the parable of the Trinity[47], that is, God as relationality, such that this Absolute is the one who has the real initiative from the eternity of transcendence and accordingly comes toward in the temporality of immanence within the going of man as Spirit or God in His relational integrity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is the Absolute, who comes to meet man in Person, in the integrity of His Person which are Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit creating an narrative of paradox, a parable that could only open up as doxology or the celebration of the meeting. This integrity of God that comes in Person is Fulfillment, the experiential-historical discourse of Faithfulness.

It can be affirmed that this meeting is the happening, the taking place. It is not just a place, but a taking place which makes possible the fulfillment of hope wherein the Absolute as God is experienced as faithfulness, going beyond or perfecting the faith of the itinerary, of the waiting, of the expectation, of the exodus. Exodus is departure, leaving, going out. It is ecstasy, excessiveness, generosity that the Transcendent Absolute offers to Man as God in an Act of Service within the experiential ambiance of the Mystery, which is the meeting point. Exodus is going away from the stinginess, greed and selfishness of isolation, solipsism which in the present world has become an art form pretending to be a necessary element for the pursuit of aesthetic ideals, in the pursuit of truth but which actually is just a poor excuse to be less human and humane. The result is a confusion of this aesthetic ideal with the truth.[48] Exodus is liberation to meet in order to celebrate.

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[47] I have found this work to be enriching on this regard, C.Kaliba, *Die Welt as Gleichnis des dreienigen Gottes*, Frankfurt-Berlin-New York-Paris: Peter Lang, 1991. For a succinct foundational study on the Trinity for this notion of the World as the Parable of the Trinity, G. O'Collins, *The Tripersonal God: Understanding and Interpreting the Trinity,* London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999; W. Brunning (ed.), *Trinität. Perspektiven der Theologie*, Freiburg: Herder, 1984; B. Andrade, *Dios en medio de nosotros. Esbozo de una teología trinitaria kerigmática*, Salamanca: Secretariado Trinitario, 1999. For an excellent biblical perspective for our present reflections, cfr. J. Bottéro, 'Le Dieu de la Bible', in :J. Bottéro, M.A. Quakin & J. Moingt, *La plus belle historie de Dieu*, Paris : Seuil, 1977,13-45 ; M. García Cordero, *Teología de la biblia*, vols. 1-2, Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1970.

[48] T. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, London: Continuum, 1997, 53.

Exodus is going out in faith only to meet, to encounter, to have an experientially celebratory relation, in the freedom of the desert, with the foundation of this Exodus which is the Covenant: the Absolute that comes to man as God, in an Act of Service, so that man can come to God as Spirit. Covenant is the seal of this encounter, which opens up as a celebration in history, a taking place that is fulfilled and thus becomes a Liturgy. The taking place that comes as meeting, as encounter is Fulfillment. It is the discourse of Faithfulness. It is the very liturgy, the very celebration. Since what is celebrated is the fulfillment in history of the Mystery as Covenant. This Covenant opens up an experiential narrative, which is Wisdom, which is the thematic of Spirituality and which Philosophy takes as the foundational discourse. The greatest excessivity of man to become Spirit, which is ecstasy from existence (remaining in existence is metaphysical solipsism, which historically is selfishness), is to be on the side of life by living, which means being in Communion with the Absolute in Person who is God and by being the Absolute in Person, God, by Participation. All these means in history to be human and humane, in finitude and culpability which are stimuli, call, vocation to Exodus, to rise up from the fall and walk by Waying the Way (Spirituality).

With the Covenant, the consent or openness of the encounter becomes a self-giving given that the coming of the Absolute as God is a self-offering which mutually seeks a self-giving, by which the Word of history becomes codified as a word that commits itself to history in the experiential narratives parting from history as investigation, as seeking the adventure out of curiosity for the truth. This time the Covenant, parting from reading and thematization, is developed into a rereading. To celebrate is to give oneself as Gift for others in Permanence, which is the stability of service, which has its historical consolidation in Mystagogy within Spirituality, for Mystagogy is the fulfillment of Spirituality in as much as Mystagogy is the Permanence and Effectivity of the '*Religatio*' project of Spirituality.

Rereading is allowing oneself to be read by God, after undertaking a thematization and reading of one's own situation in the world and search for meaning in it, in one's going to the Absolute and such rereading opens up the going forward of man not as just a waiting or expectation, but as a hoping, making this waiting or expectation into a hoping which finds its meaning in the coming of the Absolute as God. All these lead to the dis-

covery that the Absolute that is searched for is the God that initiates history in which man participates out of curiosity, by investigation or inquiry; that God has the initiative and wishes to come to man in his coming, thus opening the passive dimension of '*Religatio*' which is rereading or wherein man opens himself up, in his quest to be spirit, to be reread by the Absolute who comes as God in passivity. So much so, the Problem which is the object of investigation or inquiry becomes truly the Mystery, the presence of the Transcendent Absolute in the Immanent History of Man as God.

Such a presence is celebratory, it is effective, it is permanent, it is dynamic. It is liturgy. Liturgy is the celebration of Service in its efficiency, permanence, dynamicity: the power to transfigure within history. So much so that, man 'discovers' in hope, springing up from the Nostalgia in which his curiosity, his investigation, his inquiry matures that the Absolute that comes as God directs Himself to his *a) subjective* level on the part of man who establishes himself as the knowing subject, with a b) *global* for this coming of the Absolute as God affects man's living in the world, it is also c) *systematic* such that God comes not in a haphazard way but creating realms of meaning given the global, God changes the d) *formal* dimension because this coming is a transfiguration into man's being in the world from active to passive as this rereading is the opening up of the thematization of the active dimension, God comes to man to reveal Himself and therefore is e) *linguistic* in its nature because it seeks Communion and Communion can only be communicative and correspondingly participative; and f) God's coming is *criteriological* since the covenant that sprung from the exodus is an effectivity of the faithfulness and should be the basis of discerning and determining the validity and authenticity of the way taken.

This work, which is the concreteness of service, is exercised by means of going becomes an event by which the real profound essence of the itinerary of going is discovered as the Coming of the Absolute. This Coming of the Absolute is the fulfillment of the Absolute as Mystery, as the Presence of the Transcendent in the Immanence of human history by which the Absolute serves mankind as God. Such crossing and act of treading in the act of working or '*Religatio*' as relinking is the event of effectively rereading one's existence as search for meaning, of transforming knowledge, from its opinative stage (*doxa*) to its certain phase (*episteme*) into wisdom, into meaning. However, meaning can only go beyond from being

a vision into truly a way in a covenant, into the happening as covenant and not just in the exodus. The effectivity of this Presence as Mystery (the mystical), given that it is the 'wisdom of love', opens up Morals, an Ethics wherein the path to happiness (*eudaimonia*) or being in good spirit, i.e., the disposition to live the life of the Spirit to the fullest in the fullest of Integrity in specificity, in property, in being Person.[49] Mysticism is the mystical in its dynamism, in its constancy in its coming to history, which is an invitation to take the journey together.

C) Rebinding or 'Religatio' as Invitation to the Liturgy

Integrity is not a state but a constant historical search for life in the Absolute that seeks to overcome the so-called theoretical or speculative visions by making them into liveable ways or itineraries, not just by practice or praxis but by integrity: the involvement of the whole to be whole in Communion and Participation by means of encounter, by means of fulfillment of the coming, of the approach, of the exodus or way of excessiveness, of ecstasy (not the transitory psychological state but the very metaphysical movement of man toward transcendence). Integrity is the way wherein there is a meeting, an encounter wherein the starting point of history which curiosity or investigation or inquiry that goes or proceeds toward a goal but is approached by the coming of God, who is the Absolute as Spirit *and* Person, which is the fount and source of history as experiential narratives. Upon the fullness of the experiential approach of making Himself experienced or making Himself the mediation, the bridge for Communion and Participation, which is the plenitude of the service,

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[49] On speaking of the 'limits of my world', L. Wittgenstein, from the viewpoint of language, was in effect speaking of a horizon of meaning and living and even acting, which may go beyond the tautological limits of language. Nevertheless, we must explore whether these limits are a circumference of presence and thus present mystical and ethical dimensions, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 5.6, 6.421, 6.522. All these must be taken within the context of Modern Philosophy, cfr. J. Jartnack, *Wittgenstein and Modern Philosophy*, Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1965; M.K. Munitz, *Contemporary Analytic Philosophy*, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981; A.J. Ayer, *Logical Positivism*, New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1978; F. Kerr, *Theology After Wittgenstein*, London: Blackwell, 1986.

the Absolute as Spirit and Person in God is experienced effectively as the Absolute as Spirit *in* Person.

Service during this dynamic process within the dynamism of narratives must integrate itself as a symphony of Communion and Participation such that company perfects itself with companionship, which is the state of Communion and Participation wherein service becomes reciprocal, mutual, shared. This is the full sense of integrity, which is symphonic, which is work, which is liturgy, which is celebration. Indeed, such a full sense demands more than just trust and commitment. It demands a Testament, for the covenant, the word to commit is already binding. For example, in Christianity this seal is the cross, the living Testament. In Judaism, it is the Law or Torah. In Islam, it is the fixed written word or Quran. It is in these binding that the covenant become present in history as traditions or permanence of the Integrity in history toward eschatological fulfillment.

Integrity only makes sense within a realm of freedom guaranteed by the discovery of history as experiential narratives parting from the investigation or inquiry out of curiosity. Freedom is the drive toward fulfillment, parting from knowledge which seeks out the Absolute and is met by the coming of God whose revelation, whose opening up in experientiality to man as Spirit is Wisdom. This coming is a *syncatabasis*, *anthropopatehia*, *condescensio* or going down in generosity, coming down, starting with the Absolute coming to man as Spirit in Person, whose radical effectiveness is the Incarnation, God becoming Man to serve mankind, in Jesus Christ and the sacramental prolongation in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, then permanence of the Divine Service in Mystery.

History is the movement from investigation (from the immanent to transcendent in the Problem of Knowledge) to narrative toward the fulfillment (from the transcendent to immanence in Mystery) which is Eschatological or the fullness of Integrity. In Integrity all the modalities (subjectivity, globality, systematicity, formality, linguisticity, criteriologicality) all converge in fullness of fulfillment in terms of being the journeyer, in terms of the scope of the journey, with regard to the orderliness of the execution and development of the journey in terms of company and that the projection has been executed and developed fully, such that the language has attained its fullness in being that of company from being instructional in the work and imperatively codified in the covenant to

liturgical in terms of Communion and Participation in the celebration, such that the criteria has been met, as there is fullness of fulfillment.

Relinking and Rereading find perfection when the active and passive dimensions meet in the rebinding, which makes the Covenant truly binding, obligatory not just on the part of man who becomes a Spirit but also, and above all because of his Infinity compared to the temporality, finitude and culpability of man, on the part of the Absolute who comes as God, who by His Service binds mankind to Himself in Communion and Participation. What is binding or obligatory is truly and effectively shared, in fullness of Communion and Participation, in view of the economy of the superabundance of the coming to the receiving, in agape wherein the 'excess' or exhaustiveness of the *kénosis* reveals itself as *pléroma* or fullness, wherein the Absolute, who is God as Spirit *and* Person, is experienced as God as Spirit *in* Person.

The rebinding opens itself to the broadening of the notion of Communion and Participation in history in terms of mystagogy, which is the *bearing witness* that necessarily flows from the *acceptance*, which in turn has its *foundation* in the grasping. Communion and Participation indicate that the consenting which grew into the advent of self-giving has not arrived but continues to perfect itself in a journeying together of man becoming a Spirit and the Absolute who comes as God toward the fullness of history in Eschatology. This is made possible because of the seal, the living Testament which is a journey together, a bond that walks the Way. It is a bond that brings together the assembly of men, the ecclesiality of those who walk the Spiritual life.

Journeying together, which presupposes Communion and Participation with the Absolute together with other men in the spiritual quest to become spirits in person (not just spirits and persons), is a constant desire to arrive in the fullest of fulfillment in eschatology. This journeying together is in this immanent history already a fulfillment wherein the mutual self-opening reveals man as Spirit and the Absolute as God in the fullness of mutual relation, wherein the former is Son or Daughter, Beloved, Sister or Brother, Spouse and the latter is Father, Lover, Brother, Spouse. This mutuality of relation is forged from the relationality of Mercy of God to the Human Spirit by which He allows Himself not only to be experienced as Father, Lover, Brother, Spouse but takes the hand of the Human Spirit

as Son, Daughter, Beloved, Sister and they journey together. Wherefore, by journeying together, the mutuality of accepting the invitation of the coming (relinking) by the approaching (rereading) everything becomes binging wherein 'love is wisdom' and 'wisdom is love' and not just 'love of wisdom' or 'wisdom of love'.

The Mystery transfigures its aura of being a question and challenge by being Presence and becomes a journeying together by being Present to Each Other which is the fullness of the circle of Spirituality, which is not a 'journey of the solitary to the solitary'[50] but a reciprocating adventure even from the beginning toward the end in the way in between, though it was apparently the journey started by the individual with the revelation that the Absolute took the initiative from all eternity in coming as God. Man's investigation, searching and going is in reality. This capacity for receiving and God's coming is his overflowing giving (excess, ecstasy) such that by Journeying together there is an economy of sharing wherein this giving and searching overflows into history breaking toward it to an economy or living out in Communion and Participation of giving and receiving creating eschatology.

Spiritual Economy is the administration, management of this giving and receiving, this coming and going, this searching and arriving in terms of togetherness, in terms of Communion and Participation. This giving and receiving is total, kenotic, such that this emptying is an overflowing into the infinite, beyond totality because of the Absolute love that comes and capacitates the finite search of man in its culpability.[51] This *kenosis* of the coming of God in search of the man who searches, who investigates opens up Infinity beyond totality, such that a journeying together is opening in which the *kénosis* is not exhausted in the total giving but is intensified by the force of love (*eros*) into an infinity that can only be celebrated liturgically as *agape*, as journeying together, with all others who form the ecclesiality of those who trod the Waying of Spirituality, in Communion and Participation. Mystagogy is the dynamic interaction of this giving and receiving, coming and going, searching and arriving in initiating, accompanying, leading but together, in terms of Communion and Participation,

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[50] Plotinus, *Enneads*, VI, 9, 11.

[51] For the notion of 'flow' in Spiritual Life, I find the discussion of W. Johnston quite suggestive: *Letters to Contemplatives*, Makati: St. Paul Publications,1993, 92-95.

driven by love, a love that is shared, diffused with others in Charity, building up an ecclesiality of Communion and Participation. In such an ecclesiality, Charity, that starts as empathy, is executed, made concrete, contextual in Care of others and with others.

Remaining in the Mystery: Staying in the Ambiance of Presence from Grasping, Accepting and Bearing Witness as Commitment. The Bindingness of 'Religatio' in Exodus

Correspondingly, we must not remain in the Mystery, in the Mysticism with its ambiance of presence, accompanied by phenomena, by fulfillments. Remaining in the Mystery would be remaining in Tabor. We have to go on, accompanying the Lord, to Jerusalem, to the Passion and continue the journey, to unfold our relationship, to truly become relinked, reread by being rebounded. By going on, we accompany, we celebrate, we unfold, we originate.

At this phase or dimension of '*Religatio*', the Word becomes Binding. Bindingness is the strength, the force, the energy in history of commitment which is the full historical unfolding of the '*Religatio*' Project. A Covenant is forged. Covenants originate bindingness for generations to come. It is the seal of Communion and Participation within History in its bindingness, in its foundationality and openness to the dynamics of history and process, i.e., openness to permanence in the form of Tradition or that which is carried over, handed over, given as a gift in history to be permanent, to stay, to continually enrich. Because of the Covenant, the Mystery becomes a way of *excessus*, even exceeding its sacramentological dimension and entering into the fullness of the *eschaton*, not just the overcoming of mediation but the fullness of mediation, its perfection, the Originary.

The Covenant of the Rereading, which can never be a solitary affair between an individual man and the Absolute (given that the Absolute fulfills Himself and comes as God for all to be in Communion and Participation as spirits in person with Him) remains in the continuous journeying together of the Human Spirit and Divine Spirt or God (as Spirit is the term of Integrity) in a Personal Relationship of Communion and Participation and becomes a Celebration that is seen as the constant point of arrival of the Exodus of the Waiting of Relinking. Journeying together,

given that the Mystery in its sheer *excessus* journeys with man in history to the *eschaton*, dynamically constitutes the concretization of the Invitation to Celebrate the Liturgy or the Common Work, makes the adventure a common work, a liturgy, a celebration of togetherness, of relationality. The common or public work (liturgy) is the journeying together in history the aspiration of arriving together in eschatology. Journeying together is the seal, the binding of relationality which in history is seen as tradition, i.e., in religious tradition, the concreteness of the betweenness of the historical way or context, of which Spirituality is the dynamics of the journeying together, released from the duality of Problem-Mystery, wherein the religious tradition or permanence of the religious in history is just the horizon of comprehending historically the journeying together, already a fulfillment in itself, takes place in history toward the fullness of fulfillment in eschatology.[52] Such a horizon of historical comprehension constantly reaches out as an invitation to the liturgy. The invitation is only possible as an excess, an ecstasy, a reaching out as an Act of Service.

Only relationality, which is the experiential realization of '*Religatio*' in history, is binding bringing together the two poles: the human spirit who is Son or Daughter, Beloved, Brother or Sister and the Divine Spirit who is Father, Lover, Brother. Relationality does not seek to know. It is not an epistemology of domination, of knowing, on concordance or coherence, but it is the epistemology of *agnosis*[53], of unknowing, of *apophasis* (negative theology) of letting the experience construct its own discourse as experience, as mediation in history that opens up the ambiance of Communion and Participation which is the Mystery, the encounter of transcendence and immanence in relationality which is the sacramental unfolding in historical concreteness which are the modalities of contextual effective experience in meaningful life moments. Eventually *aphosasis*, after exhausting all the affirmative linguistic recourses of analogy which is the stretching of the experiential limits of the effable, matures, develops and grows into an anagogy, a metaphysical directionality in the historical way of Spirituality.

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[52] Many meaningful insights can be found in this essay: J.K. Ruffing, 'The Praxis of Spirituality. Experiencing God and Responding to the Relationship', in. *Studies in Spirituality* 28 (2018), 47-64.

[53] Pseudo-Dionysius, *De Mystica Theologia,* I, 3; Idem., *De Divinis Nominibus*, I, 1, II, 4, VII; 3, IX, 5; Idem., *Epistola*,1.

An epistemology of dominance is characterized by knowing through the grasp of truth in terms of concordance or correspondence, coherence and pragmatic use. The absoluteness of these uses are all manifestations of ontological monism, wherein all concreteness is reduced to an intellectual construct or to the realm of ideas which we call 'system'. In a system, all reality in its realness, all the realness as reality is adjusted and reduced to ontological terms, to the symbolic abstraction of being of beings, abstracted from the concreteness of differences and pluralities. This brand of epistemology has led an atypical mystic and spiritual master like Simone Weil to affirm that 'when God has become as full of significance as the treasure is for the miser, we have to tell ourselves, insistently that he does not exist. We must experience the fact that we love him, even if he does not exist.'[54] This means that God is not known but experienced. Relationality is going beyond knowledge which is ontological or in terms of being and enters into the metaphyscial dynamics of mediation, into the ambiance of Mystery which is experience which is transcendental in its thrust, immanent in its happening, mediationally opening up the Way which is Spirituality. Thus, Relationality, because it is the Waying of Spirituality, is metaphysical, going beyond ontological categories (categories of existence) through relationality (categorization of life) into an ecstatic realm, uniting the dimensions or phases of past, present and future of history[55], that is configured experientially in the discourse of the Spirit, in the narrative of the mystery which is Mystagogy: the initiation, communication and accompaniment into the depths of the Mystery which is lived, not just postivistically known, relationally (globally or integrally and specifically) in order to be experiential in its mediation, sacramental (incarnationally effective and historically permanent) in its concretion.

Within the current of relationality, the experience, which has been experientially and discursively unfolded in narratives, speaks only of a unifying bond which shares something in common (Communion) with both Human Spirit and Divine Spirit, already bonding in relational codes as Son, Daughter, Beloved, etc., fulfilling the Work of the Exodus and the Word of the Covenant in a mutual sharing, commitment and relationship

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54 S. Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, London-New York: Routledge, 2002, 15.

55 P. Ricouer, *Time and Narrative*, Vol. III, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, 63.

of continually journeying together in history, breaking toward eschatology. In this breaking of history, Hope grows and is released from tis tensions and enters into the Restlessness that Rests alone in the relational God[56] who is Father, Brother, Lover, Savior, Sanctifier. This rest is release from history as an arena of narratives and liberation to be the narrator, together with the Father, Brother, Lover, Savior and Sanctifier. Narratives are methodologically descriptive (phenomenological) and interpretative (hermeneutical). These two dimensions of the method (discourse on the way) must converge into the experiential, such that the experience, the very mediation of the real as reality, of reality as the real, must have its own Logos, its own creative word that seeks to dialogue, to open up in countless voices, with countless shades and modalities in Communion and Participation with the same tone. Experience is the home of the Spirit and in the Logos the Spirit effectively finds this home in history and takes possession of it and lives in it to constitute himself as a Person.

The Liberation, the Eschatological Release from the history of existence, by means (mediation by being *in medias res*) of the *excessus* of life, of the narratives is Mystagogy in its fullness, better yet, in its fulfillment in its fullness: the togetherness (the being the other to each other together) of mutual initiation, communication, accompaniment in the continuing journey which develops discursively in historical terms as a Confession, celebrated as Liturgy, permanent as a Tradition of Communion and Participation. However, it is a Permanence of Pilgrimage, of further journeying. This Permanence takes the historical form of tradition is commitment to further journeying and as Mystagogy is permanently discursive in experientiality as Doxology: as work of praise made public, made communal in Communion and Participation, made liturgical or liturgy in history, as the bearing witness of the historically immanent, breaking into the eschatology of the transcendent within the Mystery, within the experiential ambiance of Communion and Participation wherein the transcendental and immanent meet in effective and permanent encounter.

Work which is a search in '*Religatio*' as Relinking is Philosophical because its directionality is *Theologal*, i.e., toward the Absolute in search of

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56 St. Augustine, *Confessiones* I, 1.

the God. The *Theologal* seeks a Vision of the Absolute as God. The Word that is sealed in the Covenant of '*Religatio*' as Rereading is *Theological* in directionality, i.e., the Absolute comes as God, i.e., it is God who comes and Reveals Himself, opening up a space of coming which is Presence, which is the Mystical, whose effectivity is Mysticism as it is lived out in as the 'good or happy life' (Ethics). This space of coming is covered by fulfilling, by faithfulness by which the Absolute fully reveals, not just cognitively or as unveiling of knowledge but as fully giving itself in trascendence in the mediation of experience to immanent man, Himself as God, as Supreme Spirit and Person. This is His Faithfulness, Fulfillment whose modality (particularity), mediation (encounter in bridging), sacramentologicality (effectivity and permanence) is the coming, the serving of God of Himself toward man, wherein God is truly experienced as Supreme Spirit in Person.

Owing to this, in the Bindingness of '*Religatio*' as Rebinding: the duality of the Theologal and Theological is overcome with the journeying together which is the directionality of the Spiritual Wherein Man and the Absolute, Finite and Infinite, Human Spirit and Divine Spirit, in relationality as Son, Daughter, Beloved, Father, Lover, etc. journey together. This does not mean that Spirituality is limited to Rebinding. Spirituality is projected within the betweenness of the historical context in its concreteness, in and as '*Religatio*' in all its three phases, dimensions, moments, involving Theology (or the theologal by which man searches for the Absolute as God), Mysticism (or the theological by which the Absolute comes as God and becomes Present) but it is in Rebinding that the Spiritual in directionality of Spirituality, which is the realization of Mystagogy in relationality, is appreciated, even going beyond the Presence as Mystery by continuing the journey that has been established with this coming and becoming Present, which is Fulfillment of the Absolute, who is Faithful as God. God is the Absolute in His Faithfulness, who allows Himself to be experienced as the Faithful One: *Yaweh* who will be Man in Presence, in His Transcendence as Mystery within man's Immanent History. Faithfulness is fulfillment. It is traveling toward the goal which always originates as it is the Originary, the Origin as the final point of all traveling, working and celebrating. All doxology is an originating pointing toward the continuation, the transmission, the perpetuation by means of Charity, by concretion in Service following the example of God Himself.

Continuing the Adventure of 'Religatio': Spirituality as Project. Attempting to Close the Experiential Circle from Between

To recapitulate and expand further with the aim of opening new horizons of comprehension: Relinking, rereading and rebinding are three moments, phases, dimensions of the same '*Religatio*' projection of Spirituality in its fullness of realization as an experienciology which is the discursivity of mystagogy, not just the mystagogical discourse. The three aforementioned are inseparable, i.e., the three 'happen', better said, 'celebrate' together (happening together as celebration, as liturgy or overcoming of the event of existence with the doxology of life is the effectivity of betweenness as experience or the concreteness of mediation in sacramentality). In effect, the three always open up as a celebration starting with the work (liturgy), which is always public or relational with others and with which every human endeavor or adventure commences.

However, '*Religatio*' is always a perfecting adventure, for it is celebrated in history as it breaks toward eschatology in being *excessus*, as we have tried to demonstrate with our rambling and reiterative prose with iterative purpose (iterative or to construct an iter or path of passage). There are degrees of growth, maturity and development, as the experience, which is the mediation of the real in realities in as much as it is reality and of realities in as much as they are real, is an occasion of growth, maturity and development, i.e., it takes place in these terms, toward perfection, in history toward the breaking of history into eschatology, which is release, liberation in reciprocal, relational and mutual company. This is what characterizes Spirituality in its directionalities as theologal, theological and spiritual. Spirituality starts from humility, realizing that man is just dust. Humility is the echo of the epiphany of the Absolute in man.[57]

The Absolute, in as much as it is the real in itself which is present in all reality and the Supreme Reality in as much as it is real constituting the universe of which the world, has for its echo as God the effectively lived and liveable portion: the land. Humility (from 'humus' or land or earth) is the world wherein we could live in Communion with the Absolute and be the Absolute in Participation. Humility is the key to man's metaphys-

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[57] Cfr. S. Rinaudo, *La liturgia epifania dello Spirito*, Turin-Leumann: LDC, 1980.

icality or aspiration to transcendence in the historical way to the Spirit, for it grounds man in his transcendental vocation to be spirit and person in Communion and Participation with the Absolute. The world is venue of Mystagogy, the experiential living out in terms of teaching of the Mystery in terms of experiential initiation, communication and accompaniment, which all in all form the concrete moments of Mystagogy as service. This venue has a pedagogical value, for it is the point of departure, the Origin of all experiential teaching.[58] The originating epiphany of the Absolute teaches man, in his life journey, to never detach himself from the notion of Origin, from the state of being linked to the humus or land or earth is the Origin. The Origin is not only a place: it is a *topos*, i.e., a spiritual designation, reference, as starting point for all our human labors, giving the same metaphysical directionality. It is permanent, as generations of men enter into their sunset, the Origin remains. Only then can the permanent humus, the land, the earth, the world (which is primarily a house that has to be transfigured in the spiritual life as home) be effectively the point of departure for the metaphysical transfiguration and elevation of man to become Spirit in terms of Communion and Participation.

The adventure continues. Spirituality is an ongoing process. What is ongoing is the state of betweenness, not at the start neither in the end but a going-toward. It starts as Philosophy, seeking to provide a model of reality, a vision from which we could all contemplate (theoria), while striving theologally for the Absolute, seeking its attributes. It matures in Mysticism wherein *Theoria* is lived in *Praxis* in the Immanent Presence of the Transcendental Absolute in its theological coming as God, cognitively captured as Revelation, which is established as Mystery. Love is the process of this maturity, which is the driving force of all growth, development, evolution. Then the acme or summit is the spiritual directionality wherein there is a journeying together. This is the fullness of the maturity of Spirituality, which commences as Philosophy then proceeds to be a Theology in Mysticism and whose directionality is Spiritual in the journeying together. In the meantime, as we journey, let us help, sustain, aid one another in Charity which is the very effectivity of Mystagogy.

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[58] Cfr. R. Bleistein, 'Mystagogie und Religionspädagogik' in: H. Vorgrimler, *Wagnis Theologie. Erfahrungen mit der Theologie Karl Rahners*, Freiburg: Editorial Herder, 1979, 51-60.

Spirituality has been from the very beginning Communion and Participation going to the end as a Waying or the dynamicity of betweenness. But within immanent history these two have to grow, develop, mature and evolve. From the clamoring at the quest or adventure of relinking passing through the calling of rereading which is the calling of the coming of the Absolute as God. And this calling or vocation, which is a historical invitation from the Presence or Mystery, matures into a responding by man which culminates in the journeying together, wherein Man and God unfold the richness of their experiential relationality. This mutual unfolding is a reciprocal Mystagogy, given that Mystagogy is relational. Man and God mutually open up to each other, they mutually initiate, accompany, lead each other into each other and in doing so unleash their relationality in terms of love which are spelled out as Lover, Beloved, Son, Daughter, Father and journey together, open up new avenues of Mystagogy for others as well. Always ecclesial, always relational.

Spirituality is a project. It develops in its projection as '*Religatio*' whose three phases, moments, dimensions we have attempted to expound on by presenting models or perspectives for comprehension without entering into details. In view of this, it is imperative to highlight that the development of the *Spiritual Project* is experienciological, correspondingly, mystagogical.

Spirituality as project of 'Religiatio' covers from the Origin, growth, maturity, progression (these three are the states of being of betweenness as experiential narrative) until the goal, until the perfection, until the fullness of fulfillment in Communion and Participation which is the very same Origin but is found at the end, after the enriching experience which is enriching mediation which historically characterizes betweenness in its dynamicity. Spirituality has three directionalities: theologal, theological and spiritual, all of which are projected and converted into a historical task, in terms of '*Religatio*'.

Experienciology is the development of Spirituality from the itineraries built by Philosophies out of models, perspectives, visions and which are lived through in the ambiance of Mystery which Philosophy as the theologal takes by the horns of that elusive unicorn of human adventure as it matures into the theological of Mysticism, which is Ethical or living the good life in the ambiance of the Presence called Mystery, until the fullness of fulfillment of journeying together, breaking into eschatology, breaking

dualisms of the theologal (toward God) and theologically (from God) in a continuing adventure of mediation, of encounter, of bridging.

Spirituality as a project is metaphysical: it is philosophical, mystical and spiritual given that Spirituality, which is projection from betweenness in experience within the sacramentality of Mystery within the same world (the effectively lived and liveable portion of the universe) as it is carved from the universe (or the whole of reality) grows, matures and develops until solitude through solidarity becomes company and becomes a journey together in Service. This journey, which is Metaphysics in itself, parts from the aspiration of immanence and grows, develops and matures into transcendence, reaching the presence of transcendence within immanence.

Indeed, Spirituality is a journey together of the immanent and the transcendent, going beyond history into eschatology, going beyond mere union, which risks monism and monolithic structures and is just togetherness or attachment or adherence in terms of correspondence. Spirituality, which is genuine Metaphysics, aspires toward the transcendent in Communion which is commonality, building a community, sharing everything, except the identity and therefore participating in each other by maintaining, respecting each other's specificity and property. Spirit and Person are fully realized in Communion and Participation, not just mere cognitive or even ontological (monistic) union. This is what metaphysics is all about. It involves Spirits, Persons not just principles, doctrines, abstractions, symbols. Metaphysics commences with laying the foundation of our understanding by models which are itineraries, acknowledging the presence of the transcendent in our immanence. Metaphysics continues by means of journeying in terms of Communion and Participation into the fullness of fulfillment of experience of the real as reality (in realities) and reality (by being realities) as real, in its Supreme instance.

By laying the foundations, Metaphysics realizes itself as direction, by giving the word to experience (experienciology) such that experience becomes a concrete historical Way of the Spirit and Person toward transcendence within immanence, a turn: pointing out a tendency, since the real or all reality (*realité*), as Bergson affirms, is tendency.[59] Even amidst all stag-

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[59] H. Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Indianapolis-Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999, 50.

gering, amidst all things or beings (*seienden*), despite the fact that we do not know how everything stands with Being (*Sein*)[60], or how we stand up to the goal of 'Religatio' for that matter: which is beyond Being in itself, which is the Real in itself as Reality, the Supreme Reality in as much as it is Real, which is the Absolute, who fulfills Himself in history as God in experience, primarily with revelation. Thus, we come to the projection, of how we orient, provide direction, formulate the fundamental tendency to our historical existence to make it grow, evolve, develop, perfect in life. This orientation is 'Religatio'. To orient, given that is an act of service, is to originate. Origination is the modality of metaphysical service. Because of this, 'Religatio' is Metaphysics which opens up, originates as a Way, as a Spirituality in history. Such a Way is Experience, a Path of Mediation. Only as Spirits and Persons, in Integrity and Propriety, in Communion and Participation, with the Absolute who meets us as Spirit in Person (in Three Divine Persons in the Christian Trinity), can we experience, travel this way in order to 'recover our gravity', the gravity of the mediation of Spirit (which is the integrity that bridges for Communion) and the relationality of the Person (which is the specificity that makes one the proprietor of his own life with others in Participation) vis-á-vis the Absolute.

This gravity is shared by all men, in as much as we all have a profound dimension given our rationality which is the root of our calling to be Spirits (vocation to integrity which is responded in Communion) and Persons (vocation to property or ownership in specificity, which is responded in Participation). This gravity is transcendental, takes place in the immanent level, in the point of encounter called the Mystery. It is the pull, the attraction, the Beauty of the Absolute, as Origin is veiled in its vocation or potentiality, that calls to all and to whom we 'owe' Charity in Originating by unveiling itself as the Way to Perfection, by sharing with all men the Way of Communing and Participating in the Absolute. Such a pull can only bridge, can only mediate the real as reality, reality as real. It can only be Experience, in its Waying of Spirituality (the Way of being a Spirit and Person in Integrity and Proper Relationality with the Absolute), in the Directionality of Metaphysics within the immanence of the world of existence, transfiguring it into a home for life, wherein Charity is lived out

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[60] I have made use of Heideggerian terminology as found in, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2000, 217.

as Hospitality to tohers. This can only be realized in terms of Goodness, which is the diffusion of Beauty, by means of caring, which is the execution of service, in as much as service is Charity made concrete approaching the unveiling, the nudity, the perfection of Beauty as the Originary as it approaches the Absolute who comes as God, who fulfills His Promise of the Absolute as God, who lets Himself be experienced as Yaweh.

After all, the coming of the Absolute as God is His Service, His Charity to all mankind, constituting mankind into an Ecclesiality, an assembly called to Communion and Participation. Service is the historical actualization of Religation. Sevice is the force of that call, vocation from the Absolute toward man for the latter to undergo the metaphysical path toward Communion and Participation, by experiencing the Absolute who comes, who serves, who fulfills as the God who takes the initiative to meet man in Mystagogy, in the ambiance of the Mystery which opens up as Mystagogy, as the very transcendental waying of the Spirit and Person, in history.

Discapacidad y catequesis: La hospitalidad como catalizador de la acción pastoral

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Resumen: La inclusión de las personas con discapacidad en la sociedad ha ido tomando cada vez más realce y una preocupación mayor en todos los ámbitos de la sociedad. La Iglesia también está llamada a trabajar en este ámbito de forma que se facilite su participación en todos los espacios eclesiales, también en la catequesis como proceso de personalización de la fe. Esta preocupación reclama de la incorporación de un nuevo concepto como catalizador de toda acción eclesial, la hospitalidad. Por medio de ella, la Iglesia reconoce en el sujeto con discapacidad una persona que es un don a la comunidad cristiana encontrando en ella numerosos dones que poner a su servicio, así como la imagen y semejanza de su Creador.

Palabras clave: Catequesis, discapacidad, hospitalidad, inclusión, Iglesia.

Disability and Catechesis: Hospitality as a Catalyst for Pastoral Action

Abstract: The inclusion of persons with disabilities in society has become a matter of increasing importance and concern in all sectors of society. The Church is also called to work in this area to facilitate their participation in all ecclesial spaces, including catechesis as a process of personalization of faith. This concern calls for the incorporation of a new concept as a catalyst for all ecclesial action: hospitality. Through it, the Church recognizes in the disabled person a person who is a gift to the Christian community, finding in him numerous gifts to be placed at its

service, as well as the image and likeness of his Creator.

1. A MODO DE INTRODUCCIÓN

La discapacidad se ha hecho presente a lo largo de la historia de la humanidad. Si bien es cierto este hecho, no siempre ha sido contemplada de la misma manera. En la antigüedad esta era considerada no solo como algo extraño, condena o incluso como fruto de un pecado cometido por los padres o por algún antecedente familiar cuyo castigo fuera pagado con alguno de los descendientes. La experiencia del pueblo de Israel ante la discapacidad era, en numerosas ocasiones, la separación de la comunidad y la denuncia como algún tipo de posesión o acción maligna.

La acción de Jesús ante la discapacidad, que se presentará a continuación de forma un poco más profunda, supuso una gran ruptura respecto al concepto establecido hasta el momento. No obstante, esta acogida no se terminó de traducir en un concepto de inclusión real, ni mucho menos cercano al actual. De hecho, basta recordar cómo muchas discapacidades, especialmente las vinculadas a afecciones cromosómicas o sensoriales se tradujeron en la participación en los conocidos como circos de excentricidades. Así lo recoge la película *El gran Showman* (2017)[1]. El desarrollo de la sociedad y de las ciencias favorecieron la evolución del concepto de la discapacidad. De hecho, fue en torno al siglo pasado cuando se tradujo en un concepto de reconocer la discapacidad como una característica y trabajar para que fueran poco a poco insertados en la sociedad. No obstante, esta inserción no se hacía de forma real, sino que se les favorecía su participación en la sociedad, pero partiendo de principios cercanos a la segregación, de forma que su discapacidad les marcaba una forma de ser y de poder estar en el entorno. La firma en Nueva York en 2006 de la *Convención Internación de las Personas con Discapacidad* por parte de la ONU supuso un gran paso adelante no solo en la comprensión de la discapacidad sino también en la respuesta que todas las entidades, incluida la Iglesia, debían dar ante la participación de las personas condicionadas por ella.

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[1] Cf. Schianchi, 2012: 158.

Esta evolución ha dado lugar a una nueva concepción de la discapacidad que la Organización Mundial de la Salud enuncia de la siguiente forma:

«La discapacidad es un término general que abarca las deficiencias, las limitaciones de la actividad y las restricciones de la participación. Las deficiencias son problemas que afectan a una estructura o función corporal; las limitaciones de la actividad son dificultades para ejecutar acciones o tareas y las restricciones de la participación son problemas para participar en situaciones vitales. Por lo tanto, la discapacidad es un fenómeno complejo que refleja una interacción entre las características del organismo humano y las características de la sociedad en la que vive»[2].

Esta definición conllevó una gran renovación en la concepción de la discapacidad y la introducción de un nuevo modelo de intervención general que marca el desarrollo en la actualidad. La discapacidad se sitúa desde este momento en una característica más del sujeto – como tantas otras, cabría decir – y por lo que sencillamente se reclama la introducción de los elementos necesarios para que el sujeto con discapacidad pueda vivir en el entorno. De esta forma, se superaba la necesidad de crear espacios adaptados a cada una de las discapacidades para favorecer una adaptación general de los espacios para que las personas condicionadas por cualquiera de ellas pudieran participar en todos los entornos. Esto suponía, por tanto, introducir lo que se conoce como el paradigma de los apoyos como modelo de intervención en cualquier ámbito. La dificultad de una persona con discapacidad para responder a una demanda generada por el entorno debe ser salvada con la introducción de un apoyo que facilite esta respuesta de forma activa, autónoma y responsable.

Este modelo se traduce, por tanto, en la necesidad de que las entidades o los responsables de las mismas introduzcan elementos necesarios que faciliten y posibiliten la participación de los sujetos con discapacidad también en la actividad eclesial que posteriormente deberán ser validados y aprobados por estos mismos sujetos en función de su validez y utilidad[3].

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[2] Organización Mundial de la Salud (2019). *Definición de discapacidad,* https://www.who.int/topics/disabilities/es/ [Consulta 28-oct-2019]

[3] Se entiende por accesibilidad lo recogido en la Ley General de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad y de su Inclusión Social: «es la condición que deben cumplir

Este principio– que luego se traduce en numerosos modelos de intervención según las características concretas de cada una de las discapacidades– es fácilmente comprensible en cuanto a las discapacidades físicas o sensoriales como las necesidades de movilidad salvadas mediante el uso de rampas, la discapacidad visual mediante la realización de las publicaciones en tipografías más grande o el uso de gafas… En cambio, tanto las discapacidades mentales como las psicosociales presentan más dificultades en cuanto a la introducción de los elementos necesarios, así como en la preocupación de los agentes de pastoral que se encuentran en muchas ocasiones con una realidad que les sobrepasa y transformamos nuestra acción en una de lástima, falsa condescendencia y errónea misericordia, lejana de una auténtica inclusión, incorporación a la comunidad y participación en procesos de crecimiento en la fe.

El papa Francisco en su encíclica *Fratelli tutti* afirmaba:

> «Quiero recordar a esos "exiliados ocultos" que son tratados como cuerpos extraños en la sociedad. Muchas personas con discapacidad "sienten que existen sin pertenecer y sin participar". Hay todavía mucho "que les impide tener una ciudadanía plena". El objetivo no es sólo cuidarlos, sino "que participen activamente en la comunidad civil y eclesial. Es un camino exigente y también fatigoso, que contribuirá cada vez más a la formación de conciencias capaces de reconocer a cada individuo como una persona única e irrepetible"» (FT 98).

Estos exiliados ocultos siguen viviendo en nuestro entorno, muchos de ellos alejados de la Iglesia porque parten del principio de que no disponemos de la accesibilidad y de las herramientas suficientes para una auténtica participación. Este hecho, sin duda, debe hacernos replantear nuestra acción pastoral desde paradigmas como la hospitalidad como catalizador de toda acción eclesial. Además, se encuentran con una difícil asunción de la creencia en un Dios bondadoso y misericordioso que per-

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los entornos, procesos, bienes, productos y servicios, así como los objetos, instrumentos, herramientas y dispositivos, para ser comprensibles, utilizables y practicables por todas las personas en condiciones de seguridad y comodidad y de la forma más autónoma y natural posible. Presupone la estrategia de «diseño universal o diseño para todas las personas», y se entiende sin perjuicio de los ajustes razonables que deban adoptarse»: BOE 289, RDL 1/2013 art. 2

mite el nacimiento de personas con discapacidad o la adquisición de la misma a lo largo de la vida; aspecto que tal vez desde la teodicea y la teología cabría mucho que añadir. Esta afirmación del papa Francisco pone de manifiesto la urgencia de que puedan participar en la vida de la comunidad cristiana de forma activa, reconociendo así su dignidad como ser único e irrepetible, como se puede observar en la acción y en la pedagogía de Jesús de Nazaret.

2. LA PERSONA CON DISCAPACIDAD ELEGIDOS DE JESÚS

La preocupación del papa Francisco de que las personas con discapacidad existan sin vínculo de pertenencia, ya sea social o religiosa, es fiel reflejo de la experiencia bíblica que podemos encontrar con el ámbito de la discapacidad. Es verdad que la experiencia del Antiguo Testamento, junto con los escasos conocimientos al respecto, facilitaban no tanto la condena –puesto que la discapacidad ya era considerada en sí mismo fruto de un pecado que se había transmitido al sujeto– sino que también suponía la exclusión de la comunidad y el rechazo por ella[4]. En el Antiguo Testamento, solo la acción de Dios podría resolver las dificultades que provocaba la discapacidad hasta el acontecimiento Jesús de Nazaret que con su aparición, mensaje e intervención promovió un giro copernicano en la atención a las personas con discapacidad[5].

La curación del ciego de nacimiento (cf. Jn 9,1-41) relatada por el evangelista Juan pone en entredicho que la discapacidad visual fuera fruto de un pecado y termina subrayando la curación, no solo la curación física sino el retorno a la comunidad, como factor clave de esta sanación. Otras curaciones como la del sordo que hablaba con dificultad[6] (cf. Mc 7,31-37) no solo suponían la vuelta a la comunidad, sino que respondería expresa-

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[4] Cf. Jue 1,6-7; 2 Sam 5,8.

[5] Cf. 2 Mac 8,24; Ex 21,26; Gn 32,33; Sal 146,8; Is 29,18; 38, 17; Jer 31,7-8; Sof 3,19.

[6] Algunas traducciones hablan de sordomudo debido a sus dificultades para el habla. No obstante, hay que reconocer que el habla se adquiere por imitación de lo escuchado. Por ello, hace pensar que el término más adecuado pudiera ser sordo, aunque reconociendo ciertas dificultades vinculadas al habla. Podría de este modo responder a otras discapacidades, como el autismo, donde no tiene por qué darse discapacidades sensoriales propiamente dichas, sino que la afección es otra que provoca otro tipo de alteraciones o afecciones.

mente a lo que hoy entendemos por el paradigma de los apoyos puesto que esta persona tiene la posibilidad no solo de retornar sino también de participar de forma activa en ella. Afirma Pikaza:

> «es un enfermo de comunicación: no puede hablar correctamente, ni expresarse con soltura, no puede escuchar la voz de Dios, ni comunicarse de verdad con los demás. En el fondo es un esclavo de su propia sordera y tartamudez: no logra entender lo que dicen, no puede expresarse. Por eso vive encerrado en la doble distorsión de su lenguaje, como un hombre incapaz de escuchar y hablar, sin poder conversar con los demás»[7].

De esta forma, la discapacidad comienza a vincularse con la debilidad humana y la fragilidad[8]. De hecho, las curaciones adquieren su punto álgido no tanto en la sanación en sí sino en la posibilidad de volver a participar de la vida social. De esta forma, la discapacidad es presentada como una característica más del sujeto y no como aquella que le condiciona de forma discriminatoria del resto de sujetos. En esta línea es importante subrayar cómo en la experiencia bíblica nos encontramos con sujetos sensibles al ámbito de la discapacidad que intervienen favoreciendo la superación de las dificultades que estas generan como la curación del paralítico en el evangelio según san Marcos (cf. Mc 2,1-12)[9].

La novedad de la acción de Jesús se basa en la acogida y caridad con la persona con discapacidad como fundamento del bien, negando la relación causal entre pecado y discapacidad, presentándola como lugar de la revelación y relación con el mismo Dios[10]. Las curaciones se expanden más allá de lo meramente físico, puesto que, partiendo de que su origen se encuentra en Dios mismo, se subraya la incorporación plena a la comunidad cristiana y al pueblo de Dios[11]. El protestante Yong reconoce

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[7] Pikaza, 2012: 547.

[8] Cf. 1Cor 11,29-30; Gal 5,12; Mt 15,14; 2Pe 1,9; Hch 13,11.

[9] «Necesitamos ser como ellos: estar dispuestos a hacer cualquier cosa que sea necesaria para acercar a nuestros hermanos y hermanas con discapacidades a la vida de nuestras parroquias. Necesitamos encontrar formas creativas de traerlos para recibir el amor de Cristo que sana»: Sutton, 2013: 11.

[10] Cf. Mc 7,32-37; Jn 5,2-16; 9,1-41; Mt 9,27-36.

[11] Cf. Schianchi, 2012: 49-65. Càrdenas reconoce que «la catechesi ha cominciato a prendere consapevolezza che un suo compito irrinunciabile è quello di far scoprire la dignità inviolabile di ogni persona umana»: Càrdenas, 2013: 245.

que desde el evangelio lucano se puede entrever cómo la curación de la discapacidad no es en sí la sanación propiamente dicha sino la eliminación de las barreras que impiden la participación de estas personas en la vida de la comunidad cristiana. Hay que reconocer que estas barreras se encuentran en numerosas dimensiones como la social, la económica, la política, e incluso en la propia teología[12].

La parábola lucana del banquete (cf. Lc 14,15-24) es expresión de la acogida de las personas con discapacidad en el seno de la comunidad no tanto como meras destinatarias sino también como sujetos activos. Hace situar al lector, es decir, a cada uno de nosotros en la perspectiva de que no solo hemos sido invitados a su mesa, sino que estamos llamados a salir a invitar a otros muchos a la mesa de Jesús. «Cuando des un banquete, invita a pobres, lisiados, cojos y ciegos; y serás bienaventurado, porque no pueden pagarte; te pagarán en la resurrección de los justos» (Lc 14,14). En este versículo se recoge, entonces, la urgencia de hacer llegar la participación de toda persona con discapacidad en la propia comunidad cristiana[13].

La acción cristológica en favor de la normalización de las personas con discapacidad reclama tanto de la teología, en cuanto reflexión científica, como de la pastoral, en cuanto atención y protagonismo real de las personas con discapacidad, una actuación urgente, prioritaria y decidida[14]. Presentar la discapacidad como lugar de revelación de Dios y espacio de encuentro, implica, por tanto, la superación de la concepción de la naturaleza de esta como castigo, condena o error que debe ser subsanado mediante una profunda reflexión, valoración y reconocimiento de su papel en medio de la sociedad y de la comunidad cristiana. Algunos teólogos han intentado responder a esta cuestión que reclama un profundo análisis, no exento de complejidad, que, como propone Glyn, no requieran una superestructura de gracia que salve y posibilite la participación y vivencia

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[12] Cf. Yong, 2011: 69. Lc 19,9; Hch 8,38.

[13] Cf. Gosbell, 2015: 109-122.

[14] Por normalización se entiende una participación ordinaria y común de las personas con discapacidad en la comunidad. De esta forma, toda persona es aceptada, valorada, respetada y amada en sí misma y en su diversidad partiendo de sus mismos derechos, evitando esa concepción de querer ocultar las características de la discapacidad.

de la fe, así como la imagen y semejanza de Dios de la que, como las personas que no presentan ninguna discapacidad, también lo son[15].

La discapacidad se concibe, por tanto, como una característica que condiciona al sujeto que debe encontrar en la comunidad cristiana la posibilidad de vivir su fe, conocerla, profundizarla y hacerla suya, convirtiéndose en auténticos testigos del Resucitado y discípulos misioneros que testimonien el Evangelio en medio del mundo[16]. De hecho, es urgente superar la concepción que las personas sin discapacidad tenemos de que ellos puedan añorar o extrañar otra forma de percibir la realidad que no es la suya, especialmente en la discapacidad mental que en la mayoría de ocasiones aparece ya en el momento del nacimiento con un marcado carácter prenatal. En ellas no existe ese deseo ya que su forma de percibir la realidad se encuentra condicionada por su discapacidad y no conciben otro modo de percibirla y vivirla que no sea el que han conocido desde su nacimiento. Otra cuestión será en el caso de las personas que a lo largo de la vida adquieren una discapacidad, viviendo entonces un proceso de aceptación de una nueva forma de comprender y experimentar la realidad.

3. IGLESIA DE PUERTAS ENTRE ABIERTAS: MAGISTERIO Y REALIDAD PASTORAL

La preocupación por la atención a las personas con discapacidad ha estado en el centro de la atención pastoral de la comunidad cristiana desde sus orígenes, aunque tal vez es verdad que no ha llegado a aplicar en la práctica pastoral estos avances en su comprensión. Tanto Juan Pablo II[17] como Benedicto XVI presentaron su preocupación por la atención a las personas con discapacidad, mostrando el horizonte puesto en una auténtica inclusión y participación en la comunidad. De hecho, Benedicto XVI afirmó en su exhortación *Sacramentum Caritatis* que invitaba a que se trabajara en favor de la iniciación cristiana y vivencia de la fe de los sujetos con discapacidad para que esta no fuera un condicionamiento insalvable más allá de lo que la propia discapacidad generaba:

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[15] Cf. Glyn, 2019: 571-584.
[16] Cf. EG 119-121.
[17] Cf. ChFl 54; EV; FC 14.26.41.71.74.77.

«Se ha de reservar una atención particular a los discapacitados; si lo permite su condición, la comunidad cristiana ha de favorecer su participación en la celebración en un lugar de culto. A este respecto, se ha de procurar que los edificios sagrados no tengan obstáculos arquitectónicos que impidan el acceso de los minusválidos. Se ha de dar también la Comunión eucarística, cuando sea posible, a los discapacitados mentales, bautizados y confirmados: ellos reciben la Eucaristía también en la fe de la familia o de la comunidad que los acompaña» (SaC 58).

Francisco describe la atención a las personas con discapacidad como un «signo del Espíritu» ya que «ponen especialmente en juego cómo se vive hoy la lógica de la acogida misericordiosa y de la integración de los más frágiles», sin olvidar esa catalogación que se ha recogido en la introducción de exiliados ocultos como afirma en *Fratelli Tutti*[18].

El actual Directorio para la Catequesis publicado en 2020 reconoce una gran preocupación por la catequesis con personas con discapacidad y su participación en los itinerarios de iniciación cristiana hasta el punto de ser uno de los grandes acentos de este nuevo documento[19].

«Las personas con discapacidad son una oportunidad de crecimiento para la comunidad eclesial, que con su presencia se ve invitada a superar los prejuicios culturales. De hecho, la discapacidad, puede ser incómoda ya que pone de relieve la dificultad para aceptar la diversidad; también puede despertar miedo, sobre todo si es de carácter permanente, porque hace referencia a la situación radical de fragilidad de cada persona inclinada al sufrimiento y a la muerte. Precisamente porque son testigos de estas verdades esenciales de la vida humana, las personas con discapacidad han de ser acogidas como un gran don. La comunidad, enriquecida con su presencia, se hace más consciente del misterio salvífico de la cruz de Cristo y, viviendo las relaciones recíprocas de acogida y solidaridad, se convierte en generadora de una vida buena e interpelación

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[18] Cf. FT 98; AL 47; LS 117; CHV 149. En el mensaje de la jornada mundial de las personas con discapacidad, anima reconocerlos como sujetos de derechos activos: Cf. Francisco (2019). *Mensaje del Santo Padre con ocasión del Día Mundial de las Personas con Discapacidad. 3 de diciembre de 2019*. Oficina de prensa de la Santa Sede en https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2019/12/03/0958/01962.html [Consulta 12-ene-2020].

[19] Cf. Martín, 2021: 107-199.

para el mundo. Por lo tanto, la catequesis ayudara a los bautizados a leer el misterio del dolor humano a la luz de la muerte y resurrección de Cristo» (DC 269).

Aunque es verdad que los avances se han producido, como se puede observar desde el punto de vista lingüístico en el que ya no se habla de discapacitados sino personas con discapacidad subrayando esta como una característica más, sigue habiendo camino por recorrer hasta que las personas con discapacidad no sean una oportunidad sino un auténtico sujeto con derechos en la comunidad cristiana de forma que su condicionamiento no favorezca una visión lastimosa, pesarosa o de falsa condescendencia.

Comprender la persona con discapacidad como don de Dios a su Iglesia entra en diálogo con la antropología teológica y sitúa este principio en el concepto teológico *Imago Dei*. El relato de la creación (cf. Gn 1,1-2,4) reconoce que la persona es creada a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Por ello, la cuestión teológica a abordar es si la discapacidad es también imagen y semejanza de Dios, es consecuencia del pecado original o dónde se puede situar. Sin poder entrar en la profundidad teológica que requiere este debate por una cuestión de espacio, cabe ubicarla en el ámbito de la característica del ser concreto. La discapacidad no daña la imagen de Dios puesto que no se identifica con un mal sino con un modo característico y concreto de ser persona, de ser social y relacional llamado y abierto a la relación con otros iguales y experimentando la vida y presentándola como algo merecedor de que el mismo Dios se hiciera hombre por pura gratuidad[20]. La afirmación de Glyn invitaba a reconocer a la persona con discapacidad con la normalidad y la naturalidad que reconocerías a cualquier otra persona que no se encontrara influenciada o marcada por cualquier condicionamiento de los que se catalogan como discapacidad[21]. De esta forma, la discapacidad se sitúa, por tanto, no en el ámbito de la identificación sino en el ámbito de la relación y de los modos de relacionarse que

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[20] «Disability provides a new way to allow us to appreciate the limited nature of the lives of all humans (disabled and otherwise) and the in breaking of the Incarnation upon the human horizon»: Glyn, 2019: 572. «L'uomo concreto, infine, è stato messo nel mondo come segno di Dio ed è lui che, adesso, agisce come creatore e governa la creazione. A ragione si potrebbe dire che la Genesi, da questo punto di vista, democratizza l'immagine di Dio nell'uomo»: Moral, 2016: 230. Cf. Eiesland, 1994.

[21] Cf. Glyn, 2019: 574.

un determinado sujeto presenta. El teólogo alemán Sanna afirma que el único vehículo para la transmisión de la fe es la relación[22]. Esta afirmación subraya cómo encontrar cauces de relación y comunicación que faciliten la participación de las personas con discapacidad puede ser un elemento clave y fundamental a la hora de desarrollar la misión catequística.

Por ello, si la Iglesia existe para evangelizar, como recordara la exhortación postsinodal de 1985 *Evangelii nuntiandi* (cf. EN 14), y esta se sustenta sobre la relación – como la de las primeras comunidades en el libro de los Hechos de los Apóstoles (cf. Hch 4,32-36) – una Iglesia de puertas abiertas está llamada a encontrar la forma de relacionarse y comunicar la fe también con aquellos cuyo modo de relacionarse se encuentra tamizado por alguna discapacidad. No obstante, no se puede olvidar que cada discapacidad se manifiesta bajo unas características concretas en cada uno de los sujetos reclamando, por tanto, una personalización e individualización del proceso.

El Episcopado español ha publicado recientemente un documento que pretende ser el inicio y la apertura de la puerta para el trabajo con las personas con discapacidad en el seno de la comunidad cristiana[23]. Es verdad que el camino recorrido ha sido amplio y arduo a lo largo de los años; en el que se han dado numerosos avances, especialmente vinculados a las discapacidades auditivas y/o visuales, pero encontrando a la vez dificultades en las discapacidades intelectuales y/o psicosociales. Partiendo del camino recorrido en el campo de la educación propone, en el ámbito de la catequesis, la selección y clasificación de los contenidos de cara a la realización de una adaptación significativa o no significativa. Cabría en este sentido preguntarnos si los contenidos catequísticos pueden adaptarse de forma significativa o es la profundización en una experiencia y vivencia de la fe, de forma que la adaptación sería en otros niveles como reconoce el propio documento en relación al cómo hacerlo, el quién, la accesibilidad tanto al espacio como al mensaje…

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[22] Cf. Sanna, 2001: 287.

[23] Cf. Conferencia Episcopal Española, 2021.

4. CATEQUESIS, ACCIÓN PASTORAL Y VIVENCIA DE LA FE. INCLUSIÓN, HOSPITALIDAD Y ACOGIDA

Partiendo de la importancia, por tanto, de encontrar formas de relacionarnos con las personas con discapacidad en la comunidad cristiana y de estas con otros sujetos, nos obliga a replantearnos sobre qué pilares se sustenta nuestra acción pastoral, catequística y evangelizadora. No son pocos los testimonios donde o bien las personas con discapacidad han sido molestas para con las personas sin discapacidad por su modo de relacionarse o conductas alteradas, sino también ellos mismos tienen cierto reparo a participar en la comunidad cristiana porque no han encontrado acogida, formación o capacitación para poder acompañar a estas personas en los procesos de iniciación en la fe[24]. Desde un punto de vista más profundo, Greshake reconoce que las personas con discapacidad son también interrogantes para las personas sin discapacidad porque ponen en duda los propios límites.

> «Las personas con discapacidad nos estorban porque nos recuerdan nuestra propia limitación, nuestra dependencia, nuestra impotencia incluso; porque advierten de que el hombre no puede encontrar su satisfacción y el sentido de su vida en él mismo, sino que depende de los demás, de lo demás y, en última instancia, de la transcendencia que desde la fe llamamos Dios: el único que, en definitiva, puede llevar a su plenitud la vida humana tan repleta de límites»[25].

El propio Directorio de Catequesis subraya la importancia de la cultura de la inclusión. En este sentido, es importante hacer una diferenciación terminológica que no es banal. Ambos términos, integración e inclusión, utilizados a veces de forma indistinta guardan en sí una notable diferencia. La integración se basa en la normalización de la vida de los alumnos con necesidades educativas especiales. La inclusión nos sitúa en la afirmación y la riqueza de cada una de las personas partiendo de la diversidad como un derecho que lo sitúa como un objetivo prioritario. Desde el punto de vista de la teología, cabe hablar desde un concepto di-

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[24] Cf. Rizo, 2012; Sutton, 2013.
[25] Greshake, 2014: 109-110.

ferente que describe la acción con las personas con discapacidad con más profundidad, la hospitalidad. Radica en la misma esencia de la Iglesia llamada a acoger y cuidar de toda vida humana, acompañándola, como madre que engendra a sus hijos en la fe, como la maestra que enseña a descubrir en la vida el rostro y el rastro del Dios, como ese nosotros que confiesa una misma fe en una misma comunidad[26]. Monge reconoce la hospitalidad como característica fundamental del amor al prójimo. Superando una filantropía, se acerca a la acogida gratuita, desinteresada y auténtica de toda persona en la comunidad, subrayando que decir hospitalidad es abrirse a la persona y no solo a sus necesidades[27]. Carter reconoce que la hospitalidad toma forma en las comunidades cristianas cuando las personas con discapacidad son invitadas, acogidas y conocidas, aceptando su condicionamiento, y apoyados por la misma comunidad que se siente responsable de sus cuidados. Se crean relaciones auténticas, hasta el punto de que son amados por sí mismos[28]. Este paradigma de carácter cristocéntrico transforma, por tanto, la acción catequística y pastoral de la comunidad cristiana si esta quiere ser en realidad una comunidad de puertas abiertas en la que las personas con discapacidad no participen de forma condescendiente o por pena sino de forma auténtica como protagonistas tanto de su propio proceso personal de educación en la fe como discípulos misioneros en medio de la comunidad. De esta manera se abrirá

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[26] Cf. Semeraro, 2021: 47-61.

[27] Cf. C. Monge, "Una semantica dell'ospitalità", en *Teologia dell'ospitalità*, Brescia 2019, 21-36. «Christian tradition regularly articulates the concern for those who are weak in terms of care and solidarity and hospitality. Yet, accompaniment seems to be a category that not only encompasses the deepest meaning of all these terms but also points to the continuous embrace of others as we walk with them. From an authentic Christian perspective of accompaniment, detachment, abandonment, and withdrawal are negations of what we the weak demand from us. We walk with those who experience weakness, we are their companions, and we come to the end of the way with them. Rather than momentary and random, accompaniment is permanent presence»: Ospino, 2010: 413-429.

[28] Cf. Carter, 2016: 167-180. «Abbracciare il disabile come un dono, come colui che ci accoglie e ci mette a nudo di fronte alla nostra umanità, scoprendo che ogni persona è preziosa agli occhi di Dio»: Biancotto, 2018: 36. «A church more hospitable to people with intellectual disabilities would be revolutionary because of the gifts that such people bring to the wider body of Christ. […] Their contributions are no less profound once these are identified and received as the wisdom of God that reveals the saving, sanctifying, and redeeming work of the cross of Christ»: Yong, 2011: 109.

la puerta a que otras personas también puedan encontrarse con Dios, hasta el punto de convertirse en responsables también de la transmisión de la fe en muchos ámbitos[29].

5. UN PROYECTO DE TODOS, PARA TODOS Y CON TODOS: LA COMUNIDAD, LAS FAMILIAS, LOS SUJETOS, LOS AGENTES DE PASTORAL…

Ser una Iglesia de puertas abiertas donde las personas con discapacidad puedan participar de forma activa y significativa pasa necesariamente por el hecho de que la inclusión y la hospitalidad, su participación y su vivencia de la fe sean tomadas como responsabilidad de todos los que formamos la comunidad cristiana[30].

Los padres y familias viven el duro proceso de acoger e integrar la noticia de que el hijo presenta alguna discapacidad y la consiguiente tormenta de interrogantes, dudas y miedos, así como la urgente acción para llevar a cabo una atención temprana que favorezca el desarrollo, la autonomía y el empoderamiento. Los padres además de hacer frente a la dura tarea de educar e introducir los apoyos y las herramientas necesarias siguen teniendo la misión de iniciar a su hijo en la fe. Los padres, en algunos casos, relegan esta dimensión por estar sobrepasados ya que muchos encuentran notables dificultades en el ámbito escolar, administrativo, etc… Con la vista puesta en la intervención pastoral y catequística, es importante tener en cuenta el hecho de que los padres son los primeros conocedores de la intervención psicoeducativa que hay que desarrollar con cada sujeto con discapacidad por lo que será de gran interés su vinculación con el propio proceso de catequesis.

La familia es el lugar paradigmático, propio, original y fundante donde debe darse el comienzo de la experiencia de fe mediante una iniciación a la vida cristiana basada en el despertar religioso, el comienzo sencillo de la oración, o la formación de la conciencia moral. También la

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[29] «Una parrocchia che include tutti significa che non vede nell'altro il 'limite', ma comprende che la bellezza dell'essere cristiano è proprio sentirsi parte di una famiglia dove nessuno è escluso»: Donatello, 2014: 57.

[30] Cf. Vadillo, 2022.

formación del concepto del amor humano y cristiano que es reflejo del amor de Dios[31]. En ese sentido, afirma Sutton respecto a la necesidad de participación de los padres en el proceso catequístico:

> «religious educators often emphasize that effective catechesis is a family affair. The family is the most powerful force in the faith formation of a child. Parents raise their children in the faith. Religious education in the parish is an essential part of this process, but it's not the whole of it. Just as the home supports classroom catechesis, the parish's religious education program can have a powerful influence on the faith life of the family. It's not uncommon for parents to experience a deepening of their own faith as they participate in the religious education of their children»[32].

En la familia es donde se aprenden esos pequeños gestos que son básicas expresiones de cariño y amor, base sobre la cual se sostiene la familia. Es en la familia también, el primer lugar, donde la persona con discapacidad debe ser aceptada como un don de Dios. Se podría afirmar que son cuatro las acciones que serían fundamentales que la familia hiciera en relación con la persona con discapacidad que, evidentemente, favorecerían también un desarrollo lógico, natural y correcto del proceso catequístico: amar y ser amado; ser válidos; ser autónomos; y pertenecer[33]. Estos cuatro pilares no solo son claves en el ámbito familiar sino también en el ámbito pastoral y eclesial. Todos estos aspectos harán a la persona con discapacidad ser protagonista de su propia vida, es decir, estar empoderado.

Si las personas con discapacidad son consideradas sujetos en la acción pastoral y catequística, la acción pastoral deberá de ser transformada para facilitar su participación mediante las adaptaciones necesarias. Si la comunidad cristiana no cumpliera esta misión, no estaría siendo capaz de responder a las necesidades que el Pueblo de Dios presenta.

Zuza afirma que es misión de la propia comunidad cristiana atender a las personas con discapacidad de forma significativa y desarrollar itinerarios auténticos de iniciación cristiana donde se posibilite y facilite su participación:

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[31] Benavides, 2005: 59.
[32] Sutton, 2013: 39.
[33] Cf. Jiménez, 2003: 35-39.

«Si bien los sacramentos son también para ellos, para quien padece una deficiencia mental profunda, autismo o cualquier otra deficiencia grave, no es menos cierto que en la Iglesia debe subsistir la intención de honrar y respetar el deseo que nace, suscitado por el Espíritu, de recibir el sacramento o de participar en la celebración, y no reducirlo a la mera expresión de una petición, una costumbre o una obligación. Por tanto, a la comunidad corresponde revisar y explicitar el modo de proponer los sacramentos y decidir en qué catequesis, en qué comunidad y en qué lenguaje celebrarlos»[34].

Los agentes de pastoral, especialmente los catequistas deberían recibir la formación necesaria según las necesidades y las discapacidades que han de ser acompañadas para poder conocer y disponer de las herramientas necesarias para poder incentivar, favorecer y ayudar a la relación con Dios y con la comunidad cristiana de las personas que se encuentran condicionadas en sus relaciones por alguna discapacidad[35].

Por tanto, todos estamos llamados a trabajar en común y en comunión para que, sumando, la discapacidad se transforme en una característica más en la relación entre los miembros de la comunidad cristiana reconociendo, por tanto, que ellos son un don a la comunidad cristiana y que están reclamando una tarea eclesial en nuestro modo de actuar y relacionarnos en la historia, en la acción evangelizadora y catequística de la Iglesia y en su proceso personal de fe.

6. A MODO DE CONCLUSIÓN

La atención a las personas con discapacidad en el ámbito de la catequesis reclama con urgencia una reflexión teológico-pastoral que encuentre vías de encuentro y de relación para facilitar la generación de experiencias de encuentro con el Señor por la que se comienza a ser cristiano (cf. DCE 1).

Como conclusión, se puede enunciar no solo la urgencia sino la propia responsabilidad de la comunidad de acoger a las personas con disca-

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[34] Zuza, 2000: 139.
[35] Cf. Madrid – Jiménez, 2021.

pacidad en los itinerarios de catequesis siendo conscientes de que, si no son incorporadas a esta, parte del Pueblo de Dios no formará parte de la misma; además, del cuidado y acompañamiento de las familias que viven en su seno el desarrollo de una discapacidad. La evolución mostrada tanto en la Palabra de Dios hacia las personas con discapacidad como desde la evolución sociológica han arrojado luz no solo a la concepción de la discapacidad como una característica más del sujeto sino como una urgencia a la que la comunidad cristiana debe responder. No obstante, hay que reconocer que, bajo la bandera del laicismo actual o de las afirmaciones de que la persona con discapacidad no puede tener dimensión espiritual ni vivencia de la fe u otras muchas motivaciones, la búsqueda de la autodeterminación y del empoderamiento de las personas con discapacidad ha olvidado en numerosas ocasiones toda dimensión espiritual.

Por ello, es urgente la preocupación por dar un paso adelante desde la catequética y la teología pastoral de forma que se reconozca y se proponga la posibilidad de que la discapacidad es una condición más del sujeto que no imposibilita la relación con Dios, sino que la hace diferente. Este condicionamiento reclama la búsqueda de nuevos caminos que faciliten tanto la relación con el Señor Jesús como con la comunidad cristiana donde se conviertan en discípulos y tomen protagonismo en la acción evangelizadora actual.

En definitiva, todos estamos llamados a dar un paso adelante y contemplar a las personas con discapacidad como un don de Dios. Ellas son sujetos únicos amados por Dios y llamados a la relación con Él, y cuya existencia reclama de nuestra pastoral y de nuestra catequesis nuevas vías que posibiliten una acción pastoral inclusiva con tareas participadas corresponsablemente por todos, cada uno según sus capacidades. Ante todo, deben ser comprendidas como personas que también están llamadas a convertirse en testigos del Resucitado y evangelizadores en un momento de la historia en el que todos los cristianos están llamados a la santidad y al redescubrimiento de su vocación bautismal. En definitiva, la hospitalidad hacia las personas con discapacidad posibilita que ellas mismas se conviertan en hospitalarias dentro de la comunidad cristiana rompiendo así la dinámica de exclusión y no participación.

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Evangelization among the Chagga of Rombo: a dialectical process

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Abstract: The historical encounter between Christian faith and African Traditional Religion has given birth to different attitudes, beginning with that of rejection on the part of the first bearers of Christianity and their allies to the attitude of tolerance and acceptance that led to the need for a thorough and deeper understanding of both African Traditional Religions and Christian faith. When one talks of African culture and religion there is consensus that the two are inseparable. With a broad understanding of culture as a complex whole including the whole way of life including religion, it is possible to see that even the Good News is carried within a cultural matrix, that must uncloak itself in order to enable those who accept it, live it in their culture. In this encounter, through a continuous dialogue, the Gospel message received through a particular Christian tradition is assessed in order to be assimilated to the African religion-culture, and in turn this African religion-culture is exposed to biblical criticism, being challenged in order to render it conform to the Gospel. Conversion was a dialectical process involving the dynamic interaction between potential converts and missionaries with discontinuity and continuity of some elements of their beliefs and practices. If conversion is taken to involve a dialectical process, it is possible that many Chagga would have accepted Christianity after a period of experiencing its requirements and conditions and especially after tasting the spiritual aspects which touched their inner self and their reason of being, no matter their initial motives. This can be the reason for the strength acquired by Christianity in the Chaggaland.

La evangelización entre los Chagga de Rombo: un proceso dialéctico

Resumen: El encuentro histórico entre la fe cristiana y la religión tradicional africana ha dado lugar a diferentes actitudes, empezando por la de rechazo por parte de los primeros portadores del cristianismo y sus aliados hasta la actitud de tolerancia y aceptación que llevó a la necesidad de un conocimiento más profundo y exhaustivo tanto de las religiones tradicionales africanas como de la fe cristiana. Cuando se habla de cultura y religión africanas hay consenso en que ambas son inseparables. Con una comprensión amplia de la cultura como un todo complejo que incluye toda la forma de vida, incluida la religión, es posible ver que incluso la Buena Nueva es llevada dentro de una matriz cultural, que debe desvelarse para permitir a quienes la aceptan, vivirla en su cultura. En este encuentro, a través de un diálogo continuo, el mensaje del Evangelio recibido a través de una tradición cristiana particular es evaluado para ser asimilado a la religión y cultura africana, y a su vez esta religión y cultura africana es expuesta a la crítica bíblica, siendo desafiada para hacerla conforme al Evangelio. La conversión era un proceso dialéctico que implicaba la interacción dinámica entre los conversos potenciales y los misioneros, con discontinuidad y continuidad de algunos elementos de sus creencias y prácticas. Si se considera que la conversión implica un proceso dialéctico, es posible que muchos Chagga hubieran aceptado el cristianismo tras un periodo de experimentar sus requisitos y condiciones, y sobre todo, después de saborear los aspectos espirituales que tocaban su interior y su razón de ser, sin importar sus motivos iniciales. Esta puede ser la razón de la fuerza adquirida por el cristianismo en la tierra de los Chagga.

Palabras clave: Evangelización, Religión tradicional africana, antepasados, muertos vivientes, escatología, adivinos, predicamento abierto, predicamento cerrado, cristología africana.

Introduction

This paper examines how some Africans have been able to be Christians and at the same time maintaining some important elements of

their traditional religion especially the belief on afterlife or life-after-death concreted on their ancestors and the living-dead[1]. How could they maintain the Christian eschatology and that of the African Traditional Religion? The term eschatology is used here to refer to the situation of the human being after this earthly life while at the same time aware that the term has a long tradition in Christian theology with different conceptions and contents from what is found in African Traditional Religion. So when applied to the context of African religion or African Traditional Religion it refers to the common situation believed by both, that of existence after death or after this life or the hereafter or the belief that after this earthly life there is another kind of life.

In the course of the discussion, a brief exposition on the African religious perspectives will be given. The evangelization of Africa will be examined in relation to the other social factors and thus examining it as a continuous and dialectical process. The incarnation belief would be a help in the argument regarding the place of Jesus within the African universe in relation to the ancestors and finally the evangelization among the African people would be examined and evaluated as a continuous process of self-opening religiously in her encounter with Christianity and so being still in the process of growing, transformation and self-purification. I will take the Chagga ethnical group as an immediate point of reference in this discussion to avoid unhealthy generalizations.

1. The African Religion Perspectives

The African traditional religion must have been able to answer their fundamental enquires regarding their origin, present life and their destiny. Any religious system has to respond to these questions though the

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[1] For Mbiti not all who have died are ancestors, that is why he preferred the term living-dead. He distinguishes different stages in the process of integration in the hereafter into the living dead and then the collective dead. The death of the person does not imply immediate disappearance into the oblivion. He is a living dead in the sense that the surviving relatives continue to hold him, remember him and retain him in state of immortality personally. The dead family member is kept in the life of the family daily. They want to be with him always. Mbiti claimed that the cult of the ancestor has its origin in this belief and practice.

approach and the answers may not necessarily be the same[2]. The Chagga people are not interested in search for the exact moment in which human beings were created because they take it for granted that they are from God[3]. This can be seen especially in the moment of death when they affirm that "God has taken what is his" (*Ruva aira kyake*) which means that human beings are property of God and so He has taken what belongs to Him. This is due to the integral conception of man within his cultural milieu imbued with the belief that at the end it is God (Ruwa) who controls everything[4]. "Ruwa has power to do all things. Ruwa does not change, as Ruwa was of old so he is now. Nor does he lie, as he says so he will do. If a man does evil, though it be at night, Ruwa sees him. If the chief and his warriors surround a man, they cannot kill him if Ruwa does not permit it. When a man sickens and goes to the diviners and slaughters many goats and oxen (for sacrifice), he will not be cured if Ruwa does not wish it"[5].

So when it is said that the African religion caters for their spiritual needs, this does not mean that it is the best one in the world though for them it must have been the best because they did not have another one and also it is true that it has provided for their religious thirst in the important moments of their life, from the pre-natal period till death and even after death in their integration with the ancestors and their living-dead[6].

The African people have their myths though few people bother to think or read them. It may be due the fact that the common tradition of narrating stories and myth has been lost or they have been left in the writings of the foreigners who had interest to put them down. These helps

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[2] Cf. BARTOLUCCI, E., *La iglesia en África* (Madrid 1963), 74; J.-M. ELA, *Fe y liberación en África* (Madrid 1990) 46-49.

[3] Cf. LEMA, A. A., "Chagga Religion and Missionary Christianity on Kilimanjaro: The Initial Phase 189-1916", in: T. SPEAR – I. N. KIMAMBO (eds.), *East African Expressions of Christianity* (Oxford 1999) 41.

[4] Cf. *ibid.*, 42.

[5] DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro and its People. A History of the Wachagga, their Laws, Customs and Legends, together with some Accounts of the Highest Mountain in Africa* (London [2]1968) 121-122.

[6] Cf. MUSHY, "Are we Christians? An Inquiry into the Unresolved Tensions between Christianity and Chagga Cultural Practices", in: *HekJ* 48 48(2013) 66-69.

one to note that African religion among the Chagga people was well equipped with sufficient means to fulfil their religious thirst enabling them live in the world amid the various challenges facing them[7].

From what can be seen in the various ceremonies and the sacrificial rituals in their life can make its observer conclude that their religious life was well built with the necessary structures and ceremonies for their relationship with God taking into consideration that the Chagga religion, as the other African religions, imagines and believes that God being all and possessing all, has no need of anything from man: our sacrifices, gifts, prayers and thanksgiving would be of no use if they are not for the good of man himself[8]. The challenge which the observer of these practices is faced with is that these ceremonies and rituals are performed by Christians or better those who claim to be Christians[9].

The ceremonies and the related sacrifices are connected with the hereafter in such a way that the belief on the ancestors and the living-dead is the one that makes them develop such ceremonies and sacrifices[10]. They had to fulfil the traditions of their ancestors if they have to live happily in this world and join the world of the ancestors after their death[11]. The Chagga people believe that God is good and does not harm human beings. He is not busy with creatures for he has entrusted the direction to the ancestors and the living-dead as his messengers[12]. Dundas gives a pictorial elaboration from the daily life experience of the Chagga and his relationship with God and the ancestral spirits. "Thus the Wachagga praise Ruwa. And if you ask them why they fear and obey the spirits more than they do to Ruwa, they will answer this: 'When the Chief sends to demand something that is his due, and on that day you have naught not give, whom will you try to appease, the chief or his messenger that he may speak well of you to the Chief and the Chief may have mercy on you? And if you

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[7] Dundas compiled mythological stories about the origin of man, destruction of the universe and many other legends which may help in understanding the religion of the Chagga people. Cf. DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro*, 108-123; 300-340.

[8] Cf. MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God of the Ancestors. An African Approach to the Incarnation* (Nairobi 1998) 51.

[9] Cf. MUSHY, "Are we Christians?", 65.

[10] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 49.

[11] Cf. *ibid.*, 49.

[12] Cf. *ibid.*, 47.

give bad words to the spirit who is sent to you, or refuse him that which the diviner has counselled you to give (i.e. sacrifice), that spirit will go to Ruwa and accuse you, and Ruwa will be angered and will send another spirit, a foreign spirit who is not of your ancestry, to afflict you greatly and to kill you. For this reason we honor the spirits more"[13].

So the Chagga people would not think of invoking God or honouring him by offering sacrifices in order to obtain help and his protection[14]. God is good and since he is good it is advisable to leave him alone and deal with his messengers[15]. They do not have a direct relationship with God except when all their possibilities have been exhausted[16]. The cult of the ancestors for them is not an obstacle in their journey towards God because they believe as it is for the African religion generally that God himself agrees to supplications and sacrifices being offered to the ancestors[17].

The pre-eminence of the ancestors and the living-dead in the Chagga religion does not eliminate the belief that they cannot receive anything or any favour from the ancestors if it is not from God for they regard God as "fundamentally the originator of all the good in the world. Could he also send suffering and misfortune to people? Yet ultimately, they believed that life could end only if Ruwa decreed it"[18]. Here it is in line with the belief that God has given all the goods to man and now it is his duty to live according them under the guidance of the ancestors and the living-dead[19].

Boulaga sees in the belief on the ancestors, and all its related features, to be fundamental in the religious perspective of an African. Thus he made a serious call regarding those who may not have conceived rightly this belief to review their thought and insisted that even the studies about the ancestors are to be put into practice in order to help in the process of evangelization independently without unnecessary interference[20]. African

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[13] DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro*, 123.

[14] Cf. *ibid.*, 123.

[15] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 49.

[16] Cf. DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro*, 123; LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 49.

[17] Cf. MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God*, 53.

[18] LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 43.

[19] Cf. MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God*, 55.

[20] Cf. F. EBOUSSI-BOULAGA, *Dieu en Afrique* (Tchad 1977) 79.

Traditional Religion with the important belief on the ancestors should be used in a practical way in the evangelizing task because it forms the base of the African culture that it should be allowed to be read just as an old testament for the people of Africa on which the Gospel would correct the deficiencies in the course of time. "We want to use them in practical ways, in evangelization. We consider our traditional religion as our Old Testament, and we know that the Old Testament always exists together with the New Testament. More to the point, they are not concurrent, however one reads the two. So, we want to be allowed to read our Old Testament, our religious concepts. There will be clarification in the course of time; and ideas will be corrected by the gospel itself"[21].

This call of Boulaga is challenging but it can be the best way for the Chagga and other African people to maintain their religious heritage which are believed to be the foundation on which all the other religions are built with the hope of improving them always[22]. Those who pretended to destroy such realities were not aware of the dangers of what they were thinking to do because natural religion must not be considered as contrary to spiritual religion because all have origin in God[23]. If the Chagga religious traditions are not digested and assimilated by the Christian theology they run the risk of disappearing and this would create a vacuum which may have negative repercussion on the African person than it is thought[24].

The suggestion of Lema seems to be valid even today for those working in any traditional religion environment and not only for the Chagga that "instead of destroying traditional religion could use it as a meaningful and effective basis for preaching Christianity. Had such an approach been adopted, Christianity might have quickly become a more meaningful and creative force in Chagga society. The message of the Christian Gospel would not then have been presented to Chagga in a completely foreign idiom. Had it been possible for missionaries to see that at the heart of every culture there was a religious or world view that

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[21] F. EBOUSSI-BOULAGA, *Dieu en Afrique*, 79; See also MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God*, 56.

[22] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 55.

[23] Cf. *ibid.*, 55.

[24] Cf. MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God*, 56-57.

presented a general understanding of the nature of the universe and the place of human beings in it, the task of relating to non-Christians might have been more rewarding"[25].

The question is that observing their religious life, one would ask why should they accept another religion if their religion caters for all their religious needs? How could they maintain two religions at the same time? How can they maintain two eschatological beliefs at the same time which seem to be incompatible, the Christian eschatology and Chagga belief on ancestors?[26] More concretely if they believe that after this life they will join their ancestors who are the intermediaries between them and God, what about the Christian faith which affirms that our death is conquered through the resurrection of Jesus Christ who is all in all? What is the place of Christ in the religious life of the African people? Where to place Jesus in the African Christians if the major role of the mediation has been or is given to the ancestors and the living-dead?[27] The following section will be an attempt to answer these questions.

2. Evangelizing method among the Chagga

The advent of the missionaries introduced education as the best tool to communicate the message of Christ as well as health centers. The formal education was necessary to enable the Africans integrate easily in the new system introduced by colonialism and the world order in general. The Chagga people at the beginning were busy fighting among themselves in control of the trade around the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro[28].

The introduction of modern education was an element which makes the majority of the Chagga to approach the missionaries no matter their attitude and attack on their culture. This does not mean that all who became Christians passed through the missionary schools. Many might have passed through the schools for the sake education and had nothing to do with the missionaries later, but also many had to adhere to the Christian principles in order to benefit the services offered by the

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[25] LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 55.
[26] Cf. BUJO, *African Christian Morality at the Age of Inculturation* (Nairobi 1990) 78.
[27] Cf. BUJO, *African Theology in its Social Context* (Nairobi 1992) 9.
[28] Cf. MOORE, *Social Facts*, 20.

missionaries. Through this, the missionaries were able to make sure that their teachings and the Christian doctrine were followed[29].

The Chagga recognized the good side of the missionaries and adhere to them. They had to abandon some customs and adopt new ones. "Slowly and imperceptibly, they responded by accepting some Christian aspects, rejecting others, and modifying or adapting others to their environment and way of life. Chagga were able to find meaningful relationships between their own and the Old Testament attitudes to life, although these were in no way highlighted by the missionaries" [30].

One of the elements that seems to be an object of discussion in many areas of Africa and among the Chagga was the institution of marriage and especially the practice of polygamy and other types of unions considered valid in the Chagga culture. In principle the question of polygamy was not a serious issue for the Chagga people and it was not absolutized as such because it was even disappearing at the time of the missionary's advent for very few people could afford it except the chiefs who used it for various motives[31]. Due to historical circumstances, the more the Chagga people integrated into the world affairs, polygamy and many associated customs were disappearing and monogamy was more favored because with time even very few women would opt for a second wife marriage status[32].

In the Chaggaland, the mission schools contributed greatly to the awareness of the people in understanding themselves, their traditional religion and Christian faith[33]. Today they form an important part of the education institutions[34]. These benefits, these services cannot be overlooked by a sincere and honest person no matter how evil could have been some of the agents of Christianity that is why today in many centenary celebrations even the intellectuals who tend to criticize the missionaries for colluding with the colonial power, would not deny this reality because behind all the adverse cases, Christianity still continues to exist as faith which transcends all the other institutions associated with it[35].

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[29] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 58-60.

[30] *Ibid.*, 60.

[31] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60; BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity*, 226-228.

[32] Cf. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity*, 227.

[33] Cf. *ibid.*, 491.

[34] Cf. CCB, *The Catholic Church in Moshi*, 74-77.

[35] Cf. SPEAR, "Toward the History", 5; CCB, *The Catholic Church in Moshi*, 38-61.

The Chagga people saw a blessing in disguise in the missionary works of evangelization in their country because they introduce different skills among the Chagga people in comparison to the colonialists[36]. The missionaries had completely different intentions and motives and this could be discerned by the Chagga themselves for they could differentiate between the missionary and a colonist[37]. Consequently, the Chagga did not bother themselves much about the missionary's attitude for they believe that it was they themselves who must interpret and understand the message according to their culture. They knew that the white men did not know their culture, though they taught them some truths, which they could see in their services, dedication and in the moment the missionaries had to face their fellow European colonists as in the case of Carl Peters who seemed to have planned to depopulate the mountain and populate it with people from other areas such as China and India. The missionaries had to warn him of this intention that did not materialize for it would have brought a disaster on the Chaggaland in terms of wars[38]. There are very few cases or not at all, in which missionaries were attacked or killed in the Chaggaland no matter how strict they have been, as it can be seen in the evangelization of the southern part of Tanzania[39].

2.1. Why did they accept Christianity if they had their religion?

To some extent the preceding explanations have given some clue to this question, that of mutual complementarity. Can one claim that

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[36] Cf. MADDOX, "African Theology", in: *East African Expressions of Christianity* (Oxford 1999) 26.

[37] Very few Chagga people would fail to distinguish a missionary with Karl Peters with his Nubian guards moving around the slopes of the mountain terrifying and even killing some people who opposed him or that the people of Rombo could not distinguish the actions of the Germans who attacked them accusing them of killing two German messengers or the people of Marangu could not distinguish Karl Peters who ordered to kill a young man who slept with his concubine and finally also killing the girl. The Chagga could distinguish clearly between the two and that is why they accepted the message of the missionaries and in principle did not create problems with the missionaries as it can be seen in the other areas of Tanzania where the missionaries at the end were considered as dangerous as the colonists especially when they physically attacked the important shrines of the traditional religion. Cf. PERRAS, *Carl Peters and German Imperialism*, 194-199; Cf. DOERR, *Peramiho* I, 39-40, 45-46.

[38] Cf. PERRAS, *Carl Peters and German Imperialism*, 191-192.

[39] Cf. DOERR, *Peramiho* I, 39-40, 45-46.

Christianity as "religion" was better than African Religion at the moment of the encounter? One cannot easily find an answer to this question but the carriers of Christianity and the way they treated African Religion would imply that Christianity was better than African religion, but history may help to prove it to be not so absolutely[40]. The difficult here is whether one can talk of better or bad religion[41]. One can talk of bad religious practices of a certain religion because what is internal in a certain religion is expected to be manifested in their praxis and even here certain practices may seem to be bad for those who are not the followers of such religion while such practices for its followers may be considered good[42].

Religion is not only a matter of intelligence and speculation. Feelings and emotions enter there and it can be said that sometimes such aspects are predominant: "Belief or acceptance by the mind that something is true or real, often underpinned by an emotional or spiritual sense of certainty, is the extremely important aspect of religion"[43]. This can be seen in their practices on how they may differ from one place to another, from one religion to another[44]. For example what is considered and seen by one religion as the fundamental and important elements, for other religions such elements may be abominable and even blasphemy and sometimes

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[40] The pluralistic hypothesis of John Hick has attempted to show that all religions are equally good because none of the religions can claim to know God as He is, for He is a mystery. Each one captures God according to his cultural background and experience of the ultimate, which he cannot claim to be the whole truth. Cf. HICK, J., *An Interpretation of Religion. Human Response to the Transcendence* (New Haven 1989) 233-252.

[41] Hick would say that they are all an interpretation of the same Ultimate Reality and so no one should claim to be better or bad. Cf. J. HICK, *An Interpretation of Religion*, 235.

[42] Chagga religion was the only way the Chagga people were relating with God and it seems to fulfill their religious needs till the advent of Christianity. It had sustained them all throughout and so one cannot claim it to be false and discard it easily without causing some effects on the Chagga life. Here one has to distinguish what is religious and the cultural elements associated with it for one cannot claim to be religious and atthe same time to have no culture. The two are inseparable and an attempt to separate the two, an imminent crisis can be the result.

[43] B. CHIDILI, "Is African Religion a Religion?": *African Journal of Theology* 21/II (2007)332.

[44] Cf. BOUYER, *Diccionario de teología*, 369-370; A. AYA, "Islam", in: X. PIKAZA – A. AYA (eds.), *Diccionario de las tres religiones. Judaísmo, Cristianismo, Islam* (Estella 2009) 1025-1026.

not only among different religions even within the same religion differences may exist[45]. We find different religions presenting contradicting divinities in the sense that one presents a God of anger and revenge who is believed to be calmed and satisfied by the blood of innocent people while others would advocate for a God of mercy and love without absurd promises in the afterlife. The very important elements or teaching in one religion can absolutely be denied or misunderstood by the other[46]. Even the believe in God as expressed in their propositions may be equal and the same but the practices and the kind of God believed may differ enormously. Even within the same religion one may find discrimination among the different denominations, each claiming to be better than the other[47].

Thus to affirm that a certain religion is the best of all, one must absolutely cross the threshold of this world of human beings into the world of God so that God may show how each or such religion has fulfilled the teachings claimed to be revealed and here I am referring to the religions which claims to be revealed[48]. One can claim to believe that his religion is the best of all because it is the one which fulfills his spiritual thirst. Even with these complications we can say that a religion that dehumanizes the other, which tends to destroy human beings making them suffer should neither be encouraged in the past nor in today's world[49].

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[45] Cf. AYA, "Islam", 1025-1026; BOUYER, *Diccionario de teología,* 369-370.

[46] Cf. BOUYER, *Diccionario de teología*, 369-370; AYA, "Islam", 1025-1026.

[47] Here it is from the rule of logic that a reality cannot be and the same time not to be. It cannot be allowed logically that the same God would accept the same practices for a certain group of people to be good and for others to consider the same practices bad. The same God cannot be good and bad at the same time and this goes against the perfection of God. The law of excluded middle would be failed here. The Chagga are aware of this belief that nothing bad comes from God except from his messengers and the intermediaries. Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 49; DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro*, 128.

[48] The revealed religions are Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These religions especially Christianity and Islam are not only revealed but are missionary religions which search for converting others to join these religions and the history of religion shows that they are the most violent religions in their encounter with the other religions. Violent here refers not only on physical confrontations but also spiritually for their lack of dialogue with the others. Cf. THOMAS, *African Traditional Religion*, 28.

[49] Cf. MAGHIMBI, S., "Secularism and the Rise of Fundamentalism in Tanzania", in: T. NDALUKA – F. WIJSEN (eds.), *Religion and State in Tanzania Revisited. Reflections from 50 Years of Independence* (Berlin 2014) 181-196.

A religion which absolutizes and uses the divinity as the tool of oppression and terror for the self-interests of few, must not be allowed no matter how divine it may claim to be its revelation. A religion that does not respect human dignity and freedom and at the same time maintaining the truth, today should always be put into question[50]. Saying this does not mean that religion is identified with the ethics though they are indissolubly united[51] rather the way the followers of certain religion practice their religious tenets can help identify the kind of God they believe in because witness of life is the best indication of the God who is believed[52].

Religion must be ready to be challenged by new realities and from there, it may emerge renewed and purified because it would abdicate the elements that could not survive the external challenges as Mbiti expresses it that "everyone is aware that rapid changes are taking place in Africa, so that traditional ideas are being abandoned, modified or coloured by the changing situation. At the same time it would be wrong to imagine that everything traditional has been changed or forgotten so much that no traces of it are to be found"[53].

The elements that cannot universalize themselves or not accepted because they go against the common good should be allowed to disappear and should not be fought for by the believers of the concerned religion[54]. A good religion is the one which allows itself to be purified both internally and externally whereby the good elements would remain because they are good and the inadequate ones are purged and this especially when it comes into contact with other religions[55]. In principle God does not need human beings to defend him. Any human being, who acts claiming to do

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[50] Cf. J. Ratzinger, *La iglesia, Israel y las demás religiones* (Madrid 1998) 91-92.

[51] Cf. *ibid.*, 85.

[52] Cf. Paul VI, *Evangelium Nuntiandi*, 21.

[53] Mbiti, *African Religions*, xi.

[54] In today's world there are believers from the different religions who tend to become radical and defend their religious tenets or faith on the expense of others' life and peace. They do not have sufficient arguments and they use all means to make sure that their convictions are accepted or followed by all. Fundamentalism is an element of this religious syndrome tending to the destruction of religion itself rather than constructing IT. Cf. Maghimbi, "Secularism", 182-195.

[55] Cf. J. Ratzinger,- Benedicto XVI, *Europa. Raices identidad y misión* (Madrid 2005) 80.

it in the name of God, should be put in the principle of humanization[56]. If such actions dehumanize the human being they are neither from God nor of God, rather are committed in the name of personal interests that may be political, economic or social[57].

African Religion had that peculiarity of accepting other religions without any serious implication on itself[58]. It has that capacity of accommodating any religious system, making such new system one of its elements of improvement and purification, accepting the positive elements[59]. Generally, the religious, political and social needs that might have compelled the Africans to accept Christianity were facilitated by the nature and the practices of African Religion itself. Without its nature of openness and being a religion founded in the life and not in books or definitions, the social political and economic needs could not have been sufficient reasons for accepting Christianity and in fact in some cases in Africa such elements failed or did not achieve the expectations[60].

Some authors claim that the initial attractions to Christianity arose from socio-political and materialistic needs affirming that "mission Christianity provided potential political alliances for ambitious young men, land for former slaves or those dispossessed by the white settlers, education and jobs for young people seeking to take of new economic opportunities or places of refuge for women fleeing unwanted marriages"[61]. "By becoming Christian the mission was opened to them especially the poor who besides material assistance they were also comforted with the Christian hope for better life after death. To some, however, especially the poor, the mission station provided a refuge and home. At first, it was not so much the theological doctrines of Christianity that proved to be particularly attractive to the common people, but what the missionaries did in practical ways to help improve the living conditions

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[56] Cf. STARKLOFF, "Inculturation and Cultural Systems I", 73-74.

[57] Cf. MAGHIMBI, "Secularism", 182-195.

[58] Cf. CHIDILI, B., "Is African Religion a Religion?": *African Journal of Theology* 21/II (2007), 341.

[59] Cf. *ibid*., 341.

[60] Cf. WALLER, "They do the Dictating", in: *East African Expression of Christianity*, 83-128; KIMAMBO, "The Impact of Christianity", 63-82.

[61] SPEAR, "Toward the History", 6.

of ordinary Chaga. The gifts of food and clothes that the missionaries offered to those who came empty-handed to settle around the mission station convinced them that they would be better off in the benevolent care of the missionaries. The poor found consolation, too, in the Christian hope of finding a better life beyond death in God's heavenly Kingdom"[62].

The only or the main way of learning was in the mission school though it was looked with suspicious eye by some chiefs and those who did not become Christians though they continue to support the education projects because the importance of education was seen in the life of the colonialists who occupied the best positions and lead a good life. Even the servants working in the missions and in the colonial administration could be seen having a better life than those who have no opportunity. In fact becoming a Christian was taken to be the door to enjoy such privileges[63].

Women could have seen Christianity as a place of refuge in the cases of oppressive marriages for they thought by becoming Christian the oppressive customs could be avoided. One could join Christianity not because African religion was wholly bad for him or her, rather due to some elements which incur suffering on them especially those related with male dominated culture[64]. After joining Christianity such an individual would continue practicing his original religion leaving aside the oppressive elements[65]. Moderation must be included in these cases because there are some situations where Christianity could not win converts though it embarks on massive provision of services and fighting bad customs especially against women[66]. Such factors contributed in the spread of Christianity in certain contexts only[67].

Some accepted Christianity for pure spiritual needs because it offered them new spiritual powers necessary to support them in time of diseases, disasters, infertility and even during social conflicts[68]. It seems to offer

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[62] LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 56.
[63] Cf. *ibid*., 58.
[64] Cf. *ibid*., 60.
[65] Cf. *ibid*., 60.
[66] Cf. KIMAMBO, "The Impact of Christianity", 63-81.
[67] Cf. WALLER, "They do Dictating", 83-96; Kimambo, "The Impact of Christianity", 79.
[68] Cf. MADDOX, "African Theology", in; *East African Expressions of Christianity,* 26.

better tools for such cases than their original religion which was seen as a hindrance in their life especially when the inadequate cultural elements predominated[69]. It is understandable that Christianity offered new religious practices which were seen by many Africans as novelty and for them it could improve their religious life. If they were comfortable in their religion, Christianity was seen to offer some elements that were missing and considered by them suitable in their life[70].

Positively, Christianity was accompanied by many factors which a follower of African Religion could not resist. It was accompanied by some elements that made life more comfortable and bearable than the elements accompanying the traditional African Religion[71]. The greatest element was the ability to control the environment or nature through formal education which enables them to read and write, and the cure of diseases that had been threatening the life of many Africans[72].

Negatively some of the African Religion followers accepted Christianity due to the attack directed to their religion and on their culture as a whole, where it was branded paganism and primitive[73]. In order to avoid such insults, they could have joined Christianity in order to enter into the class of civilized religion. Here the mentality would be that a Christian was a civilized one and the African religion follower uncivilized. These and many other factors made some followers of African religion to accept Christianity through baptism not for a religious purpose but as a way to survive in that situation. "The spread of Christianity has to be placed within the context of colonial domination of Africa and the racial justification that explained colonialism. Colonialism in practice mandated that most Africans could never become citizens but would always remain subjects in the colonial order. They were permanently marginalized as

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[69] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.

[70] Cf. SPEAR, "Toward the History", 5-6.

[71] The modern education, health facilities and especially in facing the dangers brought by the encounter with different non-African cultures and that the mentioned services were and continue to be key fields of evangelization in Africa. Cf. MKULIMA, *150 Years of Successful Evangelization*, 178-181; BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity*, 271-279.

[72] Cf. MBITI, *African Religions*, 217.

[73] Cf. MADDOX, "African Theology", 27.

different from the civilized order, of which Christianity remained one of the implicit supports"[74].

The entrance of Christianity was closely connected with the colonial occupation of Africa. The missionaries had easy contact with the colonialists so being their member could facilitate the power of the local rulers, especially in maintaining their rule[75]. We find some cases in the Chaggaland where the colonial administration was responsible in allocating the different Christian denominations areas for evangelization in order to avoid unnecessary conflict in the Chaggaland[76]. Even some Christian missionaries aimed at converting the political leaders as a way of converting their subjects. "Locating and converting an African leader as a means of converting a large number of people was one of the ways they assured 'the cohesion of the tribes, peace, justice and the continual suppression of slavery [. . .]"[77].

Sometimes the spiritual motives and the other needs intermingled together for one could have been attracted by Christianity because it offered some spiritual guidance beneficial to the Chagga, while at the same time seeing the importance of education for the children or the health services provided by the missionaries. In some cases it is possible also a kind of evolution whereby someone who accepted Christianity for socio-economic or socio-political motives may in the long run after experiencing and living it, becomes for him a source of spiritual life and guidance[78]. The motives for accepting Christianity by the Africans intermingled among themselves in such a way that it is not easy to say absolutely that this group of people accepted Christianity for such and such motives or to affirm generally that all conversions were the result of

[74] *Ibid.*, 26.

[75] Cf. MUNSON, *The Nature of Christianity in Northern Tanzania. Environment and Social Change 1890–1916* (New York 2013) 38-39.

[76] Cf. *ibid.*, 38.

[77] K. R. SMYTHE., "The Creation of a Catholic Fipa Society'. Conversion in Nkasi District, Ufipa", in: T. SPEAR – I. N. KIMAMBO (eds.), *East African Expressions of Christianity* (Oxford 1999) 131.

[78] If conversion is taken to involve a dialectical process, it is possible that many Chagga would have accepted Christianity after a period of experiencing its requirements and conditions and especially after tasting the spiritual aspects that touched their inner self and their reason of being, no matter their initial motives. Cf. Lema, "Chaga Religion", 60.

one factor. "Conversion was thus a complex and protracted process of individual social and religious change involving a wide range of possible shifts in religious affiliation and conviction as converts changed from 'traditional' to mixed beliefs, from nominal to fervent Christianity, from denomination to another, from Christianity to Islam or from a mission church to various forms of independency"[79].

The Chagga people discovered that the missionary with his new religion would cause things to change in their way of life but it seems that they were not afraid because even with side effects of being Christians, they knew that something good would result[80]. If they noted signs of depreciation from the agents of Christianity, they believed in themselves and their cultural values because if something is good remains to be good and a bad thing will be bad no matter how well one may speak of it[81].

They accepted the new faith dialectically by accepting the good of Christianity discarding what was not essential, while at the same time accepting their cultural values[82]. "If the Christianity was selectively transmitted by missionaries, it was also selectively received by the Africans as they listened to the Christian message, interpreted it, and imbued it with meaning within the context of their own values and experience. Conversion was a classic dialectical process, involving the dynamic interaction between potential converts and missionaries, with their different beliefs and practices. Whatever Europeans intended, they could not dictate the terms of African acceptance, especially as African converts gained increasing access to vernacular Bibles and could make their own scriptural interpretations independent of those of the missionaries"[83].

The Chagga people believed that to be converted to the Gospel did not necessarily mean to break their relationship with their ancestors, because this would mean to break and destroy their reason of being[84]. The problem was that the missionaries did not concentrate on the Bible rather they give them interpretation of it and this was that which greatly was

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[79] SPEAR, "Toward the History", 6-7.
[80] Cf. CCB, *Catholic Church in Moshi*, 57.
[81] Cf. *ibid*., 57-58.
[82] Cf. *ibid*., 60.
[83] SPEAR, "Toward the History", 5-6.
[84] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 45-47.

transmitted to the African[85]. Sometimes they were not concerned with their conception of the existence as a unified whole where the sacred and profane are intermingled in such a way that it is the subject who decides the sacred space and time and not the other way round. That is to say, it is not the place and time which are holy or profane rather it is the human beings who established these categories[86].

2.3 Jesus and the Chagga Religious Universe: Theoretical analysis

The same question was made by Ela when reflecting on the relationship between Christianity and African Traditional Religion in the concrete life of an African who claims to be a follower of Christ: "Is there any place in our life in Jesus Christ for maintaining a relationship between living and the dead? Or must Africans break their relationship with their ancestors if they are to be converted to the Gospel?"[87] This question is fundamental for an African Christian but especially for the Chagga Christians who have a strong relationship with their dead so that they may lead a coherent life of faith in which the considered incompatible elements may not be seen as obstacle in their relationship with God through Christ[88].

The African Christians have to find a place for Jesus in their religious system. They have to give him a place in their relationship with the ancestors. In other words, if the Chagga are Christians that is, followers Christ, they have to be able to show how they can continue being Christians who is the way, truth and life and the one who died and rose from the dead and thus giving his followers an assurance that if they die in him they will rise with him (Cf. Acts 3:12, 16; Rm 6:8-9; 2Tim 2:8-13). After being raised they will be judged according to how they have lived

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[85] Cf. *ibid*., 46-47.

[86] As already noted when interpreting the Chagga sacrificial ritual that the Chagga is capable of establishing –by separation and unifying (conjunction and disjunction)– of sacred places according to the needs, thus in his religious life he can establish those moments in his mind and thus enabling himself to place *Ruwa* throughout his activity without requiring a special place, hour or posture. That is why it has been claimed that African Religion has no special place of worship and timetables. Cf. MBITI, *Introduction*, 14-17.

[87] J. M. ELA, *My Faith as African*, 18.

[88] Cf. MUSHY, "Are we Christians?", 66-67.

in this world, whereby the good would go to heaven and the evil to hell
(Cf. Mt 25:31-46) and all these in relationship with the Chagga belief that
after this life one joins the ancestors or the living-dead of their family
forming a community in the hereafter[89]. For them death is passing from
the visible world to the invisible world where there is no judgment and
joining with the ancestors is the ultimate desire[90]. There is mutual
relationship between the community of the living in the visible world and
the other in the invisible world, whereby the visible community should
live according to the norms established by the ancestors, praying and
offering sacrifices to them and the ancestors would fulfil their task as
guardian and their intermediaries with God.

The ordinary Chagga Christians are not concerned with these
difficulties because already they are living the two realities: Christian and
the Chagga (African) eschatologies[91].

2.4. God's Transcendence and Jesus' place among the Chagga

The claim that in African Traditional Religion God is believed to be
remotely and sometimes overshadowed by the ancestors must be
understood in a proper way because the relationship between the divinity
and the human beings has been predominantly associated by the role of
mediators. If the Chagga were to be asked about this they might have
answered that God has put us in this world but he does not belong to this
world[92]. Though they do not use the term transcendence, the concept is
there, that is why even though God is considered to be remotely, still they
resort to him in moments of crisis[93].

We can formulate this belief more clearly saying that God is believed
to be transcendent for them in the sense that everything in the world is
from him but he does not form part of them just as it is affirmed that God
created the world but does not form part of that creation, and that without
abandoning it[94]. This belief though seen doubtfully by many authors I

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[89] Cf. LEMA, *Chaga Religion*, 60.
[90] Cf. MBITI, *African Religions*, 4-5.
[91] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.
[92] Cf. *ibid.*, 43-44.
[93] Cf. *ibid.*, 44.
[94] Cf. *ibid.*, 41-42.

consider it an important aspect for the Chagga people because it may help in establishing a theory regarding the role of the intermediaries and especially the place of Jesus in their religious belief[95].

In Christianity Jesus Christ is true God and true man and this is due to the belief that God incarnated himself in Jesus Christ making this mystery relevant for understanding the human relationship with God. "The relevance of the mystery of incarnation of the Word of God of our ancestors emanates for the African precisely from the immeasurable capacity that Christ possesses for launching the African into a new kind of existence and relationships"[96]. After his resurrection and his ascension, Jesus Christ is living with God his Father and at the same living among those who believe in him through His Word and the Sacraments.

The consideration that God is always far from human beings and his concern is through the intermediaries, the Chagga people find in this a point of departure in their relationship with Christ who is God and so away from them but close to them as a man who teaches them through his Word in the church. In this way Jesus introduces the human being into "a vast movement of divine-human African solidarity"[97]. For the Chagga people Jesus is more than the ancestors because he possesses an extra quality which in reality is nothing else than God himself. So when they continue offering sacrifices they do it in order to fulfil the demands of their ancestors. Hence at the end even Christ would know what they have done or how they have lived according to the norms of the ancestors which were received from God[98].

I find it a scholarly problem the attempt to associate Jesus with the belief on the ancestors because of his divinity and the relation with the Father though it has been claimed it must be considered analogically. Mangany and Buitedag reflect this complexity: "In African theology it

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[95] Cf. *ibid.*, 46.

[96] MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God*, 59.

[97] *Ibid.*, 61.

[98] If Jesus is God and since God is the one who established the ancestors as his intermediaries, then it is Christ himself who establishes the role of the ancestors and their place and due to his incarnation he is the one who brings everything to his Father which comes from the human beings through the ancestors. Jesus is the one who will raise all including the ancestors. Cf. BUJO, *African Christian Morality,* 74-80.

seems that when Christ is in Africa, he becomes one of the ancestors. If Christ becomes an ancestor to the people, does the Father become an ancestor to the Son? If that is the case, then there is a question about the position of the Holy Spirit. Somewhere the boundaries of the Christian faith are tested"[99].

This critical reflection does not lack ground in the debate about Jesus in Africa because any implication on the Son would have implications on the other persons of the Holy Trinity, that is why such applications must also consider the broad catholic theological perspectives. It should also be open to the reflections done by the African theologians in their attempt to deepen and establish a healthy and authentic discourse on Jesus which fits their context[100].

For the Chagga, it would be very difficult to consider Jesus as an ancestor because the ancestors are neither taken to be gods nor divinities, nor believe in the great number of divinities as in the case of some Western African communities[101]. The Chagga can be accused of overemphasizing the divinity of Jesus than his humanity in this aspect but even this accusation may lack ground because they also accept his teachings and the resulting activities from his earthly life. They believe that he was a human being who lived in this earth and left his teaching for the coming generations of which they are part of it and they have accepted them and they are trying to live them. For them ancestors have a beginning while Jesus being God has no beginning, has existed from eternity with his Father[102].

Beyers & Mphahlele reflects on the same problem regarding the affirmations of some scholars of considering Jesus an ancestor: "It is not so easy to merely equate Jesus with an ancestor as Africans understand

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[99] MANGANYI & BUITENDAG, "A Critical analysis", 4.

[100] Cf. BONSU, N. O., "African Traditional Religion: An examination of Terminologies used for Describing the Indigenous Faith of African People, using an Afrocentric Paradigm": *Journal of Pan African Studies* 9/IX (2016) 108-112118.

[101] Cf. EKEKE, E. C – EKEOPARA, C. A., "God, Divinities and Spirits in African Traditional Religious Ontology": *American Journal of Social and Management Sciences* 1/II (2010) 215.

[102] Cf. BEYERS, J. – MPHAHLELE, D. N., "Jesus Christ as an Ancestor: An African Christian Understanding": *HTS* 65/I (2009) Art.(1).#132,5pages. DOI:10.4102/ hts.v65i1.132 (15 August 2017) 4-5.

it. There are several questions that make it difficult, almost impossible, to talk of Jesus as an ancestor in an African context"[103]. What kind of questions that makes difficult the approach? For them there must be sufficient reasons for Jesus to be worshipped alone as an Ancestor taking into consideration that each family, clan and tribe has their ancestors and their living-dead. "According to the African cultural background, the question would also be whether Jesus then truly is an African and from which tribe would he be. This would immediately exclude some tribes from worshipping Jesus. Different tribes have different ancestors. If Jesus becomes an Ancestor, it would mean the complete system of ancestor veneration with all the implications associated is acknowledged"[104].

The complication in equating Jesus with the ancestor is aggravated by the divinity of Jesus because an ancestor cannot be at the same time God and human being[105]. These difficulties are mentioned here to show that not only the Chagga people find it difficult to see Jesus as ancestor, but it can also be a scholarly problem though those who opt for this title have clearly affirmed that it is applied to Jesus analogically and this is the case of Bujo and many others[106].

Since God is believed to work in this system through the ancestors in his relation with the human beings, Jesus who is also God works through the ancestors because his power has been extended[107] and thus becomes the connection between the humanity and God[108]. The mystery of incarnation enables the Chagga people to believe in Jesus as God and human being and since God is believed to be far away and leaving the approach to the mediators, Christ is also put in the same place as God and all the relationship with him are those of human beings with God[109]. In

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[103] *Ibid.*, 4.

[104] *Ibid.*, 4.

[105] Cf. *ibid.*, 4.

[106] Some scholars have raised an inquiry which can help in this aspect by making critical analysis of the employment of this title to Jesus. Cf. D. STINTON, *Jesus of Africa,* 137-165; K. NÜRNBERGER, *The Living Dead and the Living God: Christ and the Ancestors in Changing Africa* (Pietermaritzburg 2007) 30-100.

[107] Cf. BEYER – Mphahlele, "Jesus Christ as Ancestor", 4.

[108] Cf. D. STINTON., *Jesus of Africa: Voices of Contemporary African Christologies* (Nairobi 2004) 140.

[109] Cf. DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro*, 107-108.

this structure Jesus cannot be restricted to the realm of ancestors because he overflows and assume it through his incarnation. The ancestors in this perspective do not remove or destroy the mediation of Christ; rather they are strengthened by Jesus mediation, which is both divine and human while theirs is only human mediation[110].

The divinity of Christ must enable them to live their traditional religion and Christianity peacefully without experiencing serious conflicts. Just as God uses messengers who are the ancestors, Jesus is participating also in the work of his Father and now on the account of his incarnation, works also through the ancestors who would also fall under his rule and would be required to fulfil his norms established by him while living on the earth[111].

The Good News would have an effect on the Chagga whereby necessarily it would challenge their traditional religion beliefs forming part of his journey with the effects of the novelty brought through this encounter resulting into continuity and discontinuity of some features in both parts, beginning with the features that are believed not to form part of the Gospel message[112].

The dialectical operation is seen in the way how the Chagga, in order to live according to the norms of their ancestors have to practice the rules they believed to be given by God through the ancestors and in order to be accepted by Jesus they have to live according to the Gospel of Jesus, but since Jesus is God and they believe that the norms given to them are

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[110] Cf. MUNUNGURI, *The Closeness of the God*, 61.

[111] In this aspect, the Chagga would believe that Jesus being God helps the ancestors who are only human beings to fulfil their role as intermediaries between them and God. In the long run the ancestors and the living-dead would be those who lived well their traditions and their Christian faith. In order to achieve this, the dialectical process would take its tolls in both parts. At the end, a common Chagga Christian morality would emerge but this would take some time. Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 59-61.

[112] In the history of evangelization one of the great debates has been to distinguish the message of Jesus from the cultural elements carrying it. May be some conflicts were the result of the elements considered to form part of the Gospel were cultural elements associated with the historical development of Christianity. It is difficult to find a pure Gospel of Jesus without any cultural association. However, effort must be done not to cover it too much with what has nothing to do with the Good news of Jesus that is why I prefer the commandment of love as the best measure in cases of conflicts. Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 52-61; RATZINGER, *Fe, verdard y tolerancia*, 53-64.

from God through the ancestors then there should not be conflict between the two[113]. The problem is when conflicts emerge on the norms (the Christian and the Chagga) to be followed and this has been common throughout the history of evangelization in Africa and is the same among the Chagga people. Such conflicts are to be solved by the application of the commandment of love: God and the neighbor[114]. In this world view then the norms of the ancestors and the Gospel would have to be fulfilled by the Chagga while in the process itself, the norms of both parts would consolidate themselves according to the way they fulfil their religious needs[115]. In this way again the superiority of the norms would depend on how they fulfil the needs of the Chagga people in conformity with commandment of love and not according to other criteria.

The sacramental life of the church in the mystical body of Christ is the one which a Chagga would have to face in his life as Christian because it is there where the norms and demands of Jesus Christ are made concrete[116]. Regarding this, the Chagga have to identify properly what is the teaching of Jesus regarding the sacraments and the liturgy because it is here where history has contributed many elements pertained to Western culture[117].

In this theoretical reflection, the divinity of Jesus for the Chagga people has enabled them to enjoy the freedom in their religious belief especially in accepting Christianity because now they play safely by

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[113] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.

[114] Cf. J. RATZINGER, *Fe y Futuro* (Salamanca 1973) 25.

[115] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.

[116] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 55-60.

[117] Practically after Vatican II Council, the church in Africa embarked on what has been known as inculturation, aiming at interpreting and understanding the Gospel from the context of African Culture. The theme of inculturation has been an object of discussion since the pontificate of Pope Paul VI in *Africae Terrarum* 7, 13-14 though he did not mention the term inculturation, the vocabulary had this intention, and with more energy during the pontificate of Pope Paul II which can be seen in all his messages during his visit in Africa beginning with his message during the opening of the C.H.I.E.A, now CUEA on the 18th of August 1985 and in a special way during the African Synod opened in 10th of April 1994 where the theme of inculturation was at the heart of the synod as it can be seen in the issued document *Ecclesia in Africa*. Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *EAfr* 55-64; "The Address of His Holiness Pope John Paul II": *African Christian Studies* 1/II (1985) 10; BENEDICT XVI, *Africae Munus,* 36.

[117] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 55-57.

fulfilling the traditions of their ancestors and those of Jesus[118]. It can be hypothesized that at the background of their belief, there is a fear that the message of Jesus who is a foreigner may fail them, and since the destiny of man is that which constitutes the foundation and the reason of being, this double adherence is like an assurance that they would remain with their ancestors and in case not then together with their ancestors would be with Jesus for they would have fulfilled also the law of Christ[119].

In this point of view there would be congruence between some norms of Christ and those established by the ancestors. The obvious Chagga norms which are incompatible with Christianity and proven to be so by the Chagga would be eliminated and in the same way the elements claimed to be Christian but which endangers the Chagga religious beliefs would face resistance and in case of insistence on the part of Christianity as it has been the case, they would operate in the background as many authors have complained and a good example again is the belief on the ancestors and the living-dead[120].

When a Chagga is found keen to fulfil the Christian requirements and at the same time fulfilling the traditions of his ancestors, it is because he believes that at the end it is God who receives the petitions and the one who rules the world of the ancestors, and since Jesus is God, it is He who is fulfilling also this task[121]. Petitions of the living to God through their ancestors would be presented to God but since Christ is also God, the ancestors are presenting the petitions to Christ who lived among men and knows well their behavior[122]. Thus Jesus has all the power to punish

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[118] Cf. *ibid.*, 55-57.

[119] Cf. MUSHETE, A. N., "La Figura de Jesús en la teología africana": *Conc(E)* 216 (1988) 242-243.

[120] Cf. AKUBUEZE OKWUOSA, *In the Name of Christianity*, 26.

[121] Cf. DUNDAS, *Kilimanjaro*, 128; LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 42-44.

[122] Cf. VATICAN II COUNCIL, *Gaudium et Spes,* 22: "He Who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15), is Himself the perfect man. To the sons of Adam, He restores the divine likeness which had been disfigured from the first sin onward. Since human nature as He assumed it was not annulled, by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect too. For by His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man. He worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, He has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin".

them for not fulfilling the norms of the ancestors and those of his Gospel because he has been given all power by his Father (Cf. Mt 28:18).

Here one may see the logic and equilibrium of this argument. If the traditional customs are not seen with good eye by Jesus they would be abandoned because they would affect their relation with God even though they have been approved by the ancestors because the ancestors are only human beings while Jesus is the same God who has given those norms[123].

The incarnate Word then has the right to say that he is the way, the truth and the life (Jn 14:6). Christ is by his relationship to God and his own involvement in the unfolding of the world, comes to place himself between God and the ancestors forming thus a unique mediator between the creation and God[124]. His mediation does not destroy the role of the ancestors as mediators because even after the incarnation and the coming of Christ who reveals God to men, "God retains his essence, he remains also a hidden God. In Christ God lowers himself in a way that one could possess him and use him. Jesus is not a substitute of God"[125].

The ancestors' role in this case is improved for now they can approach God easily with the help of Jesus who is God but also human through incarnation who knows better the needs of the living than ancestors because he is with them always as God through his Word and the Sacraments[126]. In this aspect the ancestors and the living-dead are still loved and respected and anything demanded by the ancestors, which goes against the commandment of love should be questioned and here is where discontinuity and continuity may result regarding the fundamental aspects of both religious views[127]. Jesus is not only God and man theoretically, rather in the practice since he has left the guidance and the norms for the daily life under the great commandment of love (Mt 22:34-38; Mk 12:28-

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[123] Cf. B. Bujo, *The Ethical Dimension of Community* (Nairobi 1998) 16-17.

[124] Cf. Mununguri, *The Closeness of the God*, 67.

[125] *Ibid*., 67.

[126] Cf. Lema, "Chaga Religion", 57-58.

[127] Here is what has been advocated by some authors as purification and transformation of both parts in an encounter of two or more cultural subjects because the God of history speaks to all people in a particular manner, in such a way that it can be said that the Holy Spirit is working through the traditional religions transforming and purifying them. Cf. Aettm, "Comunicado Tras el Encuentro de Accra", 34.

34; Lk 10:25-28), just as is believed that the ancestors did leave some rules and norms in relating with God though do not affirm explicitly such commandment, implicitly it is directed to that because the good of the community is achieved by increasing its life through putting individual interests aside on the expense of the community[128].

The Chagga people are aware that the mediation of the ancestors and that of Jesus cannot be confused because they have never thought at moment that the ancestors are gods or divinities. Ancestors are mediators between them and God and so for them Jesus being God (Ruwa) should not be put among the ancestors ontologically rather in terms of solidarity with them in the sense that Jesus as human being knows well the human beings: their needs, desires and so at the end He as the mediator per excellence is the one who fulfils their petitions and supplications brought to God through the ancestors[129].

3. Chagga Evangelization: A Mutual-understanding Process?

Horton[130] in his discussion on the relationship between traditional society and scientific oriented societies uses two categories: that of "open" predicament and the "closed" predicament and more concretely that of "open society" and "closed society" respectively. And closely associated with these two predicaments is the concept of "alternatives". "It is that in

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[128] Cf. MBITI, *African Religions,* 106-109; BUJO, *Foundations of an African Ethic,* 19-97.

[129] CF. BEYERS – Mphahlele, "Jesus Christ as an Ancestor", 1-2.

[130] Robin Horton was born in 1932 in the Great Britain and is a dedicated anthropologist specialized in the field of comparative religion. He had been working in this field and had realized specialized study in it since 1950 onwards. His studies have contributed much in the field of anthropology challenging and improving the anthropological study of religion. As he himself always says in his papers he is notable for his effort to study religion scientifically. The scientific approach to the study of religion can be seen even in his examples used in his presentations. In fact, this approach formed the basis for his analysis of African thought in his two instalments published in 1967: "African Traditional thought and Western Science I and II". Horton lived in Africa for almost forty years and this enabled him to conduct a research on African religions and at the same time exercising as a professor of Philosophy and Religion in some universities in Nigeria (University of Port Harcourt in Rivers State, and the University of Ife in Osun State. Cf. "Robin W. G. Horton", in: *https://wiki2.org/en/Robin_W._G._Horton* (15 October 2017).

traditional cultures there is not developed awareness of alternatives to the established body of theoretical tenets, whereas in scientifically oriented cultures, such an awareness is highly developed. It is this difference we refer to when we say that traditional cultures are 'closed' and scientifically oriented cultures are 'open'"[131].

I will use the idea of open and closed predicament in trying to interpret and understand the dialectical reception of Christianity by the Chagga people[132]. As a theory, my intention is not to make a critical analysis of his theory for this has been challenged already by J. Beatties[133], rather to use it as a help in my discussion and with the possibility of modifying it taking into consideration that his discussion is based more on the level of comparison between the traditional societies thoughts and the western science just as the title of his two discussions indicates[134].

The basic principle for Horton is that in the encounter between two realities, efforts must be made to search for that which unites them rather than concentrating on the discontinuities. This does not mean that the differences are ignored rather once the continuities are identified adequately then the discontinuities would be faced with easily[135]. "My approach is also guided by the conviction that an exhaustive exploration of features common to modern Western and traditional African thought should come before the enumeration of differences. By taking things in this order, we shall be less likely to mistake differences of idioms for

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[131] HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 157.

[132] I am using the idea of Horton as help in understanding the process of the Chagga people in the reception of Christianity. I am using the ideas of "open predicament" and "closed predicament" together with the concept of "alternative" in order to explain the encounter of the Chagga people with Christianity. I use these concepts according to the context of the Chagga in order to be in position to elicit a proper hermeneutic of the Chagga conversion process and their religious situation today. It is not necessary that such an application reflect the whole process because here I am not searching for the truth of the beliefs rather the manner these beliefs (Christian eschatology and Chagga eschatology) have been lived by the same person and at the same time.

[133] Cf. J. H. M. BEATTIE, "Ritual and Social Change": *Man* 1/I (1966) 60-74.

[134] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought I", 50-71; and *ID*, "African Traditional Thought II", 155-187. The same articles are found also in HORTON, *Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West. Essays on Magic, Religion and Science* (New York 1993) 197-258.

[135] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 155.

differences of substance, and more likely; to end up identifying those features which really do distinguish one kind of thought from the other"[136].

In this context then the African religion has many continuities such as the belief in God, respect and praying for the dead, sacrificial rituals, and many other religious phenomena which are found also in Christianity though they may have different interpretation for example: belief in one and true God, the communion of saints, the Eucharistic celebration, praying for the dead and many other devotions[137]. These could be points of departure but in order to be able to have this capacity one must know well his religious tradition and be able to interpret it before diverse circumstances. It is even more a requirement for the foreign religion brought to another culture and for a scholar who is realizing such studies in a foreign culture to have that in mind[138].

I would say that, today, it is the task of the African Christians (Chagga) people to know their religious beliefs and interpret them in line with the modern challenges and situations because ignorance of one's culture can also be the source of misunderstanding and misjudgment not only in the past but even today. Just as it was for the anthropologists and missionaries who came into contact with African religion at the beginning of evangelization it can be the same for the Africans themselves if they do not study seriously their religion[139]. Doing this would be the beginning of mutual enrichment spiritually and bodily because today, no matter how sweet a religion may claim to be, if it does not take into account the wellbeing of its adherents it may lose its credibility. The sages were not wrong when they claimed that a health mind dwells in a healthy body or what Pope Paul VI said that evangelization goes hand in hand with a whole transformation and promotion of the people[140]. This affirmation

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[136] HORTON, "African Traditional Thought I", 50.

[137] Cf. E. UZUKWU, "Liturgia e inculturación", 147-165.

[138] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought I", 50-51.

[139] Cf. CHIDILI, "Is African Religion a Religion?", 341-342.

[140] Cf. PAUL VI, *Evangelium Nuntiandi,* 31: "Between evangelization and human advancement- development and liberation- there are in fact profound links. These include links of an anthropological order, because the man who is to be evangelized is not an abstract being but is subject to social and economic questions".

according to the Pontiff does not discard the belief that inner change, conversion to Christ is the final purpose of evangelization that is why the Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert by transmitting the good news of Jesus Christ and not only the social and moral activities[141].

If it is agreed with Horton that the closed predicament is prevalent in the traditional societies, thus tending to be closed societies we can say that the African people in the process of its encounter with Christianity seemed to experience the tension between closing itself, in its traditional thought (closed society) and the need to open itself into a more scientifically oriented thought or open society[142]. This tension among the Chagga was the consequences of the introduction of Christianity because, from this encounter they have had an "alternative religious phenomenon" which made them reflect not only about their religious practices but also those of the other religion. We replace here the metaphor of stranger with the concept of "alternative". Here then, we have two basic predicaments: the closed – characterized by lack of awareness of alternatives, sacredness of beliefs, and anxiety about threats to them; and the 'open'– characterized by awareness of alternatives, diminished sacredness of beliefs and diminished anxiety about threats to them[143].

The Chagga came across an alternative that made them question their established religious structures, situation that necessarily forced them to know and experience the alternative (Christianity and the associated cultural carrier) in order to be able to make comparison and thus have the capacity to question their beliefs. Such alternative is necessary in such case because, "any absence of awareness of alternatives makes for an absolute acceptance of the established theoretical tenets, and removes any possibility of questioning them. In these circumstances, the established tenets invest the believers with a compelling force. It is this force which we refer to when we talk of such tenets as sacred"[144].

The lack of alternative and its consequence has been also noted by Pritchard –though his language may be offending to some, my intention is to show the importance of "alternatives" in the context of the Chagga

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[141] Cf. PAUL VI, *Evangelium Nuntiandi*, 18.

[142] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.

[143] HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 156.

[144] *Ibid*., 156.

people– through his experience with the Zande. "In this web of belief every strand depends upon every other stand, and a Zande cannot get out of its meshes because it is the only world he knows. The web is not an external structure in which he is enclosed. It is the texture of his thought and he cannot think that his thought is wrong"[145].

Lack of an alternative can be a consequence of many factors and can affect any traditional society in any part of the world. Thus the effort should aim at making possible the presence of alternatives with their proper expositions because an alternative may still be there but its employment may be another thing.

Horton offers an example of a lack of an awareness of alternatives in a reaction of an Ijo man to a missionary who invited him to leave aside his old gods: "Does your God really want us to climb to the top of a tall palm tree, then take off our hands and let ourselves fall?"[146] Fear of losing everything and thus creating chaos is typical of closed societies because the established tenets have an absolute and exclusive validity for those who hold them and they are convinced that an alteration of them can bring chaos and thus causing great anxiety among them[147]. Geertz claims in the same line that man can adapt himself anything to his imagination but he cannot deal with chaos[148].

There should be, perhaps, a process to be followed in order to make sure that the encounter does not produce such consequences. The Chagga people maintains their relationship with their ancestors and offer sacrifice to them, a practice which has existed before the coming of Christianity and continue to be done though with modifications and it is possible to find people who do not practice the rituals but still remember their dead relatives. They believe that in the remote future there would be purifications influenced by Christianity. Christianity is also presented with an alternative in the Chagga Religion[149].

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[145] Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande* (Oxford 1936) 194.

[146] Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 156.

[147] Cf. *ibid.*, 156.

[148] Cf. C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York 1973) 99-100.

[149] "The Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself. She is the community of believers, the community of hope lived and communicated, the commu-

Thus, the same process should take place within Christianity. It will have, at one moment, to recognize that opening itself to the other is necessary by reducing its absoluteness before Chagga Religion without abdicating its fundamental tenets because these are the basis of its being an "alternative". "With developing awareness of alternatives, the established theoretical tenets come to seem less absolute in their validity, and lose something of their sacredness. At the same time, a challenge to these tenets is no longer a horrific threat of chaos. For just as the tenets themselves have lost some of their absolute validity, a challenge to them is no longer a threat of absolute calamity. It can now be seen as nothing more threatening than an intimation that new tenets might profitably be tried. Where these conditions begin to prevail, the stage is set for change from a traditional to scientific outlook"[150].

The Chagga people as many other African peoples, had their own religious fabrics. These are the ones believed to have sustained them and were the only possible and all had to adhere to them because they were part of their life for a long time, the awareness of any alternative and its consideration would take some time[151]. The closed society would need a long time to open itself to new realities and this can be seen among the Chagga in the process of relating with Christianity in the way they still keep some traditions without questioning them or giving sufficient explanations though such traditions might have been valuable one[152].

In these traditional cultures, the Chagga included, questioning of the beliefs for example on which the divinity is based and the weigh up of success against failures are just not among the paths that thought takes "because they are blocked paths because the thinkers involved are victims of the closed predicament. For them, established beliefs have an absolute validity and any threat in such beliefs is a horrific threat of chaos"[153]. Due to this tendency, it has taken time for the traditional African man to

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nity of brotherly love, and she needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love". Cf. PAUL VI, *Evangelium Nuntiandi,* 15.

[150] HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 156.
[151] Cf. AETTM, "Comunicado Tras el Encuentro de Accra", 34.
[152] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.
[153] HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 168.

consider the alternative presented to them or Christianity as sufficiently to be trusted for all their religious needs. They struggle between the two choices and till now they are still realizing it through that dialectical process in which now they have adopted what is good for them from the alternative and in their part leaving aside what may contradict some elements presented by the alternative[154].

Horton finds the underlying readiness to scrap or demote established theories, the most important single feature of open society and thus scientific attitude[155]. The traditional African people may still be in this process, for as it can be seen after one hundred years still there are some elements which in my opinion are to be scrapped especially the need to sacrifice to the ancestors in order to appease and to make sure that they do not cause problems and disorders in the family[156]. If they are able to see an alternative of remembering them in the ordinary sense without attributing them power over the living, could be useful in their life not just because they are Christians but as a positive aspect of their life[157].

It is good to remember the beloved departed family members, the living-dead and ancestors but they should not become an obstacle in the daily life because they have to be sacrificed often[158]. This belief increase the degree of being a closed society because the whole issue of ancestors is associated with other aspects that may cause stagnation or make the Africans live and remain in the vicious circle of other useless beliefs like that of trusting the diviners and the associated practices of witchcraft and sorcery[159].

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[154] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 56, 60.

[155] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 169.

[156] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 49-50.

[157] Cf. P. HASU, "For Ancestors and God: Rituals of Sacrifice among the Chagga of Tanzania": *Ethnology* 48/III (2009) 202.

[158] The ritual sacrifices described by Dundas seem to be simplified and others abandoned in as much as more changes were introduced in the course of time. See also Wiredu, "Como no se debe comparar", 218-219.

[159] Cf. WIREDU, "Como no se debe comparar", 218-220: Wiredu is convinced that the best way of reforming outdated customs in Africa should begin by weakening the superstitious beliefs on which such beliefs are built by instilling in the new generations the spirit of critical analysis and investigation in order to recognize that the fact that such outdated customs are to be found practiced in Africa alone be a reason to eradicate them. The key here is being outdated and be practiced only in Africa.

When this is put in the dimension of open society and the related alternative thought, one can conclude that the Chagga exaggerate the importance of their ancestors and their living-dead because of the diviners who are not challenged since the Chagga do not take into account how successful the diviners are regarding their divination. "In the theoretical thought of the traditional cultures there is a notable reluctance to register repeated failures of prediction and to act by attacking the belief involved instead, other current beliefs are utilized in such a way as to 'excuse' each failure as it occurs, and hence to protect the major theoretical assumptions on which prediction is based"[160].

For example, someone would visit another diviner in case of failure of the other or may repeat a visit to the same diviner. There is no comparison of the results no matter how much the diviners have failed and here to use a proper terminology: how many times such diviner has deceived him and in fact they do not put their divinations to the test[161]. In case of failure they go to another one and in a strange manner even the victim would defend the diviner's failure as his failure in fulfilling certain secondary requirements[162]. In cases of difficulties and hard times, the diviners remedy must satisfy their needs and in case of failure, again the Chagga should have been able to question the reason of this failure and this could have had opened a new way to an alternative but this is not done. That is why a good number of the Chagga are found attending to the diviners for various misfortunes just as it is practiced by many people in Africa[163]. Horton describes this phenomenal lack of critical examination towards the diviners as an example: "What is notable in all this is that the client never takes his repeated failures as evidence against the existence of the various spiritual beings named as responsible for his plight, or as evidence against the possibility of making contact with such beings as diviners claim to do. Nor do members of the wider community in which he lives ever try to keep ever track of the proportion of success to failures in the remedial actions based on their beliefs, with the aim of questioning these beliefs"[164].

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[160] Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 167.
[161] Cf. Shorter, *African Culture*, 72.
[162] Cf. Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 167.
[163] Cf. *ibid.,* 167.
[164] *Ibid.*, 167.

The Chagga people in their process of encountering Christianity have to accept the alternatives presented before them and work on them so that they may help to establish a right relationship with their dead family members without associating them with the diviners and this would be possible if they find an alternative in the concept of cause and effect[165]. If they are capable of asking themselves that how can a diviner know the wills of the ancestors and accept that they are the cause of diseases which the today's world know their cause, then they would be able to move from the mesh of fear of being punished by the ancestors since they are believed to be guardians of traditions and morality in the community[166].

The restoration of the things as they were in the olden times can be helpful but should be relative, and should come a moment that proper problems be solved by the mortals themselves by trying to find proper solutions because sacrificing to the ancestors would not cure one from malaria or typhoid or from cancer, no matter how much animals are slaughtered[167]. In other words they should know that in this process of moving from a closed to open mentality, they would have to think of doing things as they should be done today and not as the old-time people told them to do[168].

If the Chagga are considered as being in this process of moving from closed society to open society, the ceremonies and the different rituals can be understood within this perspective and the contradictions which may arise when one observes them from outside, would then be part of the dialectic process involving the encounter with the alternative presented before them and so they should not be condemned or be attacked immediately[169]. The alternative would help them to develop a proper progressive secondary elaboration, which would facilitate to improve not only their religious beliefs but also other unhealthy phenomena[170].

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[165] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 48-49.

[166] Cf. MAGESA, *African Religion*, 35; MBITI, *African Religions*, 85.

[167] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 177.

[168] Cf. *ibid.*, 177.

[169] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 57, 60-61.

[170] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 168-169.

3.1. Confession of Ignorance: Important factor in this Process

In this process, if it has to be successful, Horton suggests that the confession of ignorance should be taken as another fundamental category especially regarding the aspects which one may find a loop hole for alien causes[171]. He finds it curious that there is a tendency of the people with whom he had lived to have neither interest regarding the beginning of the world nor the human being, though they acknowledge that it was a work of the Supreme Being, but when asked about questions that they consider important about their life, answers were given abundantly[172]. "Scarcely ever, for instance, does he come across a common diseases or crop failure whose cause and cure people say they just do not know. Given the predicament of the traditional thinker, such an admission would indeed be intolerable. For where there are no conceivable alternatives to the established theoretical system, any hint that this system is failing to cope must be a hint of irreparable chaos, and so must rouse extreme anxiety"[173].

In this Hortonian perspective, the confession of ignorance is one of the alternatives because it would enable the subject to search for means to eradicate or reduce such ignorance. If it is not admitted, especially in cases of diseases, which today we know that they are incurable, would make the diviners continue with their business of deceiving the people and increasing the victims of witchcraft accusations and other related practices. Horton may have reason when he claims that "it is only in a culture where scientific attitude is firmly institutionalized that one hopes to hear the answer 'we do not know' given by an expert questioned on the causes of such a terrible human scourge as cancer"[174].

This argument is clear when today in many parts of Africa and among the Chagga, one finds even Christian denominations claiming to have power to cure incurable diseases without the use of medicine or groups that encourage their followers to believe exaggeratedly in the faith healing and thus miraculous cures[175]. Even worse there are some traditional

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[171] Cf. *ibid.*, 173.
[172] Cf. *ibid.*, 173.
[173] *Ibid.*, 173.
[174] *Ibid.*, 174.
[175] Cf. COMORO – SIVALON, "The Marian Faith Healing Ministry", in: *East African Expressions of Christianity*, 280-290.

doctors who claimed to cure all kinds of disease thus propagating the attitude of closing within their structures discouraging even the spirit to search for the true cures of the diseases haunting the people. These mentalities are the worst enemies for the process of moving from closed society to a scientific oriented society [176].

In line with the thought of Horton there are three aspects associated with the confession of ignorance that the Chagga people do not take seriously just as many other traditional African societies: coincidence, chance and probability[177]. The acceptance of situations which cannot be explained or predicted in the human life is poorly developed and not easily acceptable by the Chagga people just as it is for the other African tribes as is clearly demonstrated by Mbiti here. "Even if it is explained to a patient that he has malaria because a mosquito carrying malaria parasites has stung him he will still want to know why that mosquito stung him and not another person. The only answer which people find satisfactory to that question is that someone has 'caused' (or 'sent') the mosquito to sting a particular individual by means of magical manipulations. Suffering, misfortune, disease and accident, are all 'caused' mystically, as far as African people are concerned"[178].

The notion of coincidence can be said to be poorly developed also and the general tendency is to give any problematic happenings a definite cause something that should not be so. For example when a tree branch falls and kills a person who happens to be passing at that place at that moment, there should be an explanation for this disaster: perhaps the man had quarreled with another man or has robbed something from someone else, or has not fulfilled some requirements from the ancestors or the living-dead[179]. Sometimes it may be associated with a sorcerer sent by his enemies for various motives to make the branch fall and kill him[180]. The idea that such an event could be an accidental convergence of two independent chains of events is inconceivable because it is psychologically

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[176] Cf. DE LA PADILLA, "Aproximación a la medicina tradicional africana", in: *Cultura Africana y Cristianismo* I (Madrid 1988) 78; MBITI, *African Religions*, 169-171.

[177] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 175.

[178] MBITI, *African Religions*, 169.

[179] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional II", 174.

[180] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 48-49.

intolerable[181]. Why to this man and at that time if many people have passed here all the day! To accept this would be to admit that it is inexplicable and unpredictable which is equal to confession of ignorance while there is no alternative[182].

It is the same with the idea of probability. A traditional society thinker demands definite forecast whether something will happen or not and since he believes that his traditional structures are capable of fulfilling this through the diviners and spirit mediums, then no doubt that all kind of people dealing with these things are numerous in traditional oriented societies or closed society than in the more scientific oriented or open society. While pre-scientific thinker is unable to confess ignorance on a question of vital practical import, a scientific oriented mentality is able to do that and where the pre-scientific thinker rejects to acknowledge any limitation on his power to explain and predict, the scientist not only faces such limitations with confidence but devotes a good deal of energy and time to explore their extent[183].

Horton calls the development from a closed society to opens society as a growth of "intellectual humility" which is a consequence of an underlying confidence, resulting from one's ability to see his current beliefs not as an end in themselves, but rather as a point of departure for the human search for order, something that would possibly enable a society to surpass the difficulties in facing their own limitations in controlling their environment[184].

Associated with the confession of ignorance, coincidence, chance and probability is the taboo practice. Horton sees taboo as an anthropological terminology for "a reaction of horror and aversion to certain actions or happenings which are seen as monstrous and polluting"[185]. In principle those who maintain this practice are unable to explain it because it is even taboo to explain it and so it is bad in itself and as a consequence people make all effort to prevent tabooed events from happening and whenever

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[181] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 174.
[182] Cf. *ibid.*, 173-175.
[183] Cf. *ibid.*, 175.
[184] Cf. *ibid.*, 175.
[185] *Ibid.*, 175.

such an event occurs appropriate sanctions would be applied and sometimes irrational ones[186].

In principle taboos are taken as legislation for what is inadequately legislated in a society, or that which surpasses the capacity of man to legislate in the traditional society because it is believed to be beyond man's jurisdiction due to the consequences of its violation[187]. There are taboos which are also sanctioned in the scientific oriented society but they are explained and then they are no longer taboo but a law that sets up demarcations for example the case of incest. It is no longer controlled by fear of polluting the land and causing the anger of the ancestors rather it violates the laws of nature and especially the genetic laws[188].

The open predicament may enable the society members challenge the taboos because some of them can be a handicap in their process of moving from closed society to open society due to the fact that often taboos impose silence on some cases due to the radical consequences to those who break it, thus impeding individual freedom in the cases for example of going against some tenets of the society believed to be inevitable for the life of the society. And in this, Horton may have reason: "Just as the central tenets of the traditional theoretical system are defended against adverse experience by an elaborate array of excuses for predictive failure, so too the main classificatory distinctions of the system are defended by taboo avoidance reactions against any event that defies them. Since every system of belief implies a system of categories, and vice versa, secondary elaboration and taboo reaction are really opposite sides of the same coin"[189].

Horton is aware that the process of moving from the closed predicament to the open predicament is neither easy one nor of a short

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[186] Cf. *ibid*., 175.

[187] Taboo is an avoidance of the act and the deed due to a fear to the power associated with it that is why in some cases explanations are seldom given except prohibitions: It is taboo for anyone to leave his house, it is taboo for any dog to bark, taboo for any cock to crow, any pig to grunt. All should sleep till the taboo ends. Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *Fenomenología de la Religión* (México ²1975) 34-38; Bujo, *Foundations of an African Ethic*, 155-161.

[188] Cf. Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 175.

[189] *Ibid*., 176.

term[190]. The movement from a "closed society" to an "open society" involves inner confrontation in the individuals[191]. And the reason is that though the open predicament has enabled individuals to tolerate threats to their beliefs, "it has not been able to supply them with anything comparable to the coziness of the traditional thinker ensconced amidst his established theories"[192], which provide him with the "womb-like warmth"[193]. This is the inner tension when an individual is confronted with alternative factors that shake those considered by his belief and social structure, to be unchangeable and untouchable. It involves pain from those who may be affected by the process of developing an alternative conception of the world. "A development of alternative world-views erodes attitudes which attach an absolute validity to the established outlook. Throughout the process there are bound to be many people on whom the confrontation has not yet worked its magic. These people still retain the old sense of the absolute validity of their belief systems, with all the attendant anxieties about threats to them"[194].

A good example is from the ancient Greece, beginning with the pre-Socratic philosophers whose independent thinking evoked strong and anxious reactions and Socrates was its victim or in the late medieval times whereby a few decades of confrontation with alien world views and open skeptical thinking were followed by decades of persecution for those responsible for disturbing the established orthodoxy by general closing up of thought[195]. Before such confrontations, Horton claims that there are two responses: first they would make sure that those responsible for the confrontation are impeded or destroyed to the last one or the second alternative is converting them to their own beliefs through fanatical missionary activity[196].

When applied to Chagga, their encounter with Christianity presented before them an alternative to their religious beliefs, enabling them to

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[190] Cf. *ibid.*, 178-180.
[191] Cf. *ibid.*, 185.
[192] *Ibid.*, 178.
[193] *Ibid.*, 179.
[194] *Ibid.*, 185.
[195] Cf. *ibid.*, 185.
[196] Cf. *ibid.*, 185-186.

make comparison and draw their own conclusion from this process that was not a one day activity[197]. They had first to know the alternative presented before them with all its associated beliefs. The first reaction must have been that of rejection by many but as time moved on and the alternative presented before them not only challenges them in term of their religious beliefs, but also other issues of life such as health and formal education; the "alternative" provided them with an easy occasion to examine their structures and see how this alternative is really an alternative worthy to be embraced[198].

If Christianity is presented as an alternative, and when I say Christianity I refer to all that which has been associated with Christianity, that is, with all its cultural baggage. It is possible that the wide context itself was a closed reality but before the Chagga people it was an alternative which helped them to question their religious beliefs and practices recognizing that they were not the only one who believed in God[199]. There were other people who also believe in God and now they are invited to believe in their God. When they began to ask themselves why they should believe the foreign God while having their God (Ruwa), then the process of moving from a closed religious system towards an open one was initiated because they would have to ask the same question for many of their religious practices and this inquiry is also an alternative in itself[200].

In this case instead of destroying those who are bringing this confrontation as did happen in some areas where Christianity was brought, they relativize their beliefs by scrapping out what could not be considered fundamental in their religious life and accept what Christianity contributed in their religious life. They had to be cautious in this process because Christianity presented itself with many other realities which made it to remain more closed within their traditional world especially by not accepting any other religious reality and the cultures of the world[201].

They might have questioned many of their beliefs and religious practices but due to insecurity and the nature of the alternative itself they

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[197] Cf. PLANNELLS, "Actitudes de los misioneros", 20.

[198] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 60.

[199] Cf. STRIJDOM, "Towards a Critique of Indigenous African Religion", 1.

[200] Cf. *ibid*., 2.

[201] Cf. MANGANY – BUITENDAG, "A Critical analysis", 4-8.

had to make a choice of not opening completely to unknown religious beliefs and our case Christianity[202]. They wanted to be an open Chagga society ready to accept Christianity as a way of challenging their own established religious and cultural systems[203]. This is what makes them continue with the Chagga religious practices and at the same time accepting Christianity but as already said dialectically as has occurred in other areas in their encounter with Christianity[204].

Transition from a closed predicament (closed society, traditionally oriented society) to open predicament (open society, scientific oriented society) touches the whole being of the individuals and so the reluctance and sometime passive resistance within the closed society may cause an inflexibility or a methodical adaptation that can be noted before the "alternative", the subjects tended to adopt some tenets of the open predicament and at the same time maintaining some tenets of the closed predicament[205]. The Chagga people should be seen in this dynamic for they seem to recognize the good elements found in Christianity but they could not abandon completely their own religion for the sake of the alternative because their religion also had some good elements that had sustained it before their encounter with Christianity. It is also healthy this process because an encounter of two different realities, normally a mutual influence is to be expected[206]. In this way they accept the open predicament tenets (challenging and questioning their beliefs) but at the same time they maintain some tenets of the closed predicament (the acceptance of some beliefs uncritically and to consider them as unchangeable) [207].

This attitude can be possible but in the long run it would be unsustainable as other factors which contribute to open predicament are acquired and stressed by the society. This can be possible especially when

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[202] Cf. Lema, "Chagga Religion", 60.

[203] Cf. Strijdom, "Towards a Critique of indigenous African Religion", 2-3.

[204] Cf. Spear, "Toward the History", 5–6.

[205] Cf. Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 185.

[206] Cf. Pobee – Mends, "Social Change", 11: "On the other hand, the influence has not been only one way, from outside factors to African traditional religion; it has also been from African tradition religion to outside factors".

[207] Cf. Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 162.

the generations that had believed that their existence and survival has been the consequence of what has been inherited from the old, is no longer active due to the movement to other areas encountering people with different ways of thinking and of viewing things, and especially the formal education which may lead to the improvement of the knowledge of the factors which make them maintain certain beliefs and practices[208]. Improvement in health services in the sense that different illness are cured and the recognition of an integral human healing as an important health service can also speed up the process from a closed society to open society[209].

Since the Chagga were and are still confronted with an alternative that enables them to make choice, today their wavering regarding a total acceptance of Christianity as an alternative can be increased by the situation of Christianity today in the countries from which it was brought for it is facing some crisis which may make the Chagga as well as other African Christians see some of their religious beliefs fundamental though he may not be able to give an explanation according to the open predicament model[210]. The Chagga may question also or even demand an answer regarding some practices found today in the old Christian tradition countries from which the missionaries came who prohibited some cultural practices as evil and now same cultural elements considered by the Chagga and the Africans, in principle, to be evil and satanic are found prevailing in the cultures with old Christian traditions especially in the questions of sexuality, marriage and atheism[211].

When an individual or society is challenged by a reality different from the accustomed one, different reactions may result due to the insecurity or fear arising from this alien element[212]. There are those who would manage and adjust themselves to the new reality though with difficult and insecurity hoping for things to be better in the future while others would long nostalgically for the fixed and unquestionable beliefs of the closed culture with the possibility of persecuting those who have managed to

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[208] Cf. POBEE – Mends, "Social Change", 11.
[209] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 180-186.
[210] Cf. LEMA, "Chaga Religion", 44.
[211] Cf. BUJO, *Foundations of an African Ethic*, 25, 35.
[212] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 185-186.

adopt themselves to the new reality and here it can be seen that the open predicament is a precarious and fragile thing[213].

In the process of evangelization, among the Chagga, such phenomena occurred but with modification in the sense that during evangelization the general principle of hospitality for any stranger could not be applied easily to Christianity because, unfortunately, it came in a context closely connected with colonization of Africa[214]. Though it was rejected primarily for questioning some aspects that could not be scrapped by some Chagga people, it did not suffer serious persecution as in some other areas of Tanzania and Africa, except for the accusation as traitors for those who accepted Christianity at the beginning[215]. In some other African societies, those who accepted Christianity were accused of many things including the raising of the anger of the ancestors and thus causing disorders and diseases and other misfortunes in the society and even in some cases missionaries suffered[216].

As time passed and after seeing the benefits associated with it, more were ready to accept it and this was for them the beginning of the process of moving from the closed milieu to an open one[217]. There was no continuous reaction normally common to closed societies for an authoritarian establishment of a systematic control and persecution of those who managed to be at ease in a world of ever shifting ideas[218].

3.2. Open and Closed Predicament Models: Critical view

The open model has its danger not only for the Chagga religious tradition but also for the alternative itself (Christianity) which facilitates the process of shifting because it has to adapt itself to the new situation and because scientific advancement can have negative influence in the field of religion[219]. Once the process has been initiated the questioning

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[213] Cf. *ibid*., 185-186.

[214] Cf. Lema, "Chaga Religion", 60.

[215] Cf. Doerr, *Peramiho* I, 35-64.

[216] Cf. *ibid*., 35-64.

[217] Cf. Lema, "Chaga Religion", 56.

[218] Cf. Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 186.

[219] Cf. Johh Paul II, *Novo millennio inneunte*, 40; J.C. Carvajal Blanco, *Pedagogía del Primer anuncio* (Madrid 2012) 93-107; O. G. De Cardedal, *La entraña del cristianismo* (Salamanca 1997) 107-139.

would even touch also the alternative itself. In this perspective, it means that even Christianity itself would be put into questioning and be considered as one among the many religious systems, causing as such religious relativism because all religions would be considered equal ways of salvation, something which is against the Christian faith which is believed to be the only way of salvation[220].

For Horton, the closed predicament motives can also contribute to the development of the open predicament[221]. The case of the missionaries, for example, which in our case are an alternative in the areas where they evangelized play this role. "Perhaps the most interesting example of essentially "closed" motivations behind activities which were to make a great contribution to the development of the open predicament is provided by the operations of Christian missionaries in the fifteenth–eighteenth centuries. The fanaticism with which the missionaries worked to convert distant peoples of alien faith can, I think, be understood as a product of the "closed" society's determination to protect itself from the possibility of being disturbed by confrontation with alien world view – a possibility which loomed large in this era of exploration"[222].

If the missionaries wanted to protect themselves -in this sense their sense of belief- then in their encounter with foreign cultures with proper claims of having their religion, they automatically had to question also their world view because now there is another world view which contradicts that of theirs[223]. They had to make sure that they understand better their beliefs and those of to be evangelized. In other words they had to open themselves to the new reality encountered[224].

This was not an easy task that is why in the history of evangelization there have been rejections and condemnations of the cultural elements of the people encountered which can be taken as a resistance towards the open predicament movement which required them not consider their world view as absolute[225]. Even with these difficulties still the missionaries

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[220] Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio,* 8, 36.

[221] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 184-185.

[222] *ibid*., 184.

[223] Cf. ADAMO, "Christianity and the African Traditional Religion(s)", 6.

[224] Cf. HORTON, "African Traditional Thought II", 184-185.

[225] Cf. *ibid*., 183-184.

embarked on studying and understanding the new world and the result was a body of records of alien views that came to color much of the thought of the times, and this was undoubtedly one of the important contributions to the genesis of the open thinking in the areas where the missionaries have come and worked[226].

To conclude this discussion, we can say that the Chagga as well as the African Christians are in the process of establishing equilibrium between the movement from a closed society to an open society, from a traditional thinking orientation to a more scientific orientation and this would take time regarding some aspects of their culture[227]. It is important to note that in this process, it is not easy to achieve a total and complete change from traditional oriented world to a total scientific oriented world. It is not even recommended especially in some parts of the world where scientific advancement have tended to eliminate the presence of God in the world[228]. There are some elements, and here especially the religious one, which would resist the questioning and challenging of the open predicament because they do not have empirical proofs of which science demands. Science in the strict science does not admit any authority that cannot be scientifically proven and here it means empirically, claiming that only is true that which is the result of a scientific verification[229]. They may forget that just as it is difficult to prove that God exists empirically, the same it is to prove that He does not exist empirically that is why faith in God who reveals himself is fundamental especially for the Christians, which has emphasized on a mutual relation with science recognizing the autonomy of the human culture and especially science[230].

This can be applied also for the Chagga people who are Christians and at the same time continue holding some beliefs of their traditional

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[226] Cf. *ibid*., 184-186.

[227] Cf. Lema, "Chaga Religion", 59-60.

[228] This began with the Enlightenment Period where God was considered to be not an omnipresent reality in the human world for he was considered to be in heaven and the human beings on the earth. Even though they did not deny his existence, for them he was an impersonal being away from the world for after creating the world he limited himself in contemplating it without any interference in its activities. Cf. John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 8-9; J. C. Carvajal Blanco, "El testimonio, corazón de la misión", in: J.C. Carvajal Blanco (coord.), *La misión evangelizadora de la iglesia* (Madrid 2016) 71-74.

[229] Cf. R. Fischella, *La nueva evangelización* (Santander 2012) 34.

[230] Cf. Vatican II Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, 59.

religion. The dialectical process can be said to fit somehow in this dynamic for little by little a point of convergence would be achieved. If we force them to abandon completely that traditional mentality, which is rooted in various beliefs as already seen, the final result would be that of separating their culture from their religion and thus losing their religious curiosity[231]. We should not forget that the human beings and especially the Chagga do associate their present life and the belief on the life after-death which is believed to resemble that of this world. And this is not peculiar to the Chagga; Xenophanes had already insinuated this many years ago in the following passage: "Mortals considered that the gods are begotten as they are, and have clothes and voices and figures like theirs. The Ethiopians make their Gods black and snob-nosed, the Thracians say theirs have blue eyes and red hair. Yes and if oxen and horses or lions have had hands, and could paint with their hands and produce works of art as men do, horses would paint the gods with shapes like horses, and oxen like oxen, and make their bodies in the image of their several kinds"[232].

Conclusion

The above reflection can help us now to make some few observations regarding the way how Chagga Christians have been able to live both Christian faith and their traditional religion. First it must be clear that in any process of encounter there are many factors which played part in the establishment of the relationships between the subjects involved. In my opinion the fundamental aspect in the case of the Chagga people are the internal factors inherent in its culture itself and especially its religious perspectives. The nature of traditional religions in Africa to have that capacity of accepting and integrating new religious views should be the point of departure though in some cases it did not function in the same way as the case of the Chagga.

The second factor is the missionary activities which presented the message of Christ as an alternative to the Chagga religious beliefs with convincing offers which were seen to be useful in the Chagga life and connected to this is the access to the Christian Scriptures with stories

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[231] Cf. PAUL VI, *Evangelium Nuntiandi*, 20.
[232] Xenophanes cited by Horton, "African Traditional Thought II", 184.

similar to those found among the Chagga and so taking to some extent the place of the oral narratives. It is true that many people had no access to the Bible but biblical stories were shared to the people by the agents of evangelization.

The third factor is the willingness of the Chagga themselves to enter in the dynamic process of associating Christian faith with their traditional religion, a process which started in the moment of their encounter with Christianity more than hundred years ago till today. This process which I have referred to it as a dialectical one is continuous one because religion is not a static phenomenon rather a dynamic one. It involves an integration of values from both Christianity and Chagga religions without diminishing the fundamentals of either in such a way that the individual continues to be a Chagga and a Christian. The principle here is that grace is built on nature, it does not destroy nature in order to implant itself on it or to heal it[233]. The fact that religion and culture are closely connected and that religion contributes an important part of that fabric and its internal order, does not necessarily mean that new religious elements cannot penetrate and instill its novelty there[234].

In this case, the aspects seen to be in tension or conflict, in the long run will be purified in as much as they are fitted in their life after experiencing them, rather than attempting to create abrupt discontinuities which may increase the duplicity in the life of the Chagga. There would be tension always because new realities emerge in the course of history requiring new understandings, interpretations and even new language. Even the resolved tensions can at a time become unresolved and the unresolved may become resolved as time goes because the Spirit has not ceased to work on the earth[235].

The scholarly theological elaborations should take into consideration the ordinary Christians who lead their life without making complicated theological debates and sometimes are not even aware of such

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[233] Cf. TOMAS DE AQUINO. *Exposición del "De Trinitate de Boecio"* (Pamplona 1987) 270; K. RAHNER, *Escritos de teología* IV (Madrid 1964-1969) 215-243.

[234] Cf. S. G. GONZÁLEZ, "Inculturación de la fe y evangelización", in: J. C. CARVAJAL BLANCO (cord.), *La misión de la iglesia. Apuntes para su estudio* (Madrid 2011) 203-204.

[235] JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 21.

interpretations[236]. It is the role of the agents of evangelization to apply them in the pastoral activities especially today since most of them are the natives, the Chagga people who are working with their own people in their own culture. They should make effort to understand their religious elements and be able to direct their people on how to relate them with those of Christianity. We cannot complain about the past missionary activities while we being Africans are doing the same and sometimes worse.

The fact that one is less traditional and more scientific does not necessarily mean that the associated religion with that system is better or more acceptable. Were it so, things would have been different for the more scientific oriented societies where today are suffering from serious crisis because the scientific orientation or mentality has reached a point of doubting all that is religious[237]. No doubt that more traditional oriented society provides better environments for religion than more scientific environments whereby everything is given a scientific explanation and requires empirical proofs for everything. Equilibrium between the two realities is necessary for a healthy religious life[238].

The fact that the Chagga have accepted Christianity and at the same time have remained Chagga is a good sign that still they can improve their religious life by accepting Christ event integrating it holistically in their life. If the belief of incarnation as has been explained in the above theory, as a point in which they have been able to live the "two eschatologies" until now, then in the same line they may at the end, reduce the tensions that have been existing between Christianity and their traditional religion elements and especially the belief on the ancestors and the living-dead regarding the manner of relating with them and especially the issue of sacrifices.

The veneration of Saints in the Christian tradition can be one of the solutions for the African Christians when the question of the ancestor veneration is addressed by making this ancestral belief part of their

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[236] Cf. BUJO, *African Christian Morality,* 123-124.

[237] Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Europa,* 8-9.

[238] The problem facing the Occident has its root in the dictatorship of scientific advancement which at the final end excludes God in its environment, something which if not taken into consideration may affect the African societies as well though not immediately. Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Europa,* 8-9; CARVAJAL BLANCO, "El testimonio, corazón de la misión", 71-74; FISCHELLA, *La nueva evangelización*, 12-13.

spiritual heritage in the proper way instead of categorical rejection of them, though I think that such a move can only be possible after a long process of integration of both realities involving understanding of each part's stand especially on the part of Christianity[239]. As noted that the Chagga may find it difficult and even impossible to consider Jesus as an ancestor, it can be easy for them to consider their ancestors, their living-dead as their saints and find a place for them in their Christian faith, for some suggest that the "the devotion to ancestor spirit and the communion of saints are not far apart in practice"[240]. In this way it can be possible for the novelty of Christianity to penetrate in that belief and become a true alternative, without ideological pretensions[241].

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[239] Cf. F. Wijsen, F. – Tanner, R., *Seeking a Good Life. Religion and Society in Usukuma, Tanzania* (Nairobi 2000) 24-34.

[240] *Ibid*., 34.

[241] It is important to note that veneration of the ancestors has an important aspect on the identity of the concerned because in this way they value their personalities also. If the veneration of the ancestors is to be abdicated it would mean to forget all their historical background which links the present generations with the past. It is more serious because it gave the impression that those of their culture are to be forgotten and embrace the foreigners. The reactions in some countries of Africa especially the Congo-Kinshasa where Mobutu imposed that only African names or ancestral names were to be used, could be the result of the need for self-affirmation, even though political motives were behind the process, the names given were foreign due to the mentality that the African names were pagan and immoral. In fact, it was objected by church authorities in Congo at that time who claimed that the Christian names were sign of Christian authenticity. Even with all the negative aspects associated with the policy of authentication, the ancestral names were accepted in the church. Cf. Baur. *2000 Years of Christianity*, 447-448.

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Conversion and Cow Protection in India: analysis and critique of Hindutva Politics

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Abstract: Since 2014, India has been under the rule of BJP which progressively introduced various Hindutva agenda to usurp social dominance and undermine the minorities, especially Muslims and Christians. This essay concentrates on two issues namely conversion and cow protection which were passionately discussed during the colonial period but resurfaced post-independence thanks to VHP. The new emphasis given on these old topics clearly betray Hindu nationalist pattern of thought and action embraced by the current government. Instead of fomenting unity, strengthening the shared culture, this option by the Sanghparivar undermines social solidarity and risks civil conflict. To what extent and how Hindutva argumentation deviates from traditional/Gandhian Hindu conceptions and innovates on commonly shared Indic values are analyzed in this paper. It manifests the potential danger of denouncing constitutional secularism and democracy as well as religious freedom guaranteed in the constitution.

Key Words: anti-conversion bills; animal protection; secularism; democracy; communalism; agency; Moditva

Conversión y protección de las vacas en la India: análisis y crítica de la política Hindutva

Resumen: Desde 2014, India ha estado bajo el gobierno de BJP, que introdujo progresivamente varias agendas hinduitas para usurpar el dominio social y soca-

var a las minorías, especialmente musul-
manes y cristianos. Este ensayo se con-
centra en dos temas, a saber, la
conversión y la protección de las vacas,
que se discutieron apasionadamente du-
rante el período colonial pero que resur-
gieron después de la independencia
gracias a VHP. El nuevo énfasis dado a
estos viejos temas traiciona claramente el
patrón de pensamiento y acción naciona-
lista hindú adoptado por el gobierno ac-
tual. En lugar de fomentar la unidad,
fortaleciendo la cultura compartida, esta
opción del Sangh Parivar socava la soli-

daridad social y hay riesgos de conflictos
civiles. En este artículo se analiza en qué
medida y cómo la argumentación hin-
duista se desvía de las concepciones hin-
dúes tradicionales/gandhianas e innova
en los valores índicos compartidos. Se
manifiesta el peligro potencial de denun-
ciar el laicismo constitucional y la demo-
cracia, así como la libertad religiosa
garantizada en la constitución.

Palabras clave: proyectos de ley contra la
conversión; protección animal; laicidad;
democracia; comunitarismo; agencia; Mo-
ditva.

With the second consecutive national election win in 2019,[1] the
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of India led by Narendra Modi began to
consolidate its nationalist Hindutva[2] agenda especially vis-à-vis the mi-

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[1]   https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/archive/nation/narendra-modi-sworn-in-as-
prime-minister-for-second-time-780564 (accessed on 2023-03-12). For a detailed analysis of
the Hindutva Politics, see my forthcoming book: *Hindutva Ideology and Politics   Concep-
tualizing Post-Independence Conflicts in India*.

[2] The term was first used in Hindu reformist cycles especially in Bengal, exemplified
by Brahmabandhab Upadhyay (Lipner 1999; Nandy 2014: 94-95), and later adopted into pol-
itics by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar contrasting it with Hinduism. The expression *Hindutva*
is employed here in *three* senses. *First* it denotes what Savarkar considers the essential cultural
characteristic of the Hindu; in this sense, it is intrinsic to the individual who feels an "attach-
ment" (1923: 87) to the Father-Mother-Holy-Land, a sense of belongingness to a sacred space;
a passively acquired racial feature and the civilizational sense of unity enabled through its in-
herent social capital. Briefly, it stands for *Hindu national identity*. *Second*, Hindutva denotes
the ideology which legitimizes the Hindu Rashtra, a territorially and ethnically conceived na-
tion dominating the government (*raj*) thanks to the cultural superiority of the former.
Whereas this idea was already advanced by Savarkar, it is Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar who
makes it central to the post-independence conception of India, re-introducing *varṇacracy* in
society and undermining the status of equal citizenship of minorities. *Third*, *Hindutva* denotes
the various socio-political-religious-cultural groupings and organizations generally known as
the family of organizations (*sangh parivar*) revolving around the triadic center: RSS (*Rashtriya
Swayamsevak Sangh* - National Volunteer Association), VHP (*Vishwa Hindu Parishad* -
World Hindu Council) and BJP (*Bharatiya Janata Party* – The People's Party of India).

norities. Indicators of this firm grip on Hindutva ideology were already manifest in Modi's thirteen-year long (2001-2014) rule of the state of Gujarat.[3] However, concrete policy changes and implementation of nationalist agenda appeared only since the second term of Modi as Prime Minister. Modi has been praised for his economic, corporate friendly, agenda in Gujarat during his time as chief minister of the state. The same policies were expanded during his first term (2014-2019) as Prime Minister. Both in Gujarat and in the nation, Modi's political priority was on the middle class (Prabhu 2020: 249-330), a strategic move to undermine the erstwhile Congress dominance on this class irrespective of their religious adhesion. One significant shift in policy to woo the middle class consisted in highlighting the *religious identity* which constitutes the core of Hindutva politics.

This essay undertakes a critical analysis of Hindu nationalism, concentrating on two topics namely *conversion* and *cow protection*, which possess historical import since the British Raj, emerged in different forms during the Indian Independence Struggle and continue to challenge policies of governance under various national and regional governments. Hindutva's embrace of these contested issues not only displays its *political strategy* of social dominance *qua* religion but also its *political justification* of the righteous republic *qua* ethics. Both topics are hence discussed in a historical context to elucidate their contemporary relevance.

In addressing the Hindu resistance to conversion, contemporary scholars have offered various theoretical explanations lately highlighting Hindutva's rejection of Western modernity (Bauman 2020). While acknowledging it as a feature of Hindutva agenda, this study includes it in the *alternative ethics* defended and propagated by the multifaceted movement (III). Unlike the debates on conversion, cow protection has been tacitly included in the Hindu Raj under *animal protection* legislation. How Hindutva deploys the Hindu sensibility towards cow is explained hence in connection to the *communalism* it embraces, which also covers other recent significant events such as the Ayodhya issue, the CAA, etc. (II). This perspective places the conversion issue right within the Indic perspective embraced by M. K. Gandhi, usurped presently by Hindutva. The

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[3] https://www.firstpost.com/politics/setting-a-record-a-look-at-12-years-of-narendra-modis-rule-in-gujarat-1157069.html (accessed 2/19/2021).

commonality and distinction between the two results in a major disagreement on secularism and the minorities equitably conceptualized in the constitution (I). Hence the topics of conversion and cow-protection reach beyond any exclusively religious argumentation.

1. The Politics of Conversion

Although conversion is *primarily* a religious topic, it has been more and more associated with colonialism especially since 1492, the so-called Discovery of the Americas (Miller et al. 2010). In its specific religious sense conversion denotes *metanoia*, the change of heart implying one's perspective and allegiance with respect to the transcendent reality.[4] This Christian interpretation does not however deprive the significance of the social and political contexts in which one's *inner transformation* takes place, abandoning a way of life and embracing a new one corresponding to the belief and practice of the chosen religion.[5] In politicizing conversion what often occurs is either to *ignore* the issue of inner transformation or to *interpret* it primarily in terms of socio-political or other similar secular parameters.

In the case of India, conversion has been a political issue exclusively linked to the *missionary activity* mostly under the East India Company and the British Raj, and hence often *conflated* with colonialism (Frykenberg 2003: 6-9). The association of conversion with *Christian* missionary activity promotes various assumptions: *first*, Hinduism, the religion of most Indians, discovers its *identity* thanks to the colonial, missionary interaction

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[4] With respect to Paul's Churches and message, Dunn writes: "'Conversion' in the full rounded sense of the word was evidently a profound and life-altering experience for many, an experience of renewal and transformation, of being cleansed, enlightened, and set free" (2009: 657). However, in the history of Catholic Christian Missions, different emphases replaced or modified this original conception (Bevans and Schroeder 2004) which was retained or re-emphasized in contemporary times: "Conversion is … not the joining of a community in order to procure "eternal salvation"; it is, rather, a change in allegiance in which Christ is accepted as Lord and center of one's life" (Bosch 1997: 488).

[5] Wakankar's (2018) philosophical interpretation of conversion in the Marathi community of the nineteenth century expands this Christian paradigm; see also: Bhagabati (2021).

(Oddie 2003). *Second*, the various autochthonous religions of India may be categorized under the overarching concept of Hinduism, creating thus a *communal/national front* against the Raj (Savarkar 1923). *Third*, belonging to the autochthonous Indic religions constitutes the *requirement* to claim Indian nationality and citizenship (Golwalkar 2015). *Fourth*, missionary activity leading to conversion is *often forced*, and hence must be banned (Bauman 2008). *Fifth*, all laws banning conversion aim at preserving one's *ancestral religion* hence the emphasis on *freedom of religion* (Richards 2021). Especially the last two points created an atmosphere of civil crisis in the 1980s and 1990s which moved the then BJP leader and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to call for "a 'national debate on conversion' in January 1999" (Kim 2003:2, 157-160).[6] The current *Anti-Conversion Bills* partially reflect this national tension on changing religious affiliation.

I.1 The Freedom of Religion Acts / Anti-Conversion Bills

To this date (March 31, 2023) *eleven* states in India have promulgated the *Freedom of Religious Acts*. These are chronologically: Odisha (1967), Madhya Pradesh (1968), Arunachal Pradesh (1978), Chhattisgarh (2000 and 2006), Tamil Nadu (2002, *repealed* in 2006), Gujarat (2003), Rajasthan (2006 and 2008), Himachal Pradesh (2006 and 2019), Jharkhand (2017), Uttarakhand (2018), and Uttar Pradesh (2019). Whereas Tamil Nadu repealed its Bill in 2006 due to minority protests, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh enacted laws against *marriage by conversion* (popularly known as *love-jihad*). There exist striking similarities between these state legislations despite their differentiated argumentation and motivation. The following table,[7] comprising of *current active laws* in **nine** states, manifests commonalities in legislation and penalties:

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[6] While Kim (2003) provides a chronological analysis, this study highlights the political dimension and its impact especially concentrating on the anti-conversion bills and the Hindutva ideology.

[7] https://www.indiatoday.in/news-analysis/story/anti-conversion-laws-in-india-states-religious-conversion-1752402-2020-12-23 (accessed on 2023-03-22). See also: https://indianlegalsolution.com/anti-conversion-laws-in-india/ (accessed on 7/29/2021).

Table 2: Comparison of anti-conversion laws

	Odisha	Madhya Pradesh	Arunachal Pradesh	Chhattisgarh	Gujarat	Himachal Pradesh	Jharkhand	Uttarakhand	Uttar Pradesh
Latest year of enactment	1967	1968	1978	2006	2003	2019	2017	2018	2020
Prohibition on conversion									
By force, fraud, or allurement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
By marriage	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Procedure for conversion – Declaration to District Magistrate or equivalent officer									
By individual seeking to convert	Advance notice (time not specified)	Nil	Nil	Within one month after conversion	10 days after conversion	One month advance notice	7 days after conversion	One month advance notice	60 days advance notice
By priest / religious convertor performing the conversion	15 days advance notice	Within seven days after conversion	After conversion (time not specified)	30 days advance notice	Advance notice (time not specified)	One month advance notice	15 days advance notice	One month advance notice	One month advance notice
Penalties for causing / abetting conversion									
Imprisonment	Up to 1 year	Up to 1 year	Up to 2 years	Up to 3 years	Up to 3 years	1-5 years	Up to 3 years	1-5 years	1-5 years
Fine	Up to Rs 5,000	Up to Rs 5,000	Up to Rs 10,000	Up to Rs 20,000	Up to Rs 50,000	Amount not specified	Up to Rs 50,000	Amount not specified	Rs 15,000 or more
Penalties for causing / abetting conversion (of a minor, woman, or person belonging to SC or ST)									
Imprisonment	Up to 2 years	Up to 2 years	Up to 2 years	Up to 4 years	Up to 4 years	2-7 years	Up to 4 years	2-7 years	2-10 years
Fine	Up to Rs 10,000	Up to Rs 10,000	Up to Rs 10,000	Up to Rs 20,000	Up to Rs 20,000	Up to Rs 1,00,000	Amount not specified	Up to Rs 1,00,000	Rs 25,000 or more
Penalties for violating procedure for conversions									
Imprisonment	Nil	Up to 1 year	Up to 1 year	Up to 1 year	Up to 1 year	3 months – 1 year (individual) 6 months – 2 years (convertor)	Up to 1 year	3 months – 1 year (individual) 6 months – 2 years (convertor)	6 months – 3 years (individual) 1 – 5 years (convertor)
Fine	Rs 1,000	Up to Rs 1,000	Up to Rs 1,000	Up to Rs 10,000	Up to Rs 1,000	Amount not specified	Up to Rs 5,000	Amount not specified	Rs 10,000 or more (individual) Rs 25,000 or more (convertor)

In his analysis of the anti-conversion bills, Richards (2021) highlights *two* waves of legislation, the first comprising of Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh and the second consisting of the remaining six states. Although their rationale and penalties are similar, two observations stand out: *first*, the anti-conversion laws argue that conversion "is an act perpetrated upon an individual by another, *not a decision of individual conscience*" (163, emphasis added) and hence is *forced* in a broad sense. This interpretative understanding is crucial in many respects which is taken up below. *Second*, the second wave of anti-conversion bills introduce *more severe punishments* of the converter (agent, instigator, or officiant of conversion) together with extensive constraints placed on potential converts. In other words, *surveillance* is increased and expanded on the *process of conversion* which is both observable and controllable. This *unique* way of understanding conversion, bracketing out its *substantive* sense, emerges from the Hindutva argumentation, characteristically fundamentalist, nationalist, and universalist (Ram-Prasad, 1993, 2003).

I.2 The Freedom of Religion Acts: Rationale

To capture the singular argumentative stance Hindutva occupies, it is useful to recall the post-independence trajectory of controversies on conversion (to Christianity) highlighting at least *three nodal points*.

I.2.1 A **first dispute** on the legitimacy of conversion occurs during the Indian Independence Struggle, and it is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Mahatma, who challenges its legitimacy, necessity, and adequacy.[8] The core of Gandhi's argumentation is straightforward and relies on his conception of *religion as universal value* which obliges every believer to *transcend* the confines of one's institutional religious adherence and hold on to the Truth. Religion is hence *dharma* but in a complex and specific sense. Gandhi expresses it succinctly:

> Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion, which I certainly prize above all other religions, but *the religion which transcends* Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to *the truth within* and which ever purifies. It is *the permanent element in human nature* which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves *the soul utterly restless* until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself (*CWMG* 17: 406, emphasis added).

This conceptualization, based on the traditional notion of Hindu *dharma*, recognizes the inter-connectedness of humanity thanks to the inner spiritual principle, *ātman*, in constant and intimate relationship with the cosmic principle *brahman*. Gandhi's genius consists in making the orthodox spiritual principle to substantiate not only the legitimacy of *all* autochthonous and non-autochthonous religions, but also their *equality de jure*, without claiming perfection of any kind; for the religious person (*homo religi*osus) is *a seeker of Truth* (*CWMG* 44: 166-167). Thereby he upholds *human religiosity* and the *independence of religions from the political structure*. In other words, for Gandhi religion is paramount to human

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[8] For Gandhi's texts on conversion, see Gupta 2017: 189-213; and for analysis see Kim 2003: 23-36.

fulfillment, as a social reality it occupies an *autonomous realm*, and *yet* would succeed only through service to humanity; alike Thomas Aquinas, Parel (2006: 116) argues, "he was against religion or politics totalizing the whole person."

However, Gandhi's stance on religion and conversion is expressed in the context of his *introducing religion into politics* (*CWMG* 13: 221); it is *not* an academic exercise of defending the *pluralist* perspective *à la* Hick (1989), for example. Political engagement, from the Gandhian perspective, is *ethical*; its integrity is guaranteed only if it is conducted within the framework of *puruṣārthas* (the ends of human life, Parel 2006). Conversion, from this perspective, is *superfluous*; when confronted with the critique of Hinduism (by missionaries, for example), what is expected of the Hindu religious person is *not* conversion but to become a *better* Hindu instead (CWMG 13: 219-225). Bauman (2021) *rightly* highlights this unique stance of Gandhi[9] in presenting "conversion as an interior process of spiritual transformation" in contrast to "conversion as a change in religious affiliation*"* (141-142), though *not sufficiently* acknowledges the ethical-political dimension Gandhi promotes: *transcending* the ethnic/cultural confines and exclusive claims on truth is a *requisite* for holding on to Truth.

Gandhi's critique of conversion makes sense not in polarizing *spiritual transformation* against *religious affiliation* but in comprehending conversion as "a political and social action" (Thomas 1991: 195),[10] emerging from "*dhārmic* agency" (Dalmiya and Mukherji 2018: 14), which for Gandhi is anchored on *niṣkāma karma*. The *niṣkāma karma* as embraced by Gandhi upholds agency as *sthitapraña* (consistent consciousness) which

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[9] "Conversion for Gandhi … was self- transformation, something one did, or could do, within any religious tradition … Moral development was possible in all religious traditions, and was the standard by which a religious person, and religious traditions, should be judged. In fact, Gandhi's primary objection to mass Christian conversions, and missionary attempts to provoke them, was not so much that they would entail Hindu demographic decline, but rather that in his estimation such conversions failed to (and could not possibly) produce moral transformation … So while conversion as *an interior process of spiritual transformation* was something to be desired, conversion as *a change in religious affiliation* was not, particularly if that change in affiliation required that one cut oneself off from one's ancestral traditions" Bauman 2021: 141-142 (emphasis added); see also, especially: Kim 2003: 30-36.

[10] For a discussion of this point, see Kim 2003: 26-27.

requires "moral cultivation and discrimination" of ethical agency (27). For, "Being *niṣkāma* or 'without desire' is to be … without 'attached desires', that is, without the 'attachment' of first-level desires to a consciously constructed self in terms of second order endorsements of desires" (31). Thus, belonging to a religion may define one's social identity, but a *sthitapraña* would not further 'attach' to it, through a second-order adoption of it to constitute the self. In other words, for a *sthitapraña* social identity does *not automatically* translate into social capital. This crucial feature of Gandhi's critique of conversion[11] is ignored both by Christians as well as by his Hindutva sympathisers, and consequently the debate on conversion in post-independence India brackets out *dhārmic* agency.

I.2.2 A concrete example constitutes the **debates in the constitutional assembly** which finally settled on *religious freedom as Fundamental Right*. Article 25 of the *Constitution of India*[12] states:

> (1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to *freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion*. (2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law — (a) regulating or restricting any *economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice*; (b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus. Explanation I.—The wearing and carrying of kirpans shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion. Explanation II. —In sub-clause (b) of clause (2), *the*

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[11] In concrete terms, missionary activity for the welfare of communities or low-class people must exercise the *dhārmic agency* in ceasing to convert, for it would amount to compounding social identity with social capital. However, in endorsing Gandhi's critique of conversion one must contrast it with the socio-political-religious identity defended by Bhimrao Ambedkar. While transcending of religion becomes *sine qua non* for Gandhi's nationalist vision it does *not* capture *the depth of social suffering* borne by the Dalits especially due to their untouchable social status. For a discussion, see: "The insurmountable grip of Caste" in my forthcoming publication: *Hindutva Ideology and Politics   Conceptualizing Post-Independence Conflicts in India,* Chapter 1.

[12] https://www.constitutionofindia.net (accessed on 2023-03-27).

reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly (emphasis added).

The context of this formulation, discussed by different scholars, concords on the following: *first*, considering *Hindu sensitivity* and Gandhi's strong stance *against conversion as exchange of religious affiliation*, *individual freedom of conscience* is assigned priority in matters of religion. This *liberal ideological leaning* reflects the kind of secularism India embraces. Indian secularism is distinct thanks to the following three features: *principled distance from religion*; *community-specific rights and contextual sensitivity*. The Indian Constitution defends secularism as *differentiated citizenship* and as *religious neutrality sui generis*, based on socio-cultural reasons. It recognizes that multiple irreducible diversities may generate conflict over values, and hence places emphasis on *pragmatic* religious content. This entails the introduction of strategies to reform religious practices which may be socially oppressive, and/or lack organized central institutions (Bhargava 2010: 63-105).

Second, while ensuring state *legal dominance* over religious practices and maintaining *de jure* the traditional conception of Hinduism as comprehending all Indic autochthonous religions, *propagation* of one's religion is upheld despite other radical formulations.[13] However, this political compromise occasions the incorporation of Hindutva views into the conversion debate: the "foreignness" of Islam and Christianity, ably argued by Savarkar (1923: 87-88; 100-101); the distinction between conversion as "something done by someone to someone else" and conversion as "something one does to oneself" Richards (2021: 158). Implied in the religious

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[13] For example, the draft articles submitted by K. M. Munshi on 17 March 1947: "VI (1) All citizens are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and to the right freely to profess and practise religion in a manner compatible with public order, morality or health: Provided that the economic, financial or political activities associated with religious worship shall not be deemed to be included in the right to profess or practise religion. VI (6) No person under the age of eighteen shall be free to change his religious persuasion without the permission of his parent or guardian. VI (7) Conversion from one religion to another brought about by coercion, undue influence or the offering of material inducement is prohibited and is punishable by the law of the Union" (quoted from Kim 2003: 201-202; for a detailed discussion, see pages 37-58; Richards 2021: 158-159).

freedom clause 25(2)(a) of the Constitution are also *cautions against missionary activity* inducing conversion through economic incentives or institutional structures related to religious practice. Hence the ensuing discussion on missionary activity in post-independence India conducted by the Rege and Niyogi Reports of 1956.[14]

Third, whereas the Reports reiterate the radical stance on conversion already expressed in the Constitutional Assembly Debates, they provide *adequate rationale* to legislate on conversion. The major points of critique[15] raised in the Niyogi Report hence reflect the first wave of legislation. Key points of these reports have in common the already highlighted Hindutva conception of religion and conversion, for what problematized is only conversion *from*, *not to,* Hinduism; and the communities targeted are the Adivasi. This enables the Committee to tarnish Christian social activity in the field of education and health services as missionary activity which induces the tribal folk to convert to Christianity, despite those services respond to the human rights of the people.[16]

I.2.3 A third and final nodal point in the debates on conversion constitutes the theoretical argument that **conversion is violence**.[17] It is Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1930-2015) who advances this opportunist argument[18] which consists mainly of *three* main points: *first*, world religions fall

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[14] For a detailed discussion, see Kim 2003: 59-87; Bauman 2008; Richards 2021: 159-161.

[15] Kim 2003: 65-69. Article 25(a) is understood as rights *of* the citizens, hence foreign missionary activity is illegal; religious freedom within a secular state is restricted, hence recalling the concept of *religio licita*; *foreign funds* aid Christian missionary activity especially among the tribals; missionaries *main aim* is conversion, education and health services are mere tools to it. Hence the following recommendations: ban on missionaries pursuing conversion; prohibition of services enabling conversion; clarification of the illegality of conversion through "undue means" (Kim 2003:68); legislative controls on the process of conversion; and ban on (Christian) religious propaganda.

[16] Bauman (2008:188-194) provides a brief discussion and argues that it is more a symptom of "Postcolonial Anxiety" (194-196).

[17] https://www.hinduismtoday.com/magazine/november-1999/1999-11-conversion-is-an-act-of-violence/ (accessed on 2023/04/13). The entire text of the speech is available as an e-book at: www.scribd.com/document/27378131/Conversion- is- Violence-Swami-Dayananda (accessed on 2023/04/13).

[18] As a spokesperson of the Hindutva, Swami Dayananda, the spiritual Guru of Narendra Modi, makes the argument in a public address of July 17, 1999 at Satguru

within two categories: "aggressive or non-aggressive," while the former, Islam and Christianity for example, engages in conversion by all means, the latter, Judaism, Hinduism, Taoism for example, does not. *Second*, "Religious conversion by missionary activity remains an act of violence. *It is an act of violence because it hurts deeply*, not only the other members of the family of the converted, but the entire community that comes to know of it. One is connected to various persons in one's world. *The religious person in every individual is the innermost*, inasmuch as he or she is connected to a force beyond the empirical. *The religious person is connected only to the force beyond he has now accepted*. That is the reason why the hurt caused by religion can turn into violence. That is why a religious belief can motivate a missionary to be a martyr. *When the hurt of the religious becomes acute, it explodes into violence*. Conversion is violence. It generates violence." *Third*, "*Religion and culture are not often separable* … Therefore, *conversion implies destruction of this entire culture* … Religious conversion should stop–the aggressive religions should realize that they are perpetrating violence when they convert" (emphasis added).[19] For it is violence against a *non-violent* person.

Contextualizing the thesis of Dayananda and analysing its content, Bauman comes to the following conclusion: "the legitimacy of the claim that proselytization is a kind of violence depends not only on one's definition of "violence," but also, importantly, on one's definition of "religion"" (2015: 186). With respect to the former, *cultural violence may* characterize conversion but the *inextricable* connection between religion and culture pits one *contingent* definition of religion, "which asserts that religions are and should be ethnic, not universal," against another, which holds "religion as something portable, exorcisable from culture, and therefore *indigenizable* in any culture, the very view that animates the Christian impulse towards proselytization" (ibid). This argument does *not* resolve

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Gnanananda Hall, Chennai, in the context of the forthcoming Papal visit of John Paul II to India in December 1999 and the current national debates on conversion initiated by the then Prime Minister Vajpayee in January 1999, consequent to the anti-Christian violence of 1998 in Dangs, Gujarat (Bauman 2015: 180-181). For details and assessment of 'the Hindutva terror campaign in Dangs,' see AIFOFDR 1999:11-32.

    [19] All quotes from: https://www.hinduismtoday.com/magazine/november-1999/1999-11-conversion-is-an-act-of-violence/ (accessed on 2023/04/13).

the issue *if* conversion *is* violence but reveals the different definitions of religion held by persons against and for conversion as well as the Hindutva strategy which "resists the expansion of one form of normative religious discourse while simultaneously attempting to impose another" (187).

It is significant to note that Dayananda's thesis targets mainly Christianity - "the missionary activity" –, does not mention re-conversion (Vandevelde 2011) and legitimizes Hindu violence against Christian and Muslim minorities as *reactions*,[20] foreshadowing a strategy deployed in the 2002 Gujarat Violence (Spodek 2010). Thus, the legitimacy of violence against religious and cultural minorities becomes a core feature of Hindutva ideology and dominance as illustrated in the targeting of Christians in Kandhamal, Odisha, in 2007 and 2008 (Bauman 2020: 143-214), and recently in Manipur.[21]

II. Cow Protection - Ideology and Strategy

Did Cow Protection - "in the modern Hindu sense, which is characterized by a taboo on slaughter and a prohibition on consumption" (Alsdorf 2010: 69) - ever constitute part of Hindu identity before it was launched first in 1882 (Singh 1903: 151) by Dayananda Saraswati (1824 – 1883), founder of the Arya Samaj? The response rests mainly on textual evidence, socio-cultural transformation of Hindu self-perception and the political, strategical role attributed to the religious duty of Cow Protection.

II.1 Cow-Protection: historical overview

Three crucial relationships are highlighted in Early Hinduism when human-animal interactions come under discussion; these are interconnect-

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[20] The Hindu is presented as the victim whom the secular state does not protect against the aggressive minorities (Saraswati 1999: 25-27).

[21] The recent outrage against the Christians of Manipur confirms that the anti-conversion violence constitutes a viable strategy of Hindutva. Since the incidents took place after the completion of this essay, no mention was made. For a brief info of the violence, see: https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/clashes-between-kukis-and-meiteis-in-manipur-over-st-status-proposal-for-meitei-community-violence-and-damage-reported-101683225905138.html (accessed on 2023-06-23).

edness and reciprocity, homology or identification, and hierarchy, all inherent in the Vedic account of creation, the *Puruṣasūkta* (RV 10.90). The story of humans exchanging their skins with the animals (*Jaiminiya Brahmana* 2.182-183), earning them the right to kill and eat animals in this world, explains Doniger (2009), does place ritual killing and eating at a higher plane together with the ethical argument "that the best way of avoiding being eaten in the other world … was to stop eating them altogether" (149). Animals were however *classified*, based on how they were killed "in a hunt (*mrigas*) or in a sacrifice (*pashus*)" (151); and in sacrifice too there was a classification of victims placing the horse at the topmost. Despite this acknowledged interrelationship of animals and humans, people did eat meat, and killed cows for special occasions, for example "when a guest arrives" (150), though one text (*Shatpatha Brahmana* 3.2.21) explicitly forbids it. But "[c]attle slaughter was also intimately connected with the cult of the dead" (Jha 2009: 34).

There did exist hence an *ambiguity* with respect to killing the cow. According to a myth referenced in RV, and told in MB, King Prithu milks the earth: "It imagines a transition from hunting wild cattle (the earth cow) to preserving their lives, domesticating them, and breeding them for milk, in a transition to agriculture and pastoral life… Cows are clearly of central economic, ritual, and symbolic importance in the Vedic world" (113). This multifaceted conceptualization attributes to cow a *special status* partially shared by other animals too. Stewart (2014) hence argues that Vedic religion "centers on the veneration and slaughter of animals" (625). "The *Manusmriti* maintains that since these animals are meant to be killed as part of their very ontological structure, their killing cannot be properly regarded as blameworthy: "Within the sacrifice killing is not killing" (57: 218)" (627; Jha 2009: 91; Alsdorf 2010: 20). Further, the text "interprets cow veneration to mean that cow sacrifice is especially meritorious" (ibid); *improper killing* of cow risks the loss of one's caste status. "In fact, a cow is so sacred that it is sometimes viewed as equal in worth to that of a Brahmin priest …" (ibid). The status/sacredness attributed to the cow makes sense hence within the conceptualization of the human-animal world as interconnected, reciprocal, homological and hierarchical. Cow stands at a rank higher, though below the horse, in the category of sacrificial animals. Besides being the nourisher, thanks to the *pañcagavya* (five products of the cow: milk, curd, butter, dung, and urine, as well as the sixth derivative

gorochan - cow bile-, Jha 2009: 129-132), it is also the symbol of "purity", "non-violence and generosity" (Doniger 2009: 42). The purity of the cow is however deficient: "no lawgiver describes the mouth of the cow as pure, though like several other domesticated animals, the cow is an herbivore (Jha 2009: 133). But the possibility of humans becoming the sacrificial victims of gods (homologically animals being the victims of humans) did raise the alarm, seriously questioning the sacrificial ritual. Buddhist critique of ritual sacrifice (Stewart 2014: 629f.) fits within this pattern of thought shared also by classic Hindu texts (Doniger 2009: 191-193; 2014: 501-506).

How does Cow Protection emerge from this larger context of carnivorous and sacrificial life-style typical of Vedic and Brahmanic periods? Three issues, namely killing for survival, ritual killing and non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), require close attention. Animal food demands killing; the Vedic texts and subsequent legal treatises of Hinduism permit and celebrate meat eating. Eating meat and killing for eating were sanctioned by the Vedas, Manu and other legal as well as medicinal writings. Animal victims were dear to gods, humans participated in the divine sacrificial meal, a guest was honoured by killing a cow, and the ancestors were appeased by carnivorous ritual festivities (*madhuparka* and *śrāddha*). However, the texts demanded caution with respect to *what* one eats and *how* killing is carried out. Procedures were important in the case of ritual/sacrificial killings; gods and the sacrificer as well as the participants ate the victim sacrificed (Jha 2009: 90-103). With the *efficacy* of animal sacrifice challenged both by Buddhism and Jainism, besides the Upanishads, *the emphasis turned gradually from sacrifice to worship*: *Yajña* was substituted by or undervalued against *Pūjā*. Though this begins the expansion and intensification of the concept of *ahiṃsā*, as well as the introduction of vegetarianism in Hindu thought, killing and eating beef within and outside ritual continued at least until the middle of the first millennium – a practice to be witnessed also in both Early Buddhism and Jainism (Jha 2009: 61-78).

Alsdorf (2010: 17) explains this inconsistency with respect to cow slaughter found in the legal texts in comparison to the laws of levirate and proposes three developmental stages. "Considered critically and historically, the apparently juxtaposed and contradictory regulations [regarding levirate] become successive stages of historical development and exactly the same holds true of the section on meat-eating in Manu." Thus, during

the first phase, meat-eating constitutes "the *natural right* of mankind to partake of meat" (21 emphasis added), "which permits the consumption of five five-clawed animals" (18). During the second phase a *compromise* is achieved: "The categorical contention that killing for sacrifice is not killing" (20). And in the third phase "which explicitly appeals to the rule of *ahiṃsā*, and unconditionally brands any partaking of meat as *immoral*, …" (21). Further, "vs 51 [of Manu] reads 'The one sanctioning (the killing), the carver, slaughterer, buyer, seller, cook, servant, and consumer – they are all killers" (ibid). However, Manu (5:56) closes the section with a passage which seems to *weaken* the strict regulations, and "belongs to another context: '*There is no offence in the consumption of flesh, intoxicating beverages, and sexual intercourse*; that is in fact the (natural) conduct of living beings; however, abstinence brings great rewards'" (Alsdorf 2010: 22, emphasis added).

Undoubtedly, Hindu tradition attaches *some unique significance* to cow; it shall be understood as discussed above in the context of acceptance and eventual, local, partial, rejection of meat eating, animal sacrifice as well as symbolic value attributed to the cow. The latter consisted in seeing the cow as provider, nourisher, protector, pure and generous. How did this transference of values occur? Jha argues, with respect to the Vedic period, "that a cow belonging to a *brāhmaṇa* came to acquire a certain degree of inviolability" (2009: 38); the donated cow (*dakṣiṇā*) had to be protected, not to be eaten (39). It did not make the cow however sacred, nor an identity mark of the Hindu community or of "the *Brāhmaṇical* social order" (102) at a later stage. Since the middle of first millennium "a qualitative change in agrarian society" resulted, indicative of which are the "Puranic religion, buttressed by a new mechanism of gift-making with emphasis on the donation of land and other agrarian resources like the cattle [which] made it necessary for the law givers to forbid the killing of kine" (114). For it constituted one of the "customs that have to be given up in the kali age (*kalivarjyas*) … This disapproval … tended to give special status to the cow [for example, in the *Vaitārini* ritual], and to exclude beef from at least the *brāhmaṇa's* menu" (ibid). Further, a cow killer was equated to an untouchable (*antyaja*), "and even by talking to him one incurs sin"; "*beef eating*" became thus "*one of the bases of untouchability from the early medieval period onwards*" (ibid, emphasis added). This perspective has been further endorsed by other law givers, and consequently cow shelters

(*gośālā*) were constructed alongside temple premises, traceable back to the ninth century CE (115). Despite "condemnation of cow killing as a *kalivarjya*," killing and beef eating continued at various parts of India together with Brahmanical persuasion to abandon the practice (120-121). Hence, Jha (2009: 146) concludes:

> … the image of the cow projected by the Indian textual traditions … over the centuries is polymorphic. Its story … is full of inconsistencies … It was killed but the killing was not killing. When it was not slain, mere remembering of the old practice of butchery satisfied the brāhmaṇas. Its five products … have been considered pure but not its mouth. Yet through these incongruous attitudes the Indian cow has struggled its way to sanctity.
>
> But *the holiness of the cow is elusive*. For there has never been a cow-goddess, nor any temple in her honour. Nevertheless, the veneration of the animal has come to be viewed as *a characteristic trait of modern day non-existent monolithic 'Hinduism' bandied about by the Hindutva forces* (emphasis added).

Hindu identity will then have to be refashioned to fit in the *imagined* sacred cow; this is what Dayananda Saraswati attempted, and the VHP now continues: to *universalize and homogenize* this socially constructed, pastoral based, feature attributed to Hinduism.

II.2 Cow Protection and communalism

If inviolability of the cow, despite its alleged sacredness, did not constitute a universal characteristic of Hinduism, this did not dissuade Hindutva to employ Cow Protection as a mobilizing tool to enhance communalism. Briefly reviewing the history of Cow Protection movement, two points shall be highlighted: first, how the emphasis on Cow Protection implicitly, and gradually in overt actions, *individuate the other* against which Hindu identity is conceptualized; second, how the communalist mobilization cements the *religious nationalism*.

In employing meat eating as a category of discrimination mentioned above, untouchability becomes legitimate (Appadurai 1981; Chigateri 2008); Cow Protection reinforces this implicit rejection of the low caste assuming them to be meat eaters (Srinivas 1962: 66-67). However, the most

overt identification of the other occurs with the individuation of *the Muslim as cow slaughterer*, especially in connection with the Bakr 'Id festival (Jones 1976: 152-153). Ideologically, Swami Dayanand "pleaded for protection to the cow on a utilitarian principle. … [Whereas] the produce of the descendant of each cow can sustain numerous persons, [t]he flesh of one cow, on the other hand, can feed only 80 flesh-eating persons" (Singh 1903: 151-152; Saraswati 1908: 261-262). This economic argument fits in the colonial context in which the movement emerged (Freitag 1980a, 1980b); however, Cow Protection is rooted also in a vision of *dharma* (Adcock 2015) that would strengthen the alternative sovereignty defended by Hindutva.

How does Cow Protection solidify Hindu communalism? Freitag's analysis of the movement clarifies its "ideology, organization, and mobilization" bridging "the gap between town and village" (1980b: 624) in North India during the pre-Independence period. "Its unparalleled success … can be attributed to at least two important characteristics: first, its platform appealed alike to orthodox, traditionalistic reformist Hindus; and second, its organizational structure united urban centers and their rural surroundings" (606). Whereas in the cities it *integrated* the Hindu population, in the villages it boosted the *upward mobility* of down-trodden Hindu groups. The Arya Samaj served here as a catalyzer, for example, in the case of the Jats (Datta 1997). After the death of Swami Dayanand (who "formed the first Gaurakshini Sabha in 1882") in 1883, the movement was intensified on religious grounds especially "when, in 1888, the North-Western Court decreed that a cow was not a sacred object and hence was not covered by section 295 of the Indian Penal Code" (Freitag 1980b: 606). This *court decision* by the colonial government served the movement at least in two important ways: first, the ruling British could be identified as meat eaters and slaughterers of cattle, alike the Muslims (Yang 1980); colonial hunting addiction corroborated this view (Rashkow 2015). Second, a concrete Hindu dietary trait, namely rejection of meat-eating, provided a *commonality* for various internally different communities. Cow represented the "universal mother": "It was therefore matricide to kill a cow" (Freitag 1980b: 609). Further, slaughtering cattle and meat-eating could from now onwards be considered *the crucial differentiating feature* between the 'unified' Hindu practices and those of the Muslims and Christians, especially of the ruling British. It is this *ideological content* which in

a unique manner shaped post-independence judicial rulings on Cow Protection, and thus unwittingly strengthened the Hindutva stance.

However, in the hands of Hindutva, Cow Protection becomes a political mobilization tool (Katju 2017, Noronha 1994; Barak-Erez 2010) increasingly encroaching the democratic legitimacy of the nation-state. Although the Constitution of India recommends in article 48 the prohibition of cow slaughter, it is "a matter of relevance solely to the states" (Jaffrelot 1996: 205), and the Supreme Court limited its scope in 1958. Even this constitutional recommendation against the cow slaughter was based, argues Gundimeda and Ashwin (2018), on Arya Samaj texts which secularized the sacred cow, insisting on its value as "mother" linking women and cows, "economic utility" and establishing "that beef-eating did not have Islamic sanction" (160, 161). Further, the Supreme Court verdicts of 1958 and 2005 "legitimised *majoritarian sentiments* in the law by conceding valuable ground to cow protectors" (164, emphasis added). The political defense of Cow Protection has been moving since independence towards its national legalization, for which Hindutva first attempted in vain in the 1960s (Jaffrelot 1996: 205-210; Katju 2013: 2:12f.; Copland 2014; Sarkar 2016). It almost succeeded when in 2005 a Supreme Court Bench validated the Bombay Animal Preservation (Gujarat Amendment) Act of 1994, reversing the earlier impingement, claiming "the interest of a citizen or section of a community, howsoever important, is secondary to the interest of the country or community as a whole" (Gundimeda and Ashwin 2018: 167), initiating thus *a conflict between fundamental human rights of the citizens of India versus animal rights*. This expands the Cow Protection debate into the new realm of environmental ethics as well as of violence sanctioned by majoritarian moral imperatives.

Briefly, one may approach Cow Protection from *three* interrelated perspectives, namely religious including the symbolic and the philosophical; political including the legal and the social; and secular, including the economic and the ecological. These provide ample maneuvering room for all stakeholders. In the following we shall examine how Hindutva approaches the issue from an alternative ethical perspective which does include all the above-mentioned perspectives, but adds normative value to its chosen historical, political interpretation – a strategy employed in "highlighting a single aspect of Ayodhya's religious history at the expense of all others" (Shaw 2000: 698). A key factor in this interpretive stance on

Cow Protection consists in the flexibility incorporated into it, so that the religious/symbolic dimensions become subservient to political/legal perspectives thwarting any exclusively secular approach.

II.3 Animal Protection as an Ethical Tool

If with integral humanism[22] Hindutva solidifies its claim for Hindu Rashtra, simultaneously it "relinquishes Hinduism and projects itself as an ideological substitution for the latter … by materialist concerns of territory, culture, xenology and state power" (Bhatt 2001: 160). Communalism plays here a significant role especially by creating "preconditions in social structures for sustained communal violence. … Religious differences were more likely to become communal conflicts [during the colonial period] when they coincided with shifts in political and economic power" (Bayly 1985: 203). This insight serves well to understand how Hindutva deployed *Cow Protection as an ethical obligation*.

In discussing above the Hindutva stance on Cow Protection various approaches were highlighted. The approach most favoured and has been promoted hitherto is the legal. By explicating briefly, the grounds on which this argument is still maintained shall clarify the *ethical sovereignty* Hindutva subscribes to. It is based on the *integral interpretation* of *dharma* and the consequent obligation under which the democratic state is supposed to act. This Hindutva argumentation shall be followed through the different stages in which Cow /Animal Protection has been constitutionally established.

The post-independence Constitution of India supports Cow Protection through article 48: "The State shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and *prohibiting*

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[22] Proposed by Deendayal Upadhyaya in the mid-1960s, integral humanism is conceived as the ideology of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS): "The objective of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh is the rebuilding of the Bharat, on the basis of the Bharatiya Sanskriti and Maryada, and as a political, social and economic democracy, guaranteeing equality of opportunity and liberty of person to all its citizens so as to build up a prosperous, powerful and united nation, progressive, modern and enlightened, able to withstand the aggressive designs of others and to exert herself in the comity of nations for the establishment of world peace" (Upadhyaya 2008: 388). Reference to Upadhyaya's text is to Kindle location, not page.

the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle" (emphasis added). As Baxi (1967) rightly points out, "it must be acknowledged that article 48 while being a reluctant compromise is a clever one. It does *not* confer constitutional immunity on cows" (347, italics in the original). But cleverness has eventually become the problem at least in two different ways: first, the 'directive principle' is vaguely formulated and hence interpretable both for and against Cow Protection; second, in the pursuant challenges to the interpretation of the article the Indian Supreme Court has continuously sustained it on majoritarian feeling, "popular sentiment" (350), against Cow Slaughter while dismissing any infringement of 'religious freedom' of the minorities, especially of the Muslims.

Analyzing in detail the court decisions of 1958 and 2005, Chigateri argues that "judicial discourse on cow slaughter, supposedly based on an economic and ecological understanding of the *use* value of cows in a predominantly agrarian economy, is predicated on a fundamental constitutive elision of the religious aspects of cow slaughter" (2011: 8.4, italics in the original). While it 'masks' the prioritization of 'dominant-caste Hindu identity' (ibid), it favors its secular ethics and ignores religious differences over the sacredness of the cow. There are hence three interrelated issues in the legal discourse on Cow Protection: *first*, the utilitarian value perspective according to which cows would not fair better than buffalos; if the 'use value' were to be central in the ethical argument, it is not unique to the Hindus. *Second*, the symbolic/sacred value perspective which makes the cow instrumental in obtaining religious merit. Reverencing the cow, however, does not have to be exclusively by not slaughtering it. "Love towards animals and eating their meat for survival is not a contradiction but a dialectical process" (Ilaiah 1996: 1445). Further, reverencing of animals, including the cow, is not a prerogative of the Hindu. *Third*, the inconclusive ethical stance of the superiority of the cow demanding prohibition of its slaughter or the inviolability of the cow thanks to majoritarian (Hindu) ethos. By upholding the ban on Cow Slaughter, the courts defend "highly contested values" and possibly act illegitimately. For neither the basis of Cow Slaughter Prohibition, nor "the persistent negation of diverse modes of being" (Chigateri 2011: 8.24) is interrogated. Whether the ethical argument is presented in economic, religious, or cultural terms, it affirms the *perceived stance of the majority* which the Court decision of 2005 clearly demonstrates.

The 2005 Supreme Court judgement concerns with "the Bombay Animal Preservation (Gujarat Amendment) Act of 1994" which expands "the prohibition of slaughtering bulls and bullocks below the age of 16 years to a total ban on slaughter of cows and their progeny" (Gundimeda and Aswhin 2018: 167). It annuls the previous High Court verdict (based on Fundamental Rights) against the Amendment. Consequently, the issue of Cow Slaughter becomes now *a contest between Animal Rights versus Human Rights* on the one hand and *a challenge against constitutional secularism* on the other hand. On both counts Hindutva claims victory thanks to the alternative ethical sovereignty which it defends. This ethical stance continues the strategy and claim which Swami Dayanand employed against the British Raj: "cow protection was advocated not simply for material reasons but also for *moral reasons*. The cow was held to occupy a pivotal position in the moral order of *dharm* [*dharma*]" (Adcock 2010: 309, emphasis added). Key to this strategy consists in presenting an argument for *undifferentiated public welfare* at the root of which stands the symbolic cow. For *dharm* in Arya Samajist parlance signifies "this-worldly welfare; material prosperity for all irrespective of confessional community; a material moral substrate produced by diet" (311). Has this strategy succeeded? If yes, to what extent? If not, why? We shall address the issue in the following section.

III. Conversion and Cow Protection: Assessment

The Hindutva alternative discussed above placed attention on communalism as conceived and fostered by it since Independence. Its ideology originating with the RSS was strengthened organizationally and politically since the 1950s by BJS/BJP and VHP especially since 1960s reaching momentum in the 1980s. Whereas Hindutva communalism shared the pre-Independence characteristics of identity and self-assertion generated from official communal classification and acknowledgement, during the post-independence period it concentrated on majority identity building and Hindu mobilization vis-à-vis Islam and other minority religious/cultural groups. The main strategy, "convert Hindus to Hinduism" (Malkani 1980: 158),[23] re-

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[23] Attributed to Swami Chinmayananda, it forms part of the comments made on the resolution against untouchability adopted during the world congress of VHP in January 1979 at Prayag.

inforced a radical revival of Hindutva's political, religious, and cultural ideology. It shall be understood as a forceful move towards *ethical sovereignty* placing Hindu dharma as the criterion and telos not only of Indian but global society. Both the Ayodhya conflict and Cow Protection movement make sense in this ethical context of *asserting sovereignty* in terms of culture, religion, and economy. Irrespective of the specific language employed, the claim rested always in the affirmation of the *superiority* of Hindu dharma in all spheres of life. For it alone provides the *wholistic or integral* achievement to the human person and society everywhere. Against this background cow slaughter has been legally contested. Does this challenge stand on current democratic grounds embraced by the Indian citizenry?

Two points shall be briefly highlighted: (a) constitutional secularism and equal treatment of religions; (b) animal rights versus human rights. It is constitutional secularism which guarantees 'freedom', 'equality' and 'neutrality' of religion in India (Crossman and Kapur 1997: 141) despite "an interventionist as well as a reformist role for courts" (Chigateri 2011: 8.26). Since this constitutional arrangement did not demonstrate 'substantive equality' in the Supreme Court decisions on cow slaughter, and the legitimacy of interventionism must be challenged, Chigateri (8.31), besides other arguments, concludes: "If secularism is to have any coherence as a fundamental principle of democratic India, then both article 48 as well as the laws on cow slaughter have to be repealed." Does this signal success to the Hindutva argumentation? It surely shows the need to re-think the correct/just application of core characteristics of Indian secularism: 'principled distance' and 'context sensitivity' (Bhargava 2010: 87-105).

Rethinking constitutional secularism entails situating the ban on cow slaughter in larger contexts including those of ecology, spirituality (Korom 2000; von Horn 2006) and "'casteised speciesism', or discriminatory practices towards non-humans, in this case by imposing casteist hierarchies on all bovines—the ostensibly protected cow as well as the unprotected buffalo" (Narayanan 2018: 351). With respect to these, the Supreme Court decision of 2005 highlights both economic/ecological as well as compassionate grounds for not slaughtering 'milch cattle' and 'draught cattle' past service. For they still supply 'dung' the value of which "is much more than even the famous 'Kohinoor' diamond" (Gundimeda and Aswhin 2018: 170)! Obviously, this argument is flawed as it ignores the damage done to

Muslim butchers and other minority groups who rely on meat as "cheap protein" (ibid), and the verdict is also biased towards the majority 'sentiment' as discussed above. Further, the whole judgement is based on a Hindutva influenced study, "the report of the National Commission of Cattle, set up by the BJP-led NDA government in 2002" (ibid). It leads one to the conclusion "that the judiciary does not hold an apolitical status in Indian democracy" (171). Hindutva's claim to ethical sovereignty in legal terms expresses itself again: "the BJP-led government in Gujarat passed an amendment to the Gujarat Animal Preservation (Amendment) Bill on 31 March 2017 that prescribed life imprisonment for those found guilty of slaughtering cows. This law has also a provision for a 10-year imprisonment for transportation, storage, or sale of beef" (ibid). This not only raises issues regarding human rights versus animal rights but also incites violence against meat eaters, as it has already happened though sporadically in various parts of Northern India. An escape from this predicament suggested by the authors consists in re-instating the original article 48 (contrary to what Chigateri stood for), for "India's cow protection debate is really no longer about any perceived hurt to religious sentiment but has become a *tool in stoking fear*" (173, emphasis added). The issue of Cow Protection becomes thus *an assertion of ethical sovereignty couched in religious, cultural, economic, and legal terms defying constitutional secularism and democracy*. It approaches to a fundamentalist stance.

The *unique defining feature* of contemporary Moditva consists perhaps in its Cow Protection policies which reflect adequately its ethical sovereignty, religious legitimacy, and socio-anthropological differentiation of Indian citizenship, thereby enabling defiance of secularism, plurality, and constitutional values. Since 2015[24] Cow Protection policies achieved a new significance transforming the hitherto ethical ideology into a *political tool of surveillance and disciplining* à la Foucault. Its targets are predominantly Dalits and Muslims traditionally engaged in meat industry.

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[24] The Maharashtra Animal Preservation Bill (Amendment) "was effected by the BJP-led state government on March 4, 2015. Under the law, anyone found selling beef or possessing it could be jailed up to five years, besides being fined." It triggered the extension of cow slaughter bans in many other states. https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/maharashtra-beef-laws-victims-mostly-transporters-and-mostly-muslim-beef-ban-2789749/ (accessed on 6/5/2021).

Parikh and Miller (2019) argue persuasively that the 'political technologies' – for example "Beef detection kits (BDKs)" (845) and "cattle unique-identification numbers (UIDs)" (848) – boost "the confluence of animal symbolism, surveillance and nation-making" and serve "to reinforce caste and species hierarchies and to discipline those deemed outsiders" (851). The study further shows, how the political technologies do *not* dissuade cow vigilante groups while "the development of these technologies *normalizes* the banning of beef in India and extends the state's ability to monitor certain groups, including cows the state aims to protect" (851, emphasis added). From an ethical perspective, such normalization serves to "reify the centering of upper-caste Hindus as ideal Indian citizens," extols the sacredness of cow making it lose its "animal status becoming a symbol of the nation and thus objectified" and creates "speciesist hierarchies" (852). With respect to Dalits and Muslims, they too become objects of surveillance and discipline especially by "sharing vulnerability with the cow due to their *positionality*; out of line, unacceptable, and illegal … a vulnerability to violence through governmentality; bodily and through objectification, surveillance, and dispensability" (852-853, emphasis added). It is this *vulnerability to violence through governmentality* which Modi refuses to engage with; hence silence when confronted with violence against minorities.

The shift in ethical sovereignty from religious efficacy to political surveillance was rapid under Moditva and shall be demonstrated thanks to the bills of protection and implementation of laws against cow slaughter. Whereas cow protection emerged as a right against the colonial regulation of animal slaughter, post-independence India provided only general regulative principles with respect to trade, protection/slaughter of animals including cows. The absence of all-India wide legislation banning cow-slaughter permitted independent states to come up with regional bills (Parikh and Miller 2019: 861-872).[25] Thus state laws designed and imple-

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[25] See Appendices I and II. Parikh and Miller (2019) provide a figure indicating all states/UTs with "some form of ban on cow slaughter" (838). State-level regulation of beef ban policy is given in detail in appendix I (861-872); an updated and partially modified version of it is included as Appendix II. To be added to the list of states/UTs without cow-slaughter ban is Lakshadweep. In this Union Territory, the Modi government is attempting to introduce the ban, and other reforms consonant to BJP ideology. https://www.sabrangindia.in/article/lakshadweep-centre-proposes-ban-cow-slaughter-beef accessed 6/2/2021.

mented the cow protection regime basing their arguments on varied but similar conceptualizations shared equally by different political parties such as BJP, INC, etc.[26] However, the momentum of cow protection increased with the emergence of *vigilante groups* which enforced cow slaughter bans especially in states with strict laws of animal protection despite the PM spoke against such violence.[27] That these action groups linked with Moditva engage in fear-mongering and violence is evidenced by recent attacks on Dalits and Muslims.[28]

The second domain the VHP currently occupies is that concerning the minorities, especially the Muslims and Christians besides Dalits and Tribals, and its othering and assimilating strategy both continues and differs from the hitherto ideology employed by Savarkar, RSS and Sangh Parivar. With respect to the majority Muslim minority, the VHP has been engaged in the new "Discourse of Punishment" (Bhatt 2001: 196), namely *violence*, manifested in the Ayodhya Conflict, Cow Protection Movement, and the Gujarat Pogrom of 2002. This pattern continues entrenching the involvement of various Sangh Parivar groups as well as serving officers of the Indian Army. Crucial here are two points: *retaliatory violence*, irrespective of its intensity, brutality, casualness, and organization, is justified morally, politically, and legally. The latter arrogates more and more power for the Hindu Rashtra conception evidenced in the 2005 Supreme Court decision concerning Cow Protection (Chigateri 2011), the final SC Verdict of Novem-

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[26] A clear example is Maharashtra. On cow-slaughter regulations in each state/UT, see Appendix II. Modifications of legislation to make the ban stricter are evident especially since 2015.

[27] https://time.com/4838566/india-beef-lynching-attacks-muslims/ (published on June 29, 2017; accessed on 6/4/2021); https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-40505719 (published on 10 July 2017; accessed on 6/4/2021); https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/27/india-cow-protection-spurs-vigilante-violence# (accessed on 6/62021). For a statistics of contemporary killings due to cow vigilantism, see https://acleddata.com/2021/05/03/cow-protection-legislation-and-vigilante-violence-in-india/ (accessed on 6/5/2021). One state, Madhya Pradesh, sets fines of 25,000 to 50,000 rupees ($340 to $680) and prison sentences of six months to three years for "cow vigilantism," i.e., committing violence in the name of protecting cows. This is the *first law* of its kind in the country. https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/india/ (accessed on 7/28/2021); see also Rajeshwar and Amore 2019.

[28] Parikh and Miller 2019; https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/india-politics-religion-cows/ (reported on Nov. 16, 2017; accessed on 6/4/2021).

ber 9, 2019, on Ayodhya dispute,[29] and the recent 2016 violence against its perceived offenders: Dalits in Gujarat.[30] Second, the Hindutva promoted by VHP transforms Hinduism into a mirror image of *political Islam* without which it would lose the newly constructed strongman identity.

As for the Christian minority, the VHP strategy fluctuated continuously (Bhatt 2001: 198-202) starting with the adoption of Shuddhi language and practice,[31] casual violence, restrictions on social engagement and educational activities in tribal areas.[32] Besides, defamation of charitable activities such as engaged by Mother Teresa,[33] her, and other con-

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[29] https://www.sci.gov.in/pdf/JUD_2.pdf (accessed on 2020/04/17); for the SCV on the demolition of Babri Masjid, see: https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/babri-case-verdict-updates-lk-advani-murli-manohar-joshi-to-skip-court-uma-bharti-admitted-in-hospital-2303034 ; https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/justice-in-ruins-the-hindu-editorial-on-babri-masjid-demolition-case-verdict/article32735773.ece (accessed on 8/12/2021).

[30] http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/gujarat-has-history-of-atrocities-and-discrimination-against-dalits/article8876913.ece?w=alauto (accessed on July 21, 2016); http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/dalits-thrashing-suicide-attempts-arson-all-you-need-to-know-about-una-protest/ (accessed on July 21, 2016); on Cow Protection Violence, see also Ganguly 2019: 87-88.

[31] Vandevelde (2011) provides an overview and clarifies the different types of reconversions. Large scale conversion (*shuddhi*) initiated by Arya Samaj disappeared after 1930, "and was reduced to the initiatives of local swamis and to the diminished work of associations such as the Indian Hindu Purification Council. It was subsequently picked up again by different RSS affiliates: while the Centre for Tribal Welfare, established in the 1950s, partly aims at reconversion and assimilation of tribals, a campaign exclusively preoccupied with reconversion was not started until the 1980s by the VHP. Since then, reconversion has taken different names and shapes: *ghar vapasi* (home-coming), *dharm parivartan* (religious return/exchange) or just *paravartan* (turning back)" (40).

[32] Bauman (2013) argues that "the uptick in anti-Christian violence is linked substantially with the increasingly powerful and tangible impact of globalization in India after the early 1990s, and with the way that Indian Christianity has come to stand, symbolically, as a proxy for it" (635). For a detailed study see, Bauman 2020.

[33] Mohan Bhagwat, the RSS chief, comments in 2015: "Mother Teresa's service would have been good. But it used to have one objective, to convert the person, who was being served, into a Christian … The question is not about conversion but if this [conversion] is done in the name of service, then that service gets devalued." https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/mother-teresas-aim-was-conversion-says-bhagwat/article6926462.ece. See Navin B. Chawla (her biographer) who already responded to similar views: "In my 23 years of close association with her, she never once whispered that perhaps her religion was superior to mine, or through it lay a shorter route to the Divine. Which is also why, when I asked

gregations, "the Home Ministry issued a circular instructing the police to undertake a census of the Christian population in Gujarat. Christian schools in the state also received a further circular requesting information on their 'country affiliations and foreign funds'" (202; Sud 2008: 1270-71). In all these intrusions, different layers of Hindutva organizations who share the "Hindu supremacist ideology" (199) took part which the cognizant leadership initially dismissed but later supported as action against "'a world-wide Christian conspiracy'" (202).[34] Bauman's globalization thesis makes sense in this context:

> In so many ways … Christianity represents all that threatens the "traditional" order, whether imagined by Hindu nationalists or by the CCTs [coterminous castes and tribes]. Hindu nationalists have done well to forge the rhetorical link between the challenge posed by globalization and that posed by the existence of a minority Christian community. And … the CCTs have in many cases embraced that linkage because it gives voice to their particular concerns and serves their purposes as well (2013: 650).

In theory anti-Christian activity denoted Hindu self-assertion while in practice it assimilated all autochthonous groups under Hinduism, an ethical strategy of vote-buying, appropriating religious-cultural symbols for violent political ends (Sen and Wagner 2009: 312-321). However, its current significance consists in a stronger embrace of an alternative ethical sovereignty based on anti-secularism and Bills of Religious Freedom.

The linkage between secularism and conversion emerges from two antithetical perspectives attributable to Hindutva and Gandhi, respec-

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Jyoti Basu, that redoubtable leader of West Bengal, what he, an atheist and communist, could possibly have in common with Mother Teresa for whom god was everything, he replied simply that "we both share a love for the poor." https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/the-mother-teresa-her-critics-choose-to-ignore/article5058894.ece (all links accessed on February 11, 2021). Since 2014, the Hindutva changed its approach to Christians; and the Christian response to secularism is also not uniform (Devika and Varghese 2011).

[34] For recent reconversion, see: https://indianexpress.com/article/india/gujarat-144-tribals-reconverted-to-hinduism-in-dang-6235405/ (accessed on 7/31/2021); for the violence in the Kandhamal district of Orissa, see Wankhede 2009; Bauman 2020: 143-214; for the current situation, see: https://gaurilankeshnews.com/remembering-the-kandhamal-massacre-twelve-years-on/ (accessed on 7/28/2021).

tively. With respect to Gandhi, it has already been highlighted above that his firm advocacy for 'transcending religion' disavows any need for conversion, while constitutional secularism in the post-independence political context meant differentiated citizenship, religious neutrality sui generis and context sensitivity,[35] hence intrinsically ambiguous, that is requiring interpretation. In concrete praxis, both these Gandhian stances presuppose a realm of common values shared by humanity, and in the political sphere equal access to one's religious adherence and the right to act accordingly in the public sphere. The inherent potential conflict between one's religious adherence and other's freedom may be considered salutary for it elicits communication, dialogical exchange and reciprocal claims of truth and legitimacy demanding a pluralist democratic society. On the other hand, denouncing secularism and banning conversion become necessary from the homogeneous conception of Hindu Rashtra and varṇacracy (Clarke 2002: 200-208). This latter conceptualization underlies the so-called Bills of Freedom, with anti-conversion rhetoric.[36]

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[35] From a legal perspective Stephens (2010: 255-265) finds this conceptualization wanting clarity, liable to activism and accusations of pseudo-secularism, and concludes: "although freedom and equality are both stated goals of the Indian Constitution [constitutional secularism], when in conflict, the value of social equality repeatedly receives preference over individual freedom" (265). Madan (2009: 233-265) "argues that special efforts are needed to give it [secularism] clear definition, work out its relation to civil society, and reinforce it ideologically" (261); Nandy (2015) adopts the Gandhian stance, but points out that banning conversion would only "push proselytisation underground. People will not publicly or openly disown Hinduism but do so clandestinely."

[36] Fernandes (2011) argues that the conception "of religion as a *social territory* in which membership was linked to membership in the national territory of the state" (120, emphasis added) is preserved and shared by the post-independence state and Hindutva; hence: "The contemporary Hindu nationalist definition includes Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism as Hindu-Indian religions but excludes Christianity and Islam as non-Indian or foreign religions" (121). Further: "In the Indian context, the *politics of conversion* has provided an everyday mechanism that has opened up a set of practices that have begun to substantively limit the terms of citizenship" (123, emphasis added). "The framing of religious conversion through anxieties over religious territories and the fluidity of caste anxiety that were at the heart of nationalist debates, continue to shape the structures and practices of the contemporary state in India" (130). While conversion to Christianity is derided, contemporary Hinduism provides a process to enter into it formally: https://www.hinduismtoday.com/hindu-basics/how-to-formally-enter-hinduism/ (accessed on 2023-04-14).

Post-independence anti-conversion laws, called Bills of Religious Freedom (Stephens 2010: 253), result from *political expediency* as well as an awfully *specific legal interpretation* of Hinduism. Stephens argues that this legal interpretation entails first, "descriptions of Hinduism as it is" (266), and second, the continuous utilization of the category of 'caste' for governmental and/or administrative purposes[37] (already pointed out above). Further, the same legal framework is used in assigning the Backward Class status to non-Hindus, thus creating an overarching legal 'caste' Hinduism with entitlements, while the Christian Adivasis, Dalits are barred from state subsidies (268-69). Despite this legal framework, the constitutional secularism guarantees that social justice prevails over communitarian/religious idiosyncrasies; this implies that caste system does not (*pace* Stephens) constitute "the natural order of society" (270). For social reform required by the constitution may demand also religious reforms, a uniform civil code, abolition of untouchability, etc.[38] as demonstrated in the recent Supreme Court decision favouring women's unrestricted entry to the Sabarimala Pilgrimage Site (Pandimakil 2019). Such decisions may not be forthcoming if Hindutva manages unduly to influence the law and courts, as exemplified by the verdict on Ayodhya dispute.

Conclusion

The above given analysis of *conversion and cow protection* argues that despite they were hot topics of debate during the colonial period, it is Hindutva's socio-political strategy of dominance which thrust them to the forefront in the post-independence India. Especially since the BJP achieves political significance since 1990s, both topics are deployed against minorities with a special emphasis on secularism and Hindu culture. Conversion is hence interpreted as *a political act of changing religious affilia-*

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[37] "Within Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, persons who profess the Sikh, Buddhist, or Jain religion, for legal purposes, may be considered to be Hindus" (Stephens 2010: 266).

[38] "India's constitutional commitment to secularism is … neither indifferent nor impartial to religion; rather, it seeks to ensure that all religions are accorded equal treatment … while simultaneously subjugating religious freedom to the project of social reform" (Narula 2010: 237-38). The Hindutva, however, insists "that the only traditions that have to be dealt with by the secular state are those of the minorities" (Van der Veer 2012: 729).

tion disadvantaging one's ancestral religion namely Hinduism. For Hindutva *presumes* that every citizen of India is born Hindu, irrespective of belonging to Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, or the tribal religions. The Constitution of India classifies them for all legal ends under the Hindu category according to article 25, Explanation 2, and thus *excludes* Christians and Muslims from all autochthonous status. Hindutva capitalizes on this legal *fine print* and considers these minority groups as *foreigners*. Conversion, understood as an exchange of religious affiliation with non-autochthonous religions, is hence challenged, considered as violence against the indigenous, and legally prohibited by Bills of Religious Freedom.

In further enhancing this position are the unique conceptualizations of religion and state advanced by Hindutva. Swami Dayananda Saraswati of Rishikesh argues that the inextricable connection between religion and culture is annihilated by conversion. This *primordial* conception of religion will hence consider exchange of religious affiliation as "cultural aggression" (1999: 3), an affirmation tenable only if one holds to this perspective but utterly challengeable under alternative conceptualizations of religion (Bauman 2015: 185-186). However, the Hindutva perspective amounts to a *fundamentalist* position[39] which in the end results in making Hinduism the *only true* religion (Golwalkar 1939: 94-95; Ram-Prasad 2003: 167). Similarly, the *nation* overrides the democratic state, which is subservient to the former,[40] and consequently secularism consists in respecting and protecting the *religious sentiment* of the "basic person" (Saraswati 1999: 6). Despite this rapprochement to the *interiority* of the human person, Swami Dayananda fails to embrace the Gandhian conception of religion nor the dhārmic agency but reduces conversion to *an act done on someone by another person*, a post-independence *legalist* position which transforms the spiritual belonging to a mere *institutional adherence*.

Hindutva communalism claims ethical sovereignty over civil society on multiple grounds but especially through religious nationalism and the symbolism of *cow protection*. Freitag (1996: 223) rightly points out to two

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[39] As employed in this study, fundamentalism/extremism denotes three interrelated features: *cultural exclusivism*, *collective authoritarianism*, and *legitimization of nationalist violence*.

[40] "'Nation' and 'State' are, not synonymous, … *in the 'State', the 'Nation' should be supreme*" (Golwalkar 1939: 92, emphasis added).

crucial post-independence tensions, namely "the state's relationship with the individual versus its relationship with the group" and the activities of public interest through institutions versus the private activities through communities. In both cases religion constitutes the middle ground or connecting link. Whereas the state attempted to bridge societal gaps through institutional policies of welfare targeting poor, landless and peasant bodies, often continuing the colonial categorization based on caste/religion, Hindutva agitations concentrated on the building up of the majority, urban, upper caste communities, especially by usurping the ritual and symbolic realms of religion. Hence the emphasis on *ritual* mobilization and the re-introduction of Cow Protection agenda.

Significant however is also the philosophical argumentation, reviving, reinterpreting, and extending the Indic/Hindu heritage. Thus, Golwalkar's claim of unity-in-diversity, societal harmony and social hierarchy based on advaita transforms *communitas* (Turner 2017), the nationally imagined community, into an epiphenomenon which guarantees unity at the risk of equality: "Equality is applicable only, on the plane of the Supreme Spirit. But on the physical plane the same Spirit manifests itself in a wondrous variety of diversities" (Golwalkar 2015: 18). The Hindutva agenda of cow protection falls within this larger context wherein Hinduism becomes the national religious and cultural resource which would *not* constitute any danger *if not* wielded as the hegemonic structure of ethical sovereignty.

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Appendix I

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/09/India_cow_sla
ughter_map.svg

Appendix II

https://acleddata.com/2021/05/03/cow-protection-legislation-and-vigilante-violence-in-india/

Political Violence Events in India Related to Cow Protection (2016-2020)
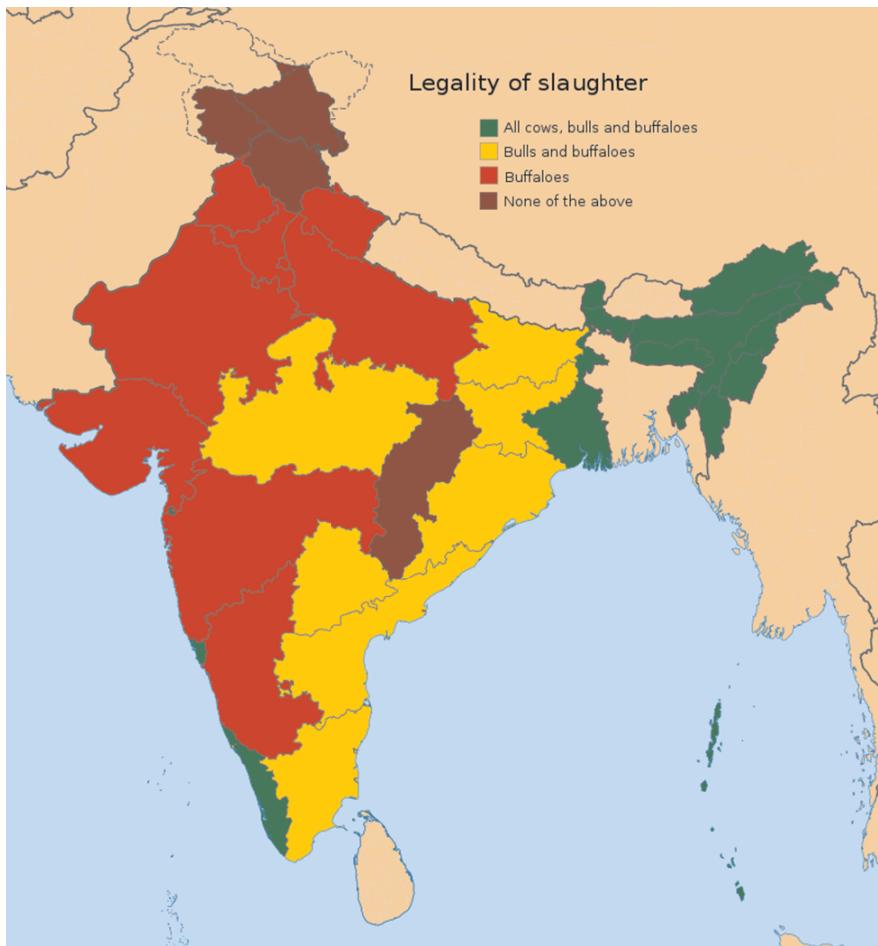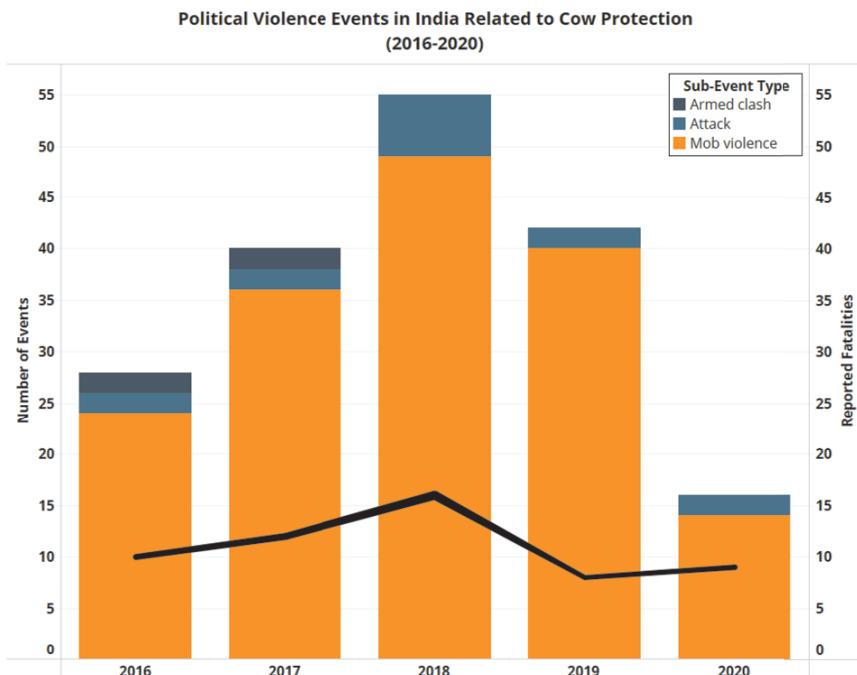
Appendix III

STATE LEGISLATION ON CATTLE SLAUGHTER, TRANSPORT AND MEAT CONSUMPTION					
States	**Title of Current Legislation**	**Cattle Definition**	**Status of Ban on Slaughter**	**Penal Provision**	**Offences**
1. **ANDHRA PRADESH**	The Andhra Pradesh Prohibition of Cow Slaughter and Animal Preservation Act, 1977. Valid also for Telangana.	"Cow"- includes heifer, or a calf, whether male or female of a cow. "Calf"- age not defined.	Slaughter of bull, bullock allowed on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate, to be given only if the animal is not economical or is not likely to become economical for the purpose of breeding or draught/ agricultural operations.	Violation of the law is punishable: imprisonment up to maximum of 6 months or fine of up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ANDHRA-PRADESH-PROHIBITION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-AND-ANIMAL-PRESERVATION-ACT-1977.pdf					
2. **ARUNACHAL PRADESH**	NO LEGISLATION				
3. **ASSAM**	The Assam Cattle Preservation Act, 1950	"Cattle" means Bulls, bullocks, cows, calves, male and fe-	Slaughter of all cattle allowed on 'fit-for-slaughter'	Imprisonment up to maximum of 6 months or fine of up to	Cognisable only

	(amended in 1962)	male and female buffaloes and buffalo calves.	certificate, to be given if cattle is over 14 years of age or has become permanently incapacitated for work or breeding due to injury, deformity or any incurable disease.	Rs 1,000 or both.	

https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ASSAM-CATTLE-PRESERVA-TION-ACT-1951.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ASSAM-CAT-TLE-PRESERVATION-AMENDMENT-ACT-1962.pdf

4. **BIHAR**	The Bihar Preservation and Improvement of Animals Act, 1955.	Bull – uncastrated male of above 3 years. Bullock - castrated male of above 3 years. Calf - male or female below 3 years. Cow - female above 3 years.	Slaughter of cow and calf totally prohibited. Slaughter of bull or bullock of over 15 years of age or has become permanently incapacitated for work or breeding due to injury, deformity or any incurable disease. Export of cows, calves, bulls and bullocks	Imprison-ment up to maximum of 6 months or fine of upto Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable only

			from Bihar is not allowed for any purpose.		
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/AR-01-04-06-2008-2.pdf; https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/12218/1/biharpreservationandim-provementofanimalsact-1955_02-1956.pdf					
5. **CHHAT-TIS-GARH**	The Madhya Pradesh Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act, 1959 serves as legislation.		Slaughter of cow, buffalo, bull, bullock, calf, and possession of their meat banned. However, bulls and bullocks over 20 years, if unfit for work or breeding shall be slaughtered. No transport or export of cattle, especially to states without cow-slaughter ban.	Imprisonment of 7 years, fine up to Rs 50,000. Claims to introduce capital punishmentf or cattle slaughter. Burden of proof on the accused.	Cognisable.
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CHHATTISGARH-AGRICULTU-RAL-CATTLE-PRESERVATION-ACT-2004.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CHHATTISGARH-AGRICULTU-RAL-CATTLE-PRESERVATION-AMENDMENT-ACT-2011.pdf					

6. **GOA**	The Goa, Daman & Diu Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1978.	Cow includes cow, heifer or calf. Age of calf not defined.	Total ban on slaughter of cow except when cow is suffering pain or contagious disease or for medical research. Prohibition of sale of beef or beef products in any form.	Imprisonment up to 2 years or fine upto Rs 1,000 or both.	Both cognisable and non-bailable
	The Goa Animal Preservation Act, 1995	Applicable to bulls, bullocks, male calves and buffaloes of all ages.	All the animals can be slaughtered on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate which is not given if the animal is likely to become economical for draught, breeding or milk (for she/buffaloes) purposes. Prohibition of sale of beef obtained in contravention of above provisions, except beef imported from other States.	Imprisonment up to maximum of 6 months or fine of up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable only

https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/The-Goa-Daman-and-Diu-Cow-Slaughter-Act-.pdf
https://ahvs.goa.gov.in/sites/default/files/Download%28118%20KB%29_0.pdf

7. **GUJARAT**	The Bombay Animal Preservation Act, 1954 (Applied to Gujarat)	Applicable to bulls, bullocks, cows, calves and male/female buffalo calves.	Slaughter of cow, calf, bull or bullock totally prohibited. Slaughter of buffaloes permitted on certain conditions.	Life sentence		Cognisable only
	The Gujarat Animal Preservation (Amendment) Act, 2011		No animal transport for the purpose of slaughter; confiscation of the vehicle carrying cow meat.	Imprisonment up to 7 years and a fine of maximum Rs 50,000.		
	The Gujarat Animal Preservation (Amendment) Act, 2017			Imprisonment of minimum 10 and maximum 14 years, and a fine of RS 1 lakh to 5 lakh.	Non-bailable	

https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/GUJARAT-ANIMAL-PRESERVATION-ACT-1954.pdf;
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/GUJARAT-ANIMAL-PRESERVATION-AMENDMENT-ACT-2011.pdf

8. **HARYANA**	The Punjab Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955(Applicable to Haryana)		Provisions same asfor Punjab except penal provisions	Rigorous imprisonment up to 5 years or fine up to Rs 5,000 or both.	
	Haryana *Gauvansh Sanrakshan* and *Gausam-vardhan* Act, 2015		Total ban on slaughter of cow which includes bull, bullock, ox, heifer or calf, and its progeny. Prohibition on export of cattle for slaughter, and sale of beef, except what is imported in sealed containers. Hence no ban on beef consumption.	Imprison-ment up to 10 years, and/or fine of Rs I lakh.	Cognisable and non-bailable.
https://indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/3463?sam_handle=123456789/2193 !!!					
9. **HIMACHAL PRADESH**	The Punjab Prohibition of Cow Slaughter-Act, 1955	(All provisions same as forPunjab)			
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/HIMACHAL-PRADESH-PROHIBI-TON-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-ACT-1979.pdf					

10. **JHAR-KHAND**	The Bihar Preservation and Impro-vement of Animals Act, 1955 serves as legislation.		Slaughter of cows and oxen; pos-session, con-sumption of their meat, banned.	Violators face up to 10 years' jail and/or Rs 10,000 fine.	Cognisable
11. **KARN-ATAKA**	The Karnataka Prevention of Cow Slaughter and Cattle Preservation Act, 1964.	Animal - means bull, bullock, and all buffaloes. Cow – includes calf of a cow, male or female.	Slaughter of cow, calf of a cow or calf of a she-buffalo totally pro-hibited. Slaughter of bulls, bullocks and adult buffaloes permitted on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate provided cattle is over 12 years of age or is perma-nently inca-pacitated for breeding, draught or milk due to injury, deformity or any other cause. Transport for slaughter to a place outside a state	Imprisonment up to maximum of 6 months or fine of upto Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable only

			not permitted.		
			Sale purchase or disposal of cow or calf for slaughter not permitted.		
	The Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act, 2020	Cattle denotes a cow, calf of a cow, bull and bullock of all ages and he or she buffalo below the age of thirteen years.	Slaughter is permitted for: terminally ill cattle or with contagious disease; buffaloes over 13 years if certified by competent authorities.	Imprisonment of up to 3 to 7 years and a fine of Rs 50,000 to Rs 5 lakh. Repeated offenders: imprisonment of up to 7 years and a fine of Rs 1 lakh to Rs 10 lakh.	
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/KARNATAKA-PREVENTION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-AND-CATTLE-PRESERVATION-ACT-1964.pdf					
12. **KERALA**	No state legislation only Panchayat-Act/Rules	Panchayat laws provide for prohibition of slaughter of useful animals in Panchayat areas in the State. Under the Kerala Panchayat (Slaughter Houses and			

		Meat Stalls) Rules, 1964, no certifi-cate shall be granted under Rule 8 in respect of a bull, bullock, cow calf, he- buf-falo or she-buffalo or buffalo calf unless the animal is over 10 years of age and is unfit for work or breeding or the animal has become permnently incapacitated for work or breeding due to injury or deformity.			
http://www.sanchitha.ikm.in/node/2451					
13. **MADHYA PRADESH**	The Madhya Pradesh Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act, 1959.	Agricultural cattle means cows of all ages, calves of cows, bull, bullocks and all buffaloes.	Slaughter of cow, calf of cow, bull, bullock and buffalo calf prohibited. However, bulls and bullocks are being slaughtered	Imprisonment up to 3 years and fine of Rs.5,000. Normally imprisonment shall not be less than 6 months and fine not less	Cognisable only

			in the light of Supreme Court judgement, provided the cattle is over 15 years or become unfit for work or breeding. Transport or export for slaughter not permitted. Export for any purpose to another State where cow slaugh-ter is not banned by law is not permitted. Sale, purchase, disposal of cow and its progeny and possession of flesh of cattle is prohibited.	than Rs.1,000. Burden of proof is on the accused.	
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MADHYA-PRADESH-DHARMA-SWATANTRYA-ADHINIYAM-1968.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/2011-12-31-594.pdf					

14. **MAHA-RASHTRA**	The Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act, 1976	'Cow' includes a heifer or male or female calf of a cow.	Slaughter of cow totally prohibited. Slaughter of bulls, bullocks and buffaloes allowed on fit-for slaughter certificate, if it is not likely to become economical for draught, breeding or milk (in the case of she-buffaloes) purposes.	Imprisonment up to maximum of 6 months and fine of up to Rs1,000. Burden of proof is on the accused.	Cognisable only
	The Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act, (amendment) 2015		Ban on sale and export of beef.	Imprisonment of 5 years, and/or a fine of Rs 10,000.	
http://www.livelaw.in/beef-ban-bombay-hc-declares-sections-5d-9b-maharashtra-animal-preservation-act-unconstitutional; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MAHARASHTRA-ANIMAL-PRESERVATION-ACT-1976.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MAHARASHTRA-ANIMAL-PRESERVATION-AMENDMENT-ACT-1995.pdf					
15. **MANIPUR**	Royal Edict by Maharaja - Darbar Resolution of 1936	"According to Hindu religion the killing of cow is a sinful act. It is also against			

			Manipur Custom. I cannot allowed such things to be committed in my State. So if anyone is seen killing a cow in the State he should be prosecuted."		
	https://www.eastmojo.com/news/2021/02/05/fir-against-ukhrul-cow-killing-reinforces-colonialism-racism-against-indigenous-people/				
16. **MEGH-ALAYA**	NO LEGISLATION				
17. **MIZORAM**	NO LEGISLATION				
18. **NAGA-LAND**	NO LEGISLATION				
19. **ODISHA**	The Orissa Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1960	'Cow' includes heifer or calf.	Slaughter of cow totally prohibited.Slaughter of bull, bullock on fit-for-slaughter certificate if cattle is over 14 years of age or has become permanently unfit for breeding, draught.	Imprisonment up to maximum of 2 years or fine up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable only

https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ORISSA-PREVENTION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-ACT-1960.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ORISSA-FREEDOM-OF-RELIGION-ACT-1967.pdf					
20. **PUNJAB**	The Punjab Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955	"Cow" includes bull, bullock, ox, heifer or calf.	Slaughter of cow (and its progeny) totally prohibited. Export for slaughter not permitted.	Imprisonment up to maximum of 2 years or fine up to Rs 1,000 or both. Burden of proof is on the accused.	Cognisable and non-bailable.
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PUNJAB-PROHIBITION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-ACT-1955.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PUNJAB-PROHIBITION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-AMENDMENT-ACT-1981.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PUNJAB-PROHIBITION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-AMENDMENT-ACT-2011.pdf					
21. **RAJA-STHAN**	The Rajasthan Bovine Animal (Prohibition of Slaughter And Regulation of Temporary Migration or Export) Act,1995. Bill No. 16/2015 bans Camels migrated out of State and slaughtered.	'Bovine' - means and includes cow, calf, heifer, bull or bullocks. 'Bull' - means uncastrated male above 3 years 'Bullock' - means castrated male above 3 years 'Calf' - means castrated or uncastrated male of 3 years and below.	Slaughter of all bovine animals prohibited. Possession sale, transport of beef and beef products is prohibited. Export of bovine animal for slaughter is prohibited. Custody of seized animals to be given to any recognized voluntary animal	Rigorous imprisonment of not less than 1 year and up to maximum of 2 years and fine upto Rs 10,000. Burden of proof is on the accused.	

		'Cow' - means female above 3 years; 'Heifer' is female of 3 years or below.	welfare agency failing which to any *Goshala*, *Gosadan* or a suitable person who volunteers to maintain the animal.		
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/The-Rajasthan-Bovine-Animal-Act-1995.pdf					
22. **SIKKIM**	2008 Sikkim Police Act		Cow slaughter prohibited only in public spaces. Monetary penalty only for unsanitary slaughter.		
	The Sikkim Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 2017		Ban on cow slaughter		non-bailable
https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=93739 http://www.bareactslive.com/SIK/sik071.htm					
23. **TAMIL-NADU**	The Tamil Nadu Animal Preservation Act, 1958 Government orders banning cow	'Animal' means bulls, bullocks, cows, calves; also, buffaloes of all ages.	All Animals may be slaughtered on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate. Certificate	Imprisonment of up to 3 years or fine up to Rs 1,000 or both.	

	slaughter dt. 30th August, 1976	.	given if animal is over 10 years of age and is unfit for work and breeding or has become permanently incapacitated for work and breeding due to injury deformity or any incurable disease. Slaughter of cows and heifers (cow) is banned in all slaughter houses in Tamil Nadu.		
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/1958TN10.pdf					
24. **TELAN-GANA**	Same as Andhra Pradesh		Slaughter of "Cow" prohibited	Imprisonment up to maximum of 6 months or fine of up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/hc-notices-to-telangana-centre-for-failing-to-stop-cow-slaughter/articleshow/77254249.cms					
25. **TRIPURA**	NO LEGISLATION				

26. **UTTAR PRADESH**	The Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955 Since 6 June 2017, the National Security Act and the Gangster Act applies also against cow-slaughter and cattle smuggling.	'Beef' means flesh of cow and of such bull or bullock whose slaughter is prohibited under the Act, but does not include such flesh contained in sealed containers and imported into U.P.'Cow' includes a heifer and calf.	Slaughter of cow totally prohibited. Slaughter of bull or bullock permitted on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate provided it is over the age of 15 years or has become permanently unfit for breeding, draught and any agricultural operations. Transport of cow outside the State not permitted for slaughter. Prohibition on sale of beef.	Rigorous imprisonment up to 2 years or fine up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable and non-bailable
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/UTTAR-PRADESH-PREVENTION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-ACT-1955.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/UTTAR-PRADESH-PREVENTION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-AMENDMENT-ACT-1979.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/UTTAR-PRADESH-PREVENTION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-AMENDMENT-ACT-2002.pdf					
27. **UTTARA-KHAND**	The Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955	Same as Uttar Pradesh	Slaughter of cow totally prohibited. Slaughter of bull or bullock	Rigorous imprisonment up to 2 years or fine up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable and non-bailable

			permitted on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate provided it is over the age of 15 years or has become permanently unfit for breeding, draught and any agricul-tural opera-tions. Transport of cow outside the State not permitted for slaughter. Prohibition on sale of beef. No ban on imported beef in sealed containers.		
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/2007UK61.pdf; https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/UTTARAKHAND-PROTECTION-OF-COW-PROGENY-AMENDMENT-ACT-2015.pdf					
28. **WEST BENGAL**	The West Bengal Animal Slaughter Act, 1950 The Animal Slaughter Control Act, 2009	Scheduled animals – bulls, bullocks, cows calves and buffaloes of all types/ages.	Slaughter of all animals permitted on 'fit-for-slaughter' certificate. Certificate given if ani-mal is over	Imprisonment up to maxi-mum of 6 months or fine up to Rs 1,000 or both.	Cognisable only

			14 years of age and unfit for work or breeding or has become permanently incapacitated for work and breeding due to age, injury, deformity, or any incurable disease.		

https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/WEST-BENGAL-ANIMAL-SLAUGHTER-CONTROL-ACT-1950.pdf;

https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/WEST-BENGAL-ANIMAL-SLAUGHTER-CONTROL-AMENDMENT-ACT-1979.pdf;

http://www.darahwb.org/actandrules.php

Union Territories	Title of Current Legislation	Cattle Definition	Status of Ban on Slaughter	Penal Provision	Offences
A. ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS	The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Rules 1967		Fit-for-slaughter certificate issued by competent authority is required.		
http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/ind132149.pdf					
B. CHANDIGARH	Same as in Punjab				

C. **DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU**	Same as in Goa				
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/The-Goa-Daman-and-Diu-Cow-Slaughter-Act-.pdf					
D. **JAMMU AND KASHMIR**	The Ranbir-Penal Code, 1932 (repealed now but not yet replaced).		Voluntary slaughter of any bovine animal such as ox, bull, cow or calf shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which may extend to 10 years and shall also be liable to fine. Fine may extend to five times the price of the animals slaughtered as determined by the Court. Possession of flesh of killed or slaughtered animals is		

		also an offence punishable with imprisonment up to 1 year and fine up to Rs500.		
https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/5857/1/ranbir_penal_code.pdf				
E. **LADAKH**	Same as in Jammu and Kashmir			
F. **LAKSHA-DWEEP**	NO LEGISLATION.			
https://www.livelaw.in/columns/lakshadweep-development-authority-act-lakshad-weep-prevention-of-anti-social-activities-regulation-kerala-legislative-assembly-175279				
G. **NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRI-TORY OF DELHI**	The Delhi Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act, 1994	Agricultural Cattle- cows of all ages, calves ofcows of all ages, bulls and bullocks.	Slaughter of all agricultural cattle is totally prohibited. Ban on Transport or Export for slaughter is also prohibited.	Imprisonment up to five years and fine up to Rs. 10,000, provided that normally imprisonment should not be less than 6 months and fine not less than Rs 1,000. Burden of proof is on the accused	Both cognisable and non-bailable
https://www.latestlaws.com/bare-acts/state-acts-rules/delhi-local-laws/delhi-agricul-tural-cattle-preservation-act-1994/				

H. **PUDU-CHERRY**	The Pondicherry Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1968		Total ban on cow slaughter including heifer or calf. Slaughter of bulls and bullocks are permitted on fit-for-slaughter certificate, obtainable if the cattle is over 15 years, unfit for breeding or draught.	Imprisonment up to 2 years or/and fine of maximum Rs 1000.	Cognisable 0and non-bailable.
https://cjp.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PONDICHERRY-PREVENTION-OF-COW-SLAUGHTER-ACT-1968.pdf					

Appendix IV

Transformation of Religious Diversity since Independence
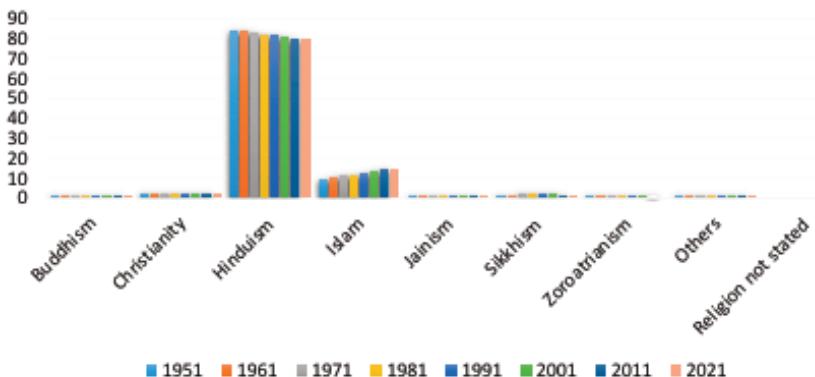
Textos y Glosas

Boletín bibliográfico de Teología fundamental

Teología analítica

Fernando Joven Álvarez, OSA
Bibliotecario
Estudio Teológico Agustiniano de Valladolid

1. Introducción

En los últimos quince años ha comenzado a desarrollarse un modo de hacer teología que, hoy en día, ha cobrado ya conciencia de su identidad. Estamos ante la "teología analítica". ¿Qué es la teología analítica? La teología analítica es la teología elaborada usando filosofía analítica.

¿Y qué es la filosofía analítica? ¿Se puede definir? Pues no, en mi opinión no. ¿Pero existe? Pues sí, abra un libro de Carnap y otro de Heidegger y compare, o uno de Quine y otro de Derrida. Las diferencias son abismales. En su origen, a comienzos del siglo XX –finales del XIX con Frege–, lo que la tradición filosófica posterior ha denominado "filosofía analítica" se circunscribía temáticamente al estudio de problemas filosóficos vinculados a la lógica, al lenguaje y a la ciencia y se desarrolló, como filosofía de la lógica –o mejor dicho: lógica filosófica–, filosofía del lenguaje y filosofía de la ciencia, en una serie de autores con una gran formación técnica en lógica, herramienta que utilizaban continuamente en el tratamiento de los temas. Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial llegó un momento en que la expresión vino prácticamente a identificarse con "filosofía del lenguaje" y con la consideración de los problemas filosóficos

como problemas creados por el lenguaje; pero, en seguida, una vez agotada esta idea, la expresión amplió su sentido y se ha usado para denominar así a la filosofía anglosajona, filosofía en inglés, circunscrita a temas de filosofía del lenguaje, filosofía de la mente, filosofía de la ciencia y filosofía de las diversas ciencias: filosofía de la matemática, de la física, etc., las "filosofías de...", es decir, filosofías de algo de lo que tenemos conocimiento científico muy desarrollado y que plantea problemas filosóficos que requieren, digamos, un tratamiento "muy técnico"; o sea, que al final hay que recurrir en su estudio a las ciencias formales, a la lógica.

Con el paso del tiempo, ya en los años setenta, los filósofos "analíticos" se han ocupado de cualquier problema filosófico, tanto en filosofía teorética como en filosofía práctica, con lo que ha dejado de haber una cierta unidad "temática", pero continúa existiendo un "aire de familia", un "talante" peculiar frente a otros filósofos, –¿a cuáles?, a los "continentales"–, en el tratamiento de cualquier problema metafísico, del conocimiento, ético, etc., que se estudie. En realidad la filosofía analítica, hoy en día, es una tradición filosófica, una forma de trabajar en filosofía, que comparte un estilo y no tanto un contenido. En esto se diferencia de otras tradiciones, por ejemplo el tomismo, en las que sí se comparte un contenido. Hay, por ejemplo, filósofos analíticos que son tomistas.

¿Y cuáles son las diferencias entre la filosofía analítica y la continental? Pues no hay, quizá, diferencias taxativas. Desde luego no es el inglés. En su origen la filosofía analítica surgió hablando más alemán que inglés y, en la actualidad, no sólo hay filosofía analítica en cualquier idioma europeo, sino que, como además siempre ha ocurrido, no toda la filosofía anglosajona es analítica, ni mucho menos. Puede que uno de los rasgos distintivos de la filosofía analítica sea el que el foco está puesto siempre en el "análisis conceptual" del tema de estudio, no en el análisis "genético-histórico" de la cuestión. Historia de la filosofía en la filosofía analítica hay poca, pero no porque no se consideren las afirmaciones de los autores, sino porque lo que interesa es sólo la afirmación del filósofo en cuanto tal y no el desarrollo histórico que ha llevado a ella. Lo que importa es el qué digo yo "aquí y ahora" sobre la cuestión y, además, eso que digo tiene que ser plausible en el marco de la racionalidad lógico-científica actual.

Volvamos al centro de la cuestión que nos ocupa. En el último cuarto del siglo XX filósofos de "formación analítica", o sea, que "se manejaban

con la lógica y con la ciencia", volvieron a tratar temas de filosofía de la religión. El asunto no era nuevo, ya desde sus orígenes (Wittgenstein, Russell, Carnap, etc.) se había considerado la religión; en los años cincuenta el "lenguaje religioso" fue tema de discusión en Inglaterra, tras ello hubo cierto letargo. En cualquier caso, el tema de la religión no era algo nuevo, lo que sí era nuevo era el interés que se desató. Siempre se citan como "padres fundadores" de esta revitalización analítica de la filosofía de la religión a Plantinga en Estados Unidos y a Swinburne en Gran Bretaña –aunque con el segundo haya más disparidad de opiniones, quizá sea Basil Mitchell–. Ambos son representantes de este "talante" analítico que, en lo que respecta a Plantinga, es "de manual".

El caso es que se produjo un efecto de "bola de nieve" y sobre cualquier tema de filosofía de la religión que busquemos hoy, la bibliografía analítica existente es inmensa. Desde el argumento de san Anselmo, –cientos de artículos, libros enteros, analizando el argumento mediante la lógica modal, etc.–; hasta los atributos divinos, –otra vez, artículos y libros sobre la omnipotencia, la omnisciencia, etc.–, pasando también por el estudio de las afirmaciones concretas de las religiones. Por ejemplo, aunque el lector no se lo crea, hay un gran número de publicaciones en el marco de la filosofía de la religión analítica sobre la resurrección de la carne, el alma, el infierno, etc.

Tras esta eclosión de filosofía de la religión realizada con el talante de la filosofía analítica, ahora ha surgido toda una generación de filósofos profesionales que se ha volcado a tratar temas cristianos y lo están haciendo como teología confesional; así como de teólogos profesionales, cuya formación filosófica es analítica, y que están elaborando teología cristiana analítica. Tenemos teología analítica. ¿Dónde? Principalmente en Estados Unidos y el Reino Unido, pero también hay un grupo fuerte en Alemania. En el resto del continente europeo, en el marco de la teología en francés, español, italiano, portugués, incluso la mayoría de la teología alemana, etc., no hay presencia destacada de teología analítica que yo sepa.

Voy a dejar de hacer comentarios personales y paso a presentar algunos libros publicados. Bueno, un comentario último: han empezado a surgir problemas colaterales a la par del cultivo de la teología analítica. Citaré el primero: ¿y qué hacemos con la exégesis bíblica, o con la historia

del dogma, o con toda la teología positiva en general? ¿Para qué sirve? La discusión ya ha comenzado, sobre todo en Estados Unidos y en Alemania, porque la mentalidad de la teología analítica da un giro completo respecto a la teología "histórica" postconciliar. Lo que es objeto de estudio es la afirmación creyente "lisa y lasa" y su credibilidad actual como tal. Queda al margen, como secundario, el cómo hemos llegado a creerla. El caso es que la creemos, ¿qué significa creer hoy que Dios es Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo, o que Jesucristo resucitó? "Volvemos a la teología especulativa ahistórica preconciliar" dicen algunos. En mi opinión no es así, ahora bien, el que, desde luego, hay un "bandazo" es indiscutible.

2. En inglés

2.1. Comenzamos con la obra que es considerada, en cierto modo, como "fundacional" en cuanto a la toma de identidad de esta corriente teológica:

(1) Oliver D. Crisp and Michael C. Rea, (eds.), *Analytic Theology. New essays in the philosophy of theology.* Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009 (2011 PB edition), 316 p.

Este libro, publicado en 2009, es considerado como uno de los trabajos que han posibilitado cobrar conciencia de grupo a los teólogos analíticos. La obra está dirigida por Crisp y Rea. El primero de ellos, Oliver D. Crisp, británico nacido en 1972, es profesor en la Universidad St. Andrews en Escocia, anteriormente impartió docencia en el Fuller Theological Seminary de Pasadena (California); su formación básica viene de la filosofía de la religión analítica. En cuanto a Michael C. Rea, norteamericano, ocupa desde 2017 la cátedra John O'Brien de filosofía en la Universidad de Notre Dame (Indiana), cátedra de la que es emérito Plantinga quien, por cierto, le dirigió la tesis doctoral; ha sido también presidente unos años de la Society of Christian Philosophers norteamericana; su trayectoria profesional también es la de un filósofo de la religión analítico.

El libro consta de una introducción (M. Rea) y catorce contribuciones agrupadas en cuatro secciones: la primera de ellas, titulada "en defensa de la teología analítica", recoge trabajos de O. Crisp *(On analytic theology),* W. Abraham (*Systematic theology as analytic theology*) y R. Rauser (*Theology as a bull session*). La segunda, "perspectivas históri-

cas", contiene los trabajos de J. Lamont (*A conception of faith in the Greek Fathers*), A. Chignell (*As Kant has shown...: analytic theology and the critical philosophy*), A. Dole (*Schleiermacher's theological anti-realism*) y N. Wolterstorff (*How philosophical theology became possible within the analytic tradition of philosophy*). La tercera, "acerca de los datos para la teología: Escritura, razón y experiencia" comprende las contribuciones de Th. McCall (*On understanding Scripture as the Word of God*), Th. Crisp (*On believing that the Scriptures are divinely inspired*), M. Sudduth (*The contribution of religious experience to dogmatic theology*) y M. Murray (*Science and religion in constructive engagement*). La última parte, "enfoques analíticos reconsiderados", recoge los artículos de E. Stump (*The problem of evil: Analytic philosophy and narrative*), M. Westphal (*Hermeneutics and holiness*) y S. Coakley (*Dark contemplation and epistemic transformation: The analytic theologian re-meets Teresa of Ávila*).

Resulta imposible en una recensión comentar pormenorizadamente cada uno de los trabajos, sólo voy a resaltar algunos puntos de la introducción:

1. El primer párrafo destaca que en los últimos años los filósofos analíticos de la religión se han preocupado, cada vez más, de explicar temas centrales de la teología cristiana, o sea, que se han pasado a teólogos; sin embargo los resultados no han sido bien recibidos por los teólogos profesionales, algo debido, sobre todo, a la diferente comprensión de la filosofía y de la teología que ambos grupos mantienen.

2. Segundo párrafo: aunque para muchos teólogos la teología se elabora en la actualidad, –por fin, frente a un pasado no tan lejano– "como Dios manda"; hay quienes afirman que, en el fondo, la disciplina está cautiva de los "enfoques continentales" y que eso tiene unos efectos nocivos (*deleterious)* para la teología.

3. Tercer párrafo: los departamentos de filosofía y de teología en los centros académicos en realidad viven en mundos separados. El diálogo interdisciplinar brilla por su ausencia.

4. Cuarto párrafo: el presente volumen representa un intento de conversación interdisciplinar entre filosofía y teología haciendo ver el valor de estudiar los temas teológicos desde un enfoque analítico.

Páginas más adelante Michael Rea expone las cinco reglas básicas que guían el trabajo de un filósofo "analítico" y que son "exportables" al teólogo "analítico", a saber:

1. Escribe de modo que las afirmaciones filosóficas hechas y las conclusiones sacadas puedan ser adecuadamente formuladas en enunciados capaces de formalización y manipulación lógica.

2. Prioriza la precisión, claridad y coherencia lógica.

3. Evita el uso sustantivo (no meramente decorativo) de metáforas y otras figuras literarias que añaden connotaciones semánticas que sobrepasan el mero contenido proposicional de los enunciados.

4. Trabaja, en cuanto sea posible, con conceptos primitivos bien comprendidos y con conceptos derivados que puedan ser analizados en función de los primitivos.

5. Utiliza, en lo posible, el análisis conceptual como fuente de evidencia.

A fin de cuentas, de lo que se trata es de proporcionar teorías explicativas verdaderas en campos de conocimiento que escapan a las ciencias naturales. Tanto la introducción, como el resto de los artículos, continúa con numerosas aportaciones dignas de estudio.

2.2. De los dos editores antes mencionados, M. Rea y O. Crisp, tenemos trabajos particulares de teología analítica.

(2) Michael C. Rea, *Essays in Analytic Theology*. (Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology). Oxford University Press, Oxford 2020, 2 volúmenes, 227 p. y 215 p.

Los dos volúmenes recopilan un total de 19 artículos del autor publicados en su mayoría previamente en otros medios entre los años 2003 y 2019. Pertenecen los dos volúmenes a la serie *Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology* de la Oxford University Press que lleva más de una veintena de volúmenes ya editados. La colección viene dirigida, cómo no, por M. Rea y O. Crisp.

El conjunto de artículos está agrupado en cinco secciones. Una primera, denominada "metateología", trata problemas epistemológicos de la teología. La segunda y tercera están dedicadas a Dios y a la trinidad. La

cuarta a la encarnación, el pecado y la redención. En la última hay artículos sobre el problema del mal, el del ocultamiento divino y el culto a Dios. En estas tres secciones los artículos analizan problemas concretos que, como es lógico, su valoración queda para el teólogo especialista en cada uno de los temas puntuales.

La introducción y los tres artículos de la primera sección: "Realismo en Teología y Metafísica"(de 2007), "Teología sin idolatría ni violencia" (2015), "Autoridad y verdad "(2016); comprenden problemas metodológicos, de epistemología de la teología o "metateología" que dice el autor. Quizá M. Rea se caracteriza por dejar lo más abierto posible el campo de la teología analítica en cuanto a "opciones sustanciales" –no existiría un compromiso con una teoría de la verdad entendida como correspondencia, etc.– y más bien limitarse a "opciones formales". Las dos primeras páginas de la introducción hacen historia de los inicios de esta corriente teológica.

Del otro editor tenemos la recopilación:

(3) Oliver D. Crisp, *Analyzing Doctrine. Toward a Systematic Theology*. Baylor University Press, Waco 2019, 279 p.

De modo similar a los volúmenes antes mencionados, nos encontramos con un primer artículo metodológico, "Teología sistemática analítica", publicado en 2017, donde aboga por un reconocimiento de la teología analítica como un modo más de elaborar teología. El resto de los artículos trata una diversidad de problemas teológicos: Dios, su simplicidad, la trinidad, encarnación, pecado original, etc., siempre desde la misma perspectiva.

La conclusión vuelve a retomar el estatuto de este hacer teológico. La comienza recogiendo un texto de Eleonore Stump como pórtico a la misma: "La filosofía anglo-americana ha estado, por lo general, comprometida con el análisis, hasta tal punto que su otra denominación habitual es "filosofía analítica". Ha estado preocupada por precisas definiciones de los términos, finas distinciones entre los conceptos y complejas argumentaciones para las afirmaciones filosóficas. (...). Tales prácticas y destrezas son importantes ciertamente, en general, para cualquier pensar cuidadoso y, en particular, para la filosofía. *Without them, philosophy is*

in some danger of turning into what can be (and often is) practiced by any-one at all over a couple of beers"... y el autor, Crisp, se lo aplica a la teología. A continuación éste expone una serie de tesis para la consecu-ción de una buena teología analítica, la primera de ellas: "la teología sis-temática es, –o, en mi opinión debería ser–, una tarea que apunte y se oriente a la consecución de la verdad (*truth-apt, truth-aimed enterprise*) pues intenta dar una explicación coherente de la doctrina cristiana la cual es realista por naturaleza". Sigue el autor desgranando el resto de con-clusiones sobre puntos teológicos particulares en función de lo que antes ha defendido en el libro.

2.3. Citemos, a continuación, una obra bibliográfica y otra introduc-toria:

(4) William J. Abraham, *Analytic Theology. A bibliography*. Highland Loch Press, Dallas 2012, 118 p.

Como el título indica estamos ante una bibliografía. Contiene un ar-tículo introductorio titulado "La teología sistemática como teología ana-lítica", ya publicado en (1). El autor, pastor metodista, nacido en Belfast en 1947, murió en 2021, fue profesor en la Southern Methodist University de Dallas en Texas y tiene en su haber numerosas publicaciones, la mayo-ría realizadas en las editoriales Oxford U. P. y Eerdmans. Un inciso, los autores anglosajones de teología analítica pertenecen a diferentes confe-siones cristianas, la mayoría son autores protestantes de todo el arco con-fesional constituido por el protestantismo anglosajón. Volviendo al tema, el autor era doctor en filosofía de la religión por Oxford y *Master of Di-vinity* por el Asbury Theological Seminary (Kentucky).

La introducción presenta este hacer teológico, y la bibliografía, pp. 30-118, lista las primeras publicaciones en teología analítica agrupadas en ocho secciones (tarea y método de la teología, Dios, creación, cristología, pneumatología, eclesiología, soteriología, escatología). De las obras cita-das, unas son teológicas confesionales y otras caerían mejor bajo la de-nominación de teología filosófica.

Un libro introductorio realizado por un teólogo profesional protes-tante, primero profesor en la Evangelical Divinity School de Deerfield (Illinois) y después en el Asbury Theological Seminary (Kentucky), es:

(5) Thomas H. McCall, *An invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove 2015, 183 p.

La obra está dividida en cinco capítulos. El primero, "¿Qué es la teología analítica?", realiza una breve introducción histórica y metodológica como va siendo normal en todas las publicaciones. Los restantes se titulan: "La teología analítica y la Escritura cristiana", "Teología analítica e historia de la doctrina", "Teología analítica para la Iglesia y el mundo"; el último: "Teología analítica para la gloria de Dios". Como indica el título el libro es una invitación, a los teólogos, para acercarse sin miedo a esta forma de hacer teología.

2.4. Dos obras de calado son las siguientes:

(6) James M. Arcadi and James T. Turner, Jr., (Eds.), *T&T Clark Handbook of Analytic Theology*. T&T Clark, London 2021 (2022 PB edition), 529 p.

Estamos ante otra obra colectiva que recoge 37 contribuciones agrupadas en seis secciones: métodos y fuentes, doctrina sobre Dios, cristología, pneumatología, creación y antropología, experiencia y práctica. La obra concluye con una amplia bibliografía de teología analítica dividida por temas, pp. 499-520, mucho más actual que la de (4) y que permite buscar sobre un tópico teológico concreto. El libro viene precedido de una introducción del editor, James M. Arcadi, breve pero clarificadora.

En este libro, al igual que en otros aquí presentados, siempre hay dos grandes secciones: una primera metodológica, es decir, una reflexión epistemológica sobre el método teológico. En segundo lugar, nos encontramos con trabajos sobre diferentes temas teológicos en detalle. En este caso, tanto la introducción como la primera parte se ocupan de la reflexión epistemológica sobre la teología y el alcance del conocimiento teológico. Una reflexión que, ya digo, es permanente en los escritos de teología analítica.

Volviendo a la introducción, se recogen las cinco prescripciones formales anteriormente citadas; ahora bien, estas son "normas de estilo". Arcadi señala que, más allá del estilo, hay unas opciones que no son formales, sino "sustanciales" dentro de la teología analítica, son compromisos teológicos sustantivos, a saber:

1. Un compromiso con alguna forma de realismo teológico.

2. Un compromiso de búsqueda efectiva de la verdad (*the truth-apt and truth-aimed nature of theological inquiry*).

3. Un compromiso por proporcionar argumentos teológicos para las afirmaciones doctrinales básicas.

Si clarificamos (2) en relación a (1) y en función de (3), en mi opinión, lo que quiere decir es que la teología debe ocuparse de hablar sobre la realidad (1) de lo que el creyente cree (3) construyendo enunciados y teorías que busquen reflejar dicha realidad bajo el supuesto de una teoría de la verdad como correspondencia (2). Alguno dirá que esta visión está hoy en día fuera de lugar tras el "giro histórico" y "simbólico" de –en nuestro caso– toda la teología postconciliar católica, y que las pretensiones teológicas deben ser mucho más débiles y "alegóricas", "teología débil". Sin embargo, la opción de la teología analítica es hacer "teología fuerte". Las diferentes contribuciones del libro ponen en práctica esta perspectiva.

Tenemos, en segundo lugar, una obra centrada de modo específico en la epistemología de la teología:

(7) William Wood, *Analytic Theology and the Academic Study of Religion.* (Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology). Oxford University Press, Oxford 2021, 329 p.

El autor, norteamericano, formado en Chicago y profesor de teología filosófica en el Oriel College de Oxford realiza un estudio sobre el carácter propio de la teología entendida desde la perspectiva analítica y sitúa el estudio de la misma en el marco universitario y académico de estudios sobre la religión dominados por una visión "postsecular" de lo religioso. La teología analítica representa para él un modo de hacer teología que puede situarse con comodidad en el marco secular de la universidad actual recogiendo lo mejor de la "modernidad".

2.5. Cerramos la sección, pero no sin antes citar dos libros que, en el marco de la teología analítica, son considerados por muchos críticos como "clásicos" en sus temas respectivos: la trinidad y la soteriología. Ambos pertenecen a la colección *Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology*:

(8) William Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013 (PB 2017), 269 p.

(9) Eleonore Stump, *Atonement*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018 (PB 2020), 538 p.

Recordemos también que existe una revista digital: el *Journal of Analytic Theology*, publicada desde 2009. Además hay un departamento universitario particularmente dedicado a la teología analítica es *The Logos Institute for Analytic and Exegetical Theology*, perteneciente a la Universidad de St Andrews (Escocia, Reino Unido).

3. En alemán

¿Cosa de anglosajones protestantes? La primera impresión al acercarse a la teología analítica pudiera ser esa, pero no es así. Al principio sí lo fue, pero ahora ya no lo es. Hay un grupo de filósofos y teólogos alemanes y austríacos que están en ello. Además es un grupo sobre todo católico, constituido en gran parte por profesores de Filosofía de la religión y de Teología fundamental. Veamos un libro básico:

(10) Georg Gasser, Ludwig Jaskolla, Thomas Schrätl (Hg.), *Handbuch für analytische Theologie*. (Studien zur systematischen Theologie, Ethik und Philosophie, STEP, 11). Aschendorf Verlag, Münster 2017, 964 p.

Como su título índica el libro es "manual", pero un manual entendido como son los "Handbuch" alemanes y los "handbook" anglosajones, o sea, libros enciclopédicos que recogen un sinfín de contribuciones que dan una panorámica global y actual del asunto tratado. No es un manual a la española. La obra incluye un primer estado de la cuestión de lo que ha sido la introducción de la Teología analítica en alemán, principalmente en Innsbruck, Munich, Frankfurt y Ratisbona, con proyectos de investigación y diversas actividades patrocinadas, algunas, por la John Templeton Foundation que, dicho sea de paso, tiene un papel muy activo en el patrocinio de la Teología analítica anglosajona en general. No lo he dicho antes, pero algunas de las obras escritas en inglés la mencionan, incluso en alguna de las introducciones se hace una reflexión sobre el asunto de la financiación.

El libro está dividido en cuatro secciones. La primera "Fundamentación: el contorno de la teología analítica" comprende tres artículos: "El desarrollo de la filosofía de la religión hacia la teología analítica "(G. Gasser y K. Viertbauer), "El pensamiento analítico en contexto" (Th. Schärtl)

y "¿Es la filosofía de la religión analítica ciega respecto a la hermenéutica y olvidadiza de la historia?" (Ch. Amor). Estas primeras 100 páginas recogen la interacción entre filosofía de la religión y teología, así como el paso que se ha dado de la primera a la segunda.

La segunda y tercera sección constituyen el grueso del libro. Las dos tienen idéntica metodología. La segunda, "Racionalidad y coherencia del teísmo", más de 300 p., incluye siete artículos expositivos y una respuesta a cada uno de ellos por parte de otro autor con ampliaciones y comentarios críticos, en ocasiones, desde perspectivas teológicas diferentes a la analítica. Los siete temas están estrechamente vinculados a la filosofía de la religión: razón y fe, pruebas de Dios, racionalidad de la fe, la sustancialidad de Dios, la omnipotencia y presciencia, la eternidad de Dios y, finalmente, la teodicea. Podríamos indicar que, básicamente, son artículos de filosofía de la religión en la frontera con la teología.

La tercera parte: "Teología analítica y fe cristiana", casi 400 p., recoge otras siete contribuciones y sus respectivas respuestas en temas específicos de la teología con idéntica metodología que la sección anterior. Trinidad, encarnación, resurrección, redención, pluralismo religioso, ética y, por último, la espiritualidad, son los temas tratados. La última sección, breve, agrupa tres artículos sobre aspectos particulares no englobados en las anteriores.

En su conjunto los 34 artículos nos dan una idea de lo que la teología analítica es y de cómo trabaja en concreto a la hora de estudiar los temas.

En la misma serie *STEP* de la editorial Aschendorff de Münster se han publicado otros volúmenes colectivos donde se realiza una reflexión metodológica sobre la teología y su carácter científico. Nos encontramos con:

(11) Martin Blay, Thomas Schärtl, Christian Schröer, Christian Tapp (Hg.). *"Stets su diensten?". Welche Philosophie braucht die Theologie heute?* (STEP, 14). Aschendorff Verlag, Münster 2019, 332 p.

Así como los tres volúmenes:

(12) Benedikt Paul Göcke, Lukas Valentin Ohler, Christian Pelz (Hrsg.). *Die Wissenschaftlichkeit der Theologie.* (STEP, 13). Aschendorff Verlag, Münster 2018-2019, 388 p., 396 p., 442 p.

En su conjunto los cuatro libros plantean cuestiones de epistemología de la teología que merecerían un análisis más detallado en el que no voy a entrar ahora. Los menciono como prueba de que se ha iniciado un proceso de reflexión sobre el carácter propio de la teología en el ámbito de habla alemana, proceso impulsado, en gran medida, por el surgimiento de la teología analítica.

Junto a ellos, y en otra serie que también hay que seguir, tenemos:

(13) Martin Breul, Klaus Viertbauer (Hrsg.). *Der Glaube und seine Gründe. Neue Beiträge zur religiösen Epistemologie.* (Religion in Philosophy and Theology, 117). Mohr, Tübingen 2022, 290 p.

Esta obra, aunque se ciñe a la "epistemología de la religión" –otros prefieren "epistemología religiosa"–, expresión que se ha convertido en un término técnico para designar a la parte de la filosofía de la religión que se ocupa del problema de la racionalidad de las creencias religiosas, o sea, de si es una actitud racional y está justificado racionalmente mantener creencias religiosas; incluye reflexiones sobre temas que están en la frontera entre la epistemología de la religión y la epistemología de la teología. La obra, dividida en seis secciones con dos artículos cada una, expone seis tendencias actuales de trabajo: la experiencia religiosa y su relevancia epistémica, la teoría del discurso y de la razón comunicativa con un acento particular en Habermas, la hermenéutica y la filosofía postanalítica, la filosofía trascendental, la filosofía de la religión y teología analítica y, por último, la corriente postestructuralista y postmoderna. Seis tendencias filosóficas que están sustentando la reflexión teológica actual. Como decía antes, la obra tiene mucho de reflexión sobre la teología, es decir, de teología fundamental y sería digna de un estudio más en profundidad.

Finalmente, no puedo dejar de mencionar un artículo que, creo, es merecedor también de un análisis detallado y no sólo por la amplia bibliografía que contiene. Se trata de:

(14) Christian Bauer, *Allianzen im Widerstreit? Zur Internationalität deutschsprachiger Theologie zwischen analytischen und kontinentalen Diskurswelten*, en *Theologische Revue* 118:2 (2022) cols. 87-104.

¿Qué está pasando en el ámbito de la teología alemana, particularmente en el católico? La impresión que recoge uno tras leer el artículo es

que todas las cuestiones –teológicas, eclesiales, etc.– se entrecruzan y que, al final, la introducción de la teología analítica ha terminado por "liarlo" todo aún más si cabe en el seno de la Iglesia alemana.

Sirvan las citas anteriores para ver que la cuestión de la teología analítica no es un asunto sólo anglosajón y protestante. El tema va a más. No entramos en la segunda parte a la hora de hablar del ambiente alemán, el que corresponde a la teología protestante luterana clásica. En él, la relación con la filosofía analítica la ha desarrollado de un modo muy particular, desde hace muchos años, desde sus dos tesis, la teología de I. U. Dalferth, ahora ya jubilado. En todo caso, ¿es lo suyo teología analítica?

4. En español

En español, que yo conozca, hay poco sobre el tema. ¿Razón? La primera y más evidente es que la filosofía de la religión no ha sido aquí cultivada desde la perspectiva analítica excepto en casos contados. Salvo los trabajos, ya lejanos, en su juventud, de Javier Sádaba y las contribuciones del profesor de la UAM Enrique Romerales; en el marco de la universidad pública la filosofía de la religión analítica ha sido muy minoritaria en el, ya de por sí, minoritario cultivo de la filosofía de la religión que, ahora, me atrevería a decir, casi se ha convertido en una asignatura exótica y marginal dentro de los planes de estudio de las Facultades de filosofía. Cuando se ha cultivado la filosofía de la religión lo ha sido desde perspectivas, digamos, "clásicas"; es el caso de Manuel Fraijó por poner un ejemplo. En cuanto al ámbito confesional católico sí ha habido un grupo de profesores de la Universidad de Navarra, o vinculados de un modo u otro con ella, que ha desarrollado en libros y revistas (*Scripta Theologica* y *Anuario Filosófico*) temas de filosofía de la religión en perspectiva analítica. Ahora bien, en el marco filosófico católico español no ha sido, ni mucho menos, tampoco la corriente dominante. Visto desde una perspectiva global, la opción analítica digamos que ha sido "marginal" en la filosofía de la religión española.

Si ha existido poca filosofía de la religión elaborada en perspectiva analítica, como es lógico habrá todavía menos teología filosófica analítica. Entendida la "teología filosófica" no en sentido amplio, que en muchos autores analíticos se identifica con la filosofía de la religión circunscrita

al análisis del teísmo (existencia de Dios y atributos divinos), sino en sentido estricto: análisis exclusivamente filosófico de tópicos teológicos derivados y provenientes de "nuestro teísmo", es decir, el cristiano, tales como la encarnación, redención, resurrección, vida eterna, etc. Con ello, el siguiente paso, el de la teología filosófica a la teología analítica, comprendida ésta ahora ya como elaboración confesional que busca la inteligibilidad y credibilidad de las afirmaciones de fe cristianas, ha sido todavía más reducido si cabe. Lo anterior lo digo en relación al posible salto que pudieran haber realizado desde la filosofía a la teología filósofos profesionales tal y como ha ocurrido en el ámbito anglosajón.

Por el otro lado, encontrar en el conjunto de los teólogos profesionales españoles trabajos en perspectiva analítica es aún más difícil si cabe; no afirmo que no haya teólogos que conozcan la filosofía analítica y los hagan, haberlos los hay, incluso uno es obispo, D. Francisco Conesa, pero son casos contados. La razón fundamental de esta ausencia estriba, en mi opinión, en que la filosofía analítica no está en el bagaje habitual de los teólogos. Utilizan filosofía, qué remedio les queda –"mal que les pese" que añadiría alguno–, pero desde otras orientaciones y tendencias. Se mueven sólo en el "continente". La impresión que uno tiene es que la formación filosófica actual en los centros teológicos no pone el acento en asignaturas tales como la lógica, la filosofía del lenguaje o la filosofía de la ciencia, por citar tres puntales, sino más bien en la historia de la filosofía, entendida ésta tanto de forma global; como particular, en cada una de las asignaturas sistemáticas. Por ello existe una desconexión bastante fuerte entre el bienio filosófico y el trienio teológico de los Centros. Las asignaturas teológicas insisten mucho en los aspectos teológico-positivos: teología bíblica e historia del dogma y de la teología; pero menos en los especulativos, con lo que la formación filosófica, a la hora de la verdad, tiene un papel bastante irrelevante; no en cuanto a formación humanística, claro está, sino respecto a la aplicación teológica de la misma. Ello lleva a la formación teológica por un camino de "pensamiento débil" donde el tema de la credibilidad de las propias creencias no es el foco central.

Mejor dejamos las reflexiones y pasamos a un libro reciente en español: (15) Agustín Echavarría y Rubén Pereda (Eds.). *Providencia, libertad y mal. Estudios en teología filosófica analítica.* Comares, Granada 2021, 169 p.

La obra reúne nueve contribuciones en español, dos de ellas importadas todo hay que decirlo, las de Eleonore Stump y Brian Leftow, autores de reconocida solvencia –aprovecho para recomendar la lectura de las entrevistas que les hicieron en *Scripta Theologica* 49:1 (2017) 85-95 y *Anuario filosófico* 49:3 (2016) 663-679 respectivamente–. Los demás trabajos corresponden a Enrique Moros, Enrique Romerales, Agustín Echavarría, Rubén Pereda, Jorge Martín Montoya Camacho, Eduardo Ortiz y Javier Sánchez Cañizares. Salvo el primero, todos los artículos se mueven en el campo de la teología filosófica estudiando cuestiones particulares (problema del mal, determinismo, etc.).

El primer artículo: "Introducción al origen y configuración de la teología analítica", elaborado por Enrique Moros, es el que más relacionado está con la teología analítica. El autor, en un primer apartado, realiza un recorrido histórico por la filosofía analítica hasta llegar a la teología haciendo, al final, unos oportunos comentarios sobre la *Fides et ratio*. La segunda sección del artículo se detiene en la trayectoria intelectual de Plantinga. El tercer y último apartado considera la definición, características y problemas de la teología analítica; en él recurre a autores ya antes mencionados –Crisp, Rea, Wood, Abraham, etc.– y sitúa a la teología analítica en el contexto de la teología actual. Además incluye la traducción de las "cinco reglas" de Rea y un comentario a las mismas.

Sirva esta escueta reseña como ejemplo para hacer notar que también en España hay dignas contribuciones en este área del conocimiento filosófico y teológico, confiemos en que continúe la tendencia en un futuro próximo.

5. Final

He intentado en esta breve revisión bibliográfica presentar algunas de las obras que me han parecido más relevantes a la hora de introducir esta nueva perspectiva teológica. Por supuesto la selección no es completa y habrá quien considere, con razón, que faltan aportaciones sustanciales. Y, por supuesto también, que ni me he leído en detalle todos los libros, ni puedo juzgar sobre muchas de las aportaciones específicamente teológicas que en la mayoría de ellos se realizan. No obstante, espero que esta presentación sirva para que el lector se acerque, aunque sea por mera curio-

sidad, a alguna de la obras y entre en este mundo de la teología analítica interesante para la teología fundamental por diferentes motivos. Cito cuatro que me parecen pertinentes:

1. Ya en (1) y en las demás antologías citadas hay contribuciones específicas sobre los temas clásicos de la teología fundamental en su dimensión dogmático-fundamental: la revelación, la biblia como palabra de Dios, la inspiración, etc.

2. En la práctica totalidad de las obras hay reflexiones sustanciales sobre el carácter propio de la teología, es decir, hay un estudio sustantivo de la epistemología de la teología.

3. Además, en los artículos de carácter teológico dogmático, o sistemático –si se prefiere, en la denominación más protestante–, hay una preocupación continua por la credibilidad en concreto de las afirmaciones teológicas que se realizan.

4. Finalmente, hay un interés general por hacer ver la credibilidad de la fe cristiana en estrecha relación con la reflexión filosófica, conectando la teología de modo particular con la epistemología religiosa elaborada por la filosofía de la religión. Si hay una cuestión que está siempre latente en la teología analítica es la de la relación entre fe y razón.

La Teología analítica se centra en la búsqueda de inteligibilidad de las creencias cristianas, del "qué estamos diciendo", en una situación de demanda de credibilidad por parte de los creyentes, del "¿se puede seguir afirmando esto?". Qué quiere decir, por poner un ejemplo, que Jesucristo es Dios en el marco de la pregunta "¿se puede continuar afirmando en nuestros días que Jesucristo es Dios?".

En el contexto en que surge la teología postconciliar de los sesenta y los setenta nos encontrábamos en sociedades cristianas, no secularizadas en absoluto salvo unas minorías, donde la aceptación de las creencias se daba por hecho y la cuestión era hacer ver que lo nuestro "no era mitología". La preocupación por la historia, por la exégesis, por "lo positivo", por el "Jesús histórico" en el caso del ejemplo, reflejaba esa inquietud. Ahora bien, en una situación de sociedades secularizadas, donde las creencias son ya poco compartidas, se busca, primero, una explicitación clara de lo que se cree, "qué afirmo cuando digo que Jesucristo es Dios", y el qué creemos se pregunta en una sociedad y cultura donde prima la cosmovisión naturalista de la realidad, no hay más realidad que la naturaleza.

¿Cabe hablar racionalmente de una "realidad espiritual", a la cual no tengo acceso empírico inmediato, que está más allá de la realidad natural?, o ¿no queda más remedio que conformarse con un "lo nuestro no es más que una forma de hablar"? La primera impresión que se puede tener de la teología analítica es que es trabajo especulativo, ocioso, de filósofos creyentes cerrados en su mundo. Creo que no es así, sino justo al contrario, la teología analítica brota en un contexto académico y social marcado por el naturalismo científico. En él trata de dar respuestas. El libro de Wood antes citado pienso que va en esta línea.

Personalmente creo que el "giro histórico", es decir, el desarrollo acentuado de la teología positiva, tuvo su sentido en una situación social de cristianismo aceptado, la sociedad de los años setenta no era una sociedad secularizada ni mucho menos, y donde la credibilidad que demandaba el creyente estaría en destacar que "lo que creo no son mitos". Ahora bien, en un ambiente totalmente distinto, de secularización radical y con sistemas de creencias naturalistas alternativos, la demanda actual de credibilidad que realiza el creyente pasa por establecer, como prioridad, "cuál es el contenido de lo que creo", porque "tendrá que haber un contenido inteligible de lo que creo", a fin de cuentas, "algo" creo, qué es ese "algo". Seguir embarcados en obras teológicas que se reducen a estirar la exégesis y la historia del dogma hasta el extremo ya no daría más de sí y se demandaría una teología mucho más "racionalista" que dé cuenta de la "realidad" que el creyente confiesa.

Para dar respuesta en esta situación las afirmaciones positivas, de historia, valen de poco, son afirmaciones de hecho y de juicios de hecho no podemos saltar a juicios de valor, a afirmaciones normativas; y resulta que las afirmaciones creyentes incluyen siempre una dimensión normativa, valorativa, autoimplicativa dicen algunos. La afirmación creyente no es el enunciado "Jesucristo es Dios", sino la actitud proposicional "creo que Jesucristo es Dios"; por lo tanto requiere de un trabajo conceptual, especulativo, de justificación para admitir la razonabilidad de dicha actitud, que sobrepasa todos los juicios de hecho que sobre el tema podamos hacer. Las afirmaciones de hecho tienen un límite, la realidad empírica. La realidad espiritual, de la cual el creyente afirma su existencia, es una realidad con la cual sólo puede trabajar conceptualmente. El caso es que somos creyentes siempre en un marco espacio-temporal que nos limita y, conceptualmente, buscamos la credibilidad racional de la realidad espiritual

en la cual creemos, algo que sólo nos puede venir dado a partir de su propia inteligibilidad. En el mejor de los casos, que no se dará –sería el peor de los casos–, la realidad espiritual no sería sino nuestra realidad conceptual con existencia independiente; y no se dará, seguro, porque resultará que lo que después exista sobrepasará con creces nuestros conceptos, pero esa no es ya la cuestión que nos ocupa ahora. En nuestra situación espacio-temporal actual no podemos por menos que pensar lo que creemos y hacerlo con las herramientas conceptuales de que disponemos.

La teología analítica propone una vuelta a un trabajo especulativo de la teología y, al margen de sus resultados, su mera existencia, no cabe duda en mi opinión, debe ser bienvenida. Quizá haya quien afirme "esto no es más que teología hecha por filósofos" y puede que sea así, pero corre el riesgo de que alguno de los autores antes citados le replique: "claro, como los teólogos habéis dejado de hacerla..."

Más información bibliográfica sobre las obras reseñadas puede verse en la web de la biblioteca: https://biblioteca.agustinosvalladolid.es/cgi-bin/koha/opac-search.pl?type=opac&op=do_search&q=an,phr:378667

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Sumario