Durham University

Durham E-Theses

Mystical strategies and performative discourse in the theologia mystica of Teresa of Avila: A Wittgensteinian analysis

Peter Mark Tyler

How to cite:

Tyler, Peter Mark (2009) Mystical strategies and performative discourse in the theologia mystica of Teresa of Avila: A Wittgensteinian analysis. Doctoral thesis, Durham University.

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a https://etheses.durham.ac.uk/id/eprint/1931/ is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the full Durham E-Theses policy for further details.

Academic Support Office, The Palatine Centre, Durham University, Stockton Road, Durham, DH1 3LE
e-mail: e-theses.admin@durham.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
https://etheses.durham.ac.uk

Mystical strategies and performative discourse in the *theologia mystica* of Teresa of Avila: A Wittgensteinian analysis

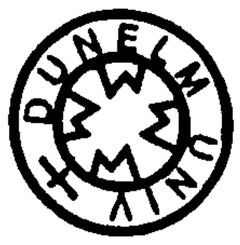
by

Peter Mark Tyler

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the PhD Degree at Durham University,
Department of Theology and Religion

2009

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author or the university to which it was submitted. No quotation from it, or information derived from it may be published without the prior written consent of the author or university, and any information derived from it should be acknowledged.



1 7 FEB 2009

Contents

		Page
Declarations		5
Abstract		6
Acknowledgements		7
Chapter One. Introduction: A Change of Aspect?		9
1.1	Why Teresa and Wittgenstein? Structure and Aims	11
1.2	Teresa and Wittgenstein – Changing Aspects	15
1.3	Methodologies and Background	21
1.4	A Note on Sources, Translation and Terminology	22
1.5	Structure	23
Part One: Establishing a Wittgensteinian Approach to *The Mystical*		27
Chapter Two: The Creation of *Modern Mysticism* and its Critics		28
2.1	The Making of *Modern Mysticism*	28
2.2	The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The Psychologisation of *Modern Mysticism* – William James	30
2.3	Vaughan, Inge and Underhill: The British Orientalisation of Modern Mysticism	38
2.4	The Contemporary Academic Critique of *Modern Mysticism*	58
2.5	The Current Debate	66
2.6	Summary	88
Chapter Three: Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* and the Problem of Interpretation		91
3.1	The *Nachlass*	91

3.2 The Wittgensteinian Secondary Literature 93
3.3 Wittgenstein and the Philosophy of Religion 103
3.4 Wittgenstein and *The Mystical* 114
3.5 Summary 117

Chapter Four: Saying and Showing - A Wittgensteinian Methodology 120
4.1 The Tools for Doing Philosophy 121
4.2 'A Way of Seeing'/*Die Übersichtliche Blick*: The Limits of Saying and Showing 124
4.3 The Move from Thinking to Seeing: Ontological Content of Mystical Discourse 131
4.4 From Seeing to Acting: Performative Discourses and Strategies of Elucidation 135
4.5 Linguistic Strategies: How the Midwife Undertakes Her Work 137
4.6 Summary 140

Chapter Five: Mystical Strategies and Performative Discourse of the *Theologia mystica* 143
5.1 The Creation of the Medieval Dionysian Tradition: The *Corpus Dionysiacum* 144
5.2 The Mystical Strategies of Dionysius 152
5.3 Summary of Dionysius: The Mystical Strategies of the Theologia Mystica 161

Part Two:

Applying the Wittgensteinian Approach: The Mystical Strategies of the *Theologia Mystica* Illustrated by an Examination of the Writings of Teresa of Avila 166

Chapter Six: The Form of Language: 'Mystical Strategies' in Teresa of Avila 167
6.1 *Alumbradismo,* 1559 and the Valdés Index 169

6.2 Teresa and the *Theologia Mystica* 174
6.3 De Osuna, *Recogimiento* and the Tradition of *Theologia Mystica* 179
6.4 Strategies of de Osuna's *Teologia Mística* and Gerson's *Theologia Mystica* Compared 186
6.5 Summary 195

Chapter Seven: Unsaying and Unknowing in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein 198
7.1 Sells's Mystical Languages of Unsaying 198
7.2 The Strategies of Teresa's *Mística Teología* 202
7.3 Strategies of Unknowing in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein Compared 204
7.4 Summary 233

Chapter Eight: 'A Transformational Process': Strategies of Affectivity and Embodiment in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein 235
8.1 Transformational Strategies in Wittgenstein and Teresa 238
8.2 Wittgenstein's Hard Road to Embodiment 242
8.3 Teresa's Transformational Strategies 258
8.4 Teresa's Use of the Strategy of Embodiment 266
8.5 Summary 293

Chapter Nine: Conclusions 295
9.1 Summary 295
9.2 Family Resemblances 299
9.3 Conclusion 303

Bibliography 306

Declarations

No part of this thesis has previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or in any other University. Material from the work of others has been acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases suitably indicated.

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published in any format, including electronic and the Internet, without the author's prior written consent. All information derived from this thesis must be acknowledged appropriately.

Signed ..... Date..25.1.09..

Abstract

Mystical strategies and performative discourse in the *theologia mystica* of Teresa of Avila: A Wittgensteinian analysis
Peter Mark Tyler

The thesis argues that a Wittgensteinian approach to the 'mystical' writings of a 'mystical theologian' such as Teresa of Avila reveals that rather than exhibiting an ontological mysticism these writings are better understood as enacting what are termed 'mystical strategies' or 'performative discourse'. The notion that both Wittgenstein and Teresa employ what are termed 'therapeutic or transformational strategies' to effect change in their readers is central to its argument. In this respect the thesis concludes that their writing is fundamentally *transformational* in character.

After an Introduction, Part One begins with a review of some of the current understandings of 'the mystical', placing particular emphasis on elucidating the category of what is termed 'modern mysticism' as it arises in the English-speaking world in the late 19th/early 20th century. This is followed by a discussion of the various approaches that have been taken to Wittgenstein's writings and how the interpretation of this thesis fits into the academic conversation of current Wittgensteinian scholarship. The thesis then elaborates the 'Wittgensteinian methodology' which is adopted for the rest of the exegesis. Part One concludes by elucidating the medieval tradition of *theologia mystica* to which, it is argued, Teresa's writings are heir.

Part Two begins by setting the context of Teresa's life and writings and showing how she became acquainted with the *theologia mystica*, especially through the writings of Francisco de Osuna. The following two chapters take two particular 'mystical strategies': a 'strategy of unknowing' and a 'strategy of embodiment', and show how not only Teresa, but Wittgenstein too, utilise these strategies in their writings.

The thesis concludes by demonstrating that Wittgenstein and Teresa share a preoccupation with 'making pictures' to stimulate a 'change of aspect' in the reader's way of seeing and acting in the world by use of the 'mystical strategies' outlined. By so doing, it is argued, this presents an original approach to interpreting the 'mystical theology' of a writer such as Teresa of Avila.

Acknowledgements

The acknowledgements required for this thesis are too numerous to enumerate. First and foremost my thanks go to my main supervisor, Professor Philip Sheldrake, who has persisted with care, patience and attention through a lengthy process. I would also like to thank his co-supervisor, Professor Gerard Loughlin who has been very helpful, especially in formulating the chapters concerned with approaches to Wittgenstein.

Numerous institutions and libraries have extended generous support over the past seven years. I am particularly indebted to the staff of Sarum College Library, Salisbury; Salisbury Cathedral Library; St Mary's University College Library, Strawberry Hill; Senate House Library and the British Library. Sarum College for allowing a sabbatical to give me time to visit Spain to research sources, here I was very grateful for help from P. Javier Sancho and the staff of the *Centro Internacional de Teresiano Sanjuanista* in Avila. Staff and administration at Durham University and my fellow colleagues at Sarum College and St Mary's for reading drafts and versions of the final thesis especially Dr Marije Altorf, Prof David Jones, Dr Michael Hayes, Dr Patrick Moore, Prof Gerald O' Collins, Dr Susan Stephenson and Dr Anthony Towey. Prof Brian McGuire for help with the translation of Gerson's *De Theologia mystica.* Finally, Fr Jimmy McCaffrey OCD and the Carmelite community of Boar's Hill, Oxford for being unstinting in their support, help and use of their library.

Without the moral, emotional and intellectual support of the following the thesis could not have been completed: Dr Ashish Deved, Hymie Wyse, Julienne McLean, David Stones, Gwynneth Knowles and all my family. I thank them with great love. Finally, mention must be made of the extraordinary conversations with Euan Hill in spring 2006. Meeting one of the last surviving students of Wittgenstein confirmed many of my hunches regarding Wittgenstein's approach to the problems under discussion and helped clarify some things that lay hidden in his texts. For this I am very grateful.

Finally I would like to thank all my past and present students who through their conversations and lively interest in this project have sustained my enthusiasm throughout.

Dedicated to my brother

Paul John Tyler

1952 – 2009

RIP

Chapter One. Introduction: A Change of Aspect?

Much of what we are doing is a question of changing the style of thinking.
(Wittgenstein LC:28[1])

> *Wisdom is grey, life on the other hand and religion are full of colour.*
> (Wittgenstein VB:62)

Towards the end of his life in 1949, whilst walking with his friend Maurice Drury around Phoenix Park in Dublin, the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889 – 1951) shared the following remark:

> I am not a religious man but I cannot help seeing every problem from a religious point of view. (Rhees 1987:79)

The curious ambiguity of the phrase with its rejection of 'religion' but appreciation of a 'religious point of view' seems to embody much of what the 'religious' meant to Wittgenstein. Since his death, and in the vast ocean of commentary and criticism that has emerged since then, there have been attempts to either co-opt him as a closet atheist, or at least a verificationist; or, on the other hand, an avowed and practising Christian. As will be demonstrated in this thesis, neither attempt has been wholly successful and his unique blend of so many strands of nineteenth and twentieth century thought – idealism, logical positivism, existentialism, psychologism and linguistics – stubbornly defies simple categorisation.

It is the contention of this thesis that it is precisely *this* ambiguity and *difficulty* within Wittgenstein's thought that makes it so helpful in investigating 'the religious point of view'. In particular, this dissertation will bring a 'Wittgensteinian point of view' to bear on a vexed and confusing subject of religion – what has been variously referred to as 'the mystical', 'mysticism' or 'the mystic'. The thesis argues that this Wittgensteinian

point of view can be helpful in elucidating how best to approach the concept in discussion and analysis. To illustrate the point one classical writer of Christian 'mystical' writing will be taken as a case study: the sixteenth century Spanish Carmelite saint Teresa of Avila (1515 – 1582) and in Part Two of the thesis this Wittgensteinian point of view will be applied to her writings. In so doing it is recognised that her works cannot be viewed in isolation from her times and forebears and a central part of the thesis will be that her 'mystical' writing can best be understood as the inheritance of a medieval Christian tradition that is referred to as the tradition of *theologia mystica.*

Accordingly, the research question for this thesis can be formulated as follows:

> Can a new approach to problems of 'the mystical', as expressed in the Christian tradition of medieval 'mystical' writers such as Teresa of Avila, be revealed by adopting an approach based on the philosophical writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein?

In answering this question the thesis will take the following form:

It begins with a review of some of the current understandings of 'the mystical', placing particular emphasis on elucidating the category of what is termed 'modern mysticism' as it arises in the English-speaking world in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century as an ontological tool for describing 'the mystical'.

The second part of the literature review, in Chapter Three, will review the current status of Wittgenstein scholarship, in particular the commentaries on his views on religion and the 'religious point of view'. The chapter will place particular emphasis on Wittgenstein's notion of 'aspect seeing' in a *Weltbild* as central to how the thesis will approach the writings of Teresa of Avila. The following chapter will refine the 'Wittgensteinian methodology' of the thesis developing a threefold insight based around the move from Saying to Showing to Acting.

Part One will conclude by using the Wittgensteinian methodology to interpret the rise of what is termed *theologia mystica* as a distinct method of discourse, or language

---

[1] All abbreviations for Wittgenstein's works are given in the Bibliography.

game, arising from the twelfth/thirteenth century Latin revival of the works of Dionysius in the Parisian schools. It will be argued that Teresa is heir to this tradition via the Victorines, Jean Gerson and Francisco de Osuna.

Part Two of the thesis will have two aims: first, to apply the Wittgensteinian methodology developed in Part One to Teresa's 'mystical' writings, in particular to delineate what are termed the 'mystical strategies' that are used in her works. Secondly, to compare the 'mystical strategies' used by Teresa with similar strategies used by Wittgenstein in his own works. Thus, although the thesis begins by seeking to apply 'Wittgensteinian analysis' to 'mystical situation' – in particular the writings of Teresa of Avila - the final result is to produce a tool which can be reflected back on Wittgenstein's writing, thus showing his own 'mystical strategies'. Ultimately, it will be argued, this helps to make sense of his own 'mystical' claims in works such as the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and perhaps throw light on the famous 'Wittgensteinian religious point of view' already mentioned.

1.1 Why Teresa and Wittgenstein? Structure and Aims

At first sight St Teresa, the passionate Carmelite nun, and Wittgenstein, the austere linguistic philosopher, do not seem to be the most obvious conversation partners: Wittgenstein, the 'tractarian doctor' known for the rigour and spareness of his gnomic collections of philosophical reflections and Teresa, the gushing and spontaneous Doctor of the Church who travelled tirelessly around sixteenth century Spain founding convents, confronting the authorities and scribbling monumental books on prayer and spiritual guidance. Yet, although as far as is aware, no such similar study has been undertaken before, it is the contention of this thesis that close analysis and comparison of their respective works throws light on both authors, and, what will be called the 'mystical strategies' that they employ.

Accordingly, in approaching the two writers, the method will be to develop some distinctively 'Wittgensteinian' tools for analysis. These will concentrate around:

a) The tools for doing philosophy

b) How the mechanisms for philosophy can be applied to spiritual and theological questions
c) The limits of language in addressing these questions.

Secondly, these questions lead to a particular *method*. This method can be summarised in the line from the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI:66) – '*Denk Nicht, Sondern Schau!*' 'Don't think – But look!'. Whilst not being an anti-theoretical philosopher Wittgenstein preferred an approach to the subject matter that 'consisted in seeing connections' rather than being interested in the 'occult identities' of metaphysics.

If such a method is applied to the writings of a sixteenth century Spanish saint there are clearly going to be problems. First, Teresa's writings were not written as philosophical texts – let alone a reaction to the prevailing philosophical critiques of the day. Unlike Wittgenstein, Teresa has an unshakeable belief in the power of God the Trinity to direct her actions and the souls under her guidance; such a clear metaphysical mandate is clearly unobtainable to Wittgenstein. His God is more a matter of conjecture and yet, it is the contention of this thesis, that by applying a 'Wittgensteinian' critique to Teresa's writings new things can be revealed in her approach to theology. No such similar study has been undertaken before and thus it is proposed that this thesis makes a unique contribution to our knowledge of both authors.

When the Wittgensteinian method is applied to Teresa one of the most striking discoveries is the light it throws on the late medieval discourse which is referred to throughout as the *theologia mystica* and that by the time of Teresa's writing in the sixteenth century already had a venerable ancestry. As part of Cardinal Cisneros's reforms in the early sixteenth century a number of texts of the tradition had been made available to lay people in Spain. Teresa talks in particular of the *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual,* 'The Third Spiritual Alphabet' (TA) of Francisco de Osuna. An examination of this text shows a clear debt to fourteenth century scholars of the tradition especially Jean Gerson, Chancellor of Paris University. Gerson himself makes reference to Hugh of Balma ('Hugh the Carthusian' or 'Hugo de Palma') and the Dionysian tradition of interpretation made famous in the Parisian schools through the work of the Victorines,

especially Richard and Hugh of St Victor and Thomas Gallus. It is the argument of this thesis that de Osuna and Teresa are heirs to this medieval tradition of 'affective Dionysianism'. Thus, by analysing the language of this tradition it is possible to talk about two 'linguistic strategies' of the tradition (what will be called 'mystical' or 'performative' strategies): the strategy of unknowing and the strategy of embodiment. The first of these has already been investigated in Michael Sells's *Mystical Languages of Unsaying* (Sells 1994). However, it will be argued that Sells's analysis presents something different from the Wittgensteinian approach presented here and the latter approach will be used to develop an understanding of what is termed the 'mystical strategy of unknowing'. It will also be demonstrated that although this strategy has normally been associated with Teresa's co-worker, St John of the Cross, she herself uses this strategy frequently in her writing. The study will explore this 'unknowing' within Teresa's writings, rightly restoring this aspect to her approach.

On the second strategy – that of embodiment – emphasis will be given to Teresa's use of desire and pleasure in the strategy she adopts presenting what is termed an 'epistemology of desire'. This part of the thesis will also show how Teresa embodies the Wittgensteinian movement from Saying to Showing to Acting, thus emphasising the *transformational* element in both Teresa's and Wittgenstein's writing.

By these means the conclusions will be reached demonstrating what a study such as this can contribute to how both Teresa and Wittgenstein approach 'the mystical'.

The study, then will have four major aims:

1. To argue for an interpretation of 'Wittgensteinian methodology' based primarily on the notion of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* ('Clear Overview') and the importance that Wittgenstein gives for a distinction between *Weltanschauung* and *Weltbild* if his approach to philosophy is to be understood aright. This will be complemented by a Wittgensteinian movement from 'Saying to Showing to Acting'. Wittgenstein famously wrote: 'Do not do anything for the reader that he can do for himself' (VB:1948). Both Wittgenstein's writings, especially the *Investigations,* and those of Teresa, especially the *Moradas*, stand in incomplete

relation to the reader. It will be demonstrated that at the heart of Wittgenstein's approach is a *performative* strategy, rather than an *informative* one. Neither develop a systematic body of theory or learning and in both the interaction with the reader is through various *performative strategies*.

2. To see what can be revealed about the writings of the Teresa of Avila when we apply these philosophical approaches derived from Wittgenstein much of whose later work was concerned with the *form* of language rather than *content*. Thus, Wittgensteinian analysis will be used to analyse the prevailing form of language available to Teresa – what is called the language of *theologia mystica*. It will be argued that Teresa inherited the 'language game' of *theologia mystica* using it in her works to perform the work she wanted it to do on her readers. In so mapping the linguistic strategies of Teresa something will be revealed of the linguistic strategies of the *theologia mystica*.

3. To compare the linguistic strategies of Teresa and Wittgenstein to demonstrate how they both reveal what are termed 'mystical strategies'. In particular attention will be drawn to two strategies: a 'strategy of unknowing' and a 'strategy of embodiment'. Wittgenstein's movment from 'saying to showing to acting' will be stressed as will Teresa's claim that contemplation is not an end in itself but must lead to action. Both, it will be argued, present texts for action not contemplation. We shall investigate here the notion of mystical writing as fundamentally *therapeutic*.

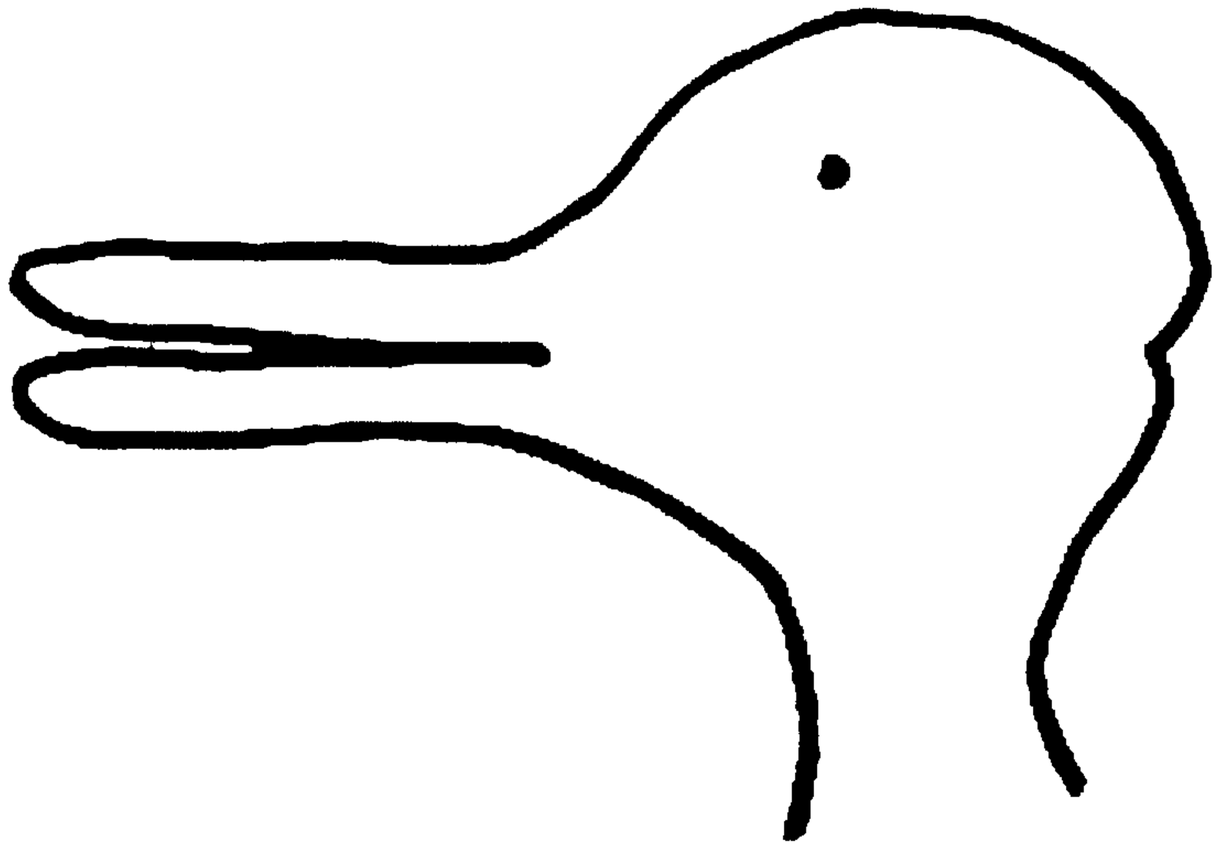
4. To assess what a study like this can contribute to the ongoing academic debate about the nature of mysticism and mystical language. As well as reviewing various contemporary academic notions of 'the mystical' and giving some of its derivation it will be argued that the Wittgensteinian analysis proposed here presents a new and original way of interpreting the Christian mystical tradition.

1.2 Teresa and Wittgenstein: Changing Aspects

> What is incomprehensible is that nothing, and yet everything, has changed.
> (Wittgenstein RPP2:474)

One of the central arguments of this thesis will be that one of the key 'family resemblances' between Wittgenstein and Teresa is their shared preoccupation with 'making pictures' to stimulate a 'change of aspect' in our way of seeing and acting in the world. In this respect it will be argued that their writing must be seen as fundamentally *transformational* in character.

In his final years Wittgenstein became increasingly interested in what he termed 'aspect seeing', stimulated in particular by prolonged reflection on Jastrow's famous 'Duck-Rabbit' diagram:



In his final remarks written in the late nineteen forties and published posthumously as *The Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology* (RPP1), *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* (RPP2), *Lectures on Philosophical Psychology* (LPP) and *The Philosophical Investigations* (PI) he returns continually to the figure and how we 'change an aspect' in our thought and life. The 'incomprehensible' matter that haunted Wittgenstein at the end of his life after he had given up his professorship in Cambridge

and moved to a solitary hut in Rosro near Connemara in Ireland was how 'nothing and yet everything' is changed with the change of aspect. As he wrote in 1948 at Rosro:

> We now have a language game that is remarkably the same as, and remarkably different from the previous one. Now what follows from the expression 'Now I see…' is completely different, even though there is once again a close relationship between the language games. (RPP2: 476)

> What is incomprehensible is that *nothing*, and yet *everything,* has changed, after all. That is the only way to put it. Surely *this* way is wrong: It has not changed in *one* respect, but has in another. There would be nothing strange about that. But 'Nothing has changed' means: Although I have no right to change my report about what I saw, since I see the same things now as before – still, I am incomprehensibly compelled to report completely different things, one after the other. (RPP2: 474)

It will be argued throughout this thesis that both Teresa and Wittgenstein elicit this 'change of aspect' by what will be referred to as 'mystical strategies' or 'mystical performative discourse'. For both the aim of their writing is not to leave the reader cold but to elicit transformational change.

Clearly for both of them the aim of this change is different. Teresa, as will be seen, is a sixteenth century contemplative nun working and writing at a time of epoch-making change in the Western church. Her concern throughout is how a Christian can keep the necessary stillness and contemplative discernment to allow balanced Christian ethical action in the middle of a 'world in flames'.

Wittgenstein, on the other hand, is a twentieth century philosopher struggling with the various currents of twentieth century thought within which he found himself: idealism, verificationism, realism, logical positivism and existentialism. He concluded from the midst of a difficult life of struggle and self-reflection that the aim of philosophy was to 'show the fly the way out of the fly bottle' (PI: 309). We shall return to this statement and discuss what he may have meant by this in Chapter Four. However, it is

clear that for Wittgenstein philosophy could never be an abstract rarefied discipline, it had to have a *practical, ethical* dimension. For him, the right seeing of true philosophy will bring about right action. Thus, a key feature of the 'mystical strategies' developed in this thesis will be how the change of aspect brought about by those strategies leads to action.

It will also be argued that both Teresa and Wittgenstein often initiate this process by means of disorientation and deconstruction. In this respect it will be argued that the Wittgensteinian *Blick* shares many characteristics with the *Blick* of what is termed the *theologia mystica*. It will be demonstrated that both achieve this objective by inventing new similes, new ways of looking at things, turning our assumptions upside down, using humour, aporias and irony. Their gestures and comments will nudge us in certain directions so that in Wittgenstein's case we can begin to 'see the world aright' (T 6.54) and in Teresa's be brought into deeper contemplative relationship with God. Their strategies interrupt the spontaneous, unselfconscious flow of our ongoing 'mental' activity forcing us to reevaluate our place in the world and our attitude to it. They will use language in unusual and provocative ways and by the means of carefully selected images and metaphors suggest new ways of seeing and acting. By sometimes shocking and surprising us both authors will bring us back to what we knew already but were unable to express in words. Through it we shall return to where we began and see something for the first time.

It will be argued that both understand that for there to be a real life-changing 'change of aspect' there must be an 'apophatic' breaking into the stream of ordinary discourse. Once we thus begin to 'see the world aright' we can return to the world for embodied ethical action. For Wittgenstein the *Weltanschauung* is not changed by mere verbal reasonings (not the arguments of the *theologia speculativa* of the *letrados*[2]) but by the presenting of pictures. In PI: 139 he takes the example of how we learn the meaning of the word 'cube', asking:

---

[2] A term used for the 'learned theologians' of Teresa's day, see Chapter Six for a fuller exposition.

> What then exactly hovers before us (*vorschwebt*) when we *understand* a word? – Isn't it something like a picture? Can't it *be* a picture?[3]

Rather than presenting traditional classical arguments in treatise form, Wittgenstein realises (as he did when he wrote the *Tractatus*) that such shifts of the *Weltanschauung* occur through presentation of *pictures* rather than systematic argument:

> His acceptance of the new picture consists in his now being inclined to regard a given case differently: that is, to compare it with this rather than that set of pictures. I have changed his way of looking at things (*Anschauungsweise geändert*). (PI: 144)

> I wanted to put this picture before your eyes, and your *acceptance* of this picture consists in your being inclined to regard a given case differently; that is, to compare it with *this* series of pictures. I have changed your *Anschauungsweise* (way of viewing). (Z: 461)

This is precisely Teresa's method in many of her works, especially the *Moradas* where she presents us with *pictures* to make her argument. As we shall see later the very opening passage of the *Moradas* presents this beautifully:

> While I was beseeching our Lord today to speak through me (*por mí*),[4] as I was unable to find a thing to say (*no atinaba a cosa que decir*)[5] or how to begin to comply with this obedience, what I will say now presented itself (*ofreció*)[6] to begin with this starting point: that we consider our soul to be like a castle, totally of diamond or very clear crystal, where there are many abodes (*aposentos*),[7] as in

---

[3] My translation, Anscombe in her translation gives: 'comes before our mind' (see reference in Bibliography). I have avoided this as it limits the ambiguity of the german *vorschweben*

[4] Peers gives 'through', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez give 'for', see Bibliography.

[5] Peers gives 'I could find nothing to say', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez ''I wasn't able to think of anything to say'

[6] Peers: 'a thought occurred to me', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez ' there came to my mind'

[7] Peers 'a rather more pretentious word than the English 'room': dwelling place, abode, apartment', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez: 'Teresa uses the Spanish words *moradas, aposentos y piezas* in approximately

heaven there are many mansions. Now if we consider it carefully, sisters, the soul of a just person (*el alma del justo)*[8] is nothing else but a paradise where He says he takes his delights (*El tiene sus deleites).*[9] Well then, what do you think such an abode would be like where a King so powerful, so wise, so pure, so full of good things, takes his delight? I cannot find anything with which to compare the great beauty and capacity of the soul; and truly our intellects will no more be able to grasp this than they can comprehend God, no matter how keen they are, for He Himself said that He created us in his own image and likeness. (M: 1.1.1)

For both, astonishment, shock and surprise are *essential* components of the 'change of aspect' required for their writing. As Wittgenstein puts it:

> Astonishment (*Staunen*) is essential to a change of aspect. *Und Staunen ist Denken* – And Astonishment is Thinking. (RPP1:565)

Faced, as will be argued, with such performative masters of 'shock and awe' certain difficulties arise for the academic researcher, and especially the PhD student. As we shall see, and has been pointed out by many commentators, neither Wittgenstein nor Teresa are concerned with developing a systematic body of theory or explanation. As Stanley Hauerwas puts it with reference to Wittgenstein:

> (Wittgenstein) slowly cured me of the notion that philosophy was primarily a matter of positions, ideas, and/or theories. From Wittgenstein, and later David Burrell, I learned to understand and also do philosophy in a therapeutic mode... Moreover, Wittgenstein ended forever any attempt on my part to try to anchor theology in some general account of 'human experience', for his writings taught

---

the same sense; they refer to rooms or dwelling places within the castle... Most people today think of a mansion as a large stately home, not what Teresa had in mind with the term *moradas.* 'Dwelling places' turns out to be a more precise translation of Teresa's *moradas* than is the classic 'mansions' and more biblical and theological in tone.'

[8] Peers 'the soul of the righteous man' Kavanaugh and Rodriguez 'the soul of the just person'

[9] Peers 'He takes His delight' KR 'He finds His delight' see also V:14:10 and Exc: 7, allusion to Proverbs 8:31

> me that the object of the theologian's work was best located in terms of the grammar of the language used by believers. (Hauerwas 1983: xxi)

Like Kierkegaard, whose writings greatly influenced him, Wittgenstein was not so much concerned with 'making difficult things simple' for his readers' comprehension but 'to make easy things difficult' for the sake of his reader's character (See Kierkegaard 1992:186). Thus we look in vain in both Teresa and Wittgenstein for systematic complexity. Wittgenstein does his philosophy through remarks and aporia, whilst Teresa does her theology through image, metaphor and embodiment. As we shall see, both want to engage us in conversation and fail in so far as their writing does not 'seize us with passion' in order to 'turn us round'.[10]

One aim of this thesis is to recapture the original spontaneity and ruggedness of the original texts of both Teresa and Wittgenstein. In the case of Wittgenstein the task of interpreting this type of approach to philosophy is made more difficult by the range of sources and collections to which his disparate *Nachlass* has been put by his executors and interpreters. As will be demonstrated in the Chapter Three, before we embark on our study it is necessary to define exactly what we understand by the Wittgensteinian *corpus* and at least have a nodding acquaintance with the various schools of interpretation that have consequently grown up since his death. As we shall see there, there have often been two opposing trends – to go against Wittgenstein's own words and try to make him a systematic philosopher presenting a systematic treatise or, as is increasingly the case, to emphasise the 'Kierkegaardian' nature of his philosophy and what has been termed its therapeutic nature. In the case of Teresa, again as we shall see, there are attempts to systematise her writings, yet, like Wittgenstein, she seems always to struggle against this and live by the same dangerous littoral of aporia as Wittgenstein. Accordingly, throughout this thesis, although an academic argument based on the writings of the two authors will be presented it is hoped that something of their spirit of spontaneity, aporia and humour can be preserved.

Proceeding from this question of style is that of methodology to which we turn next.

---

[10] See Chapter Eight for a longer exposition of this.

1.3 Methodologies and Background

As will be clear from the above, when investigating Teresa and Wittgenstein we are looking at two writers who do not necessarily conform to the norms of theology on the one hand or philosophy on the other. In Wittgenstein's case, as we have seen, the aphoristic style of his writing, like Kierkegaard's or Nietzsche's, will often deliberately avoid easy and simple classification. Therefore, in Chapter Four below, some time will be spent expounding what is termed the 'Wittgensteinian methodology or approach' used in this thesis. In this respect the thesis will create its own methodology as it responds to the strategies of Wittgenstein's texts. Using this Wittgensteinian methodology we shall analyse Teresa's texts using key interpretative tools derived from Wittgenstein's thought and writings.

In our investigation of *the mystical* we shall be covering a variety of approaches and angles. Naturally it would be beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the deployment of the terms *mystic/mysticism/mystical* as they arise in all academic disciplines, approaches, creeds and contexts. However, the approach that will be adopted here could broadly be said to be under the umbrella of what is usefully termed *practical or pastoral theology*, in particular, methodologies derived from the emerging academic study of *spirituality,* especially within the Christian context.[11]

Recent studies (See, for example Astley 2002, Graham 2007, Campbell 2007, Lartey 2007, Ballard and Pritchard 2006, Carr 2002, Schreiter 2007) have emphasised the multidisciplinary and emerging nature of pastoral/practical theology as it is currently being practiced in the academic world. Overall, an emphasis is being made on the process of bringing theology into dialogue with other disciplines. In this respect, this dissertation fits within the broader *projet* of Practical/Pastoral Theology (See Gagey 2007) as an emerging discipline by being a contribution to the dialogue between philosophical and theological methods in the academy. Within this broad picture it is also intended to contribute to the emerging study of Christian Spirituality as an independent area of academic study in its own right. As will be argued, if we follow Wittgenstein and Teresa

---

[11] For a good recent introduction to how the discipline has emerged/is emerging see Burrows and Dreyer 2005

aright, our theology and philosophy inevitably lead to practical action, therefore, the thesis accords with much of the present understanding of pastoral theology as practical theology.

1.4 A Note on Sources, Translation and Terminology

Before concluding this chapter with a summary of the dissertation chapters it is necessary to note some aspects of the sources, translation and terminology that will be employed throughout.

As has already been alluded to, when studying Wittgenstein in particular, certain choices have to be made as to the sources that will be used and how they will be interpreted. Chapter Three will go into greater depth about the problems of interpretation and sourcing of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*, the majority of which lay unpublished at his death and some of which is still not published. This thesis draws on both published and unpublished material. With published work it has been usual to quote the English translation as it appears in the relevant English text. However, there have been occasions when it was felt that some phrases needed an altered translation to clarify a point that was being made, in this case the author's own translation has been indicated. In the case of unpublished *Nachlass* the full original German wording is given with the author's translation. All Wittgenstein's works have been listed as they appear in English translation with abbreviations in the Bibliography. References to Wittgenstein's manuscripts adopt the classification first used in von Wright's 1969 paper *The Wittgenstein Papers* reprinted in *Philosophical Occasions 1912 - 1951* (PO) pp. 480 – 510.

In the case of Teresa the two main English translations of her work have been used: Kavanaugh and Rodriguez (1980) and Allison Peers (1946), unless indicated when the author has needed to make his own translation. The Spanish sources of the BAC edition (De la Madre de Dios and Steggink 1997) and the Burgos edition (Alvarez 1998) have been used. Occasional reference is made to other translations which will be given where necessary. As with Wittgenstein a complete list of her works with abbreviations is given in the Bibliography.

Other primary and secondary sources are referenced using usual academic conventions and full details can be found in the Bibliography.

Due to the major problematic of defining *the mystical/mysticism/mystic* upon which so much of the argument of this dissertation depends the three terms are usually quoted in italics throughout.

1.5 Structure

Accordingly, the subsequent structure and plan of the dissertation will be as follows:

Chapter Two:

The Creation of 'Modern Mysticism' and its Critics

The chapter presents a key tool in academic interpretation of 'mystical texts' – the notion of 'the mystic' as a cross-credal, experientialist, ontological category with deep roots in perennialism and influenced by orientalist approaches - what will be referred to as *modern mysticism.* In particular, attention will be given to how the category arises in the English speaking world, especially the United States and Great Britain, with special reference to four writers: Robert A. Vaughan, Ralph Inge, Evelyn Underhill and William James. By analysing these four writers it will be demonstrated how the foundations of *modern mysticism* are presented to the academy.

Having established the category of *modern mysticism* the contemporary academic debate on the subject will be reviewed concentrating in particular on the constructivist critique to *modern mysticism* and the various responses to it.

Chapter Three:

Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* and the Problem of Interpretation

This chapter will begin by critically engaging with the key Wittgensteinian sources and presenting the various schools of interpretation. The aim of this chapter will be to expound where the analysis of the thesis fits into the current academic interpretation and how this study builds on recent developments.

Chapter Four:

Saying and Showing - A Wittgensteinian Methodology

Using Wittgenstein's texts the Wittgensteinian methodology of the thesis will be presented with which *The Mystic* will be subsequently investigated. In so doing attention will be paid in particular to the writings of the later Wittgenstein especially as to the nature of epistemology and ontological expression in mystical discourse. At this point attention will be paid to the nature of the *mystical discourse* or *game* referring to it as a *performative discourse* or *strategy of elucidation.* Wittgenstein's later expression of the philosophical enterprise as a movement from thinking to seeing to acting will also be presented. This will support the contention of the thesis that Wittgenstein's approach is primarily *transformational* in character.

Chapter Five:

The Mystical Strategies of the *Theologia mystica*

The methodology developed in the previous chapter will now be used as a tool to interpret the tradition of *theologia mystica* in the West. Particular attention will be paid to what are termed two key 'mystical strategies': the strategy of deconstruction and unknowing and the strategy of embodiment and the affective.

Central to the history of this strategy are the texts of the *Corpus Dionysiaca*: originally Greek texts they made their impact on the West largely through two sets of translations – a first group in the ninth Century by the French monk Hilduin, and the Irishman Eriugena – and a second group in the twelfth century Parisian Renaissance, primarily by the Victorine Sarracenus and the English Bishop, Robert Grosseteste. This chapter will concentrate on the mystical strategies of the twelfth/thirteenth Century Latin texts and how they were thus disseminated, through Gerson and de Osuna, to Teresa.

Part Two:

Applying the Wittgensteinian Approach: The Mystical Strategies of the *theologia mystica* illustrated by an examination of the writings of Teresa of Avila

Chapter Six:

The Form of Language: 'Mystical Strategies' in Teresa of Avila

The second part will use the Wittgensteinian methodology developed in Part One to interpret Teresa's writings as an example of 'mystical performative discourse'. To assess Teresa's debt to the tradition this chapter will chart how the strategy comes to her through Jean Gerson via the writings of Francisco de Osuna.

Chapter Seven:

Unsaying and Unknowing in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein

This chapter will argue that both Wittgenstein and Teresa use the 'mystical strategy of unknowing' presented in Part One. It will begin by contrasting it with Sells's 'mystical language of unsaying' demonstrating how the Wittgensteinian 'mystical strategy of unknowing' is more concerned with a practical 'change of aspect' rather than constructing a theoretical theology of apophasis. The chapter will then analyse six such 'strategies of unknowing' in the writings of Teresa and Wittgenstein.

Chapter Eight:

'A Transformational Process': Strategies of Affectivity and Embodiment in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein

As with the previous chapter the 'strategy of embodiment/affectivity' will be investigated and its importance for both Wittgenstein and Teresa developed. Again, there will be differences in emphasis on the purpose of the strategy in both writers, however it will be argued here that there is a 'family resemblance' between the two that makes such a comparison sustainable.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

The conclusions of the thesis will fall into three main areas:

a) How the the writings of Teresa of Avila can be revealed by this Wittgensteinian approach to present language games that encourage the reader to engage in a new embodied, apophatic approach that stimulates contemplative prayer in the individual's relations to God.

b) The debt that Teresa of Avila owes to her 'master' de Osuna and what will be termed the tradition of *theologia mystica* to which she is heir.
c) How Wittgenstein's strategy of the 'mystical' reveals that his 'religious point of view' was expressed through verbal and linguistic strategies that make his published and unpublished claims to an interest in *das Mystische* comprehensible within the Western Christian mystical strategy of *theologia mystica.*

The conclusion will assess the original contribution that the study makes to the ongoing academic debate about the nature of mysticism and mystical language. It will be argued that the Wittgensteinian analysis proposed here presents a new and original way of interpreting the Christian mystical tradition and an original contribution to contemporary Pastoral/Practical Theology.

Part One: Establishing a Wittgensteinian approach to *the Mystical*

As stated in the opening chapter, one of the chief aims of this thesis is to present a specifically *Wittgensteinian* interpretation of *the mystical* using the writings of Teresa of Avila as a case study. However, before we can embark upon that we need to clarify two aspects of the subject by virtue of an extended literature review. First, we need to review what has been understood by *the mystical* and how a Wittgensteinian view will interpret this and, secondly, to analyse how Wittgenstein's writings have been interpreted by the secondary commentators, especially his writings on religion. Thus, in Part One of the thesis we shall begin in Chapter Two by looking at interpretations of *the mystical* within the secondary literature followed in Chapter Three with a review of the Wittgensteinian *Nachlass* and how it has been interpreted. This will then lead to the exposition of our proposed Wittgensteinian methodology for interpreting *the mystical* in Chapter Four before we turn to the tradition that influenced Teresa of Avila, especially that based on the writings of Dionysius, and apply our methodology in Chapter Five. This will act as a basis for examining the Teresian texts with our Wittgensteinian approach in Part Two of the Dissertation. We turn first then to current academic understandings of *the mystical.*

Chapter Two: The Creation of *Modern Mysticism* and its Critics

Sometimes an expression has to be taken out of the language and sent to the cleaners. Then it can be re-introduced into service. (Wittgenstein VB: 1940)[12]

There are two main aims of this dissertation: to take a methodology based on the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein and apply them to the Christian medieval tradition of *theologia mystica* as exemplified in the 'mystical writings' of Teresa of Avila and secondly to compare the 'mystical strategies' of Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein in order to throw light on what he understands by *das Mystische* and reveal the *Sprachspiele* that Teresa uses in her writing.

However, this discussion must be embedded in current academic debate regarding *the mystical*, especially in interpretation of writers such as Teresa. This chapter will be concerned with contemporary academic understanding of *the mystical* and will argue that this can be seen as reaction and counter-reaction to the proposition of an ontological, cross-credal category which we refer to as 'modern mysticism'. Accordingly, we shall trace some of the key elements in the creation of this category, reviewing the writings of Vaughan, Inge, Underhill and James before looking at contemporary academic reaction to it. At the end of Part One, in Chapter Five we shall return to the problematic of *the mystical* however at that point we shall look at it through our Wittgensteinian methodology of a medieval *Sprachspiel* of what we will term 'theologia mystica'.

2.1 The Making of *Modern Mysticism*

Any thesis wanting to clarify the 'mystical speech' of a writer such as Teresa of Avila needs to address at some point the definitions of 'the mystical' with which it is working. A comprehensive literature review of all the usages of the term in every area of academic discourse would neither be possible nor desirable, consequently this chapter aims to shape the understanding of contemporary academic discourse on 'the mystical' by seeing

---

[12] *'Man muß manchmal einen Ausdruck aus der Sprache herausziehen, ihn zum Reinigen geben. – und kann ihn dann wieder in den Verkehr einführen'.* My translation

it comprised of two over-arching tendencies: that towards evaluating 'mysticism' as a quasi-ontological, cross-credal category, what we will refer to as 'modern mysticism', and a contemporary academic movement which seeks to concentrate primarily on the *form* of mystical discourse at the expense of any content, especially psychologistic content, what we shall refer to as 'constructivist' approaches. It is the argument of this chapter that much contemporary discussion on the issue, especially in the theology faculty, is centred around these two movements and reactions to them. By contrast, this thesis proposes its 'Wittgensteinian methodology' as a way of navigating an impasse between these two understandings, presenting 'mystical speech' which is neither de-psychologised nor overly ontological. This will be the task of Chapter Four. However, before we move to that position it is necessary to review this debate and the main movements that have created it.

Before investigating the contemporary critical academic reaction to *the mystical* it is necessary to understand something of its origins and how it arises in contemporary discourse. In particular, how its distinctive qualities are developed and maintained in Western European discourse. We shall be largely confined here, in what will necessarily be a brief survey, to the archaeology of the term in English-speaking context.[13]

Recent scholarship on the archaeology of the term has been dominated by the work of Michel de Certeau (1992), Louis Bouyer (1981) and Bernard McGinn (1991) who have traced the pre-history and early modern history of the word *mystic*, *la mystique, mysticum*. From this research and analysis, which is by no means concluded,[14] it is argued that *mysticism*, as a distinct category – that is, 'associated with distinct religious experiences' (Sheldrake 2001:39) emerges in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in the cultural and religious exchange between *Golden Age* Spain and France. More specifically, de Certeau favours Bordeaux as the region of 'transition (and translation) from sixteenth-century mystic Spain to seventeenth century mystic France'(de Certeau 1992:10). For seventeenth century France is the place 'where the

[13] For this reason I have not explored the origins and use of the term by, *inter alia*, such notable German scholars as Heiler, Stolz and Rahner. For a perceptive account of the latter's views on *das Mystische* see Endean 2004.

mystic wave breaks' and from here we can 'move backward toward the horizon from which it came'.

De Certeau points out, when we speak of 'mystics', 'sixteenth century authors instead said "contemplatives" or "spirituals" ' (de Certeau 1992:94). He cites traditional usage by Bernard of Clairvaux, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas amongst others, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries gives numerous instances (de Certeau 1992: 95). Regarding Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, he suggests they both prefer the term *contemplación* and, in the case of John of the Cross anyway, 'uses "mystical" theology to designate the "negative" aspect of infused contemplation in reference to the apophatic tradition of Dionysius the Areopagite'. We shall return to this later, and to Teresa's use of the term 'mystical theology' in Chapters Five and Six suggesting other interpretations of the *theologia mystica* from our Wittgensteinian perspective.

By this time, argues de Certeau, the adjective 'mystical' takes on the aspects of the 'hidden key', the hermeneutical lodestone or alchemical secret (following Bouyer, it returns to its original Greek meaning of *mus*, hidden or closed). The hermeneutic of the esoteric is strongly enforced: 'At this point the term "mystical" becomes the proper one to qualify any object, real or ideal, the existence or signification of which eludes direct knowledge'(de Certeau 1992:96). He further suggests that the movement that brought about this specialised use of 'the mystical' also created a new 'science of extraordinary facts', mystics: *la mystique*. We shall return to these early modern influences on the term shortly.

2.2 The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The psychologisation of *Modern Mysticism* – William James

The analysis of the rise of *la mystique* as a distinct category of human *Wissenschaft* is complimented by recent categorisation of another movement – that of the 'psychologisation' of mysticism that begins towards the end of the nineteenth century and continues to the present day. Again, this is a large topic and takes in many branches of

---

[14] Volumes 1 – 4 of McGinn's *Presence of God* series on the history of Western Christian mysticism have so far emerged, with two more volumes in preparation, see McGinn 1991, 1994, 1998a, 2005.

psychology, theology, philosophy, psychiatry and social sciences. In addition, throughout the nineteenth century we see the effects of colonialism on Western European/American understandings of *the mystical* and what has been termed by Said (1978) as 'Orientalism'. Scholars such as Lash (1988) and Williams (1991) see much of the modern psychologisation of mysticism as arising from the influence of William James, in particular his groundbreaking *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (James 1902). However, recent work by Leigh Eric Schmidt (2003) has attempted to bridge the gap between de Certeau's work on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the later work by scholars on James and beyond. [15] As with Teresa of Avila , Schmidt shows that the prevailing category in the English speaking world up to the early decades of the eighteenth century was again 'mystical theology', especially as seen as interpretation of the Dionysian tradition. Thus, in 1656, Thomas Blount provided this definition in his *Glossographia:*

> Mystical Theology is nothing else in general but certain Rules, by the practise whereof, a vertuous Christian may attain to a nearer, a more familiar, and beyond all expression comfortable conversation with God. (Blount 1656: 235)

As Schmidt points out, Blount's work contains no definitions for *mystic* or *mysticism*. The older understanding of 'mystical interpretation of scripture', ie. a 'hidden or internal' meaning, seems to have been retained (eg. in Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopeadia* of 1738) however it is not until the middle of the eighteenth century that the term 'mysticism' is employed as a substantive in its own right and here it is mainly used in a pejorative sense to criticise the enthusiasms and 'amorous extravagancies' of 'the sects', especially Methodists and Quakers. The first usage in this way has been found by Schmidt in the works of Henry Coventry's dialogues[16] *Philemon to Hydapses: Or, the History of False Religion.* Here he contrasts 'the true spirit of acceptable religion' with 'the seraphic entertainments of mysticism and extasy' (Coventry 1761: 56/60). Religion, rightly

---

[15] De Certeau's perspectives can be criticised as too narrow to allow a full general picture (See McGinn 1991) and as leaving out developments beyond the French speaking world, with their specific characteristics.

[16] Henry Coventry, ca 1710 - 1752

practised, is described as 'liberal, manly, rational and social institution' (ie. tolerant and full of aesthetic proportion and public decorum) and is contrasted with the 'deluded votaries of mysticism' (Coventry 1761:44). For Coventry, the great source of such mystical 'extasies' was 'disappointed love': the frustrated passion is 'transferred from mere mortals to a spiritual and divine object, and love... is sublimated into devotion.' (1761:47).

The 'mystics' came to be seen increasingly as a small sect or band within Christianity, much as the *alumbrados* had been seen in sixteenth and seventeenth century Spain, and the 'Molinists' later.[17] Thus, in the 1797 entry for the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica* 'the mystics' are defined as:

> A kind of religious sect, distinguished by their professing pure, sublime and perfect devotion, with an entire disinterested love of God, free from all selfish considerations... The principles of this sect were adopted by those called *Quietists* in the seventeenth century, and under different modifications, by the Quakers and Methodists. (1797:598)

Schmidt sees the eighteen forties and fifties as the point where a shift occurs in definitions of *mysticism;* from something associated with a small sect or group with esoteric characteristics it slowly defines something broader and wider with universalist and perennialist elements. Thus in the 1858 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica* (eighth edition) we find the following: 'Its main characteristics are constantly the same whether they find expression in the Bagvat-Gita of the Hindu (*sic*), or in the writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg' (1858:755). This is really the beginning of the modern understanding of mysticism which is still with us today. That is, mysticism as a universal form of religious experience that finds specific expression in distinctive environments: Buddhist mysticism, Indian mysticism, Spanish mysticism, German mysticism and so on. The other significant element that arises at this time is the 'orientalisation' of mysticism which we will consider shortly.

---

[17] See Tyler 2005: *Alumbrados* and forthcoming *Miguel de Molinos* in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity.* We shall return to this theme in Chapter Six.

Robert Alfred Vaughan's (1823-57) two-volume collection, *Hours with the Mystics* (1856) as well as comparable publications in French and German[18] helped to popularise this notion, this being supplemented by orientalist notions of the 'mystic East'.

In 1836 the Transcendental Club was formed in New England from a group of Unitarian ministers and intellectuals wishing to discuss philosophical and theological issues. By 1838 we record them meeting to discuss 'the question of Mysticism', in particular questions such as 'Was Jesus a mystic?'(See King 1985:5).

By the end of the century, authors such as Octavius Frothingham in his *Ten Great Religions* (1871-83) were able to imagine a future religion of the United States that was liberal and universal without being dogmatic, ecclesiastical, sacramental or sectarian with *mysticism* being its binding glue (Frothingham 1891:115 –132). Emerging from the Civil War period, it seemed that *mysticism* could provide a unifying influence on a fragmented country and the hope of a Universal Religion. This late nineteenth century Transcendentalist stream combined with others to create the climate in which William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) could fruitfully appear.

James's father, Henry James Sr had friends amongst the transcendentalists, read Swedenborg and had a faith that has been characterised as 'an idiosyncratic fusion of Calvinism and republicanism' (Levinson 1981:11). For Henry Sr 'the old Theology' was 'substantially the same in all the sects, from the old Romish down to the modern Swedenborgian'. Henry Sr also kept a keen interest in all the new religious movements emerging in mid nineteenth century America and his sons' preoccupations reflected those of their father in, amongst others, the Shakers, Mormons, Millerites, Spiritualists, Swedenborgians and Transcendentalists (see Levinson 1981:4). As well as these groups, James's early years saw the formation in the States of such influential movements as the Seventh Day Adventists (1860), Jehovah's Witnesses (1872) and Madam Blavatsky's Theosophical Society (1875). During his teens and early twenties James became involved with both Epicureanism and Stoicism and maintained an interest in all things esoteric and 'spiritualist' throughout his life. This would help to form the final shape of *The Varieties.*

---

[18] Including works by Johan Heinroth, Joseph von Görres, Ludwig Noack, Adolph Helfferich and Victor Cousin

In his articles of 1890 and 1892 for *Scribner's Magazine* and *The Forum* reprinted in *What Psychical Research has Accomplished* (James: 1897) James details his experiences in the field of psychical research. In view of the definitions of *mysticism* arising in the mid to late nineteenth century it is not surprising, then, that James uses the word *mystical* to describe these 'psychic phenomena', ie. 'divinations, inspirations, demoniacal possessions, apparitions, trances, ecstasies, miraculous healings and productions of disease, and occult powers possessed by peculiar individuals over persons and things in their neighbourhood'(1897:300). *Mysticism* and *Mystical Practice* are for James clearly identified with 'practices of the occult' transmitted from generation to generation by 'this mass of human beings' outside the circles of academe. Further, the 'mystical mind' is associated with the 'feminine', in contradistinction to the 'scientific-academic' mind associated with a certain 'manliness'(1897:301,37).

By these means, the modern 'transcendental' or better 'perennialist' understanding of mysticism had been born.[19] The characteristics of this type of mysticism being:

- It is primarily identified in *extraordinary* states and conditions – occult and supernatural practices reveal its presence. It is preoccupied with *religious experiences.*
- It has an orientalist component
- It is cross-credal and universal, manifesting in different religions in differing ways.

James's descriptions of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, of which he was one-time President, display his methodology as to how to approach these *mystical phenomena*: experiments, surveys and observations can all be used to reveal the secret truths of these phenomena.

We have, then, much of what James will say on *mysticism* in *The Varieties* already in embryo in these texts. The other significant element that will be explored in *The Varieties* is the role of the 'religious genius' in 'picking up' these far ends of the

---

[19] In this respect, see also Sedgewick (2004)

mystical spectrum and passing them on to the mass of 'ordinary believers'. Such a genius, is for James someone who has an innate mental instability (see James, 1902:7). Some, at least, of this appears to be autobiographical and relates to James's own struggles in his early twenties with near-suicidal depression. This 'melancholy' cast to James's character seems to have stayed with him for some time and his struggles with these suicidal urges are recounted in his later lecture of 1895 to the Harvard YMCA *Is Life Worth Living* (James 1897:32)[20].

By the time, then, James came to deliver the 1902 Gifford Lectures in Edinburgh the main planks of his delineation of 'transcendental mysticism' or what is called in this dissertation 'modern mysticism' were in place. This, we argue here, will form the cornerstone of 'modern mysticism' as it emerges in Western academic discourse: its psychologism, perennialism (influenced by orientalism) and its concentration on unusual states or experiences – its experientialism. All of which will find its way into the final version of *The Varieties* which will do so much to influence the subsequent academic climate of discussion of *the mystical* in the English speaking world.

Of particular relevance to our discussion here are Lectures Sixteen and Seventeen on *Mysticism*. Much of what we find there can be predicted by what has gone before. Thus, his bold assertion at the beginning of the lecture that 'personal religious experience has its root and centre in mystical states of consciousness' will make sense in the context of this metaphysic. Briefly reprising some of his original perspectives by references to the connection between *mysticism* and 'thought-transference and spirit-return',[21] he concentrates on defining what characteristics these mystical spirit states will have. In particular, that they will have the following four characteristics:

> 1. *Ineffability*: The handiest of the marks by which I classify a state of mind as mystical is negative. The subject of it immediately says that it defies expression, that no adequate report of its contents can be given in words... In this peculiarity mystical states are more like states of feeling than like states of intellect. No one

[20] Reprinted in *The Will to Believe*, James 1897
[21] In view of James's background, an interesting choice.

> can make clear to another who has never had a certain feeling, in what the quality or worth of it consists. (James 1902: 380)

The mystic, moreover, has a more 'musical ear' than most of us, attuned to this silent symphony. They have gifts in a special way 'more akin to states of feeling than intellect' enabling them to engage with James's unseen order:

> Lacking the heart or ear, we cannot interpret the musician or the lover justly, and are even likely to consider him weak-minded or absurd. The mystic finds that most us accord to his experiences an equally incompetent treatment.(1902:380)

James's second quality of *mysticism* is its *'noetic quality'*. In this aspect he deepens his previous distinction of the mystical states as 'states of feeling' by characterising them also as 'state of knowledge'. They are:

> States of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance... and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for after-time. (1902: 380)

Both these characteristics, ineffability and noetic quality, relate more to the transcendental nature of the 'mystical experience', their origins in 'another world' and, therefore, their peculiar power when manifest in the mystic in this world: a power that epistemologically gives them greater certainty than 'states of feeling' or the 'discursive intellect'.

The third quality delineated by James, *transiency,* relates more to the 'experientialist' aspect of James's agenda than its 'transcendentalist' side:

> *3. Transciency.* Mystical states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at most an hour or two, seems to be the limit beyond which they fade into the light of common day. (1902: 381)

Of the four qualities this seems the most 'experientialist' of them all, clearly indicating James's understanding of *mystical states* as discreet, specific experiences.

With his description of *Passivity* he returns to his favourite subject which is never far below the surface in *Varieties:* the exploration of the paranormal and extraordinary. He refers to the 'manuals of mysticism' which prescribe 'certain voluntary operations, as by fixing the attention, or going through certain bodily performances' which will produce mystical states such as 'prophetic speech, automatic writing or alternative personality'. We immediately recall the New England circles of mysticism that James as a young man, and his father, explored and experienced: *mysticism* here defined, is clearly an esoteric and exotic function. From this perspective, his reference in the next paragraph to 'professional mystics at the height of their development' does not seem so odd after all as long as we remember that James's *mysticism*, in its perennialist-experientialist quality, is a specific *modern* phenomenon born in the late nineteenth century and destined to have a vigorous life in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This new understanding of *modern mysticism* with a specific metaphysic, ontology and epistemology, is receiving here one of its fullest and first expositions.

As he also makes clear in this chapter, and again this follows from his earlier metaphysical seperation of religious experience from religious institutions and organisations, the *mystical experience*, does not have to be connected with a specific *religious* institution or organisation:

> Single words and conjunctions of words, effects of light on land and sea, odors and musical sounds all bring it when the mind is tuned aright. (1902: 383)

For James, *mysticism* is the secret heart of religion, the living essence that inhabits below the surface and gives life to everything else that follows. Again, of significance for much that will follow, James suggests a relation between these states and certain chemically induced positions produced by drugs such as nitrous oxide, with which he famously experimented (see James 1902: 387).

The other central innovation of James's chapter on mysticism is its marshalling of examples from 'other religions': 'Buddhists, Hindus, Mahommedans'. Another feature

which will be developed in much twentieth century discussion of mysticism – mysticism as a cross-credal entity:

> This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. This is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of clime or creed. In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note. (1902: 419)

In such terms, the perennialist-experientialist view of mysticism survives intact to the present day. James's descriptions in *The Varieties* presents us with a clear insight into certain key characteristics of modern mysticism, namely:

1. The psychologisation of modern mysticism
2. Its experientialist nature
3. Its manifestations of perennialism

Before we look at the contemporary critique of James and the beginnings of 'modern mysticism' amongst contemporary writers we shall conclude this survey of the origins of 'modern mysticism' by looking at three other writers who, with James, were key in developing the category: Robert Vaughan, Ralph Inge and Evelyn Underhill.

2.3 Vaughan, Inge and Underhill: The British Orientalisation of *Modern Mysticism*

So far we have considered the processes that went into forming James's *Varieties*, in particular the personal sphere within which James was involved and the milieu of North American religious attitudes at the end of the nineteenth century/beginning of twentieth century. This thesis is concerned to trace the development of *mysticism* as a 'modern' category in the English speaking world. Accordingly, we will now turn to parallel developments that were taking place in Great Britain at this time. To do this we will

concentrate on three writers, two of whom predate James's *Varieties*: Robert Alfred Vaughan (1823-1857) and William Ralph Inge (1860 –1954); before turning to one whose first published work on 'mysticism' post-dates the *Varieties* but was of considerable importance in the creation of 'modern mysticism': Evelyn Underhill (1875 – 1941).

As with James, a significant factor in the development of *mysticism* in all three writers was the interaction with and discovery of non-Christian cultures, especially through the colonial power gradient. Whereas James specifically concerned himself with the esoteric societies and phenomena he recorded in emerging post Civil War America, the three British writers investigated *mysticism* against the backdrop of British colonial empire, especially its dealing with the Indian Subcontinent and the Far East. Vaughan devotes a large portion of *Hours with the Mystics* to 'Hindoo, Buddhist and Yogi mysticism' (1895: 54 *passim*) and is very much in the 'India, cradle of civilisation' school[22]. Likewise, Inge has no hesitation in branding aspects of Christian history which do not fit his thesis as 'Oriental'. For example, talking Syrian Christian mysticism he comments:

> It is the ancient religion of the Brahmins, masquerading in clothes borrowed from Jewish allegorists, half-Christian Gnostics, Manicheans, Platonising Christians, and pagan Neoplatonists. (Inge 1899:104)

As he makes clear he has no direct study of Indian religion but constructs his understanding of it from summaries available,[23] or from reports from colonial administrators.[24]

This colonialism and esotericism seems to have influenced Underhill even more deeply than Vaughan or Inge, which was no doubt helped from her involvement prior to

---

[22] As we shall see Vaughan makes numerous references to India and Indian culture. See also his *India in 1857: Historical Parallels* in Vaughan (1858) where Vaughan writes in response to the Indian Mutiny/1st Indian War of Independence where his brother-in-law was killed and sister involved: 'The Anglo-Saxon will not accomplish less than the Roman, for his destinies are higher... Our Indian adversaries lack a head and act with little concert, the superiority of the West is already not less decisive on the part of Britain than of Rome' (1858:306-310)

[23] eg p.113, reference is made to Hunt's *Pantheism and Christianity*

[24] See p.112, reference to Hon P Ramanathan CMG, Attorny-General of Ceylon

writing *Mysticism* with the Society of the Golden Dawn, an esoteric society that practised an eclectic mixture of magic, occult, Kabbalah and Eastern esotericism amongst other things, we shall return to this. In her writings she refers to what studies were available on Eastern religions and seemed particularly interested in Sufism.[25]

We can therefore extract two elements of their 'colonial' critique for our present discussion:

1. How modern mysticism emerged alongside an interest in the 'archaic' nature of 'Eastern' culture, especially Indian culture, when compared with Western culture. and
2. How 'Vedic religion' and 'Classical Buddhism' became ahistorical yardsticks against which all later forms of Indian religiosity could be measured, assessed and evaluated.

It is the argument of this thesis that this British nineteenth century 'orientalist' view of 'the mystic' combines with James's psychologisation to produce the distinctive characteristics of 'modern mysticism' as a discrete academic category. Before we turn to contemporary academic critique of that category we shall briefly review the work of Vaughan, Inge and Underhill in turn.

2.3.1 Robert Vaughan and *The Hours with the Mystics* (1856)

Of the three British writers surveyed here Vaughan has been unfairly neglected and to date very little academic appraisal has appeared of his writings, including the very influential *Hours with the Mystics* (1856, hereafter HM). Accordingly, for the purposes of this thesis, it is worth outlining some of the main elements of his approach.

---

[25] See in particular Ch 6 of *Mysticism* where reference is made to works such as Palmer's *Oriental Mysticism* of 1867 and translations of Attar, Al Ghazzali and Rumi. Indeed, in her final Bibliography of 'Works and Lives of the Mystics' she only lists Christian authors except for three neo-Platonists and seven Sufi authors whose works are all cited in English translations then available.

Although Underhill and Inge are rather dismissive of Vaughan's *Hours*,[26] it is quite clear that both of them read Vaughan and were perhaps more influenced by him than they would like to admit.[27] From the point of view of our study it is a fascinating text as Vaughan holds in embryo many of the themes of the emerging study of *mysticism* and at a comparatively early date compared to our other two authors.[28] His attitude throughout the text is a largely negative one to this *mysticism*. Yet, in his text we find many of the elements that the later writers would develop.

In Vaughan's material the four elements of modern mysticism identified above, eg. essentialism, perennialism, experientialism and orientalism, are very much in evidence, with particular emphasis, it is argued here, on:

1. An 'orientalist' view of an Eastern/Indian *archē* to *mysticism* and
2. The privileging of an extracted 'essence' of mysticism, primarily located in authorative texts.

Vaughan begins his exploration of 'Early Oriental Mysticism' (HM 51-60) with a discussion of the 'Bagvat-Gita'(*sic*), drawing on Charles Wilkins's translation of 1785 (Wilkins 1785). Wilkins, along with William Jones and Henry Thomas Colebrook, was one of the early pioneering orientalists. For Wilkins and Jones the *Gita* is seen as representative of the 'grand mysteries' of the Hindu religion as a whole.[29] Jones, for instance, states that those who wish 'to form a correct idea of Indian religion and

---

[26] See Inge 1899:347 : 'There is something almost offensive in telling the story of men like Tauler, Suso, and Juan of the Cross, in the form of smart conversations at a house-party, and the jokes cracked at the expense of the benighted 'mystics' are not always in the best taste. Vaughan does not take his subject quite seriously enough. There is an irritating air of superiority in all his discussions of the lives and doctrines of the mystics, and his hatred and contempt for the Roman Church often warps his judgement.'
and Underhill 1910:xiii: 'Vaughan's supercilious and unworthy 'Hours with the Mystics''

[27] Inge however does state (1899:348): ' I wish to acknowledge considerable obligations to Vaughan, whose early death probably deprived us of even better work than the book which made his reputation.'

[28] Born in 1823, the eldest son of a Congregational minister, in Worcester, Robert followed his father into the ministry holding posts in Bath and Birmingham. His health was always delicate and his pastoral ministry seems to have been somewhat impaired. In 1855 he showed symptoms of tuberculosis and after two years living as an invalid in Bournemouth and London he died at the early age of 34 at Westbourne Park, London in 1857. Published in 1856 his *Hours with the Mystics* ran into several editions and until the publication of Inge's *Christian Mysticism* and Underhill's *Mysticism* remained a key influence on further thought on the subject in English speaking countries. See *Essays and Remains,* 1, ix -cxiv

[29] See King 1999:121

literature' should 'begin by forgetting all that has been written on the subject, by ancients and moderns, before the publication of the *Gita*'(Jones 1799:1:363).

Vaughan asserts that *mysticism* has its roots in this Indian *archē*, but:

> Mysticism, then, is born armed completely with its worst extravagances. An innocent childhood it never had; for in its very cradle this Hercules destroys, as deadly serpents, Reason and Morality. For the mystical adept of Hindooism the distinction between good and evil is obliterated as often as he pleases. (HM: 52).

Mysticism, then, for Vaughan is not only born in 'the East' but is born corrupt and perverted. 'Western mysticism', on the other hand, 'checked by many better influences, has rarely made so patent the inherent evil even of its most mischievous forms' (HM: 53). Mysticism in the West is bad, but not as bad as that of the East: 'the European, mystic though he be, will occasionally pause to qualify, and is often willing to allow some scope to facts and principles alien or hostile to a favourite idea'.

Vaughan's mystical ontology is however quite sophisticated. Rather than seeing it as a 'ready made commodity' which is transmitted from one generation to another, he prefers to see it as 'a state of thinking and feeling, to which minds of a certain temperament are liable at any time or place, in occident and orient, whether Romanist or Protestant, Jew, Turk, or Infidel'(HM: 54). A state of thinking which is diseased and not a little perverted: 'though conditioned by circumstance or education, its appearance is ever the spontaneous product of a certain crisis in individual or social history'(a theme which recurs in all our four authors – see James above). In Indian mysticism we find the 'set of features' that 'we repeatedly encounter… through the history of mysticism':

> The same round of notions, occurring to minds of similar make under similar circumstances, is common to mystics in ancient India and in modern Christendom. The development of these fundamental ideas is naturally more elevated and benign under the influence of Christianity. (HM:54)

So, although it is not a commodity, it is more a cluster of 'fundamental ideas' that keeps recurring. Although negative in his understanding of *mysticism*, Vaughan wants to reduce it to a set of essential propositions which he gives as follows:

1. Mysticism 'lays claim to disinterested love as opposed to mercenary religion'.
2. It 'reacts against ceremonial prescription and pedantic literalism of the Vedas.' On this point see above, although, rather than seeing the mystics as worthy reformers he comments tartly 'in some hands such doctrine might rise above the popular morality; in most it would be so interpreted as to sink below even that ignoble standard' (55).
3. It 'identifies, in its pantheism, subject and object, worshipper and worshipped.'
4. 'Aims at ultimate absorption in the Infinite'. Out of this idea for Vaughan arises 'the monastic asceticism, inertia, trance'
5. Mysticism ' inculcates, as the way to this dissolution, absolute passivity, withdrawal into the inmost self, cessation of all the powers.' He gives this power especially to 'the Yogis', likewise ' the monks of Mount Athos, whose mysticism was also of this degraded type, substituted, as a gazing point, the navel for the nose.'(HM: 57). Here he compares certain of these degenerate 'Hindoo practices' with similar ones to be found in the writings of Teresa of Avila.
In the case of the Hindus 'stupefying drugs were doubtless employed to assist in inducing this state of insensibility'.
6. 'Believes that eternity may thus be realized in time'
7. 'Has its mythical miraculous pretentions'. Commenting on the similarity of these states to those of the Rhineland mystics Vaughan states: ' the dregs and refuse of mysticism along the Rhine are equal in quality to its most ambitious produce on the banks of the Ganges.'(HM: 59).
8. ' And, finally, advises the learner in this kind of religion to submit himself implicitly to a spiritual guide – his Guru.' Here Vaughan associates the 'Hindoo Guru' with 'the Pir of the Sufis, the Confessor of the Middle Age and the Directeur of modern France.'(HM:59)

Finally, in comparing the approach of the 'Hindoos' with that of German idealism he concludes: 'The idealism of the Oriental is dreamy and passive; it dissolves his individuality; it makes him a particle, wrought now into this, now into that, in the ever-shifting phantasmagoria of the universe'(HM: 60).

For Vaughan, then, the corruption of the passive quietude of mysticism runs throughout human history and at all times and places it reveals the same objects. It is to be feared and rejected. Unlike the other two writers Vaughan does not advocate a specific *Christian mysticism*, for him, *mysticism* is universal, eclectic and perennialist (if always corrupting) and in his analysis it can manifest itself at any time or at any place:

> Mysticism has generally apprehended religion rather on its divine than on its human side. It makes haste to lose humanity, and to be glorified. Grievous afflictions have reminded some of the mystical aspirants that they were human still. The spiritual pride of others has betrayed them, first to ostentatious sanctity, and then to shameful sin. (HM:353)

Although he states at the beginning that he sees *mysticism* as a collection of ideas rather than an ontological reality, the impression left at the end of the text *is* a perception of *mysticism* as a malign *thing* or *influence* that enters and corrupts all religions. Eastern religions, by their supposed inferior nature, are more susceptible to this infection and at various times in the history of Christianity, weaker, decadent or corrupt versions of Christianity have likewise fallen victim to this plague: 'Romish' Catholicism and Orthodoxy, particularly so. It seems only a thorough-going Protestantism (or congregationalism) will protect us from this infection. 'The best of the Romish mystics' he declares, 'are questionable Romanists' (355), 'Tauler and Madame Guyon were more protestant than they were aware.' Yet, as mentioned above, there is ambiguity in Vaughan's text and it is sometimes difficult to pin down his real thoughts on the subject. He concludes by stating:

> Mysticism has generally apprehended religion rather on its divine than on its human side. It makes haste to lose humanity, and to be glorified. Grievous

afflictions have reminded some of the mystical aspirants that they were human still. The spiritual pride of others has betrayed them, first to ostentatious sanctity, and then to shameful sin…

The history of mysticism shows us, further, that the attempt to escape all figure or symbol, in our apprehensions of divine truth, is useless, or worse than useless. (HM: 353)

From the perspective of this thesis Vaughan's study illuminates two key themes:

1. We see in his writing, at a relatively early stage, the evolution of a *perennialist mysticism* clearly influenced by mid-Victorian colonial encounters. Quite apart from biographical details of Vaughan's life referred to above (and manifest in his *India in 1857: Historical Parallels* in Vaughan [1858 2:306-310]), the text of *Hours with the Mystics* contains references to encounters with colonial administrators in train carriages trundling through the British countryside. From the sketchy reports of early Orientalists, Vaughan uses the narratives of Hindoos, Buddhists and Mohammedans to advance his theories. This *mysticism* has an ontological nature independent of all the forms it takes in different religions.
2. Although Vaughan does not advocate a distinctive *Christian mysticism*, his study lays the groundwork for such claims from Inge and Underhill. In seeing the *mystical* as an element in religion he comes closer to von Hügel's analysis of the role of mysticism.

As stated above, the interest of his analysis is in showing the formation of *mysticism* as a modern category and the role of colonial interaction in producing it. The psychologisms of James are not to be found here, but the other three elements we would characterise as essential elements of modern mysticism, vis: essentialism, perennialism and orientalism, are and will influence later writers in their approaches.

2.3.2 Inge and the Creation of *Modern (Christian) Mysticism*

Inge's Bampton Lectures of 1899, delivered to Oxford University, took 'Christian Mysticism' as their theme and in their published form (*Christian Mysticism,* 1899, hereafter CM), like Vaughan's *Hours*, would go on to influence much discussion of *mysticism* in the subsequent generation.[30] From the point of view of this review his writing marks a mid-way transition between the orientalist/perennialist (and largely negative) perspective of Vaughan and the psychologism of the James-influenced Underhill. Inge's work can be seen an attempt to take a more positive view of the category introduced by Vaughan and perhaps baptise it into something more 'eminently manly and sane' (CM: 305).

In the forty years since Vaughan's text 'Christian Mysticism' seems to have come of age. Inge talks of 'Christian Mysticism' as an unquestionable entity whose ontological substance is not doubted. Although he admits his historical presentation of the theme is tempered by 'apologetic' considerations (these were, afterall, sermons to be delivered from the University pulpit), he nevertheless is in no doubt that there is such a thing as 'Christian Mysticism' whose development can be traced chronologically through the history of Western Christianity. His Platonic background clearly influences his view but he also acknowledges contributions from scholars working in diverse areas of 'mystical scholarship', notably the 'German mystics' and Julian of Norwich, demonstrating how mystical scholarship was already well developed in Britain at the time.

Let us return to our points of analysis above to see how they appear in Inge's text. From a fringe element or aspect of Christianity, *Christian Mysticism* has become for Inge a clear ontological category whose methods and origins can be traced. His *mysticism* 'has its origin in that which is the raw material of all religion, and perhaps of all philosophy

---

[30] Born in 1860, William Ralph Inge taught classics at Oxford from 1888 to 1905 where he was ordained priest in 1892. After some time in parish life he became Lady Margaret professor of divinity at Cambridge in 1907 where he continued his studies into the neo-Platonists, esp Plotinus and the English Platonic tradition. In 1911 Prime Minister Asquith made him Dean of St Paul's in the hope of reviving the literary eminence of the cathedral. Through his published essays and weekly column in the *Evening Standard* he disseminated his views on a variety of topics to a wide public audience. His rather right wing views on state provision of health care for 'sub-men', bursaries for the children of working class families to enter higher education and his ambivalence to Nazism (especially its race theories) made him a controversial figure. He died in Brightwell Manor, Wallingford in 1954. See Fox (1960), Grimley (2004)

and art as well, namely, that dim consciousness of the *beyond*, which is part of our nature as human beings' (CM:5). Inge's understanding of 'all religion' is of a transcendent/immanent variety so that his definition of mysticism: 'our consciousness of the beyond', immediately privileges those religions which emphasise such categories. He also defines it as a quickening or 'reforming principle' that animates 'religious deadness'.[31] Inge, however, is more concerned with promoting a *Christian Mysticism* than any type of perennialist category. His *Christian Mysticism* is based on the Gospel of St John and is the 'foster child of Platonic idealism' (CM: 78): 'The Gospel of St John... is the charter of Christian Mysticism. Indeed, Christian Mysticism, as I understand it, might almost be called Johannine Christianity' (CM: 44). From its gospel roots this mysticism is nurtured by Platonism and Neo-Platonism to reach maturity. This pure Johannine-Platonic (ie. 'Western' mysticism), is (as we saw in Vaughan above) 'corrupted' by influences from Asia. This 'Asiatic leaven' which was 'mixed with Alexandrian thought' in the early church brought unhealthy emphases on 'psychical phenomena, whether ecstasy or kindred states', finally being passed into 'Catholicism' (CM:15). Here we see the process described above, vis: the privileging of an extracted 'essence' of mysticism, in this case a Johannine-Platonic form, which then stands in contrast to the contemporary debased forms of mysticisms in arenas such as Roman Catholicism ('the debased supernaturalism which usurps the name of Mysticism in Roman Catholic countries' [CM: viii]) or 'dabblers in occultism'(ix).

In his third lecture on 'Christian Platonism and Speculative Mysticism' he speculates on the origin of this Asiatic 'leaven'. In Syria as in Alexandria, Inge finds 'rampant Orientalism' (CM:101) and it is not long before Inge reveals the origins of these perverse speculations in 'the ancient religion of the Brahmins, masquerading in clothes borrowed from Jewish allegorists, half-Christian Gnostics, Manicheans, Platonising Christians and pagan Neoplatonists' (CM:104).

As suggested with Vaughan, the infections from the more archaic East reach the West. Supporting his claims he mentions 'a native Indian judge' who summarises what Inge takes to be Buddhist beliefs in Nirvana/Vedanta. For Inge, from this Asiatic root

---

[31] Rowan Williams, as we shall see below, adopts a not dissimilar attitude to mysticism to this (see Williams 1991: 143 –171)

comes the *via negativa* of Western mysticism: 'I regard the *via negativa* in metaphysics, religion and ethics as the great accident of Christian Mysticism' spreading from 'Asiatic mysticism' which is ' the natural refuge of men who have lost faith in civilisation' (CM: 115). To support his views on the influence of Pantheism from Eastern sources Inge quotes Vaughan:

> Here again we must go to India for a perfect example. "The learned behold God alike in the reverend Brahmin, in the ox and in the elephant, in the dog and in him who eateth the flesh of dogs". (CM:118)

Of course, 'none of the writers with whom we have to deal can fairly be charged with this error, which is subversive of the very foundations of true religion'. Even Emerson, he suggests (like Eckhart and Plato) does not go this far.

Throughout Inge's text there is a tension between an understanding of *mysticism* that is 'eminently manly and sane' (CM:305) and a debased, degenerate or decadent form, the former receiving different names throughout the lectures. At some times it is the Johannine/Platonic mysticism of Christianity, at others the 'contemplative mysticism' of latter day poets such as Wordsworth and Browning. The latter, on the other hand, being identified with the negative and quietist elements of 'Asiatic mysticism', the 'deplorably barbarous practices of the Eastern Church' (CM:125), the 'debased supernaturalism' of the Roman Catholic Church (CM:viii) or various occult, theosophical or 'kabbalistic' practices in recent centuries (CM:273, 299). It is the argument of this dissertation that such distinctions are doomed to failure. Why so? The main reasons can be summarised thus:

1. As a nineteenth century construction, the category of *mysticism* as a distinctive category is itself suspect. As we have seen, a large part of its nature derives from orientalist conceptions of non-Christian faiths (which inevitably retain the categories of Christianity) and it has an inherently *perennialist* structure.

2. As a reaction to the eclectic and perennialist nature of this *mysticism*, we see writers such as Inge (and later Underhill), trying to create a distinctive *Christian Mysticism* with the features outlined above and given essentialist claims.

3. Allied with its perennialist metaphysic *Modern Christian Mysticism* has an uneasy relationship with experientialist/empiricist approaches. It incorporates them where they support its assumptions, but is wary of their perennialist implications.

Inge's aim in the Bampton lectures was to develop a manly, English, Christian mysticism which would feel at home within the Church of England, a church, he believed (like many of his contemporaries) to be uniquely suited to fostering this element – a 'sound and sober mysticism' as found in St John and St Paul, an apologetic that assigns this 'special work to the Church of England... which shall be both Catholic and Evangelical without being either Roman or Protestant'(CM:275).

Although Inge believed he was merely reiterating an ancient truth of mysticism (what we can call a 'Golden Thread' view of mysticism), we have argued here how, in the footsteps of Vaughan, Inge was in fact developing a unique and new intellectual conception – the notion of *modern mysticism*. Which, as in Vaughan's account has a concomitant essentialism, orientalism and perennialism. Unlike Vaughan, Inge was concerned to develop a unique, and somehow higher or purer form of *Christian mysticism* (his 'Johannine- Platonic' belief). However, we have argued that such a *Christian mysticism*, stripped of all orientalist and perennialist elements, is impossible to achieve, as Inge's *Christian mysticism* is the sister of the nineteenth century *Modern mysticism* whose developments we are tracing here, and inextricably shares its orientalism, perennialism and essentialism.

2.3.3. Evelyn Underhill and the Struggle to Create *Christian Mysticism*

We will conclude this survey of what have been classed as the 'Creators of Modern Mysticism' with one of the most influential in promulgating the notion of 'Modern Mysticism': Evelyn Underhill.

As an avid reader of Inge (as well as being acquainted with Vaughan), it was inevitable that Underhill would continue Inge's task to create a unique *Christian Mysticism*. Her *magnum opus* of 1910, *Mysticism* (Underhill 1910, hereafter UM),[32] contains the tensions of Inge with perhaps an added urgency following Underhill's felt need to reconcile her own perennialist tendencies with her increasing belief in Christian doctrine. Unlike Vaughan and Inge, however, she is approaching the subject after James's *Varieties*, so that in many ways her book presents the fullest exposition of *modern mysticism* melding the insights of fifty years of British historico-theological (colonial) reflection with the more recent psychological insights of the American school.

Before investigating Underhill's account it is worth recounting some of the circumstances that led to her ambiguous relationship to the perennialist element of *mysticism* that formed that account. Charles Williams records in his Introduction to her letters that in 1904 she 'joined an occult companionship known as the Order of the G.D., and belonged to it for some years. She was not yet impressed by the person of our Lord' (Underhill 1943:12). Armstrong (1975:36) provides us with further evidence of her involvement with the Order of the Golden Dawn through the evidence of two letters from her to Arthur Waite concerning her membership of the order and written in 1905. We cannot be clear about how long she was involved with the order or what her involvement was, although her letters show that she had been initiated into the '3=8 degree', a lower level of the Order. Her initiations requiring knowledge of Hebrew, 'astrology and fortune telling' and she was given the occult name of *Soror Quaerens Lucem* – lit. 'Sister who

---

[32] Born in 1875 in Wolverhampton to a comfortably off family, Evelyn Underhill was taught at home, Sandgate House, Folkestone and Kings College London 'ladies department' in Kensington Square. She read extensively herself and always had an enquiring nature. She married Hubert Stuart Moore in 1907 and spent the rest of her life in London writing and researching, especially on the subject of mysticism. She died in Hampstead in 1941. See Greene (1988, 1991, 2004), Cropper (1958), Armstrong (1975),Underhill (1943)

Seeks Enlightenment'.[33] Underhill herself writes of her experiences in her *A Defence of Magic* in the Fortnightly Review of 1907 (hereafter DM). Between this article and the completion of *Mysticism* in 1910 there lies just three years, yet in that time Underhill's views evolve again, influenced by conversations with von Hügel and R. H. Benson, as

---

[33] As all commentators recognise, it is difficult to get exact details about the nature of the 'Order of the Golden Dawn' and its proceedings. However recent scholarship has given us more insight into its workings. Central to its formation seems to be W Wynn Westcott, born in 1848, he qualified as a medical doctor in 1871 and became a Freemason in Martock, Somerset in 1872. In 1880 he moved to London and in 1892 was made Supreme Magus of the Rosicrucians (see Gilbert 1983:26). The Rosicrucians seem to have separated from the Freemasons sometime in the fifteenth/sixteenth century and developed their own branch of esotericism, with occasional cross-overs with mainstream Masonry. Westcott states in his *The Rosicrucian Society of England* (1915) that the 'Societas Rosicrucias' was founded in East Anglia in 1865 with rules stating that ' no aspirant shall be admitted into the Society unless he be a Master Mason... he must be a believer in the fundamental principles of the Christian doctrine, a true philanthropist and a loyal subject.' From its beginnings not only was a connection with Christianity acceptable but positively encouraged. He seems to have founded the 'Society of the Golden Dawn' around 1887 after his move to London. Thus we find him writing in the February 1889 issue of 'Light' the following response to an enquiry:

> 'The Order of mystics which gave Eliphaz Lévi (Abbé Constant) his occult knowledge and of which Johann Falk was at one time the Lecturer on the Kabbalah in London, is still at work in England. It is not a Masonic order and there is no distinction between men and women students. The greatest privacy is maintained, and some knowledge of Hebrew is essential, but the whole course of study and experience is so abstruse and complex that the membership is very limited as to numbers, and the proceedings have no public interest. Its true name is only told to initiates, and the few outsiders who have heard of its existence only know the society as 'The Hermetic Students of the GD''(Gilbert 1983: 25)

It is interesting to note the use of *mystic* in this context, still retaining that eighteenth/early nineteenth century perennialist aura and seeing Christian mysticism as part of that perennialist tradition.

By March 1890 the 'Isis-Urania' Temple of London had 55 members, 'Osiris' at Weston-super-Mare had 8 (surely part of Westcott's old Somerset connections) and 'Horus' at Bradford 13. There were 10 grades or orders to the Society based on the 10 sephiroth or Emanations of the Kabbalah. Underhill's references to her Hebrew examinations seem to have been a central part of this very Kabbalistic society.

After 1891 various initiation ceremonies were introduced to the Order by Mathers including in the 'Adeptus Minor Ritual' a symbolic crucifixtion of the candidate. (Waite 1938:161), it was also at this time that many Egyptian elements were introduced into the ritual. By 1900 various schisms and fracas were splitting the society culminating on 17th April 1900 with a fracas at 36 Blythe Rd, Hammersmith over who had rights to the premises, involving Mathers, W. B. Yeats and Aleister Crowley dressed in 'highland dress, a black mask over his face, and plaid thrown over his head and shoulders, an enormous gold or gilt cross on his breast and a dagger at his side' (Gilbert 1983: 68). Other scandals would hit the various branches, including the abuse and rape of young girls, although it appears that Underhill's chapter under A.E. Waite was not involved with this. However, all the groups retained interest in Kabbalah, Alchemy, Tarot, Psychic Work and Fortune Telling

Waite's group continued to meet from 1903 in Mark Mason's Hall, Great Queen St and Staple Inn, London and these were presumably the meetings Underhill attended. His group not only included Underhill but Algernon Blackwood ('Umbra Fugat Veritas'), a well know playwright, who is perhaps best known today for his play *A Prisoner in Fairyland* set to music by Sir Edward Elgar during the First World War in his *Starlight Express*.

Gilbert records that the last Temple of 'Hermes' in Bristol seems to have closed in 1972 and he writes 'my own efforts to find it went no further than an accommodation address in the Balls Pond Rd.'(1983:79)

well as her own 'mystical experience' during a visit to a convent in Southampton in January 1907. She describes the occurrence in a letter to Mrs Meyrick Heath in 1911:

> The day after I came away (Feast of Purification) a good deal shaken but unconvinced, I was converted quite suddenly, once and for all by an overpowering vision which had no specifically Christian elements, but convinced me that the Catholic religion was true. (Underhill 1943:125)

Accordingly, her account of 'magic' in *Mysticism* takes up the themes of the previous article and embellishes them with this new *Christian* perspective. Within these two accounts the tension inherent in Underhill's project (and the project of creating *modern mysticism*) is at its strongest.

What is most striking on looking at the text of *Mysticism* is how many of Underhill's earlier ideas in *Defence of* Magic survive in the later text. It is as though Underhill does not want to leave the perennialist insights she has gained from her induction into the esoteric societies. Thus in *Mysticism* we find this passage:

> In magic, whether regarded as a superstition or a science, we have at any rate the survival of a great and ancient tradition, the true meaning of whose title should hardly have been lost in a Christian country; for it claims to be the science of those Magi whose quest of the symbolic Blazing Star brought them once, at least, to the cradle of the Incarnate God (UM: 152).

Which almost exactly reproduces a similar passage in the *Defence*:

> Yet the real significance of these words should hardly be lost in a Christian country; for Magic is the science of those Magi whose quest of the symbolic Blazing Star brought them to the cradle of the Incarnate God. (DM:754).

In both texts Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy, is seen as the natural inheritor of the 'magic tradition'. Thus, in the *Defence* we find:

> Christianity, heir of all wisdom and truth, is also heir of the Magi... all persons who are naturally drawn towards ceremonial religion are in this respect really devotees of Magic. Sacraments, however simple their beginnings, tend, as they evolve, to assume a magical aspect. Those who observe with understanding, for instance, the Roman rite of baptism, with its spells and exorcisms, its truly hermetic employment of salt, anointing chrism, and ceremonial lights, must see in it a ceremony nearer to the beneficent operations of white magic, than to the simple lustrations practised by Saint John of the Baptist. (DM: 764)

This inextricable linking of the two 'traditions', especially in the sphere of sacramentology, is carried over intact into the later text, with some added qualification. In the earlier texts Lévi's views were reported and accepted without much criticism, here Lévi becomes 'certainly heretical' and his statement that 'the Christian Church was also the heir of the magi' is qualified (UM:163) before Underhill returns to her earlier position:

> Religion, as we have seen, can never entirely divorce herself from magic: for her rituals and sacraments must have, if they are to be successful in their appeal to the mind, a certain magical character. (UM:163)

Thus, although magic and Christianity are conflated, and Underhill wants to retain the dissolution of boundaries between the two ('we seem to stand on the very borderland between magician and priest' UM:163, DM:764) so clearly adopted in the *Defence*, by the time she writes *Mysticism* she appears to need to appease the demands of orthodoxy (perceived or real) by condemning the same statements. The result, as pointed out, can often be quite schizophrenic:

> Hence in every period of true mystical activity we find an outbreak of occultism, illuminism, or other perverted spirituality and – even more dangerous and

> confusing for the student – a borderland region where the mystical and psychical meet. (UM:149)

Her response to the seeming 'dissolution of boundary' is to reinforce the character of 'true' or 'genuine' mysticism, which of course is more or less *de facto* identified with 'Christian mysticism' – the process described above. In such passages the making of *modern Christian mysticism* is clearly revealed (with a great debt here to Inge):

> In the youth of the Christian Church, side by side with genuine mysticism descending from the Johannine writings or brought in by the Christian Neoplatonists, we have the arrogant and disorderly transcendentalism of the Gnostics: their attempted fusion of the ideals of mysticism and magic. During the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance there are the spurious mysticism of the Brethren of the Free Spirit, the occult propaganda of Paracelsus, the Rosicrucians, the Christian Kabalists; and the innumerable pantheistic, Manichean, mystery-making, and Quietist heresies which made war upon Catholic tradition. (UM:149)

This attempt to define 'true/genuine' mysticism in contradistinction to 'spurious/perverted' mysticism is one of the key characteristics of *Mysticism*. The ambiguity of the text (presumably reflecting Underhill's own ambiguity, which judging from her background is not surprising) and, we argue, the category itself, means this project is already compromised following our observations on Inge above.

In addition to her struggles with perennialism Underhill has the added challenge of responding to James's *Varieties*. In Chapter Four, *The Characteristics of Mysticism*, Underhill suggests James's 'four marks of mysticism' 'will fail to satisfy us' (UM:81) and aims to present 'four other rules', however her 'rules' still remain deeply Jamesian. Thus, Rule Two: 'Its aims are wholly transcendental and spiritual. It is no way concerned with adding to, exploring, re-arranging or improving anything in the visible universe' (UM:81) accords very well with James's view as stated above.

Summarising her attitude to James, Kripal suggests:

> One fruitful way to understand Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism* is to read it as a transitional or ambivalent text struggling, never quite successfully, to reconcile these traditional and psychological, these premodern and modern framings of 'mysticism'... (her) answer in *Mysticism* is clearly a double, if not duplicitous yes... it seems that she wanted to psychologize mysticism, but not too much.
> (Kripal 2001:34)

As he points out she had 'done her homework' and in the text there are references to most of the founding fathers of the early French and American schools of psychology: in addition to William James there are references to James Leuba, Edwin Starbuck, James Bissett Pratt, Morton Prince, Pierre Janet, Henri Delacroix, Richard Bucke and Henri Bremond (although, interestingly, only one reference to Freud, see Kripal 2001:53, Cropper 1958 :114).

Like James, she subscribes to the view that the 'mystics' constitute a breed set apart with special 'psychological' characteristics. Their radio sets, as it were, are constructed in such a way that they can tune into the 'mystical experiences' from the beyond more easily, the 'mental apparatus' she talks about in chapter three which can 'escape from the prison of the sense-world, transcend its rhythm and attain knowledge of – or conscious contact with – a supra-sensible Reality' (UM:44). Underhill, however, differs from James in two important respects:

First, she wants to link the two realms of the 'immanent' and 'transcendent' with the emerging categories of the conscious and unconscious/subconscious. In this respect she anticipates the work of the later Jung and post-Jungians. The instability of her categories does not detract from the originality of this move.

Her second chief distinction from James is the emphasis on *love* rather than *knowledge*. This takes us to the heart of Underhill's programme. As Armstrong puts it in his biography of Underhill:

In fact Evelyn Underhill's greatest book is distinguished by the very qualities which make it inappropriate as a straightforward textbook or *vade-mecum* to anything connected with mysticism. This is why it will probably continue to be read after numerous so-called objective or scientific treatments of its subject have long been replaced and mouldered into oblivion. The spirit of *Mysticism* may be summed up by saying that it is romantic and engaged rather than dispassionate and objective, empirical rather than theoretical, actual rather than historical.

(Armstrong 1975: 109)

Or, as Underhill puts it in her Third Rule: 'the business and method of Mysticism is love... it is the eager, outgoing activity whose driving power is generous love, not the absorbent, indrawing activity which strives only for new knowledge' (UM:85).

2.3.4 Summary: The Creation of *Modern Mysticism*

The *Modern Mysticism* of our three British authors can therefore be seen as an interpretative tool that arises, as we have seen, from specific late colonial and European circumstances, especially in its *orientalist, perennialist and essentialist* elements.
The authors describe it with the following characteristics:

1. The key narrative for this mystical hermeneutic is historical. The authors want to stress the 'unbroken thread' that links Gospel and early Christian texts with the present day. Again, each varies as to the emphasis they take. Inge, for example privileges the 'Johannine corpus' and wants to suggest that the mystical strand arises from here. We can characterise this as the 'golden thread' view of mysticism, ie. an unbroken thread that leads directly from apostolic and post-apostolic times, through the middle ages, reformation and enlightenment to the present day.

2. Through the lens of the Dionysian corpus all four authors agree on the Platonic and neo-Platonic structure that underlies the Western mystical tradition. Inge, for example, calls Plato the 'the father of European mysticism' (1899:78) and this idea would reach

broad agreement from the others. As well as Dionysios, the neo-Platonists Plotinus and Philo are given due credit for their influence.[34]

3. Experientialism such as James's is accepted without much critique. The role of ecstasies, locutions and other 'supernatural' phenomena are seen by most of the authors as aspects of the Christian mystical path. Again, they vary as to the significance and role they play. Inge, in particular, is very suspicious and tends to associate them with 'Romish' understandings of mysticism.

4. 'The mystic' is seen as a genuinely different and 'other' person. For James they are the 'disturbed genius', for Underhill and Inge they are able to 'tune into' the sublime waves of the infinite. Either way it makes sense to talk of people as 'mystics' with special characteristics.

Our authors, then, in their struggle to distinguish a specifically *Christian* mysticism in contradistinction to the eclectic/perennialist/essentialist milieu within which they find themselves create an interpretative standpoint – what we call here *Modern Mysticism* – which has these distinctive qualities:

1. It has an ontological nature, it is **essentialist** in that its origins and development can be traced throughout history as a distinct category of human experience which reaches its culmination in Christianity.
2. It relates to **perennialist** assumptions as found in much of James and nineteenth views of *mysticism*. The perennialism goes with a certain degree of eclecticism
3. Like James, our three authors stress the importance of **mystical experience** in their approaches. Although they are not as overtly psychologistic as James (except Underhill, who here shows her reliance on James) they share his emphasis on the importance of the discrete mystical experience as carrier of much that is of importance in the tradition.

---

[34] See also Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (1918) and *The Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought* (1926). For an extended discussion of the role of Plato in the 'mystical tradition' see Turner

4. Perhaps more so than James, they reveal a stronger **orientalist** element to their hermeneutic of mysticism. This can either be viewed positively (Underhill) or negatively (Vaughan).

Having traced the origins of *modern mysticism,* concentrating on its evolution in the English-speaking, Christian context, we shall now move now to the contemporary debate beginning with the constructivist critique of the nineteen seventies. In doing this it is apparent that we are passing over many twentieth century writers on mysticism, not least Otto, Butler, von Hügel, Heiler and Stace.[35] However, the scope and limit of this thesis prevents it from covering each in depth. Rather, we have tried to demonstrate how the four authors covered in this chapter develop a way of looking at *the mystical* which is typical of what we term the view of *Modern Mysticism*. This thesis also maintains that until the constructivist challenge of the nineteen seventies such an approach underlay much of what the other twentieth century authors imported into their approach to the subject,[36] namely, its essentialism, perennialism, orientalism and experientialism, and it is to the critique of these four elements of *modern mysticism* that we turn to next.[37]

2.4 The Contemporary Academic Critique of *Modern Mysticism*

The publication of the collected essays edited by Stephen Katz, *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* in 1978 marks a convenient starting point to summarise the contemporary scholarship on *mysticism*. The authors of the essays in this volume, and the subsequent *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, (Katz 1983) and *Mysticism and Language* (Katz 1992), especially Katz and Robert Gimello, began the process of challenging the notion of *mysticism* as a cross-credal entity based on the epistemological assumption of a 'pure' unmediated or uninterpreted experience. For this group,

---

(1995)

[35] See, for example, Butler (1926), Heiler (1932), Otto (1957), Stace (1960) and von Hügel (1908)

[36] The obvious exception being von Hügel whose characterisation of the 'mystical'as an 'element' in religion would seem to avoid many of the criticisms developed against the essentialism of modern mysticism. However, as shall be argued in the following section, much of von Hügel's approach finds its ways into McGinn's analysis so the Baron's ideas can be discussed at that point.

[37] 'Modern Mysticism' is, of course, still alive and well in the academy despite constructivist challenges. We shall return to this later.

consequently called 'contextualists' or 'constructivists' all experience, including mystical experience, is contextually bound and only intelligible contextually.

As Gimello puts it:

> Mysticism is inextricably bound up with, dependent upon, and usually subservient to the deeper beliefs and values of the traditions, cultures and historical milieux which harbour it. As it is thus intricately and intimately related to those beliefs and values, so must it vary according to them. (Gimello 1983:63)

In his study he wants to move away from a more narrowly 'experientialist' view of mysticism to one that takes account of the historicity and contextual character of the 'mystical experience': ' the deep and formative connections between it and the systems of concept, practice, discourse and institution which produce and contain it'. (Gimello 1983: 85). His conclusion being that:

> Mystical experience is simply the psychosomatic enhancement of religious beliefs and values or of beliefs and values of other kinds which are held 'religiously'... mysticism has become fascinating to many of its students exactly because it has seemed to them to be an alternative to religion. It has come to be viewed as a repository of all that is best and still admirable in religion but one that is free from such no longer acceptable elements as dogma, authority, discipline, respect for tradition etc. (Gimello 1983:85)

Gimello's critique of the creation of *modern mysticism* assumes many of the points we have raised above. Thus he comments on the relative novelty of academic study of mysticism citing Underhill, Inge, Leuba Maréchal, Poulain, Otto, Von Hügel and Massignon as the key figures in its development,[38] the elitism we have noted in both Underhill and James and a suspicion of institutional religion. To these three factors we can add those mentioned above:

---

[38] See Gimello 1983:86 and Gimello 1990 cited in Herman 2000:99

1. The 'orientalist' element in the creation of modern mysticism and
2. The privileging of an extracted 'essence' of mysticism located primarily in authoritative texts.

From the constructivist critique it is then possible to de-construct the notion of 'mysticism' in a writer such as James. Taking him as an example, and many of the arguments employed here can equally used against Underhill, Vaughan and Inge, we can summarise reactions to his categories of 'mysticism' as follows:

1. Elitism within 'Modern Mysticism'

To contemporary eyes the elitism of James's texts seems rather striking. He is rather disparaging of the 'ordinary religious believer' whose 'religion has been made for him by others, communicated to him by tradition, determined to fixed forms by imitation and retained by habit'(James 1902:6). He calls this 'second-hand religious life' and feels the study of it would 'profit us little'. The unbalance such a perspective brings to his study would not be worth commenting on were it not for the fact that the investigation of religious phenomena within the psychology faculty still too often concentrates on the exotic and exceptional rather than the everyday thus skewing results and conclusions, as is the case with James.

2. Anti-institutionalism

As Lash points out (1988:56), James's contrast between personal religion and institutional religion is not incidental to his argument but essential to it, especially in his characterisations of 'first hand' and 'second hand' religion and his general theory of 'personal experience':

> Armed with the romantic image of the genius as one charged up with psychic energy from some strange source 'beyond' the public world of social institutions, James exaggerates the pattern setter's originality. Human creativity – whether

religious, scientific, or aesthetic – is never absolute. The pioneer is a *product* of the culture and traditions which he or she refashions, often (admittedly) in dramatic and unexpected ways. Without the tradition, the cultural and linguistic institutions, of the people of Israel, Jesus could not have had his 'personal' experience of the mystery he called Father, in the way that he had it, nor could Paul have had his 'personal' experience of the mystery of Christ. (Lash 1988:57)

James dislocation of personal 'experience' from context immediately creates problems.

3. Pure or Private Experience

As already mentioned, one of the major impacts of James's analysis was to enshrine the notion of 'religious experience' at the centre of subsequent debate about religious phenomena in general and *mysticism* in particular. Such an 'experientialist' stance has been criticised on many grounds. by many authors.[39]

The notion of 'pure' experience (religious or otherwise) divorced of all categories of culture, prior experience, tradition, structures, institutions and relationships is suspect. Lying behind the concept is a sense of 'experience', perhaps, as 'conscious mental going on' (Swinburne 1979:244) which betrays a Cartesian metaphysic with a disembodied 'I' experiencing specific sensations and 'experiences'. Lash suggests:

> For *human beings*, experience, at least in the vast majority of its forms, includes a great deal more than mental goings-on. For the Cartesian 'ego', on the other hand (which being itself not bodily, can only enjoy nonbodily or 'mental' experience), Swinburne's definition seems entirely appropriate: the little person inside the skull observes or notices its body's indigestion. (Lash 1988:92)[40]

The Cartesian model lies at the heart of all representational paradigms of cognition envisaging human knowledge as the inner, subjective representation of an 'outer' external

---

[39] See in particular Lash(1988), Turner (1995), Williams(1991), Ferrer (2002)

world (See Ferrer [2002], Rorty [1979] and the following chapter). As Ferrer points out, the model is particularly unsuited to the demands of transpersonal or spiritual perspectives where the distinction between knowing subject and known object are often collapsed:

> In other words, during transpersonal events, the subjective-objective structuration of phenomena suffers such drastic inversions that these categories lose their descriptive and explanatory value. In transpersonal phenomena, it became strikingly obvious, not only what is subjective can become objective, but also what is objective can become subjective. (Ferrer 2002:30)

As we shall see in Chapters Four, Seven and Eight below, this 'anti-Cartesian' critique of experientialism has many of its roots in Wittgenstein's approach to the self which we shall be exploring throughout the dissertation.

4. The Empirical Agenda

James's Cartesian base also implies an empiricist approach to religious phenomena – this is underpinned with a reductionist or positivist agenda which privileges the natural sciences as a methodological ideal for all other sciences (see von Wright 1971 and Sorell 1991). The problem with such an approach to the area of spiritual enquiry is that only the methods of the natural sciences may be applied (experimentation, replication, testing, verification, falsification etc.). The critiques of Habermas (1971) and Gadamer (1990) amongst others have revealed the damaging effects of importing such 'scientism' into all forms of enquiry. With reference to spiritual enquiry Rothberg (1994) comments:

> To interpret spiritual approaches through categories like 'data', 'evidence', 'verification', 'method', 'confirmation' and 'intersubjectivity' may be to enthrone these categories as somehow the hallmarks of knowledge as such, even if these

---

[40] We shall return to this argument when we review Kerr's systematic critique of the influence of Cartesian dualism on theology (Kerr 1986) in the following chapter.

categories are expanded in meaning from their current Western usage. But might not a profound encounter with practices of spiritual inquiry lead to considering carefully the meaning of other comparable categories (eg *dhyana, vichara, theoria, gnosis* or *contemplatio*) and perhaps to developing understandings of the inquiry in which such spiritual categories are primary or central when we speak of knowledge? To assume that the categories of current Western epistemology are adequate for interpreting spiritual approaches is to prejudge the results of such an encounter. (Rothberg 1994:8)

In Ferrer's words, to apply the scientific ways of verification, experimental evidence, replicability and falsifiability to spiritual phenomena 'may be equivalent to trying to test the flavor of a savory soup with a very rusty fork' (Ferrer 2002:58). Spiritual phenomena require other methodologies than the scientific for their elucidation, this is an underlying theme to this study and one we shall return to when we consider our 'Wittgensteinian methodology' in the following chapters.

5. Experientialism and the Apophatic

We shall turn to the apophatic in greater depth in Chapter Seven below. However, in the context of our critique of modern mysticism it is worth raising an issue presented by Turner (1995) and McIntosh (1998) amongst others. Simply put, even if we accept the existence of discrete verifiable 'religious experiences' it can be argued that many of the writers within the so-called 'mystical tradition' may well have cautioned against the cultivation of such experiences. Here, Turner in particular is warning us when we apply modernist (empiricist, Cartesian) categories to medieval texts, especially those with an apophatic bias:[41]

> Put very bluntly, the difference seemed to be this: that whereas our employment of the metaphors of 'inwardness' and 'ascent' appears to be tied in with the

[41] To give James his credit, he largely avoids the apophatic tradition and is more concerned with cataphatic events.

> achievement and the cultivation of a certain kind of experience – such as those recommended within the practice of what is called, nowadays, 'centring' or 'contemplative' prayer – the medieval employment of them was tied in with a 'critique' of such religious experiences and practices. (Turner 1995:4)

He concludes:

> Experientialism is, in short, the 'positivism' of Christian spirituality. It abhors the experiential vacuum of the apophatic, rushing to fill it with plenum of the psychologistic. It resists the deconstructions of the negative way, holding fast to supposititious experiences of the negative. It is happy with commendations of the 'interior' so long as it can cash them out in the currency of experienced inwardness and of the practices of prayer which will achieve it. (Turner 1995:259)

Although, it must be pointed out, there is an equal danger of reading a postmodern critique of experientialism back into the tradition as much as a 'modern mystic experientialism'. In this respect the approach of the Wittgensteinian methodology presented in this thesis aims to tread a 'middle way' between these two extremes.[42]

6. Supra-credal Essentialism of Modern Mysticism

One of the defining features of *Modern Mysticism*, as we have seen, is an understanding of 'mysticism' as a cross-credal category found in all religions and none. As James puts it: 'in Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note' (James 1902: 252). This *essentialism* which has become a central part of modern definitions of mysticism[43] has been comprehensively challenged by Stephen Katz in his 1978 essay *Language Epistemology and Mysticism* (Katz:1978). Katz identifies three forms of statement associated with this cross-credal mysticism:

---

[42] I am grateful to Philip Sheldrake for this observation

1) All mystical experiences are the same; even their descriptions reflect an underlying similarity which transcends cultural or religious diversity.
2) All mystical experiences are the same but the mystics' reports about their experiences are culturally bound. Thus they use the available symbols of their cultural-religious milieu to describe their experience.
3) All mystical experience can be divided into a small class of 'types' which cut across cultural boundaries. Though the language used by mystics to describe their experience is culturally bound, their experience is not. (Katz 1978:24).

Katz objects to these assumptions on several grounds. First, he disputes the idea that there are *pure* experiences of any type: 'that is to say, *all* experience is processed through, organized by, and makes itself available to us in extremely complex epistemological ways. The notion of unmediated experience seems, if not self-contradictory, at best empty... the experience itself as well as the form in which it is reported is shaped by concepts which the mystic brings to, and which shape, his experience' (1978:26).

Therefore, the Hindu will experience *Brahman*, the Buddhist *Nirvana* and the Christian *Unio Mystica* – all three of which are specific to their categories and context and cannot be interposed. He continues by criticising notions of 'common core' mysticism such as are found in the authors mentioned:

> What appear to be similar-sounding descriptions are not similar descriptions and do not indicate the same experience. Choosing descriptions of mystic experience out of their total context does not provide grounds for their comparability but rather severs all grounds of their intelligibility for it empties the chosen phrases, terms and descriptions of definite meaning. (Katz 1978:47)

The constructivist reaction to 'modern mysticism' as outlined here has produced varying counter-reactions which we now review before concluding this chapter.

---

[43] See, for example, Huxley (1946), Otto (1957), Suzuki (1957), Heiler (1932), Stace (1960) and Smart (1958, 1962, 1967, 1978)

2.5 The Current Debate

We have argued so far in this chapter for two 'movements' in contemporary academic understanding of 'the mystical', viz: 'modern mysticism' and 'constructivism'. To conclude this chapter we will now assess the impact of these two movements on the current debate using these two signifiers to highlight trends and currents in the present debate.

2.5.1 Reactions to Constructivism 1: The Decontextualist/Neo-Perennialist Position

Reaction to the constructivist critique has largely fallen into three categories: those who accept the constructivist critique and want to employ it in their work, those who reject it and those who seek a 'modified constructivism'. I shall take some representative figures from each group beginning with Robert Forman as a representative of what has been called the 'Neo-Perennialist Position'.

Forman's work presents a nuanced response to the constructivist challenge which can be characterised in two strategies (See Forman 1990, 1998):

1. The suggestion that some 'mystical experiences', especially those concerned with an experience of 'pure consciousness event' (PCE) or 'wakeful but objectless consciousness' (Forman 1998:7) are part of our 'fundamental human psychophysiological structure' (1998:27). This 'psychophysiological structure' is not created by culture but is part of our common heritage as human beings, it 'comes with the machinery of being human': 'I assume that a fourteenth century Dominican friar must have been aware and have tied together his own awareness through time just as I do, and also precisely the same way as did an eighth-century Korean.' (Forman 1998:27).

This awareness is always present to the human, it is the matrix within which all experience occurs – 'to be fully human is to be conscious, in all cultures' (1998:34). The position reflects the criticism of Turner's anti-experientialist mentioned above, ie. that the constructivist position in attempts to 'de-psychologise''modern mysticism' goes too far

the other way. Mysticism without any psychological categories at all risks becoming an abstract or dead theoretical concept. When we return to Wittgenstein in the following chapters we shall see how his approach allows for this psychological realism to remain whilst avoiding the weaker aspects of 'modern mysticism'.

2. The second point of commonality in his cross-cultural perspective is the perspective on the *means* to access this PCE. Different mystical traditions, at differing times and places, access this PCE by similar methods: 'one realizes consciousness unmixed with intentional content by means of a process of letting go, an emptying of self, a forgetting of language and sensation. Though the content that we 'forget' differs, the capability to forget is innate. Thus it is that the processes of coming to mysticism are so strikingly similar from era to era' (Forman 1998:34). The mystical process is primarily a *transformative* process whose key features, for Forman, are 'stripping or letting go of concepts, attachments, and pictures of one's self and others' – ' the process leading to mysticism is not like one of constructing images but more like a process of removing what we have 'seen' or 'constructed' until the subject persists alone' (11). As well as his cross-cultural consciousness, Forman therefore proposes a form of cross-credal deconstructivism.

Forman's critique presents a reassertion of the perennialist position, but one that reacts to the constructivist challenge of which parallels can be found in other authors. So then, rather than advocating mysticism as a 'cross credal entity' (*pace* Inge, Vaughan etc) he would rather make comparisons between similar 'mystical games or strategies'. His second point, which emphasises the *form* (or in Kripal's words, the *game*) of mysticism rather than its content is one that has been adopted by several recent commentators, as we shortly see. Rather than concerning themselves with the disputed ontological status of the mystical event they have concerned themselves with the strategies, linguistic or experiential, of the 'mystics'. The commentators vary as to the ontological content they want to import into this form.

The clear criticism of this first point is that he is only describing one 'type' of mysticism, that of emptying, negation (or in Christian terminology, *kenosis*) whereas

'mysticism' has traditionally encompassed many other forms and manifestations. When other decontextualists take up this point, for example, Evans, the result often seems close to the Jamesian positions outlined above. Thus, Evans (1989) challenging the neo-Kantian metaphysic of the constructivist position, proposes a movement from the restriction of 'conceptual and linguistic frameworks' to 'direct experience of spiritual entities' (1989:58), arguing for 'real spritual entities and real structures within a spiritual realm'. These 'real spiritual entities' seem to rely on a dualistic metaphysic that seems close to James's position above. The decontextualist position at such points seem to return to the Jamesian, experientialist position.

As Jantzen and McIntosh point out (Jantzen 1995:346, McIntosh 1998:137) such favouring of Forman's 'pure consciousness experience':

> Plays directly into the hands of modern bourgeois and gender assumptions. It keeps God (and women) safely out of politics and the public realm; it allows mysticism to flourish as a secret inner life, while those who nurture such an inner life can generally be counted on to prop up rather than to challenge the status quo of their workplaces, their gender roles and the political systems by which they are governed. (Jantzen 1995:346)

This is a theme developed by Carrette and King (Carrette and King 2005) in analysis of the contemporary 'quest for spirituality' as privatised experience. Lurking behind such notions is, as McIntosh states 'the premise of a theologically mute, self-transcending subject' (McIntosh 1998:138) – the disembodied 'ego' of the enlightenment rational self. Despite Forman's attempts to move into a neutral theoretical space to over-view 'mystical experiences' it seems we are still moving in the perennialist, soft enlightenment world of James *et al.* The neo-perennialist position may react to the constructivist critique but it still seems to harbour many 'modernist' assumptions that need to be addressed.

2.5.2. Reactions to Constructivism 2: The Historical-Theological approach.

Within the study of Christian mysticism one reaction to the constructivist challenge has been to return to the historical/theological matrix of what has been termed 'Christian mysticism'. Assuming our analysis of the origins of Modern (Christian) Mysticism above are correct, and that it does have an inherent essentialism, perennialism and experientialism, then there will accordingly be problems in taking this route. In reviewing the work of one of the foremost scholars of this area, Bernard McGinn, this inherent tension will become apparent.

McGinn clearly acknowledges a debt to von Hügel's differentiation of the 'mystical element' of religion (as opposed to the critical and institutional elements) and thereby it appears hopes to sidestep many of the ontological problems encountered in the employment of the modern term *mysticism*. Von Hügel's approach, which we can term 'historical-theological', did not concern itself with the ontological status of supposed 'mystical experiences' but only viewed the *mystical* in its pre-modern guise as an aspect (in the case of Christian mysticism) of a *particular* historical-theological-exegetical substratum. Such a view of Christian *mysticism* would see its unravelling at the dawn of the modern era under the processes described by de Certeau in the creation of *la mystique* (see 2.1 above). Likewise, Bernard McGinn's projected six volume series *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism* (McGinn 1991, 1994, 1998a, 2005) aims from its inception to be more than just a purely historical description of the course of development of medieval mysticism:

> Historical reconstruction, when well done, is more than mere description: it is always guided and informed by explanatory perspectives that are at least implicitly constructive. (McGinn 1991:xii)

He explicitly moves away from any experiential definition of mysticism *à la* James relying instead on the written evidence of the texts themselves:

> Mystical masterpieces, which are often close to poetry in the ways in which they concentrate and alter language to alter their ends, have all too often been treated like phone books or airline schedules, handy sources of confirming what we already expect. (McGinn 1991:xiv)

His plea is for a 'more nuanced understanding of the textually and theologically mediated nature of all Christian mysticism'. Yet, despite using the term 'Christian mysticism' McGinn does not really define what he means preferring to wait until the final volume of his series before committing himself. Yet he is clear that he is undertaking a 'theological account of the history of mysticism' (1998b:13) or a 'historical theology based upon classic texts' (1998b:18). What he terms his 'heuristic sketch' at the beginning of the *Foundations of Mysticism'* outlines his bases for evaluating a text/author as 'mystical':

Mysticism is a 'part or element of religion' (1991:xv).

Here McGinn clearly shows his debt to von Hügel:

> I will argue that there have been mystical elements present in the Christian religion from its origins but that the first great tradition of explicit mysticism cam to birth when a theory of mysticism first fully laid out by Origen in the third century found institutional embodiment in the new phenomenon of monasticism in the fourth century (1991: xvi).

However, although McGinn describes 'mysticism' as an 'element' his description does seem to imply a concrete ontological basis to mysticism as an 'entity' here.

2. Mysticism as a 'process or way of life':

'The essential note – or, better, goal - of mysticism may be conceived of as a particular kind of encounter between God and the human, between Infinite Spirit and the finite

human spirit' – a 'form of union with God, particularly a union of absorption or identity in which the individual personality is lost' (McGinn1991:xvi).

3. Mysticism as 'a direct consciousness of the presence of God'

Inspired here by Joseph Maréchal, he concludes his proposal for analysing 'the mystical' by stating:

> Thus we can say that the mystical element in Christianity is that part of its belief and practices that concerns the preparation for, the consciousness of, and the reaction to what can be described as the immediate or direct presence of God.

But once again it seems that the category of 'mysticism' in its modern ontological sense is shifted to 'presence'. Despite his anti-experientialist claims there is a strong element of the 'modern mystic ontology' in McGinn's methodology.

However, McGinn's approach also emphasises the comparability of mystical form - 'the series of verbal strategies in which language is used not so much informationally as transformationally, that is, not to convey a content but to assist the hearer or reader to hope for or to achieve the same consciousness' (xvii).The schema as presented seems to lean too heavily on an understanding of 'consciousness' that is far from clear. By psychologising the process in this way there is a tendency towards 'experientialism' which is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is ruled out by McGinn himself as suspect (1991: xvii).

McGinn's psychological model is of 'human consciousness' *mediated* 'both by the subject's previous history and by the mediations necessarily found in thought and speech' (xx). From the Wittgensteinian critique below we will find it necessary to question such forms of 'two level' psychologisation. His position leads to the statement: 'What the mystics are talking about is what lies 'between' these necessary mediations, if I may express it in this way'. This seems a puzzling statement and, we argue, creates unnecessary extra metaphysical layers to 'experience'.

In his review of McGinn, Simon Tugwell raises questions about imposing 'modern mysticism' on to medieval forebears (Tugwell 1993, 1996). McGinn's reply (McGinn 1998:17) gets to the heart of much of our present discussion on the nature of the hermeneutic or 'whether it is legitimate to employ contemporary terminology, at least in transposed fashion, to understand aspects of past eras which did not employ the terms in precisely the same ways as we do' (1998:17). Acknowledging the problems involved here (' "mysticism" is a modern word and may in some cases be laden with jargon') McGinn says that he will continue to employ the term 'mysticism' for the 'mystical element in Christianity'. Yet it seems that following our analysis above of the evolution of the modern term 'mysticism', McGinn (or anyone else for that matter) will run into trouble here. It has been demonstrated above that *mysticism* in its modern sense has *essentially* perennial, essentialist and usually experientialist (as well as empirical and possibly orientalist) under- and over-tones which *cannot* be excluded once the word is introduced. Sells makes a similar point in his review of McGinn (Sells:1993) noting how McGinn adopts the position of the early church fathers such as Clement and Irenaeus in relation to the 'heresy' of 'Gnosticism'. As Sells points out this disables a more nuanced approach to, for example, a comparison of the Nag Hammadi texts and the early church critics of Gnosticism. This programme of 'tidying up' the 'Christian mystical tradition' (we could say, inventing it) is one we have already encountered in Inge and Underhill[44]. McGinn's dilemma is the dilemma that confronts anyone who wants to discuss the 'mystical element of Christianity' (which, he argues, became 'explicit at the time of Origen and played a role in the history of Christianity for centuries') in ways that relate to the contemporary world and its common verbal coinage of 'mysticism' without importing some of the problems associated with 'modern mysticism' discussed in this chapter.

---

[44] As he is 'hard' on the Gnostics, so McGinn seems rather lenient to Augustine: 'It is difficult to conceive of Plotinus, or any other pagan mystic, describing a mystical vision that is at once communal and accessible to a soul not trained in philosophy, especially that of a woman' (McGinn 1993:234). As Sells points out: 'a Plotinian might point out that women had a role in Plotinus's school and that the Neoplatonic academy in Alexandria elected a woman, Hypatia, as its head – in institutional terms the rough equivalent to a woman being elected Bishop of Rome.' (Sells 1993:397)

2.5.3 Reactions to Constructivism 3: The Comparisons of Mystical 'Form'

Following on from Forman's suggestions this section explores how many recent commentators have emphasised the similarity of mystical device or strategy rather than ontology. The emphasis is on performance rather than ontology. As suggested above the writers vary as to the ontology they want to import into their discussions. As this will be closest to the strategy adopted in the rest of this study from our Wittgensteinian perspective we shall spend more time expounding this third position. A key presentation here is by Michael Sells in his 1994 study 'Mystical Languages of Unsaying' (Sells 1994) to which we shall return in Chapter Seven below.

Another contemporary who has helped develop this notion of mystical 'game, strategy or technique' is Jeffrey Kripal.[45] In a recent article Kripal refers to his approach to the subject as a 'mystical humanism' commenting that it is 'in effect a version of Schwab's integral humanism that brings together the worlds of Western critical theory and Asian mystical thought, on the one hand, and those of the Asian philosophical traditions and Western mystical thought, on the other hand' (Kripal 2004:487). He paints his scholarship on a wide canvas that incorporates both the Western and Eastern traditions (being both a scholar of Western and Hindu mysticism). Building on de Certeau's writings on *la mystique* (see 2.1 above) his position is close to Forman's in suggesting an underlying ontological basis to mysticism which is developed in culturally specific contexts, he calls this process 'comparative mystics', the purpose of which is 'to expose all doctrinal claims as historically and culturally relative expressions of a deeper mystery or ontological ground that nevertheless requires these relative expressions for its self-revelation'. In other words 'cultural differences and local knowledge are socially and politically important but not ontologically important, and that ontological ultimacy – which flourishes especially in subversive countercultures or mystical traditions – is the

---

[45] A key text I shall refer to here is Kripal's recent work *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom* (2001). In the text he takes five 'case histories': Evelyn Underhill, Louis Massignon, R.C.Zaehner, Agehananda Bharati and Elliot Wolfson as his subjects and teases out the role of each scholars engagement in the 'mystical hermeneutic' which shapes the ultimate form of their work:
'I hope to demonstrate that the phenomenon of mystical experience as it is encoded in the lives and works of historians of mysticism can best be thought of as an esoteric hermeneutical process intimately related to both the biographical patterns of the scholars' lives and their hermeneutical interactions with the texts, people and rituals they set out to study'. (2001:6)

level at which deep communication may be realizable'(2004:489). This process of mystical investigation takes place within the 'postmodern' context of the 'modern' insights of democracy, science, individualism, human rights, capitalism and globalism.

Again, like Forman (and Williams – see following section) he recognises the commonality in mystical technique between the traditions, but rather than 'deconstruction' he emphasises their 'subversive' elements vis-à-vis their respective religions: ' in short, I do not want to lose sight of the fact, so often forgotten, that many of these mystical traditions are *counter*cultures that have been persecuted, sometimes quite violently, by their own orthodox religious authorities'(2004:493).

Ontologically, his category of comparative mystics admits of the modern category of experience on the grounds that the constructivist case is itself overstated and flows from a relativist epistemology that is not shared by much of mystical literature. Rather than concentrating on the objects of study of the Western critical tradition he turns his gaze to the tradition itself, regarding that tradition in itself as a 'modern mystical tradition'. The scholars of religions, themselves, turn out to have often had 'profound experiences' reading and interpreting these texts which have consequently changed their lives (see in particular Kripal 2001):

> Given what is often personally, professionally, and religiously at stake in these events, it perhaps should not surprise us that such writers commonly hide these secret (*mustikos*) experiences from their peers and readers through a variety of rhetorical and esoteric strategies. Historians of religions, in other words, are often closet mystics, if we allow ourselves to redefine *mystic* in an untraditional – that is, modern – way. (Kripal 2001:508)

At this point the hermeneutical circle between the mystic writer – the interpreter and the reader begins to close :

> There is something genuinely mystical about the work of such scholars, for their interpretations and writings issue from a peculiar kind of 'hermeneutical union'. They do not so much process religious data as unite with sacred realities, whether

> in the imagination, the hidden depths of the soul, or the very fabric of their psychophysical selves. (2001:5)

In the words of Jorge Ferrer (2002), the study of mysticism itself becomes 'participatory' or transformative. We can not engage with the mystical texts as indifferent objective 'enlightenment' observers, by their very nature they draw us in and they 'read' us as much as we 'read' them. Kripal invokes 'the mystical texts themselves, for these are texts that invite us into their worlds, call us to take them seriously, and demand from us some honest answer to their claims about the most profound issues of life' (2001:xiii). This embodiment and affectivity within our engagement with the mystical is a central theme of our approach which we will expound in Chapter Eight.

For Kripal the texts engage in different 'rhetorics of secrecy' to hide or camouflage the 'already textualized 'experiences' of their authors in the movements of the texts' which then stimulate 'meaning events' in the readers of the text. With Don Cupitt (see below), he understands mysticism as a 'kind of writing' (Cupitt 1998:9) that is traditionally a 'very dangerous kind of writing that bypasses institutional channels of salvation and 'melts down' ontological assumptions and their attending psychological structures to produce a euphoric condition of religious happiness in the here and now' (2001:8).

This 'mystical hermeneutics' collapses past and present into a single textual process. We, the readers of the mystical text, are as much a part of the 'mystical event' as the writer or the original 'mystical experience' itself which inspired the writing. This fact is 'not a 'problem' to bemoan, a 'stain' to remove, or more bizarrely, an act of 'imperialism' to deny, but the very place of our hermeneutical union with these historical human beings an the best promise of our coming to some, always tentative, understanding of our shared humanity'(2001:302).

From the point of view of this study we shall see in the following chapters how our 'Wittgensteinian approach' also emphasises such a 'participatory turn' in our approach to the 'mystical text'.

One final point from Kripal's analysis that has influenced the discussion here is his isolation of the role of the *erotic* in the mystical tradition. Taking his cue from Freud

he reiterates the insight built upon by Foucault that ' the primary processes of the mind' are linked to 'the pleasure principle and its libidinal energies'. The category of the erotic, both in the writer and the reader is as essential as the perennial in realising the hermeneutical strategy.:

> I am thus arguing for an expansion of what we normally mean by the intellect, one as close (if by no means identical) to the Plotinian *nous eron* (literally, the desiring intellect) and medieval Christian understandings of love and knowledge (*amor ipse intellectus est*, 'love itself is knowledge') as to modern academic models of rationality, linear thought and objectivism. (Kripal 2001:12).

Therefore, by 'the erotic', Kripal means:

> A radical dialecticism between human sexuality and the possible ontological ground(s) of mystical experience. I thus use the category not as a reductive category to explain away mystico-erotic experience as simple sexual displacement à la Freud, but as a respectful, ultimately hopeful way of insisting on both the sexual rootedness of mystico-erotic events (with all the physical messiness and literal fluidity that rootedness implies) and the possible ontic source(s) of those same remarkable experiences. (2001:21)

Kripal's 'erotic' restores the 'violence and sexuality and general excess' of the mystical tradition to our gaze, from whence it has been displaced by the common core or perennialist discussion or the neo-Kantian constructivist debate about the epistemological nature of mystical knowing :

> A recurring pattern captured succinctly by one common medieval Latin term for the ecstatic rapture of mystical love, *excessus* – quite literally, the excessive, the ecstatic, that which erotically enraptures one out of the normal boundaries of egoic consciousness in order to 'liquefy' the soul in the male beloved. (2001:29)

Each mode of mysticism, Kripal argues, whether the Gnostic, Tantric, Sufi, Taoist and kabbalistic, 'sponsors an erotic hermeneutics' (2004:510) in relation to the prevailing dogma of its tradition. 'Scholars of comparative religion have grouped these countercultures under the heading 'mysticism' because they intuit in all of them a not-yet-fully articulated or understood form of consciousness that they themselves to some extent share – each routinely transgresses the binary categories of its own orthodox culture'(2004:510).

Therefore the different mysticisms are seen as holding the same hermeneutic practice, if not 'metaphysical substance'. As well as subversion and transgression, 'the mystical' then also becomes signified by 'the game'. Referring to Ramakrishna's critique of Advaita Vedanta, the phenomenal world now becomes a ''mansion of fun' in which to take delight in the omnipresence and essential bliss of the divine.' (496); devotion (*bhakti*) and love (*prema*) become as important as the 'metaphysical absolutes of *nirvana* and *brahman*'.

Mysticism is *dangerous* and by its nature it subverts:

> The mystical mind inevitably zeroes in on the orgasmic situation. (2001:228)
>
> The erotic is the "door", or, perhaps better, the fluid "stream" (my Freudian slip) that links the human and divine worlds. (2001:183)

In Chapter Eight below we shall return to some of these notions, however, in our Wittgensteinian interpretation of Teresa's texts there we shall argue rather for a 'strategy of embodiment' rather than 'erotic game' as Kripal proposes. Nevertheless Kripal's original analysis has shed light on much of the nature of mystical practice and language that will be pursued in this thesis, not least the evolution of what we term here the 'mystical strategies' of writers such as Dionysius, De Osuna and Teresa of Avila.

As will be apparent there is a great deal of use to our survey in Kripal's work. However, he still persists in retaining the ontological perennialism of 'mysticism' which, for reasons we have already given cannot be accepted by us. Accordingly, although this thesis will draw on some of his analysis, especially his emphasis on the game and the

libidinal, we will not be relying on his perennialism or ontological status of mysticism. For reasons that will be developed in the following chapters the Wittgensteinian perspective we adopt here will not permit that particular route.

2.5.4 Reactions to Constructivism 4: Other Christian Approaches: McIntosh, Williams and Cupitt

To conclude our review of recent approaches to the application of the category of *mysticism* to contemporary scholarship we shall discuss three responses that are primarily Christian in orientation: Mark McIntosh, Rowan Williams and Don Cupitt. Although they are all writing from within the Christian context their 'post-contextualist' positions are somewhat different.

2.5.4.1 Mark McIntosh

One of the most nuanced Christian responses to the changing academic perception of 'the mystical' is Mark McIntosh's 1998 *Mystical Theology* (McIntosh: 1998). McIntosh essentially uses a theological/historical-critical approach to justify the return of 'the mystical' to theological discourse. Throughout his text McIntosh uses the terms 'mystical/mysticism', 'spiritual/spirituality', 'contemplation' and 'mystical theology' interchangeably, sometimes within the same sentence which can sometimes cause some confusion.[46] However, he suggests that something akin to what he terms early Christian notions of 'contemplation' better replace contemporary notions of mysticism. He defines this 'contemplation' as the following key element:

> Contemplation is not like normal thinking, only muddled and tentative, on the contrary it is seen as an activity in which the mind is liberated to perceive clearly. (McIntosh 1998:11)

Immeadiately realising the problem of introducing the modern category of 'mind' into his analysis he qualifies the term thus:

> The use of the term "mind" here ought not to suggest that which is exclusively discursive, a manipulative rationalism that subjects whatever it encounters to its own control. The more classical notion of mind refers to the desire of our whole being for deep understanding and relationship with all that is intelligible. (McIntosh 1998:11)

There is no doubt that McIntosh is aware of the problems of using terms like 'mind' when referring to the mystical. However he never seems to entirely remove the shadow of James's experientialism in his analysis. This leads to him talking easily (like Underhill, Inge and Vaughan) of 'mystics' and 'their mystical experiences':

> The intensity of mystical experience can easily lead to a kind of absolutism that oppresses the lives of mystics themselves or of cultures receptive to them. (McIntosh 1998:14)

It is difficult to make sense of passages like this without employing some form of hermeneutic derived from the 'modern mystical' approach. Following our exegesis above of the evolution of the employment of 'modern mysticism' by Christian writers this can cause problems. McIntosh employs the category of 'the Christian mystics' (eg. 1998:113,137) and sometimes comes close to suggesting a distinctive 'Christian mysticism' which seems close to the 'Johannine Christian mysticism' of Inge (see above). Yet, as we would expect from our analysis above, the employment of such a category will always imply the perennialism/empiricism and experientialism of 'modern mysticism'. McIntosh is wary of this and takes the anti-experientialist and anti-perennialist stance of, amongst others, Lash and Turner (1998:137). Like Underhill and Inge, he is at pains to distinguish his 'Christian mysticism' from 'perennial mysticism'.

---

[46] See, for example, p.136: 'My aim has been to suggest the inherent integrity of Christian spirituality and theology, and the degree to which the mystical journey underlies and even generates whatever is most

The problem with his attempt to do this is that he relies almost totally on writers from the apophatic tradition within a framework provided by Sells and Turner (1998:137). His equation (theologically speaking) of the 'mystical event' with the kenotic theology of Christian understanding of the Trinity and the Paschal Mystery needs this emphasis on the apophatic tradition, especially as interpreted by Sells. As he admits himself later, 'In general then it will be chiefly apophatic traditions of Christian spirituality which help us in reflection on this analogy'.

To take one example, when he refers to St John of the Cross he only uses quotations from the *Dark Night of the Soul/Ascent of Mount Carmel* without reference to the *Spiritual Canticle* and *Living Flame of Love*. The result will surely be an emphasis on the suffering/apophatic side of John to the expense of the cataphatic/erotic.[47] Consequently, his conclusion that in the writings of 'the Christian apophatic tradition such as Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysios, John of the Cross and Edith Stein... the most intimate divine presence is experienced by the human subject as a profound darkness, as painful longing, even dereliction' (1998:191) will seem a bit skewed.

Yet despite these qualms McIntosh is able to take some of the best of the constructivist analysis and apply it to the Christian texts. His chapter on 'Theological Hermeneutics and Spiritual Texts' comes closest to the analysis of this thesis, where he stresses the forms and hermeneutics of 'the mystic speech'; an 'interpretive framework within which the readers of the text may come to recognise and participate in their own encounters with God' (McIntosh 1998: 124). Influenced here by Ricoeur's writing (See Ricoeur 1996) his notions of the 'provocation and performance' of the text are related to the themes that will be developed in this thesis. Of particular import in his analysis for our thesis here is the notion of the mystical text as an essentially 'uncompleted text' that lies open for completion by the reader (cf. Wittgenstein 'whatever the reader can do for themselves leave for them to do'):

> Hence the language of much mystical speech, unlike the discourse of a theology text book, is left open and unconcluded... Mystical texts such as these are

---

truthful in theological perceptivity.'

[47] His use of Edith Stein's *Science of the Cross* may well influence him here

> linguistic performances, and it is the very patterning of their language which allows them to draw the reader into a new perceptivity. (McIntosh 1998:142)

One area where this thesis differs from McIntosh's approach is to take the analysis of 'mystic speech' (what we shall refer to later as the Medieval 'language game of *theologia mystica*') back to the medieval texts of Dionysius (this will be done in Chapter Five below). In McIntosh's analysis of Dionysius he is more concerned to illuminate the theological, and primarily liturgical, dynamic of the texts. In the analysis we present below we shall be concerned with Dionysius's 'mystic speech' as form of 'performative utterance'.

In conclusion, his book is concerned to relocate 'spirituality', that is 'Christian spirituality', within a Christian (theological) framework:

> This book will develop an understanding of spirituality as a discovery of the true 'self' precisely in *encountering* the divine and human other – who allow one neither to rest in a reassuring self-image nor to languish in the prison of a false social construction of oneself... Spirituality as the transformation and discovery of self always happens in encounter, it is an activity constantly stirred up and sustained by the other who calls one out of one's 'self' and into the truth of one's mission in life, out of provisionality and into the adventure of incarnation. (1998:5-6)

Drawing, amongst others, on the writings of Von Balthasar and De Certeau he argues for a pre-modern continuum of theology-spirituality which theologians must try to return to (1998:67). This is a form of what he calls 'intellectual mysticism', quoting in approval Gregory the Great's maxim '*amor ipse notitia est*' – 'love itself is a form of knowing' (1998:70). We shall return to this relationship between the *affectus* and the *intellectus* when we discuss the *theologia mystica* in Chapter Five below. Suffice it to say for now, that McIntosh's position allows for a more *participatory* understanding of mysticism-spirituality-theology very much along the lines advocated by Kripal, Ferrer and others. 'Mystical language' is not a positivistic report but an invitation into a process.

In summary then, McIntosh, drawing on many of the writers we have discussed above presents a nuanced and balanced critique that takes the contemporary debate on 'mysticism' and pitches it into theology's questioning as to its role and parameters in the contemporary world, especially in the light of the contemporary interest in spirituality.[48] The result is a participatory view of theology which will surely benefit that discipline.

2.5.4.2 Rowan Williams

In a series of articles in the late nineteen eighties and early nineties Rowan Williams synthesises many of the strands of thought on mysticism discussed here to present an original and helpful contribution to the debate (See Williams 1983, 1984, 1991).

Following the constructivist critique of Katz *et al* he is suspicious of the category of *modern mysticism*, especially its essentialism, experientialism and perennialism (e.g. see 1983: 334-5, 1984:209, 1991:144 - 153).[49] Williams deliberately eschews this more 'psychologistic' or 'phenomenological' methodology, relying instead on an explicitly *theological* methodology to explore the term: in particular, a scriptural, patristic and liturgical analysis (see 1984: 198 where he cites Knowles in particular as a model here). From this context two approaches emerge.

Exploring Butler's *Western Mysticism* (Butler: 1926) in 1984 he considers whether we might do better to 'avoid the word "mysticism" entirely'(Williams 1984:213), a position we have already essayed in respect to McIntosh and the use of 'spirituality'. He suggests 'contemplative discipline' (or later, 'contemplative enterprise') as a possible alternative, the article focussing as it does on this aspect of the Christian tradition as reviewed by Butler. Within his theological context he sees the aim of 'mysticisms' as distinctly *teleological*, ie. that through Christian contemplation and practice the believer has 'the image of Christ formed' in them, 'mystical' becomes shorthand for:

---

[48] Space does not allow us to enter into a lengthy discussion of the contemporary category of 'spirituality'. See references in Introduction above.

> The deepening and habitual awareness of loss, recovery and transformation in relation to the paschal focus of Christian commitment... the capacity for radical liberty and trustful responsibility in the face of a world of senseless pain and oppression, the bearing of a darkness which challenges all our desires and projections, in the confidence that we are taken into a (deeply paradoxical) relationship with the source of all meaning, an elusive – if not entirely effable – union with "the Father". (Williams 1984:209)

The aim of mystical practice is to bring us closer to the *persona Christi* which we hold in potential. This emphasis on mystical form rather than content is refined in the later final chapter to *Teresa of Avila* (1991). Here, once again, following Lash he is sceptical of the essentialist/empirical/experientialist/perennialist content of *modern mysticism* and turns once again from comparability of form rather than content (as in Kripal and McIntosh above). Of Kripal's three categories of erotic, transgressive and deconstructive, he mentions the transgressive (1991:154) and the deconstructive (again, like McIntosh, in the context of the kenotic aspect of the Christian message) but leaves out the erotic. The element he particularly emphasises, is the 'reformative' or 'generative' element of the mystic. The 'mystic' is the one who returns to the original 'charism' of the religion – whether that be in the life or teaching of a charismatic founder such as Mohammed or Gautama Buddha, or the generative terms of a religion such as Judaism or Hinduism[50]. Unlike McIntosh, he recognises that the apophatic is unsufficient to do justice to the complexity of the Christian foundational story and stresses that 'Christian mysticism' in its refoundational guise will reflect any one of a number of elements from the foundational story:

> There is the story of God's becoming human, the story of that humanity itself, and the story of the establishing of the community in faith in Easter and Pentecost. What is it that needs to be recapitulated? The movement out from heaven and

---

[49] 'I want to resist the notion that we have anything approaching an uncontroversial, neutral and abstract concept of 'the mystic' and 'the mystical' in psychological terms which we can usefully *start from* in the study of religious language and institutions' (1983:335)

> back to it? The pattern of the incarnate ministry? Jesus's path to the cross? The disciple's experience of the resurrection? (1991:156)

Thus, we accordingly have many types of refoundational mystical form within the Christian tradition:

> There are many types of passion mysticism.... We have instances – from Richard Rolle in medieval England to Tilak in nineteenth-century India – of ecstatic devotion to the person of Jesus as exalted Lord... we have also, in the last two decades, an unexpected resurgence of the language of a 'new Pentecost' – the ecstatic recapitulation of what is believed to be primitive Christian experience in the Charismatic movement. (1991:157)

In these final pages Williams suggests an amalgam of the two responses – that the individual 'mystics' model themselves on Christ and by this recapitulation of the life of Christ in their lives (he takes Teresa as his example) they can assist this 'refoundational' aspect in the community around them:

> The shape of the fundamental story becomes the shape of this human biography in a comprehensive way which may lead to the profound disturbances and disorientations of consciousness that the 'mystic' characteristically describes. (1991:158)

In response to Williams's argument two points arise:

1. There is the possibility of 'elitism' arising from his approach. As with James there is a tendency towards seeing 'the mystic' as a special individual with a special role to perform in a particular context. Perhaps the possibility of 'ordinary mysticism' is

---

[50] In 1983 this is stated as ' the task of recalling to remembrance their community's commitment to holiness, significant and integrated social life.'(1984:343). See also Inge's views on this point above.

discounted. Again, here Williams may be revealing his indebtedness to the basic forms of *modern mysticism* in his analysis.

2. Williams's critique seems to come from a reformation or protestant context. It seems to privilege the 'foundational aspect'. However his comments are very pertinent, especially his observations on 'theologia mystica' within Teresa's writings and we shall return to this later.

Like McIntosh, within Williams's approach there is a tension between holding essentialist content (a possible debt to the essentialism of *modern mysticism*) and a psychologically empty but philosophically coherent position (hence the emphasis on the deconstructive to the expense of the erotic). However, when we compare their views with another Christian writer such as Turner they clearly have more psychological content which is to be applauded. Williams, like McIntosh, takes the challenge of constructivism and presents a theologically nuanced response. However, as with McIntosh, Williams is not so concerned with delineating the specific 'language games' of the 'theologia mystica' which will be the work of this thesis.

Before concluding this chapter we shall review one last Christian author who, unlike McIntosh and Williams, has wanted, in direct response to Wittgenstein, to delineate the form of 'mystical discourse' – Don Cupitt.

2.5.4.3 Don Cupitt

Of all the writers being reviewed here perhaps Cupitt is the one who takes the writings of Wittgenstein most seriously. However, it is argued here that he misinterprets Wittgenstein and ends up with a position that is probably more unacceptable than that of either McIntosh or Williams.

Cupitt's career has been marked by a concerted attempt to 'dissolve' many of the boundaries that, in his words, survive from the 'modern period' (roughly 'beginning in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' [1998:12] and ending in the late sixties, 1968 for convenience [1998:1]). We are now living in the 'postmodern' period when the

'certainties' of modernity are being dissolved or 'melted down'. Cupitt's own narrative here relying heavily on 'postmodern' writers such as Derrida, Levinas, Lyotard, Wittgenstein, Heidegger etc. helped by traditional Christian 'mystics' such as Eckhart and Margarete Porete. In this process of dissolution, 'modern terms', such as 'experience', 'religious experience', 'mysticism' and 'spirituality' are likewise being melted down and reformed. Much of Cupitt's writing on 'experience' reflects the critique of James we presented above and it is not necessary to recapitulate. Likewise, his critique of 'mysticism' reflects our argument above that 'modern mysticism' is largely a late nineteenth century/early twentieth century creation.

Cupitt's views have also had a strong impact on Kripal, especially his notions of 'mysticism' as 'a kind of writing' that subverts the established order (see Kripal 2001: 8). This view of 'mysticism' as 'anti-institutional' form we have already noted from James and, it could be argued, is very much a Jamesian/'modern' notion. Like McIntosh above, it can argued that Cupitt concentrates too much on the deconstructive and apophatic at the expense of the erotic and libidinal in the mystic (*contra* Kripal), in contradistinction, for Kripal this is held 'in the body': 'All mystics, after all, had bodies, which in turn shared a set of biologically and culturally shaped sexualities' (Kripal 2001: 332). A view equally to be found in the writings of contemporary feminist writers already referred to such as Grace Jantzen (Jantzen 1995) and the authors we shall discuss in relation to Teresa of Avila in Chapter Eight such as Gillian Ahlgren and Alison Weber (Ahlgren 1996, Weber 1990).

This critique of Cupitt's lack of embodiment can be carried to his whole project, which in itself is questionable. It seems as though Cupitt wants to remove all ontological content from the 'mystical game':

> Even language may not give us a rock-solid starting point. It too is secondary. It too can be seen as mere construct. We made it up. So, when all proposed foundations or fixed starting-points have failed, we find ourselves obliged to admit that everything is secondary. There is no pure datum, no primary substance, no 'absolute', nothing that is always ontologically prior... We are always in secondariness. (Cupitt 1998:7).

Although Cupitt invokes Wittgenstein, it can be argued that a radical dis-ontology is not a necessary implication of Wittgenstein's critique (as will be demonstrated in Chapter Four below). To complicate matters, Cupitt seems to defy his own rigorous disontological strictures by introducing a new category of 'the fountain'. This 'state', achieved through meditation, he describes as:

> A one-level floating continuum. Everything, including the self, disappears into shimmering oceanic bliss, beginningless, endless, foundationless, secondariness. This is the Unitive State, the Spiritual Marriage, "the Real" ...
> I propose that we picture it as the Fountain... The fountain or the falls become again a traditional symbol of life's , or time's , perpetual self-renewal, a symbol of healing, refreshment and repose.(Cupitt 1998:133)

In response we raise two points here:

1. Cupitt's 'oceanic bliss' seems to be the old 'Platonic' sense of 'at-one-ness' given 'postmodern' clothes.
2. Despite his protestations of total 'disontology', Cupitt has imported a very real ontology with his 'Fountain', or as he calls it 'The Real'. We shall have more to say on this when we look at the ontological implications of Wittgenstein's critique for our study.

In conclusion, there seems to be much that is of use from Cupitt's analysis. He has taken on board the implications for mystical analysis from the constructivists and the role of language in the mystical hermeneutic. Although, distinctly 'modern' in its emphasis, the exploration of the category of subversion/transgression is helpful as is Cupitt's use of erotic language. Yet, by placing too much emphasis on the role of mystics as 'wordsmiths' and over emphasis on the linguistic categories Cupitt does seem to miss out a vital element of the 'mystical game'. Cupitt seems to forget that writing (and expression) requires reference in his hurry to sweep away all 'institutional categories'. In this 'anti-institutionalism' there are also shades of James's 'elitisim': the mystic as the

wise seer who bravely sees through the lies of institutional religion to reveal its heart as a lonely suffering individual.[51]

Like his 'modern' adversaries (Underhill, Inge, Vaughan) Cupitt is not adverse to using 'orientalist' categories to support his views (see 1998:62,65) and despite his protestations, on these grounds alone, it seems that Cupitt may not be so 'postmodern' as he would have us believe.

2.6 Summary

This has, by necessity, been a lengthy chapter. However, it has been necessary to give a comprehensive overview of how *the mystical* has been used in academic discourse since the rise of 'modern mysticism' and its consequent critique over the past thirty years.

The chapter began by stating that we would trace the etymology of the term 'mysticism' in recent centuries and isolate a particular category that we call 'modern mysticism'. Also that the understanding of this phrase would be illustrated by using, in particular, a critique of the work of William James, Robert Vaughan, Ralph Inge and Evelyn Underhill.

It was argued that for these 'makers of *modern mysticism'* there was a clear ontological category of *mysticism,* which was basically essentialist, experientialist, orientalist and perennialist in character, and for James this was filled out by his concept of *mystical experience*. It was further argued that these categories were adopted, largely uncritically, by the chief writers on 'mysticism' in the twentieth century, notably Otto, Stace and Zaehner and were commonplace assumptions in scholarly discourse until the constructivist critique of Katz *et al* in the late seventies/early eighties.

Since Katz we have seen varying reactions to the 'deontologisation' of *mysticism*. At one end Forman and the neo-perennialists have wanted to restore full ontological status to the category of *mysticism*, at the other end of the spectrum is Cupitt advocating (though not necessarily achieving as we saw) a totally deontologised approach. In

---

[51] See for example p. 108 and Cupitt's contrast of the 'priestly and institutional' with the 'prophetic and charismatic'

between, with McIntosh, McGinn, Turner, Williams and Kripal we saw varying levels of ontological content imported into the category.

In the following two chapters we shall return to Wittgenstein's writings where we will argue for a particular Wittgensteinian approach to the problem which helps to remove some of the problems associated with some of the positions above. However, it is important to state that from the review of this chapter the following consequences arise for the thesis:

1. Unlike Underhill, Vaughan, James and Inge we shall not be looking for a cross-credal, experientialist, ontological (and possibly orientalist) category called 'mysticism'. Rather we shall be concentrating on the 'mystical form, strategy or game' using an approach which will develop from Wittgenstein's writings in the following chapter.

2. From Sells, Cupitt and Kripal we will argue in Chapter Seven for a *deconstructive* element to *the mystical/mysticism/mystic.* However, in that chapter, applying this approach to Teresa of Avila we shall argue for an approach with nuanced differences from Sells's.

3. Following on from Kripal and McIntosh we shall explore the embodied/affective element of the mystical as manifest in Teresa of Avila's writings. This will form the basis of Chapter Eight.

4. Recognising the importance of Williams's and McIntosh's contributions to understanding the constructivist critique in Christian theological context this thesis will be concerned with developing the specifics of 'mystical speech', especially as 'incomplete speech act' in 'interpretative framework'.

Consequently, drawing on the 'Wittgensteinian methodology' developed in Chapter Four we shall characterise this in Chapter Five as the *Sprachspiel* of *theologia mystica.* However, before moving into this we shall return now to Wittgenstein's writings in the

next chapter before elaborating the 'Wittgensteinian methodology' that will be adopted for the rest of the thesis.

Chapter Three: Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* and the Problem of Interpretation

One of the difficulties with working with Wittgenstein's writings is that there is no general consensus as to how they should be approached. In addition, there have emerged differences of opinion as to how his literary legacy – his *Nachlass* – should be treated. This chapter will explore some of the issues around interpretation of the *Nachlass* and explore some of the key schools for understanding Wittgenstein's approach to philosophical problems. Whilst not agreeing entirely with all of Daniel Hutto's arguments in *Wittgenstein and the End of Philosophy* (Hutto 2003) we have found his division of Wittgensteinian interpretation into that of *theoretical* and *therapeutic* helpful and will adopt a version of this when surveying various interpretations of Wittgenstein's approach, especially to the philosophy of religion.

3.1 The *Nachlass*

On Wittgenstein's death in 1951 his literary executors Georg von Wright, Rush Rhees and Elizabeth Anscombe thought at first that Wittgenstein's literary legacy consisted of a few notebooks that he had in his possession at the time of his death (See PO: 480). However as von Wright narrates in *The Wittgenstein Papers* (in PO: 480 -506) it soon transpired that there was an awful lot more material than originally had been thought. In his introduction to the *Wiener Ausgabe* (WA: 1:51) Nedo gives the number of extant pages to date as 30,000. Based on von Wright's description in *The Wittgenstein Papers* and his own analysis, Stern (1996:473) and others suggest that the figure is nearer to 20,000 pages rather than 30,000. Regardless, the material of the *Nachlass* accordingly turned out to be vast. In his will Wittgenstein had requested that his executors 'shall publish as many of my unpublished writings as they should think fit' (Stern 1996:454). As he had published so little in his lifetime: the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922, T), a *Wőrterbuch* for the children of Upper Austria (1926, WB) and a short paper for the Aristotelian Society (1929, AS) the executors did not have much to guide them in making their decisions as to what was publishable and what not. From the nearly completed

Philosophical Investigations (1953, PI) onwards there flowed (and continues to flow) a stream of works authorised by the executors (see 'Wittgenstein's works' in the Bibiography). Although the work of the executors was punctilious and industrious they have not entirely been beyond reproach. Various attempts have been made to publish the *Nachlass* as a whole, beginning with the Cornell microfilm facsimile of 1967. Although helpful the microfilm facsimile was at times hard to read and certain texts, such as the so-called *Geheimer Tagebücher* (GT), had been deliberately covered over to spare the public possible embarrassment from his more personal reflections (we shall return to this later). Stern in his paper (1996) charts the unhappy evolution of the *Wiener Ausgabe* under Nedo which is only now just appearing. However, perhaps the fullest and most accessible of all the attempts to open up the *Nachlass* has been the Bergen Electronic Edition (2000, BEE) which was produced in 2000 by the University of Bergen in Norway. The production of these various editions of the *Nachlass* has allowed scholars to see the shortcomings of some of the editorial decisions made by the original executors (See Stern 1996, Savickey 1998 and BEE). The chief criticism has been that the executors did not provide enough critical apparatus to justify their editorial decisions and why certain portions of the *Nachlass* were published in a certain way and not another. This has particularly been the case with collections of *Bemerkungen* published in collections such as *Culture and Value* and *Remarks on Colour.* As the editors of the Bergen Electronic Edition put it in their introduction to the Edition:

> With the aim of honouring Wittgenstein's intentions, his editors have sometimes put together selections from a range of different manuscripts. Unfortunately, Wittgenstein's intentions can rarely be established with any certainty. The instructions he wrote into his works are numerous and often contradictory. Those selections that have been made have secured Wittgenstein a place among the first rank of Western thinkers. Regrettable, however, is that his editors do not always document their decisions, thus obscuring the relationship between the publicised material and its sources. (BEE: Introduction)

Along with this lack of critical apparatus commentators such as Stern and Savickey also see another more insidious tendency in the editing process: that is, a tendency to 'tidy up' Wittgenstein's *Bemerkungen* to produce well-manicured and philosophically balanced 'texts'. One of the key arguments of this dissertation will be that, like Teresa of Avila's works, we tidy up Wittgenstein's works at our peril. Having examined them for the past ten years, especially through the lens of the *Nachlass* editions, it is the author's conviction that they can only be read aright as a radical attempt to *change our perception of philosophical problems*. Wittgenstein, like Teresa, was not interested in producing finely polished philosophical tracts (notwithstanding the fact that he took great care and time to produce the *Bermerkungen* in an order and form he was happy with[52]) but rather he wanted his texts to 'trouble the reader' – 'I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking' - as he writes in the Preface to the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI: vi). Accordingly, it will be argued throughout this dissertation that the *style and presentation* of Wittgenstein's writings (like Teresa's) is as important as the *substance*.

Having highlighted, therefore, some of the problems involved with established the Wittgensteinian *corpus* we will now turn to the schools of interpretation of his writings, especially the commentaries on his writings on the nature of religion.

3.2 The Wittgensteinian Secondary Literature

Faced with the vast array of secondary literature on Wittgenstein's writings it has been decided for the purposes of this thesis to concentrate on a literature review of those commentators who have been particularly concerned to outline his views on religious belief. Having illustrated these schools of interpretation the chapter will conclude by

---

[52] Monk in his biography (Monk 1990:319) gives a detailed picture of how Wittgenstein went about this process: 'Wittgenstein had a peculiarly laborious method of editing his work. He began by writing remarks into small notebooks. He then selected what he considered to be the best of these remarks and wrote them out, perhaps in a different order, into larger manuscript volumes. From these he made a further selection, which he dictated to a typist. The resultant typescript was then used as a basis for a further selection, sometimes by cutting it up and rearranging it – and then the whole process was started again.'
We have in the *Nachlass* examples of work at all stages of this process.

looking at those writers who have specifically tried to delineate Wittgenstein's views on *the mystical.*

As stated above, when faced with the overwhelming secondary literature, Hutto's distinction between the *theoretical* and the *therapeutic* in Wittgenstein's commentators, has been found helpful. Accordingly, before turning to the interpretations of Wittgenstein's remarks on religion and the philosophy of religion it is necessary to outline the context within which this occurs. Throughout this literature review, whilst mindful of general movements in Wittgensteinian scholarship since his death in 1951, we have tended to concentrate on works published in the past twenty years.

Reading Wittgenstein: Theory and Therapy

Surveying the reactions to Wittgenstein's work nearly fifty years after his death, Rorty in his essay *Keeping Philosophy Pure* summed up the position thus:

> Academic philosophy in our day stands to Wittgenstein as intellectual life in Germany in the first decades of the last century stood to Kant. Kant had changed everything, but no one was sure just what Kant had said – no one was sure what in Kant to take seriously and what to put aside. (Rorty 1982:20)

In this essay Rorty suggests that Wittgenstein's writings throw down a gauntlet to all who read them, especially professional philosophers. The challenge to enter the 'transcendental standpoint' of the *Tractatus* and the further challenge of the 'twice born' to resist this temptation and the challenge to both of the 'pure of heart' expounded in the *Philosophical Investigations* that transcends the need to 'explain, justify and expound'. In tracing this distinction, which Hutto (Hutto 2003) calls the 'theoretical and the therapeutic', Rorty emphasises the importance of the *Tractatus* for those who have expounded Wittgenstein from the former point and the importance of the *Investigations* for those of the latter disposition. This distinction between the emphasises of the work of the 'earlier' and 'later' Wittgenstein, and this possible distinction between a theoretical and an anti-theoretical approach to his writings has been a constant since the voluminous

Wittgensteinian secondary literature began to swell. As Pears puts it (Pears 1988b: 218), in these later works 'he is moving away from theorizing and towards plain description of the phenomenon of language.' Many of these commentators taking as their key text the famous remark from PI: 126 on the nature of philosophy:

> Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. – Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of *no interest to us*.

Consequently, amongst the Wittgensteinian secondary literature we see a split between those commentators who see the work of the later Wittgenstein as continuing the work of the earlier Wittgenstein and those who see a new *anti-theoretical shift* in the post-*Tractatus* works. As stated at the beginning of this chapter a lot of this (mis) - interpretation arises from the confusion surrounding the publication of the *Nachlass*. To add to the confusion, a recent book, *The Third Wittgenstein: The Post-Investigations Works* (Moyal-Sharrock: 2004) has argued that the parts of the *Nachlass* that have appeared charting the latter period of Wittgenstein's life, in particular *On Certainty*, suggest a *third* interpretation of Wittgenstein that transcends even the position developed in the *Investigations*.

We are thus left with four possible ways of viewing his works in the authors of the secondary literature:

1. Those who remain with the traditional division between the 'earlier' and the 'later' Wittgenstein and see the later works, especially the *Investigations,* as a critique of the earlier works, especially the *Tractatus.* Representative of this trend would be Peter Hacker whose recent work *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies* (Hacker: 2001) makes this point.
2. The so-called 'new Wittgensteinians' (See *The New Wittgenstein* – Crary and Read: 2000) who see a theoretical union between the early and later Wittgenstein and reject any notion of a firm break between the two.

3. Those who regard the 'third Wittgenstein' of the 'post-*Investigations* works' (so-called) as presenting a third and more radical departure from the Wittgensteinian corpus.
4. To these three interpretations, we could possibly add a fourth, a growing body of Wittgenstein scholars who, following Wittgenstein's own remarks in the latter works of moving from the theoretical to the practical, or from *saying* to *showing* want to emphasise the importance of the biographical elements of Wittgenstein's life and use them to gain a more complete picture of what his thought was trying to achieve. Again, a key collection of essays, *Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy* (Klagge 2001) has acted as a vessel for presenting this interpretative strand.

Each will now be considered in turn.

3.2.1 The 'Two Wittgensteins': 'The Standard Interpretation'

Crary (2000:2) calls this position the 'standard narrative' by which Wittgensteinian interpretation is guided. By this is meant the notion that the *Tractatus* and *Investigations* are two separate works, the latter intended as a specific critique of the former. The *Tractatus* represents the culmination of the first phase of Wittgenstein's thinking (broadly up to 1918) which is essentially the delineation of the limits of meaning by the delineation of the 'logic of our language' – the form of language and the form of the world will thus reflect each other. This 'picture theory of meaning' is rejected in the post-*Tractatus* works, especially the *Investigations,* in a period which extends roughly from the early nineteen thirties up to his death in 1951, at which time he was still trying to get his thoughts into an order with which he was happy for publication. The 'second Wittgenstein' is not so much concerned with a theory of meaning that connects the meaning of a word to a particular pattern of external reality but rather to one in which meaning is derived from the *use* of the word, often described by a concentration on *Sprachspiele* – language games. The tendency of the first phase is to lead to a notion of meaning which is truth-conditional and essentially realist, whereas

that of the latter depends on a notion of meaning based around assertibility conditions and is essentially anti-realist. The classic exponents of this view are Dummett (Dummett: 1991), Hacker (Hacker: 2001) and Pears (Pears:1988), amongst others. For Pears in Wittgenstein's later work:

> There are no independent, objective points of support, and meaning and necessity are preserved *only* in the linguistic processes which embody them. They are safe only because the practices gain a certain stability from the rules. But even the rules do not provide a fixed point of reference, because they always allow divergent interpretations. (Pears 1988: 179)

As well as this tendency to anti-realism, which, as we shall see later, has influenced the notion of a 'Wittgensteinian' interpretation of religion in such 'anti-realist' commentators as Cupitt and Phillips, the 'standard interpretation' supports a view of Wittgenstein, especially the 'later Wittgenstein', who was primarily concerned with developing a philosophy of language based on such concepts as *Sprachspiele* and *Lebensformen* – 'Language Games' and 'Forms of Life'[53]. Two phrases which, in English translation at least, seem to have developed a life of their own in Wittgensteinian scholarship.

3.2.2 'The New Wittgensteinians'

The 'new Wittgensteinians' represented in Crary and Read's 2000 collection *The New Wittgenstein* (Crary and Read 2000, including, amongst others, Stanley Cavell, John McDowell, James Conant, Cora Diamond and Hilary Putnam[54]) share with the authors of the 'standard interpretation' the notion that Wittgenstein sought in his later writings to overturn the metaphysical implications of the 'picture theory' of meaning found primarily in the *Tractatus*. Where they differ from the 'standard interpretation' is in seeing this critique as being present throughout Wittgenstein's writings, even

---

[53] For a thorough account of the consequences of realist and anti-realist interpretations within the 'Wittgensteinians' see Insole (2006), Chs 1 – 4.

[54] Although the collection includes an essay by Peter Hacker he is dissenting from the general view of the 'New Wittgensteinians' and would prefer to place his view in that of the 'standard interpretation'

including the *Tractatus*. Crary describes this as the *therapeutic* aspect of Wittgenstein's work, a notion we will return to below. One of the chief consequences for understanding Wittgenstein's work is to revise interpretations of the *Tractatus* to include what we can call more specifically 'therapeutic' understandings of that great work. When we come in Chapter Eight below to consider the *Tractatus* in the light of previously unpublished diaries of Wittgenstein from this period (GT) we shall find much that supports this point of view. One important influence from the 'new Wittgensteinians' that has influenced the approach of this thesis is the importance they give to the *style* of his writings as much as his *substance.* As we shall see later when we compare the means of expression in Wittgenstein and in the mystical texts of Teresa of Avila, *how* things are said may be as important as *what* is said. Thus these interpreters get away from a notion that has often haunted the executors of the *Nachlass* that Wittgenstein's work has to be 'tidied up' in order to get at a 'real' philosophical text. Rather, the fragmentary nature of the collections of remarks, including their often contradictory authorial voices should be understood in the 'therapeutic' tradition of philosophers such as Kierkegaard (an acknowledged influence on Wittgenstein) rather than the systematic treatises of, say, a Hegel or a Kant. In Crary's words 'the dialectical structure of Wittgenstein's writing makes an internal contribution to the philosophical instruction it contains' (2000:7). For this aspect of the 'new Wittgensteinian' agenda a lot of thanks must go to Stanley Cavell who has long championed this notion of the 'confessional and therapeutic' within Wittgenstein's work. (See, for example Cavell 1976, 1979)

3.2.3 The Third Wittgenstein

The premise of *The Third Wittgenstein – The Post Investigations Works* (Moyal-Sharrock 2004) is to present a collection of papers that argues for the significance to the *Nachlass* of the material published post *The Philosophical Investigations*, in particular *On Certainty.* Moyal-Sharrock, the editor of the volume, believes that these works do not mark a distinctive break with the writing of the *Investigations* but rather they continue Wittgenstein's thoughts in ways that are not so manifest in the

Investigations. For reasons given above regarding the difficulty of sorting out the publication of the *Nachlass,* it would at first sight seem odd to give the *Investigations* a cohesion of thought which its unsystematic collation would not seem to merit which is why many of the contributors to the volume want to make a distinction between Parts One and Two of the *Investigations* They see the former as largely as Wittgenstein hoped it would be published whilst the latter is more akin to the posthumously published *Nachlass* which makes up the bulk of Moyal-Sharrock's 'Third Wittgenstein'. In support of this von Wright is quoted:

> I lean, myself, towards the opinion that Part 1 of the *Investigations* is a complete work and that Wittgenstein's writings from 1946 onwards represent in certain ways departures in new directions. (Von Wright 1982:136)

Thus, these later works, beginning with Part Two of the *Investigations,* are seen as launching out in new directions, in particular the examination of the relationship between philosophy and psychology.[55] For Moyal-Sharrock the 'third Wittgenstein' embraces all the works after 1946, consequently published as Part Two of the *Investigations, On Certainty, Zettel, Remarks on Colour* and *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology.* From the point of view of this dissertation a key interpretation from *On Certainty* has been incorporated as understood by recent scholarship. This is the work of Judith Genova, in particular *Wittgenstein: A Way of Seeing* (1995) taken up by Ivana Dolejšová in *Accounts of Hope: A Problem of Method in Postmodern Apologia* (2001). Genova and Dolejšová's interpretation of a move in *On Certainty* from Thinking to Seeing to Acting appears a helpful way of understanding the later Wittgenstein as will be explained in Chapter Four below. In his essay in *The Third Wittgenstein* Hutto seeks to show how this movement is present in Wittgenstein's philosophy from the *Tractatus* onwards and is not just unique to the post-1946 works. From the point of view of this dissertation we are not concerned to make a case for the importance of the so-called 'third Wittgenstein' and the thesis will draw on Wittgenstein's works from all stages of his development. If it is necessary to ally ourselves with any particular 'school' of interpretation this thesis would

---

[55] On this see Kerr (2008) for an excellent summary

probably go with those scholars such as Hutto who see a philosophical consistency throughout Wittgenstein's work. As argued at the beginning of this chapter the confusion whereby the *Nachlass* has been published has probably contributed to the perception of different Wittgensteins with differing aims and intentions. This point was put in a conversation with one of Wittgenstein's last pupils in 2006,[56] and the author was told that if Wittgenstein were alive now his thoughts would have moved on whilst using the same methods that he consistently used throughout his life. The concerns of the late nineteen forties would not be his concerns today, yet his *method* would probably remain the same. From the perspective of this thesis the recent work on the post *Investigations* literature, especially *On Certainty,* has perhaps clarified the movement in Wittgenstein from saying to showing to acting and an inherent foundationalism that can, as Hutto argues, be found in his works well before 1946. In addition, as already presented in the Introduction above, the post 1946 works contain some very perceptive work on Aspect-Seeing which have been incorporated into this thesis.

3.2.4 Wittgenstein and Biography

The unique style of Wittgenstein's writings and his challenges to straightforward academic or conventional interpretations of his work, coupled with the problems of establishing generally accepted definitions of what constitutes a Wittgensteinian 'text' have all contributed to the growth of another basis for evaluating Wittgenstein's contributions to academic discourse: namely, accounts and interpretations of Wittgenstein's life, especially records of conversations with friends, students, colleagues etc. From the early nineteen fifties onwards these have regularly appeared. Although we seem now to be coming to the end of first hand accounts of encounters with Wittgenstein, we still have the formidable body of literature that tries to interpret his philosophy through the events, actions and conversations that occurred in his life. Wittgenstein's often 'larger than life' personality, eccentricities and colourful acquaintances have all added to this tendency. From the point of view of our study here two of the most important collections of encounters are those by his former pupils Norman Malcolm (in

[56] Conversation of the author with Euan Hill, Carshalton, November 2006

Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir, [Malcolm 2001], first published 1958) and Maurice Drury (in Rhees [1987], *Recollections of Wittgenstein*). In both we find Wittgenstein talking candidly about religion in a way that is not often so evident in his written remarks. These conversations, especially with Drury, have helped complete the picture of Wittgenstein's views on such matters and extend the conversation beyond the written texts. This process has been extended by the two excellent biographies of Wittgenstein produced in the late nineteen eighties/early nineties: Brian McGuinness's *Wittgenstein – A Life* (McGuinness 1988) which covers the period up to 1921 and Ray Monk's *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (Monk 1990), the first biography of the complete life of Wittgenstein. Again, much extra-textual material has helped to give us a better overview of Wittgenstein's life and work, and in particular how the two were often seamlessly interconnected. Although, as we shall see in Chapter Eight, the problem of the availabity of *Nachlass* material has also influenced these two projects and the publication of, for example, the *Geheime Tagebücher 1914 -1916* in 1992 (GT) has brought more material to light.

As is the case with Wittgenstein studies, the biographical information has helped open up new lines of interpretation of Wittgenstein's work which are well summarised in the 2001 volume *Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy* (Klagge 2001). As with Teresa of Avila, these biographical discussions have helped form a context for interpreting Wittgenstein's work. This will be particularly important in Chapter Eight where we use the *Nachlass* entries from Wittgenstein's time in World War One to construct some notions of his ideas that influenced the latter parts of the *Tractatus.*

3.2.5 Wittgenstein as Therapist

Before moving onto the secondary literature that discusses Wittgenstein's specific contributions to debates about the nature of religion it is helpful to conclude this section on his general interpreters by returning to the question of Wittgenstein as *therapist* as opposed to *theoretician* or *logician.* The reason for doing this is that many of the arguments and interpretations of *the mystical* presented in this thesis have grown out of an examination of this literature in particular.

As stated above one of the first writers to emphasise the 'therapeutic' within Wittgenstein's writing was Stanley Cavell (See Cavell 1976, 1979). By the time Alice Crary's collection *The New Wittgenstein* (Crary and Read 2000) came out in 2000 it seemed as though the notion had influenced a whole generation of Wittgensteinian scholars. The authors collected there, Crary suggested, shared an interpretation of Wittgenstein's work as a) a unified whole and b) broadly 'therapeutic' in nature. The first point has already been discussed above. The second emphasises the shift in recent Wittgensteinian scholarship away from the understanding of his work as largely *theoretical* (or, in Rorty's words, largely concerned with the reactions and concerns of fellow 'professional philosophers') to an understanding which is built around seeing his work as contributing to individual existential development, or as Hosseini calls it in a recent work, 'the development of wisdom' (Hosseini 2007). For Crary this 'therapeutic aim' is largely around helping us to see the 'sources of philosophical confusion' we hold by replacing a need for a metaphysical view of language to a concern with the observation of the running of language as a means to solving philosophical confusion. Thus, for Cavell, the aim of Wittgenstein's philosophy is to bring us back from metaphysical speculation to the everyday discourse of 'forms of life' (*Lebensformen*) where language has its natural home. Whereas Cavell *et al* are primarily concerned with the purely philosophical consequences of a reading of Wittgenstein's work other contemporary authors have gone further and ascribed to Wittgenstein a therapeutic agenda that goes beyond the purely philosophical. In this respect there has been a growing movement to connect Wittgenstein's writings with psycho-therapeutic literature, beginning of course with his fellow Viennese theorist, Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939). Although Wittgenstein's remarks about Freud are scattered throughout the *Nachlass*, especially the collection of remarks published as *Culture and Value* and the conversations with Rhees in 1942 published as the *Conversations on Freud* in *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (LC:41 – 52), the first systematic survey of the relationship between the two authors was Jacques Bouveresse's 1995 work *Wittgenstein Reads Freud: The Myth of the Unconscious* (Bouveresse 1995).[57]

[57] See also Frank Cioffi's 'Wittgenstein's Freud' (Cioffi 1969) and McGuinness's 'Freud and Wittgenstein' (McGuinness 2002)

Bouveresse's work, like others who have followed him such as Levy (1996), concentrates more on Wittgensteinian critiques of Freudian notions of unconscious, ego, superego and the general Freudian 'mechanics of the mind' rather than notions of philosophy as therapy *per se*. More helpful for this dissertation has been Peterman's 1992 *Philosophy as Therapy* which has taken Cavell's ideas of the therapeutic in Wittgenstein and extended them beyond the philosophical to the ethical. Its emphasis on the movement from *theoria* to *praxis* in Wittgenstein's writings seems to be of fundamental importance for a balanced interpretation of his work, as we shall see later. In this respect the notion of the importance of the *confessional* has been an important theme in many therapeutic interpretations of his work and one that will play a role in this thesis.[58] Finally, it is worth noting that the later Wittgenstein saw the value of Freud's work not as a pseudo-scientist but in the function of Freudian analysis as 'aspect-changing':

> When a dream is interpreted we might say that it is fitted into a context in which it ceases to be puzzling. In a sense the dreamer re-dreams his dream in surroundings such that *its aspect changes*...
>
> In considering what a dream is, it is important to consider what happens to it, the way its aspect changes when it is brought into relation with other things remembered, for instance. (LC: 45 -46)

We shall return to this aspect of Wittgenstein's work in Chapter Four below.

3.3 Wittgenstein and the Philosophy of Religion

When we turn to Wittgenstein and the religious it might be argued that rather than influencing a contemporary philosophical debate, Wittgenstein's writing has produced a whole new way of thinking of the disipline, or even developed a new discipline in itself. Surveying the many eminent philosophers who have ventured to interpret his contribution to the discipline the only thing that can be said with certainty is that there is very little consensus amongst them as to what exactly is that contribution and how it should be

---

[58] See also *Wittgenstein's Confessions* (Thompson 2000)

understood. In a recent collection of essays, *Wittgenstein and Philosophy of Religion* (Arrington and Addis 2004) at least five major strands of Wittgensteinian scholarship are apparent and worth looking at:

1. The role of 'Language Games' and 'Forms of Life'
2. Wittgensteinian foundationalism and the influence of *On Certainty*
3. 'Wittgensteinian Fideism'
4. 'Faith as Passion'
5. Wittgenstein and the 'religious point of view'

We shall now turn to these before ending this chapter with a review of how Wittgenstein's remarks on *the mystical* have been interpreted by his commentators.

3.3.1 The Founding Fathers: Language Games and Forms of Life

Some of the earliest attempts to apply Wittgensteinian approaches to religious issues have also been some of the most far-reaching in that much subsequent scholarship in the area has echoed the approaches of these early pioneers, in particular the work of Rush Rhees, Norman Malcolm, Peter Winch and D.Z.Phillips.[59]

One of the key elements in all four writers, which has become something of a neo-Wittgensteinian orthodoxy, is that religious language must not be treated as any other language but has its own system of verification that will only make sense within the 'religious language game'. Such ideas are clearly influenced by those of the later Wittgenstein, especially the *Philosophical Investigations,* and have become something of a cliché in interpreting Wittgensteinian views of religious discourse. One of the consequences of this, as was seen in the previous chapter, is to have created views of *the mystical* such as those of Cupitt's (See Cupitt 1987, 1998) that while purporting to be 'Wittgensteinian' have an anti-realist character that go far beyond that envisaged by Wittgenstein (See previous chapter and Tyler 1993).

---

[59] See, for example, *inter alia* Malcolm (1993), Winch (1958, 1987), Phillips (1965, 1976, 1986, 1988, 1993, 1997, 2001)

Such moves have used the importance of *Sprachspiele* from the *Investigations* to make a case for arguing the special importance of religious *Sprachspiele.* Thus we find Rhees writing:

> "God exists" is not a statement of fact. You might say also that it is not in the indicative mood. It is a confession – or expression – of faith. This is recognized in some way when people say that God's existence is "necessary existence", as opposed to "contingency" of what exists as a matter of fact; and when they say that to doubt God's existence is a sin, as opposed to a mistake about the facts.
> If you ask, "Well when we are talking about God, does our language not *refer* to anything?", then I should want to begin, as I have tried to here, by emphasizing something of the special grammar of this language…
> You might think that I meant that the language about God was just a sort of beautiful pretence; or perhaps that it was just part of the formality of ceremony, like after-dinner speeches. I do not mean anything of the sort, of course, and if I wanted to avoid *that* I might say that the language about God certainly does refer to something. But then I should want to say something about what it is to 'talk about God', and how different that is from talking about the moon or talking about our new house or talking about the Queen. How different the 'talking about' is, I mean. That is a difference of grammar. (in Phillips 1997:49)

Even in this passage Rhees seems to realize the anti-realist implications that arise from just such an emphasis on the 'grammar of language' at the expense of a putative object of reference. An issue we will return to in the following chapter when we discuss our approaches to the 'Wittgensteinian methodology' for approaching the 'mystical'. As well as the consequent anti-realist philosophy of Cupitt, these approaches have also led to a strain in 'Wittgensteinian' interpretations of the philosophy of religion that emphasises 'the ceremonial' in the religious. Gareth Moore's approaches come to mind here (See Moore 1996) and Clack's doctoral dissertation on the *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* published as *Wittgenstein, Frazer and Religion* (Clack 1999b) which likewise

explores the importance of the ceremonial for an understanding of Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion whilst avoiding the pitfalls of anti-realism.

Winch's contribution to the debate has been to emphasise how the methods of the natural sciences cannot be applied wholesale to the study of human affairs, such as religious belief.[60] Common to many of these approaches of the 'founding fathers' of Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion has been the importance they ascribe to Wittgenstein's dictum to look at description rather than explanation in our approach to the phenomenon of religion citing in particular Wittgenstein's remark in PI:109: 'We must do away with all *explanation*, and description alone must take its place'. Thus Winch suggests we cannot understand what is happening in a monastic community by applying purely naturalistic theories without also taking into account the underlying beliefs that motivate such a community. What they all have in common is the appeal to take the religious *Lebensform* seriously if we are to approach any serious formulation of religion as a fact of human affairs. In the following chapter we shall see the consequences of this for our analysis of *the mystical,* in particular, looking at the *Sprachspiele* of 'the mystical' without seeking any 'occult entities' of explanation.

In his summary of what he calls the 'neo-Wittgensteinian analysis of religion', (Clack 1999a:81) Clack sees the idea that 'religion (or magic) constitutes a specific "category of behaviour" and that it is "conducted according to considerations of its own"' as the key point which unites so many of these views of what are termed here the 'founding fathers' of a 'Wittgensteinian Philosophy of Religion'. As he puts it:

> The idea here that rather than there being one monolithic account of truth, meaning and rationality common to all human institutions and practices and by means of which each practice can be evaluated, there are instead an infinitely extendable number of distinctive modes of social life, each of which can be evaluated only on its own terms. (Clack 1999a: 81)

Winch calls these 'modes of social life' with their own set of rules, whilst others prefer to use the phrases from the *Investigations*: *Lebensformen* or *Sprachspiele* – normally

---

[60] See, for example, *The Idea of a Social Science* (Winch 1958

translated into English as 'Forms of Life' or 'Language Games'. One of the chief consequences of this approach has been to foster a seemingly invulnerability of the 'religious form of life' which is not open to criticism. This has been characterised as 'Wittgensteinian Fideism' to which we turn next.

3.3.2 Foundationalism and Fideism

In addition to key approaches developed in the *Investigations* such as the *Lebensformen* and *Sprachspiele* it is possible to isolate another cluster of Wittgensteinian interpretations that take for their starting point what we have already characterised as the 'third Wittgenstein', or the post-*Investigations* writings, especially *On Certainty*. This has led to the development of a form of 'Wittgensteinian Foundationalism' that seeks to defend religious propositions as 'properly basic' (See in particular Phillips's work especially Phillips 1988). Such approaches use the arguments of *On Certainty* that certain statements are 'properly basic' to make the point that this is particularly the case with religious statements. Such notions, however, do lead to the idea that religious categories may be beyond criticism, either from empiricial approaches or reductionist theories that seek to reduce religion to particular psychological, sociological or other explanations. This was a favourite approach of the neo-Wittgensteinian thinker D.Z.Phillips who did so much to shape subsequent Wittgensteinian discourse. Thus in his *Religion without Explanation* of 1976 he criticises Frazer, Freud, Durkheim and Feuerbach for failing to take into account the importance of the foundational nature of belief for the believers themselves. Again the emphasis is on the *description of the actual use* of religious language, rather than the search for explanation:

> Instead of stipulating what *must* constitute intelligible uses of language, one should look to see how language is in fact used... The philosopher's task is not to attempt to verify or falsify what he sees, for that makes no sense in this context. His task is a descriptive one; he gives an account of the use of language involved. (Phillips 1976:41)

A position largely held to by Phillips throughout his long and fecund philosophical career and basically restated in one of his last books *Religion and the Hermeneutics of Contemplation* (Phillips 2001).

One of the consequences of approaches such as Phillips's was the criticism developed by Kai Nielsen in his article *Wittgensteinian Fideism* of 1967 (Nielsen 1967). Essentially, Nielsen argued that what writers such as Phillips and Rhees were producing was the latest variety of 'fideism' – ie. the notion that religion does not need to be open to rational defence. The Wittgensteinian element being that as 'form of life' religion needs no defence and is justified in itself. Nielsen particularly took issue with 'Wittgensteinian fideism' for, first, the idea that only the believer can fully understand the nature of religion. Nielsen argued that just as an anthropologist visiting a tribe could understand their beliefs without necessarily adopting them so the scholar of religion could conceivably understand a religious practice without adopting it. Secondly, Nielsen objected to the 'compartmentalisation' of human life that seems to be entailed by talking about specific language games for this and for that. Third, Nielsen argues that just because we have a religious 'language game' it does not mean that it should be invulnerable to critique and verification. He argues that just as once we used to talk about fairies and witches and no longer do so (presumably from empirical critique of these notions) so religious notions should be open to similar critique:

> That a language-game was played, that a form of life existed, did not preclude our asking about the coherence of the concepts involved and about the reality of what they conceptualised. (Nielsen 1967:208)

Since 1967 this charge of 'fideism' has been thrown at successive waves of Wittgensteinian scholars, most notably D.Z. Phillips. Phillips's first rebuttal of the criticism occurred in his 1986 book *Belief, Change and Forms of Life* (Phillips 1986) a task that continued until the end of his life and which was revisited in one of his last works, *Religion and the Hermeneutics of Contemplation* (Phillips:2001). Phillips's ripostes largely consist of clarifications of his own remarks to show how Nielsen's original remarks were a misunderstanding.

Regarding the idea that religious beliefs can only be understood by believers, Phillips rejects this as a straightforward distortion of his works and claims that from 1965 he always maintained that religious truths must be open to sceptical discourse. In their 1998 reader *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings* (Rowe and Wainwright 1998) Rowe and Wainwright state that Phillips 'thinks religious belief should not be assessed by the rational criteria used in science, traditional metaphysics, or our commonsense reflections about the world, or by other external standards'(Rowe and Wainwright 1998:132). Again, Phillips responds to this accusation by pointing out that it does not take into account the subtlety of his arguments regarding the nature of 'rationality'and really sidesteps the issues that Wittgensteinian scholarship has raised for the foundational nature of religious belief (Phillips 2001:28).

On the issue of religious concepts as being 'cut off' from other spheres of human life, Phillips makes it quite clear that from *The Concept of Prayer* (1965) onwards he had never maintained this idea, rather, seeing religion as 'not cut off from the common experiences of human life: joy and sorrow, hope and despair' (Phillips 1965:40).

In addition to these two main charges of 'fideism' based on Nielsen's readings, there is one more characteristic of 'fideism' as it is usually encountered in the literature which we have already touched on above and will return to later. Basically, that religious belief can only be determined by religious language and that meaning cannot be found from an objective standpoint. Phillips distances himself from this, although this idea which is essentially anti-realist can be made against against Cupitt's work which we examined in the previous chapter.

Before leaving the 'fideism and foundationalism' debate, which over the past thirty years seems to have generated more heat than light, it is worth mentioning one Wittgensteinian scholar who seems to get closer to the heart of the matter. This is Fergus Kerr, whose 1986 *Theology after Wittgenstein* (Kerr 1986) is a classic account of how a study of Wittgenstein's work can inform the study of theology[61]. In his discussion of 'fideism' Kerr makes the key point that a lot of the discussion is based on an essential misunderstanding (or even mistranslation) of Wittgenstein's somewhat technical phrases

[61] See also Kerr 1982, 1983, 1984

Lebensformen and *Sprachspiele*. The notion, he argues, that 'religion' can be equated with a Wittgensteinian *Lebensform* is essentially a misunderstanding of how Wittgenstein used the term. Likewise, a Wittgensteinian *Sprachspiel* has a technical sense which cannot be applied to 'religion' *tout court*. Ascribing such a view to Wittgenstein is also backed up by evidence from Wittgenstein's own journals and correspondence that he had no such view of religion. A point we shall return to in the next section. As Kerr goes on to suggest, one of the reasons for the emergence of the criticism of 'Wittgensteinian fideism' may have been the influence of the 'founding fathers' themselves. He quotes Malcolm:

> I do not wish to give the impression that Wittgenstein accepted any religious faith – he certainly did not – or that he was a religious person. But I think that there was in him, in some sense, the *possibility* of religion. I believe that he looked on religion as a 'form of life' (to use an expression from the *Investigations*) in which he did not participate, but with which he was sympathetic and which greatly interested him. (Malcolm 2001:60)

Kerr concludes 'it is sad that Wittgenstein's name is now associated, perhaps irreversibly, with a position in the philosophy of religion that rests upon radical misconceptions of two of his most inventively liberating expressions' (Kerr 1986:31). In this respect we will be at pains throughout this dissertation, especially in Chapter Four, to locate Wittgensteinian terms such as *Lebensformen* and *Sprachspiele* in their original context as they arise in his writings.

To summarise this section so far. It seems that the initial response to Wittgenstein's writings from the 'founding fathers' was to create a sense of Wittgenstein as a respondent in the classical pursuit of the 'big questions' of the philosophy of religion. This in turn seems to have created the Shibboleth of 'Wittgensteinian fideism' which seems on examination to be neither Wittgensteinian or fideist. Yet, as Kerr remarks. it has skewed the reception or value of Wittgenstein's writing for the study of religion to such an extent that many students and scholars do not proceed beyond this smokescreen.

Drury, Wittgenstein's friend and pupil, once told Wittgenstein that he had been reading F.R.Tennant's *Philosophical Theology* to which Wittgenstein replied 'a title like that sounds to me as if it would be something indecent' (Rhees 1987:90). This response perhaps indicates the direction we should take in applying Wittgenstein's writings to the study of religion, *pace* the work of the 'founding fathers'. Some of the most interesting recent writing on the consequences of a study of Wittgenstein's writing for the study of religion seems to begin at this point, trying, as it were, to begin with what Wittgenstein (quoting Kierkegaard) calls the 'passion of religious belief'. Of all the writing reviewed here this has been the most influential on the approach to Wittgenstein that has been adopted for this thesis and will be elaborated in later chapters. We turn to this next.

3.3.3 *Faith as Passion*[62]

As we shall see throughout this dissertation and will return to in depth in Chapter Eight, Wittgenstein was always buffeted by the *passion* of faith. As we have seen, the publication of the *Nachlass* by his executors tended to isolate Wittgenstein's remarks on faith and religion from his remarks on logic and mathematics but as we shall see in Chapter Eight this is not always how the remarks appear in the *Nachlass*. The diaries we quote from later (some of which have not been published) show that Wittgenstein was constantly searching for religious certainty and essentially saw religious faith as a *passion (Leidenschaft)* – a phrase he borrowed from Kierkegaard – a search which was to preoccupy most of his adult life. We have mentioned above the importance of understanding the Wittgensteinian biography for the comprehension of his philosophy. In the case of understanding his attitude to religious belief this is perhaps even more important. One of the key texts for throwing light on Wittgenstein's attitude to religion were the recollections of his pupil Maurice Drury (in Rhees 1987). Drury had originally gone up to Cambridge to study for the Anglican priesthood at Westcott House. However, after he had come under the influence of Wittgenstein he abandoned his ordination training and spent two years working with unemployed people in Newcastle and Merthyr

---

[62] '*Weisheit ist leidenschaftlos. Gagegen nennt Kierkegaard den Glauben eine Leidenschaft* : Wisdom is passionless. But faith by contrast is what Kierkegaard calls a passion' (CV:53e)

Tydfil. With Wittgenstein's encouragement he began to study medicine in 1934 and qualified in 1939. The most important period of his recollections of Wittgenstein date from the period after the Second World War when Wittgenstein was living in Ireland and Drury working in St Patrick's Hospital in Dublin. After Drury's death in 1976 his recollections were collected and published by Rhees. Commenting on the reason for publishing the remarks Drury stated:

> The number of introductions to and commentaries on Wittgenstein's philosophy is steadily increasing. Yet to one of his former pupils something that was central in his thinking is not being said.
> Kierkegaard told a bitter parable about the effects of his writings. He said he felt like the theatre manager who runs on the stage to warn the audience of a fire. But they take his appearance as all part of the farce they are enjoying, and the louder he shouts the more they applaud.
> Forty years ago Wittgenstein's teaching came to me as a warning against certain intellectual and spiritual dangers by which I was strongly tempted. These dangers still surround us. It would be a tragedy if well-meaning commentators should make it appear that his writings were now easily assimilable into the very intellectual milieu they were largely warning against. (Rhees 1987:xi)

Many of the key themes of Wittgenstein's writing which will be explored in this dissertation are contained in this quote: the difficulty and oddness of Wittgenstein's writing and how it stubbornly resists easy (or sloppy) academic assimilation; the notion of certain 'intellectual and spiritual temptations' that his philosophy helps us to overcome; the existential relevance of the *passion* of his philosophy and the challenges it presents. His philosophy, so Drury suggests, should not leave us cold:

> Christianity says that wisdom is all cold; and that you can no more use it for setting your life to rights than you can forge iron when it is *cold*. (CV:53e).

As Frederik Sontag points out in his *Wittgenstein and the Mystical* (Sontag 2000), to which we will return in the next section, one of the key influences on Wittgenstein's notion of religious belief was his encounter with Tolstoy's *Gospel in Brief* (Tolstoy 1895) which he had first come across whilst he was a soldier in World War One. McGuinness and Monk tell the strange story of how shortly after arriving in Galicia during his war service in 1914 he walked into a bookshop which only contained one book – Tolstoy's *Gospels*. At this time he was feeling particularly low and in Monk's words he was quite literally 'saved by the word' (Monk 1990:115). He carried it with him wherever he went for the rest of his service and became known to his fellow troops as 'the man with the gospels'. In later life Wittgenstein would tell Drury (Rhees 1987:86) that there were only two European writers of recent times who had anything important to say about religion: Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. In the book Tolstoy calls Christianity 'a very strict, pure, and complete metaphysical and aesthetic teaching above which human reason has not risen' (Tolstoy 1895:384). Churches, as well as universities, for Tolstoy, do not expound it and it is found through following the 'passion of conscience' very much in the way advocated by Kierkegaard. 'Simple language', a theme we shall return to later, 'the language of millions of simple, unwise men' (Tolstoy 1895:4) for Tolstoy, is better than any fine or fancy language for getting this truth across. A common ground, as we shall see later between Wittgenstein's and Teresa of Avila's style.

The zeal and passion of the Tolstovian Gospel stayed with Wittgenstein throughout his life, tempered as we have seen, with the passion of Kierkegaard which he read avidly during his 'break from philosophy' in the nineteen twenties. This slightly idiosyncratic faith, mixed with a dash of Tagore, perhaps explains his later remark to Drury with which we began the thesis and was to so influence Malcolm and many other Wittgensteinian commentators: 'I am not a religious man but I cannot help seeing every problem from a religious point of view' (Rhees 1987:94).

Thus it is possible to interpret the later remarks found, for example in Drury, as a commentary on Wittgenstein's belief in the importance of faith as *passion* whilst remaining sceptical as to religious institutions and behaviour *tout court*. Thus if we are to make sense of Wittgenstein's contribution to the philosophical problems arising from religious faith we would do well to look at his conviction of the *passion* of religious faith

as much as the 'logical structure' of any supposed religious 'language games'. As has been already said, this is an approach that has been favoured by several recent commentators,[63] and one which has influenced this dissertation to which we will return in Chapter Eight when we will explore its consequences in more depth.

3.4 Wittgenstein and *The Mystical*

The final passages of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* completed whilst Wittgenstein was on active service in World War One and a prisoner in Monte Cassino, Italy, contain his most consistent, and some would say notorious, comments on *das Mystische:*

6.44 *Nicht wie die Welt ist, ist das Mystische, sondern dass sie ist*
Not *how* the world is, is the mystical, but *that* it is.

6.45 *Die Anschauung der Welt sub specie aeterni ist ihre Anschauung als – begrenztes – Ganzes.*
Das Gefühl der Welt als begrenztes Ganzes ist das mystische.
The view of the world *sub specie aeterni* is to view it as a limited whole.
The feeling of the world as a limited whole is the mystical.

6.52 We feel that even when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched. Of course there are then no questions left, and this itself is the answer.

6.521 The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of the problem.

6.522 *Es gibt allerdings Unaussprechliches. Dies zeigt sich , es ist das Mystische.*
There are indeed, things that are inexpressible. They *show themselves*. That is the mystical

---

[63] As well as those referred to see also McCutcheon 2001, Kallenberg 2001, Tanesini 2004

7 What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.

As has been apparent throughout this chapter and a theme we shall return to throughout this thesis, one of the difficulties with coming to terms with Wittgenstein's texts is the deliberate ambiguity and difficulty of his remarks. As we shall see later, when Frank Ramsey went to Austria in 1923 to help with the English translation of the *Tractatus* he wrote back to his mother:

> Some of his sentences are intentionally ambiguous having an ordinary meaning and a more difficult meaning which he also believes. (LO: 78)

Thus it is perhaps unsurprising that this somewhat gnomic style, especially in these remarks on *das Mystische* coming at the end of what purported to be a thesis on logical form, should mystify his earliest commentators, not least Bertrand Russell. Although his former mentor and friend paid fulsome praise to the work in his preface ('a book no serious philosopher can afford to neglect') he did not accept the conclusions, especially the references to 'the mystical'. Consequent commentary has often sided with Russell (and most members of the Vienna Circle) in finding the 'mystical remarks' a sideshow or hindrance to the main action of the *Tractatus* which is seen as primarily concerned with logical form or the nature of meaning. Another approach has been to co-opt Wittgenstein's remarks into a wider search for the 'mystical' as an ontological, cross-credal category – something, again, which does not seem to be Wittgenstein's purpose and that we shall return to in the following chapter.

Of commentators in recent years perhaps Cyril Barrett (See Barrett 1991 and his article in Harris and Insole 2005, pp 61 -75) had come closest to recognising the full import of the final paragraphs of the *Tractatus* for a wider understanding of Wittgenstein's approach to faith, belief and what he himself called 'the problem of life', in the contemplation of which, Barrett claimed, Wittgenstein's own philosophical heart lay. For Barrett:

> Wittgenstein's lasting message is first, the inexpressibility of religious belief, ethical principles and aesthetic judgements in empirical terms and hence, second, the absurdity of attempting to give an empirical account of them. (Harris and Insole 2005:63).

Barrett wants to stress the importance of silence to Wittgenstein and allies his approach to the strategy of pure apophasis that we will return to in Chapters Five and Seven below. There, a modified approach to Barrett's notion of complete apophasis in Wittgenstein's approach to the mystical will be argued for, stressing as much the importance of desire and affectivity in a Wittgensteinian interpretation of the Dionysian tradition. In Barrett's opinion, Wittgenstein does not take the Kantian road to the transcendental, but rather 'returns to Hume and turns him on his head' (Harris and Insole 2005:64). That is to say he agrees that expressions of value and metaphysics cannot be empirically meaningful, but 'their nonsensicality was their very essence: they are an attempt to say the unsayable in order to make sense of the sayable'.

Of the other (sparse) literature on Wittgenstein and 'the mystical' we have already mentioned Sontag's 2000 study. Of the writing on this subject his is the most intriguing, however the book assumes an understanding of what the author means by 'the mystical' or 'the mystic'. As will be argued in the following chapter, a Wittgensteinian overview of the use of the word in all its manifestations in the past two centuries precludes this option if we are to take seriously the consequences from Wittgenstein of understanding, as much as anything else, the *use* of the terms 'mystical' in a contemporary context. In so far as Sontag does define his terms he seems, like so many commentators, to be preoccupied with the mystical as an ontological cross-credal entity. As argued in the previous chapter this is unacceptable following a constructivist critique of mystical essentialism. This is perhaps where most of the philosophers of religion who tackle the question of Wittgenstein and 'the mystical' become unstuck.[64]

McGuinness, on the other hand, in his instructive essay on 'Mysticism' (McGuinness 2002) relies upon the characterisation of 'the mystical' from Russell's 1914 essay

---

[64] In this respect, a similar strategy is adopted by Weeks's 1993 work *German Mysticism from Hildegard of Bingen to Ludwig Wittgenstein* (Weeks 1993)

'Mysticism and Logic' which was probably not read by Wittgenstein at the time he wrote the *Tractatus*. Russell's account, like McGuinness's, relies on a Jamesian notion of the mystical which we have already critiqued. Being imbued with the Jamesian spirit McGuinness concerns himself with the somewhat tangential question of whether 'Wittgenstein is entitled to have a single doctrine of mysticism' (2002:187), a question whose legitimacy has already been questioned. In this respect it is noticeable that McGuinness concerns himself with whether or not 'Wittgenstein had a mystical experience during the war', or as he later puts it 'a genuine mystical experience', a category in itself that we have already challenged. Using Zaehner and James in an essentialist way McGuinness concludes by stating that 'we cannot know whether Wittgenstein had mystical experiences'. As we have seen such a conclusion is unsurprising due to the nature of the category itself. As opposed to Barrett, who grasps the full metaphysical implications of the final remarks of the *Tractatus*, McGuinness remains rooted with the question of whether Wittgenstein's so-called 'mystical experiences' can be verified or not. A question it seems that Wittgenstein's own approach rules out as illegitimate. It is precisely to challenge such unhelpful classifications of Wittgenstein's so-called 'mysticism' that this thesis arises.

3.5 Summary

In his survey of various approaches to Wittgensteinian interpretation, Kallenberg concludes:

> I suspect that each 'discovery' of a supposed central feature of Wittgenstein's thought has the grip it does on each author not because he or she has an objective grasp on Wittgensteinian truths, but because Wittgenstein has a subjective grasp on them as readers; each 'discovery' is but a manifestation of their particular 'cure'. Reading Wittgenstein rightly leads to diverse convictions because maladies differ; each author champions the 'Wittgenstein theory' that most reflects the way that he or she has escaped his or her own fly-bottle. (Kallenberg 2001:13)

In this regard this chapter has been concerned with stating the difficulties that arise from a contemporary study of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* and its application to questions of faith, and with respect to this dissertation, the implications he has for our understanding of 'the mystical'. We have isolated two over-riding challenges: first the fragmentary and dislocated manner in which the *Nachlass* has been presented and the difficulty of extracting, for such a *lebendig* philosopher, his written philosophy from his life – hence the importance attached to biographical detail for a full understanding of his philosophy, especially in its implications for understanding religious belief.

The other over-riding challenge has been in the nature of the texts themselves and how these have give rise to multiple interpretations over the past fifty years since Wittgenstein's death. Apart from disagreement about the consistency of his style – *Was there one consistent Wittgenstein? An early and a late Wittgenstein? Or even a third Wittgenstein?* – there are the texts themselves that sometimes seem to deliberately trip us up and invite ambiguous or contradictory interpretations. This latter question is one we shall return to in Chapter Seven below. It has been argued in this chapter that we do Wittgenstein a disservice by seeing him primarily as a *theoretical* philosopher and that we distort his work if we remove its *therapeutic* aspect from the whole. In this respect we are close to the open 'mystical speech' that we reviewed in the previous chapter.

All these over-arching problems of interpretation have fed into the assessment of the legacy of Wittgenstein's philosophy for understanding questions of religious belief and faith. It has been argued that early attempts by 'the founding fathers' to make Wittgenstein another analytic philosopher of religion have had middling success and, in some writer's opinions, failure. As such, co-opting of Wittgenstein into the ranks of 'philosophers of religion' has meant that some of the *passion* and *awe* with which he approaches the subject has been necessarily lost. It has been argued that recent commentators have attempted to return to the strangely stubborn spirit of wonder that lies in Wittgenstein's philosophical writings and harnessed it to unlock some contemporary issues of faith.

Concluding with a review of the literature on 'the mystical' it has been argued that, with some notable exceptions, much of the literature has held onto a largely

unexamined view of the category which would have been current, say, fifty years ago. The extent to which these Wittgensteinian scholars have failed to keep abreast of recent developments in the study of 'the mystical' as analysed in the previous chapter detracts from the validity of their conclusions, especially if as is done in this thesis, we use a Wittgensteinian methodology to approach these same questions.

Accordingly, in the following chapter we turn to the proposed Wittgensteinian methodology of this thesis for approaching the writings of St Teresa of Avila.

Chapter Four: Saying and Showing - A Wittgensteinian Methodology

> 4.121 *Propositions cannot represent logical form: it is mirrored in them.*
>
> *What finds its reflection in language, language cannot represent.*
>
> *What expresses itself in language, we cannot express by means of language.*
>
> *Propositions show the logical form of reality.*
>
> *They display it.*
>
> 4.1212 *What can be shown, cannot be said.* (Wittgenstein: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*)

Chapter Two delineated some contemporary academic ways of approaching *the mystical* with their concomitant strengths and weaknesses. At the end of that review it was clear that there was much that was helpful in the current debate however it was argued that there was room for another approach to be adopted. Consequently, this chapter will present the approach to *the mystical* that will be adopted for the rest of this thesis – what we will term the 'Wittgensteinian methodology' – based on a reading of Wittgenstein's works as delineated in the previous chapter.

This methodology will be primarily based on the notion of the *Übersichtliche Blick/Darstellung* ('Clear Overview') and the importance that Wittgenstein gives for a distinction between *Weltanschauung* and *Weltbild* if his approach to philosophy is to be understood aright. Accordingly, we shall begin by considering the following areas:

a) The tools for doing philosophy
b) How the mechanisms for philosophy can be applied to spiritual and theological questions: The *Übersichtliche Blick*

4.1 The Tools for Doing Philosophy

As argued in the previous chapter, Wittgenstein's approach to philosophy is notoriously dense and obtuse, indeed, it could be argued that much of his philosophical method was about *attacking* philosophical method (See Peterman 1992, Genova 1995, Sass 2001, Rorty 1982, Fann 1969, Kallenberg 2001). 'With the eye of a practiced marksman' writes Genova, 'he hit his target squarely, rather than rarely, challenging philosophy's emulation of science, especially the latter's penchant for theory and faith in progress' (Genova 1995:xiii). His famous 'anti-philosophical' stance, however, is not the whole story, for, as he assures us himself, his aims were also deeply philosophical. An anti-method it may have been, but Wittgenstein still considered himself a philosopher going about the work of philosophy:

> I know that my method is right. My father was a business man, and I am a business man: I want my philosophy to be business-like, to get something done, to get something settled. (Rhees 1981: 125)

There is clearly 'method behind the madness', indeed as we have seen already, much of Wittgenstein's intentional aim seems to have been to re-envisage the aims, goals and techniques of philosophy itself; his style itself being part of that revolution. Style, or how something is said, determines for Wittgenstein what is said:

> In philosophy it is not enough to learn in every case *what* is to be said about a subject, but also *how* one must speak about it. We are always having to begin by learning the method of tackling it. (RC III:43)

As Genova states:

> Nowhere in the zillion remarks patiently recorded in his notebooks can one find an explicit declaration of his aims and intentions. Instead, cryptic and hostile sayings pepper the text... In part, he is reluctant to propound and declare like a scientist or prophet. Instead, sarcasm seems a better teacher than sincerity for would-be lovers of wisdom. The results, however, are few clues and even fewer descriptions of his new way of doing philosophy. (Genova 1995: xv)

We want very much to 'pin Wittgenstein down' but this is precisely what he *does not want* us to do, and he makes it as hard as he possibly can for someone who wants to do this, which has presented its own challenges in the writing of this thesis. Many times over the past six years there has been the desire to abandon the project, yet ultimately, the challenge of putting Wittgenstein's anti-method or anti-philosophy into philosophical and theological categories proved irresistible and the result is this thesis. As Genova comments on the phrase from *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*: 'The crush of thoughts that do not get out because they all try to push forward and are wedged in the door' (RFGB:3), saying 'After suffering the squeeze for twenty years, I came to the conclusion that there is no one, final presentation of his thought, but a variety of arrangements, some more perspicuous than others' (Genova 1995:xvii):

> One is always in danger of saying too much or too little. As with poetry, wrenching the thoughts from their embodiment invariably does them damage. One produces theory, the phenomenon Wittgenstein dreaded most, instead of change, the only thing that mattered to him. (Genova 1995:xvi)

It is on this challenging cusp between avoiding theoretical pronouncements and enunciating Wittgenstein's (and Teresa's) agenda for change that this thesis hovers.

The stated aim of this dissertation is to take an approach to *mystical discourse* derived from Wittgenstein's writings and located within the academic debate on the subject as delineated in Chapter Two which will then be applied to the Christian tradition of *theologia mystica* as exemplified in the case study of the thesis – the writings of St Teresa of Avila. However, as well as applying this Wittgensteinian methodology to Teresa it has been found, and will be demonstrated in Part Two of this thesis, that the strategies and techniques developed by Wittgenstein are mirrored in the writing of Teresa. Faced with the difficulties of Wittgenstein's approach it may be thought that Teresa of Avila would present a more systematic, reasonable and coherent approach to the soul and the spiritual life. Yet, the more the thesis engaged in conversation between the two the more it became apparent that she too was engaged in a similar game; for, as with Wittgenstein, there is no one final theological or anthropological position to take on her writings and the style is as important as the substance: her goads and sarcastic comments are as insistent as Wittgenstein's as we shall see in Part Two below. This, we argue in this thesis, is of the nature of 'mystical speech', whether encountered in Wittgenstein or Teresa.

Returning, however, to Wittgenstein, we are confronted with the fact that he was clearly not intending to view philosophy *sub specie aeterni* (T: 6.45), ie. to create an overriding view of the world, or indeed a 'school' or 'Fach' in his name (see Rorty 1982). Rather, the argument that will be developed in this chapter is that the task of Wittgenstein's approach is to cultivate what he calls the *Übersichtliche Blick,* the aim of this *Blick* being, as we have already seen, to cultivate a 'change of aspect' in our way of seeing the world. We shall turn first then to uncovering what he meant by this *Blick.*

4.2 'A Way of Seeing'/ *Die Übersichtliche Blick* : The limits of saying and showing

How hard I find it to see what is right in front of my eyes! (Wittgenstein VB: 1940)

In his lectures of 1930 Wittgenstein defines the task of philosophy as one of attempting to 'be rid of a particular kind of puzzlement. This "philosophic" puzzlement is one of the intellect not of instinct' (CLL:21). From this time onwards he sees philosophy as possessing a clear method or as he describes it in the *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* (RFGB), *eine Übersichtliche Blick* – a 'clear overview' or, as it is often translated, a 'perspicuous view'. For Wittgenstein, what we are doing in philosophy is 'tidying up' our notions of the world, making clear what can be said about the world. From the nineteen thirties onwards Wittgenstein begins to talk increasingly about *die Übersichtliche Darstellung* as a way of 'doing philosophy': literally, a 'way of seeing'. Thus in the *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*, written in 1931, he contemplates Frazer's approach to certain anthropological events and how far such an *Übersichtliche Darstellung* can critique reflections such as Frazer's. He states his own position as one which has the form: 'Here one can only *describe* and say: this is what human life is like' (RFGB:121) contrasting it with what he sees as Frazer's approach:

> "And so the chorus points to a secret law" one feels like saying to Frazer's collection of facts. I *can* represent this law, this idea, by means of an evolutionary hypothesis, or also, analogously to the schema of a plant, by means of the schema of a religious ceremony, but also by means of the arrangement of its factual content alone, in an *Übersichtliche Darstellung.* (RFGB:133)

This 'perspicuous view' is: 'of fundamental importance' to Wittgenstein's approach and he describes it as that which: 'brings about the understanding which consists precisely in the fact that we "see the connections". Hence the importance of finding *Zwischengliedern*

("connecting links")' (PI:133). These *Zwischengliedern* 'do nothing but direct the attention to the similarity, the relatedness of the *facts'*.

By the time Wittgenstein begins writing the text which will ultimately become the *Philosophical Investigations* (unpublished at the time of his death) the position of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* has become clearer and more refined. Thus we find the following key passage which develops the earlier idea of the *Remarks:*

> A main source of our misunderstandings is that we do not *übersehen* (oversee) the use of our words. - Our Grammar is lacking an *Übersichtlichkeit* (overview). - The *Übersichtliche Darstellung* produces the understanding which allows us to 'see connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *Zwischengliedern.*
>
> The concept of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* is of fundamental significance for us. It designates our *Darstellungsform* (viewpoint), the way we see things. (Is this a *Weltanschauung*?). (PI: 122)

Following this with two important clarifications that point to the nature of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* :

> A philosophical problem has the form: "I don't know my way about". (PI: 123)
>
> Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either.
> It leaves everything as it is. (PI: 124)
>
> Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. – Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. (PI: 126)

Wittgenstein therefore proposes a methodology, based on the *Übersichtliche Darstellung,* where we simply put 'everything before us'. We observe the 'language games' or our

context while not concerning ourselves with 'hidden things', as we have seen already in the quote at the head of this chapter, and a consistent part of this thesis. This is nothing new to Wittgenstein but already in germinal form in the earlier *Tractatus*: the notion that language does not so much *say* as *show*.This being a crucial distinction for Wittgenstein and the notion from which the later *Übersichtliche Darstellung* arises.

He is concerned that the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* is not another competing *Weltanschauung* with others in the post-enlightenment/scientific world (Hence the phrase 'Is this a *Weltanschauung*?'). The point is clarified in the remarks from *Vermischte Bemerkungen*:

> Clarity, perspicuity (*Durchsichtigkeit*) are an end in themselves. I am not interested in constructing a building, so much as having a clear view (*durchsichtig*) before me of the foundations of possible buildings. My goal, then, is different from the scientist and so my think-way is to be distinguished. (VB: 459)[65]

We have before us the clear view of possible buildings rather than constructing another building: conflicting *Weltanschauungen* can be held before the *Übersichtliche Darstellung*.

In his last writing, *On Certainty*, written as he lay dying in Cambridge he clarifies the concept by contrasting a *Weltanschauung* with a *Weltbild*. In contrast to the *Weltanschauung*, which sees itself as *the* way of seeing, the *Weltbild* is *a* way of seeing:

> It (the *Weltanschauung*) takes itself too seriously, as the ultimate explanation and foundation of our convictions. In contrast, the concept of a *Weltbild* completely avoids the knowledge game. (Genova 1995:50)

There are certain propositions that are not open to doubt (OC: 341), they 'make themselves manifest' but cannot be subject to sceptical deconstruction – 'if I want the

---

[65] Written as a draft foreword to *Philosophische Bemerkungen* in 1930. See also *Zettel* 464: 'The pedigree of psychological phenomena: I strive not for exactitude but *Übersichtlichkeit*'

door to turn the hinges must stay put' (OC: 343). These beliefs form a system that is not a knowledge system but 'an ungrounded way of acting' (Genova 1995:51). In investigating language we cannot, as it were, 'step outside language'; our investigation of language takes place within the 'stream of life' – and language itself. This is the implication of Wittgenstein's proposal of the *Weltbild*. To develop one of Wittgenstein's metaphors, we can only, as it were, make repairs on the engine whilst the engine is running, or at least, we can only see how the engine works if we investigate when it runs – when it idles we cannot make sense of it. The feeling that we can 'step outside language' and only then make sense of it, is fallacious and ultimately misleading – *this* is the 'picture that once held us captive' (PI: 115) and led us to seek an 'Archimedean point' from which we could survey language from outside, a false assumption:

> "But *this* is how it is -" I say to myself over and over again. I feel as though, if only I could fix my gaze absolutely sharply on this fact, get it in focus, I must grasp the essence of the matter...
>
> A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably. (PI: 113,115)

In formulating and developing the notion of the *Weltbild* Wittgenstein was influenced by his reading of Oswald Spengler's work of 1923 *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (Spengler 1923). In a note amongst the *Vermischte Bemerkungen* he remarks, *inter alia* that Spengler (as well as Russell, Hertz, Schopenhauer, Boltzmann, Frege, Kraus, Loos, Weininger and Straffa) have influenced him (VB:1931) and Drury notes that in the early nineteen thirties Wittgenstein was recommending that he read the work.[66] Although rather sprawling and baroque, Spengler's classification, based upon Goethe, does contain germs that will later develop into Wittgenstein's *Weltanschauung/Weltbild* distinction. Amongst other things Spengler points out a difference between theorising that 'atomises' our perspective on the world and theorising that takes a broader picture:

> The tendency of human thought (which is always causally disposed) to reduce the image of Nature to the simplest possible quantitative form-units that can be got by causal reasoning, measuring and counting – in a word, mechanical differentiation – leads necessarily in Classical, Western and every other possible physics, to an atomic theory. (Spengler 1926:384)

This 'atomising', scientistic tendency is contrasted with the '*Formgefühl und Weltgefühl des Erkennenden'* - 'The Form-feel and World-feel of the knower' (Spengler 1923 I:494, my translation):

> The thinker, in imagining that he can cut out the factor of Life, forgets that knowing is related to the known as direction is to extension and that it is only through the living quality of direction that what is felt extends into distance and depth and becomes space. (Spengler 1926 I: 387)

From Spengler, then, Wittgenstein clearly takes the notion of 'seeing a whole' and 'forming connections' to make that whole. This is brought out in a passage from *Logik, Sprache, Philosophie*, the work on which Wittgenstein collaborated with Waismann:

> Our thought here matches with certain views of Goethe's which he expressed in the *Metamorphosis of Plants.* We are in the habit, whenever we perceive similarities, of seeking some common origin for them. The urge to follow such phenomena back to their origin in the past expresses itself in a certain style of thinking...
>
> We are collating one form of language with its environment, or transforming it in imagination so as to gain a view of the whole of space in which the structure of our language has its being. (Waismann 1965: 80)

---

[66] See Rhees 1981: 128. Wittgenstein also adds in his conversation: 'I don't trust Spengler about details. He is too often inaccurate. I once wrote that if Spengler had had the courage to write a very short book, it could have been a great one.'

The *Übersichtliche Darstellung,* then, as Wittgenstein comes to formulate it in his later philosophy, is influenced by a Spenglerian/Goetherian 'taking an overview', what we have seen earlier as the observation of a 'change of aspect' that allows us to 'see the world aright'. In creating the distinctively 'Wittgensteinian synthesis' he was also, as we have seen, indebted to the writings of the nineteenth century physicist, Heinrich Hertz (1857 – 1894). Writing concerning the 'mysterious' natures of electricity and force Hertz compared this mystification with the clarity with which we can speak of gold and velocity, saying:

> I fancy that the difference must lie in this. With the terms 'velocity' and 'gold' we connect a large number of relations to other terms; and between all these relations we find no contradictions which offend us. We are therefore satisfied and ask no further questions. But we have accumulated around the terms 'force' and 'electricity' more relations than can be completely reconciled amongst themselves. We have an obscure feeling of this and want to have things cleared up. Our confused wish finds expression in the confused question as to the nature of force and electricity. But the answer which we want is not really an answer to this question. It is not by finding out more and fresh relations and connections that it can be answered; *but by removing the contradictions existing between those already known,* and thus perhaps reducing their number. When these painful contradictions are removed, the question as to the nature of force will not have been answered; but our minds, no longer vexed, will cease to ask illegitimate questions. (Hertz 1956:7)

Applying the practice of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung,* then, to our 'mystical investigations' here we observe a process of *watching* or *seeing* the 'Form of Life' (*Lebensform)* through the 'language games' (*Sprachspiele*) that are employed. Our job is not to make mystical interpretations of certain *Weltanschauungen* but to present 'everything as it is'. The ontological questions no longer concern us (as they did the proponents of 'modern mysticism'). When Wittgenstein's approach is applied to the

spiritual realm then its application is nicely summarised by Drury's remarks concerning *The Tractatus*:

> For me, from the very first, and ever since, and still now, certain sentences from the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* stuck in my mind like arrows, and have determined the direction of my thinking. They are these:
>
> 1. "Everything that can be put into words can be put clearly"
> 2. "Philosophy will signify what cannot be said by presenting clearly what can be said"
> 3. "There are, indeed, things which cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are mystical". (Drury 1973:iv)

We refer to this passage for two reasons. First, Drury seems to neatly sum up much of Wittgenstein's method for approaching philosophy, and secondly he delineated the relationship between a) the need to speak clearly – the *Űbersichtliche Blick* of the philosopher, and b) how this relates to the 'unsayable' and the 'mystical'. By delineating what can be clearly said we also delineate what cannot be said but can be shown. This is the role of the philosopher.

These questions lead to a particular *method*. This method can be summarised in the line from *The Philosophical Investigations* – '*Don't Think – Only Look!*' (PI: 66). Whilst not being an anti-theoretical philosopher Wittgenstein preferred an approach to the subject matter that 'consisted in seeing connections' rather than being interested in the 'occult identities' of metaphysics.

We see then how Wittgenstein's philosophy 'leaves everything as it is'. Its aim, in his words, is 'to present everything before us' so that we can have a grasp of the *Weltbild* rather than the *Weltanschauung*. As we saw in the previous chapter, after Wittgenstein's death there has been a tendency to emphasise the importance of analysis of the *Sprachspiel* or 'Language Game' as the major outcome from the *Übersichtliche Blick*. Yet, the argument presented here has suggested a rather wider concept of Wittgenstein's *Weltblick*, one that encompasses the *Sprachspiel* but that goes beyond this to analyse the whole nature of the speech/action interface that underlies human communication. For

Wittgenstein, we have argued, the philosophical *Blick* is not simply about a dry analysis of 'Language Games' (as is often interpreted by contemporary scholars) but a wider all-embracing understanding of the act of human communication. Thus the 'view' advocated here leaves behind the hard ontological realism of 'modern mysticism' and its advocates, as well as the empty anti-realism of constructivists such as Katz and Cupitt. Rather, the Wittgensteinian approach advocated here concentrates the mystic 'speech act' in its overall communicative intent, that is, through *showing* as well as *saying*. This leads to the notion we will explore in later chapters of the 'performative discourse of mystical speech'.

4.3: The Move from Thinking to Seeing: Ontological Content of Mystical Discourse

A consequence of the adoption of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* is a move throughout Wittgenstein's later work from a 'thinking' to 'seeing' (or, we can put it, from 'saying' to 'showing') to, finally in the last works such as *On Certainty*, a 'way of acting'. The 'change of aspect' that accompanies the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* will also, by implication, lead to a change of life and action – the fly will be led out of the fly-bottle. As he wrote in 1931:

> A present day teacher of philosophy doesn't select food for his pupil with the aim of flattering his taste, but with the aim of changing it. (VB:1931)

As is argued throughout this dissertation, at root Wittgenstein's philosophy, like Teresa's theology, is basically *transformational.*

In the *Philosophical Investigations* we are exhorted to '*Denk nicht, sondern schau!* – Don't think, only look!' (PI: 66). We take our material – the 'language games' – and we observe 'similarities, relationships' and 'anything common at all'. The aim of philosophy, for the later Wittgenstein is:

> The uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the value of discovery (PI:119).

Understanding is no longer a 'mental process' (PI:154):

> Try not to think of understanding as a 'mental process' at all. – For *that* is the expression that confuses you. But ask yourself: in what sort of case, in what kind of circumstances, do we say, "Now, I know how to go on".

His philosophy: 'simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. - Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us' (PI:126).[67]

We have seen already how elements of such an approach have been adopted by commentators such as Sells and Kripal in reference to the mystical discourse, teasing out the 'mystical games' of deconstruction, subversion and the libidinal. However, in both writers there seems to be an ambiguity about the 'ontological content' 'behind' the discourse. In the case of Sells, as we shall see in Chapter Seven, there is 'reference' to an apophatic 'event' behind the apophatic text (3 and 7 in his 'Principles of Apophatic Language'). Kripal is ambiguous here and seems to be closest to the 'ontological agnosticism' we are advocating here, although he does not state it in those terms. From Wittgenstein's analysis we see that the meaning of a discourse is derived not only from the language itself but its context in the 'stream of life': 'words have meaning only in the stream of life.' (RPP1:913).[68] *Pace* Cupitt and the anti-realists, with such a conception it is hard to image a language game that does not 'have contact with reality' ie. 'The stream of life'. As Wittgenstein puts it in *On Certainty*: 'The human frame of reference, that includes the capability of experience and of judgment, is seen as constitutive for our relation to reality' (OC 80.81).[69] The truth of certain empirical propositions cannot be

---

[67] cf PI 435 'For nothing is concealed... for nothing is hidden...'
[68] See also T: 4.031 ' this proposition represents such and such a situation'.
[69] See also LPE: 143. One of the arguments of this thesis is that Wittgenstein's methodology implies an ambivalence towards the ontological commitments of his approach, he is not radically *disontological* as

tested, however our understanding of a proposition can be. Applied to mystical discourse, the 'truth' of these statements cannot be 'tested' (*pace* James and other psychologistic and experientialist approaches) by verification, but they *can be understood* nevertheless: 'The truth of certain empirical propositions (like "I am in pain") belongs to our frame of reference' (OC: 83) and therefore 'the truth of my statements is the test of my understanding of these statements. That is to say: if I make certain false statements, it becomes uncertain whether I understand them' (OC:80.81). The 'human frame of reference' (judgement and experience) is necessary for our relation to reality. To think of a 'language game' entirely unhinged from 'reality', which seems to be the direction of Cupitt's analysis, is neither desirable or helpful; our 'frame of reference' allows for the 'truth' of a particular discourse. Mystical discourse does not necessarily have to be reduced to empirical statements requiring empirical verification, the understanding of the discourse within its framework brings meaning. In Dolejšová's words:

> No sharp distinguishing line can be drawn between what is constitutive for our frame of reference and what is a product of it, what is the capability of experience and of judgment, and what are their expressions. Both are expressed in propositions, and there is no better way of expressing them. Both propositions are part of a kind of "mythology". (Dolejšová 2001: 269)

To illustrate this point Wittgenstein uses the famous metaphor of the riverbed of 'hardened empirical propositions' allowing other fluid propositions to flow in (OC:95 – 97).

We saw above certain attempts to ground the 'certainty' of the mystical event:

1. James's 'transcendental-experientialism' that grounded the mystical event in the 'mystical experience'. This was to be investigated by empirical means.

2. The 'Modern Mysticism' of Vaughan, Inge and Underhill that emphasised a cross-credal ontological entity.

3. The constructivist emphasis on the 'logic' of mystical language.

---

implied by Cupitt and Phillips, nor does his approach suggest the 'hard' realism of, say, Teresa. We can perhaps suggest he opens an ontological door which Teresa, for one, is free to pass through. I am indebted

From Wittgenstein's analysis we are presented with another epistemological alternative which avoids many of the problems we have seen with these three. We are presented with a 'methodological non-foundationalism' (Dolejsova 2001:270) that arises from the frame of reference of our (mystical) speech. Wittgenstein presents three moments to the communicative act: knowing, believing and acting. Within these there is 'hierarchy of certainty': ' in the beginning is the deed', acts come first, which provide the credibility of belief upon which our knowledge is based. In our analysis of the mystical discourse (games) in Part Two of the thesis we will not be looking for a certain extra-linguistic category ('mysticism'/'mystical experience' etc) that grounds the discourse and gives it certainty (The question 'Was so-and-so a mystic or not' is therefore misleading) but the certainty that arises from the knower's *knowledge* in the discourse itself. The certainty arises from the discourse: 'The truth of my statements is the test of my understanding of these statements... If I make false statements, it becomes uncertain whether I understand them' (OC: 80, 81). It is possible to have a 'mystical orientation' without a fixed belief system 'behind it' (whether this is explicitly ontological in the case of Underhill and Inge, or explicity de-ontological in the case of Katz and Cupitt). The meaning of the mystical statement arises from its use by the agent, or as Wittgenstein states in the *Philosophical Investigations*: 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language' (PI: 43). The certainty of mystical discourse is not something to be derived but something from whence we start. Consequently, our emphasis here, using our Wittgensteinian perspective, will be on the *form* of mystical language game or what I will refer to as *performative discourse*.

Wittgenstein's analysis releases the fly of mystical analysis from the mystical fly bottle. We are no longer concerned with finding ghostly ('occult', see Z:605, 606) 'entities' or categories that lie 'behind' mystical discourse ('And so the chorus points to a secret law' RFGB:133). Mystical discourse possesses meaning *qua* mystical discourse. Its language games are embedded in a practice or 'way of life' that enables reference to occur. Rather, our aim is to pursue 'a more active kind of *practical understanding'* in

---

to Chris Insole for help in elucidating this point.

accord with the general thrust of this thesis which is towards a *practical* philosophical theology:

> An understanding that will allow us to 'go on' in an activity in a socially concerted and unconfused manner... Instead of seeking something hidden, something that will explain a circumstance to us, intellectually and passively, (Wittgenstein) provides us with a more active kind of practical understanding. (Schotter 1997:9)

In summary, it is proposed here that 'mystical discourse' be understood as a means of 'changing aspect' through the *Übersichtliche Darstellung.* This then frees us up to 'see the world aright' which will have implications for how we live in a practical way. In short, we could summarise our position by suggesting that *the meaning of mystical speech is found through transformative act.* We turn to how this is done through the move from seeing to acting next.

4.4. From Seeing to Acting: Performative Discourses and Strategies of Elucidation

> *Worte sind Taten* – Words are deeds (Wittgenstein VB: c1945)

> Language is not a representational structure but a presentational act. (Genova 1995:117)

By the time of the last writings, especially *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein is supplementing the 'way of seeing' with a 'way of acting':

> Giving grounds, however, justifying the evidence, comes to an end; - but the end is not certain propositions striking us immeadiately as true, ie. it is not a kind of *seeing* on our part, it is our *acting*, which lies at the bottom of the language game. (OC: 204)

The frame of reference of the mystical discourse in the 'way of life' is essential:

> What has to be accepted, the given, is – so one could say – *forms of life*. (PI: 226)

We have moved 'out of the head' to find understanding and meaning in the wider arena of games. Our aim is not to 'refine or complete the system of rules for the use of our words in unheard-of ways' (PI:133), there is not one 'philosophical method' but 'methods, like different therapies' (*gleichsam verschiedene Therapien*). As we saw in the previous chapter, this analogy with therapy is telling and relates clearly to the 'mystical strategies' of a writer such as Teresa of Avila. As we shall see in Part Two, she is not so much concerned with enunciating metaphysical theories of theology but providing a *practical way of acting* which will help a distressed person find peace and solace. Likewise, Wittgenstein is concerned to move the reader from thinking to seeing and finally acting. The reading of his philosophy, as has been emphasised all along, is not a passive act but must be an active engagement that challenges the reader to engage with the work on all levels. A strategy, as we shall see, he shares with Teresa. As in psychotherapy, both Wittgenstein and Teresa involve us in observing the foundations of possible buildings rather than trying to build one building – the *Weltbild* rather than the *Weltanschauung* (See also Tyler 1999). Like a successful therapist, they do not provide clever interpretations and interventions but allow the clarity of insight (*Übersichtliche Darstellung*) to be turned on the 'foundations of possible buildings'.

This post-enlightenment way of knowing (therapeutic discourse – to which we could add mystical discourse too) requires a more interactive and immediate medium or frame of reference than either thinking or seeing provide. Action is the closest activity available to language and such activity will be tempered by a necessary vein of humility arising from the lack of an overriding *Weltanschauug*, as we shall see in Part Two, humility is a necessary component of the overall 'mystical strategy'.

For Wittgenstein, as with Teresa, *change* and *transformation* are paramount. Both entice us, excite us, goad us and puzzle us. *They are not meant to leave us alone.* They pose us problems (Wittgenstein's thought games, Teresa's word pictures and challenges) which cannot be ignored. By their nature they 'subvert', if they do not subvert they have

failed in their task. If we play their games with them they re-orientate our perceptions of reality, ourselves and our place in the world: hey are primarily *performative discourses* that 'show' rather than 'say'. In Genova's words they are 'elucidations':

> Elucidations are in a class of their own, not quite poem, aphorism or logical equation, they resist categorization... They instruct by example, by showing rather than saying. (Genova 1995:108)

As Wittgenstein states in his preface to the *Tractatus,* there is what is presented on the written page and what is unwritten, and often 'this second part is the important one' (LPE: 143).[70] Thus,

> Instead of helping us 'find' something already existing but supposedly hidden behind appearances, (Wittgenstein's) methods help us grasp something new, as yet unseen, in the emerging articulation of our speech entwined activities. (Schotter 1996:16)

Accordingly, when in the following chapter we turn to the *Sprachspiele* of Teresa and her antecedents we shall identify these *Spiele* as *Performative Discourses for Changing Aspects*. They are discourses out of which action arises and which cannot be viewed without their concomitant context of action.

4.5 Linguistic Stategies: How the Midwife Undertakes Her Work

Anything your reader can do for himself leave to him. (Wittgenstein VB:1948)

As we noted above, one of Wittgenstein's main aims was to let his reader 'do their own work'. He was primarily concerned for his students to 'do their own thinking.' Euan Hill, one of Wittgenstein's last students with whom I recorded a conversation in early 2006 referred to it as 'bootstrapping' from computational theory, ie. you just give enough

[70] cf The Tractatus 4.1212: 'What *can* be shown, *cannot* be said'

programme for the computer itself to go on developing the programme[71]. Thus we find in his writings a variety of subversive or 'prompting' strategies to enable him to do this to his reader. He is not going to bamboozle us or dazzle us with layers of sophisticated theory, rather he will challenge us to wake up and start thinking for ourselves.

Wittgenstein clearly states that he does not want to spare his readers the trouble of 'thinking for themselves' (PI: viii). He says of his later philosophy:

> I do philosophy now like an old woman who is always mislaying something and having to look for it again: now her spectacles, now her key. (OC 532)

Genova comments:

> Dressed as an old woman (a guise used often by philosophers, eg. Diotima) instead of the conquering hero, Wittgenstein pads about his conceptual domain seeking what he mislaid, namely, the pictures that free one from the fly-bottle... Its goal is pure performance in that once it completes its job, to change the way of seeing, it ought to self-destruct. Words ought to dissolve into the attitudes and actions from which they came. They are, in the strictest sense of the word, "deeds". (Genova 1995:129)

Or further, we can say that he disguises himself like Socrates's midwife the better to give birth to individual and independent thought in the listener or reader. As Kallenberg has stressed, he wants to inspire in the reader the same 'passion of subjectivity' as his mentor, Kierkegaard, had in himself.

In such a way of 'doing philosophy' our normal conventions of philosophy and conceptual discourse dissolve. No longer the systematic introduction, exposition and conclusion – these are the requirements of the *Weltanschauung*; the *Weltbild* has differing requirements. His comments appear as a sequence of numbered remarks, sometimes apparently randomly thrown together, yet as we have already seen, we know that he took

---

[71] Conversation in Carshalton, March 2006

great time and trouble arranging and re-arranging their sequence so that the discourse would have the desired performative effect on the person who engaged with it:

> They point or gesture towards ends that are somewhat alien to our current preoccupations. In fact they are written in the form of "striking similes" and "arresting moments" – they have a "poetic quality" their function is to change our "way of looking at things" (PI:144). (Schotter1997:1)

As we shall see in the following chapter, mystical discourse adopts similar strategies to subvert and elude its reader's expectations – in both cases, the goal is 'pure performance'. For Wittgenstein, our words become tools, instruments to challenge and wake us up, he refers to them as 'the levers in the cabin of a locomotive' or 'tools in a toolbox'. Throughout his writings he uses them carefully and develops and traces his strategic elucidations with care and caution. Schotter (1997:14) isolates four 'linguistic strategies' adopted by Wittgenstein:

1. To arrest or interrupt ('to deconstruct') the spontaneous, unselfconscious flow of our ongoing 'mental' activity. These strategies provoke us into examining whether there is 'more to it' than we expected. We are shocked into 'standing back'
2. To use certain 'instructive forms of language' that provoke us to give 'prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily made us overlook'(PI:132). They are 'instructive gestures' which point and show.
3. To suggest new ways of thinking by the use of carefully selected images, similes and metaphors which can help the process giving 'first form to such sensed but otherwise unnoticed distinctions, thus to make reflective contemplation of their nature possible'.
4. To use the comparison of different 'language games' to present 'an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view; one of many possible orders; not the order' (PI:132).

His similes, his playful use of metaphors, are there to 'show' rather than 'say'. They recall us to our right relationship to our language, our selves and those around us. In terms of mystical discourse, we can talk about a play that reminds us of our right relationship with the triune God. Just as the chiropractor hits our bones at certain angles to bring the correct alignment back to the body, so Wittgenstein, and our 'mystical strategists', hit our mental, emotional and spiritual bones at different angles to bring our thought, emotions and spiritual seeing back into right alignment. As part of this subversive linguistic toolkit, Genova (Genova 1995:130) isolates four 'subversive stategies' used by Wittgenstein:

1. Talking to himself
2. Contradicting himself
3. Avoiding arguments and conclusions
4. Refusing orientating structures

When we come to investigate the linguistic strategies, or performative discourse, of Teresa and the *theologia mystica* in part two we shall return to these strategies and compare and contrast these approaches with those adopted by Teresa. For now it is necessary to conclude this chapter with a summary of the argument developed so far.

4.6 Summary

Our analysis of the Wittgensteinian performative discourse in this chapter has opened up a possibility of exploring the mystical 'language games' or 'strategies' whilst remaining 'ontologically agnostic'. Certain key aspects of the Wittgensteinian methodology have been isolated which will be adopted in the rest of this thesis.

The chapter began by emphasising the adoption of a *Weltbild* (rather than a *Weltanschauung*) based upon an *Übersichtliche Darstellung.* It was then argued that Wittgenstein sees a change of *Weltbild* as necessary to 'change our aspect' or 'way of looking at the world'. Ultimately, we argued, this will inevitably lead to a change of life or action. Drawing upon Wittgenstein's writings we emphasised the importance of *action*

and performance to his understanding of discourse. We suggested that similar strategies can be found in mystical discourse and proposed to search for this *performative discourse* in the *theologia mystica* of the Western tradition, in particular in the writings of Teresa of Avila. In investigating these writings in Part Two from this Wittgensteinian perspective the following points will be borne in mind:

1. We shall not be seeking to find quasi-ontological 'mystical entities' in the texts. We choose not to adopt this essentialist methodology (the position of 'modern mysticism' elaborated in Chapter Two). Following the arguments presented above, we shall be observing the *Weltbild* of the discourse.
2. Although we shall not adopt an essentialist approach to mystical discourse we shall not, conversely, see that discourse as a cold contextualist narrative. We shall analyse the discourse from its performative or participatory perspective. That is to say we appreciate the *transformational* aspect of mystical discourse and how it leads, in a Wittgensteinian sense, from saying to showing to acting. We are concerned with the whole communicative intent of mystical speech as transformative act.
3. It was argued above how Wittgenstein delineates a philosophical method that concentrates as much on *how* something is said as much as *what* is said. Therefore, in applying his methods to the writings of Teresa of Avila we shall concentrate as much on *how* she says something as much as *what* is said. Thus, when we turn to the texts of Teresa of Avila we shall be concentrating on the performative aspects of her texts as we compare them with similar strategies in the writings of Wittgenstein.
4. We have isolated a move in Wittgenstein from *thinking to seeing to acting*. We shall show in the following chapters how such a move helps elucidate the 'mystical strategies' of the *theologia mystica* to produce a similar move from thinking about God to experiencing God through what is termed embodiment or affectivity. As well as the 'deconstructive strategy' suggested above it forms, we shall argue, the second strategy of the *theologia mystica*.

Having argued against using the essentialism of 'modern mysticism' and the cold linguistic analysis of constructivism to approach the writings of Teresa of Avila, Part One of the thesis will conclude with the proposal for analysing her writings from a third perspective based on the Wittgensteinian approach outlined in this chapter. Namely, what we propose to call *the performative discourse of theologia mystica.* The final chapter of Part One will be devoted to developing this idea and its implications.

Chapter Five: Mystical Strategies and Performative Discourse of the *Theologia Mystica*

The rest of this dissertation will concentrate on applying the Wittgensteinian approach developed in the previous chapter to the 'mystical strategies' of the writings of Teresa of Avila. However, before we turn to those writings themselves, which we will do in Part Two, we need to clarify one final term we have already introduced and which will be used for the rest of this dissertation – namely that of *theologia mystica*.

So far it has been argued that both 'modern mysticism' and pure constructivism *à la* Cupitt and Katz are limited as approaches to 'mystical texts' such as those of Teresa of Avila. In the previous chapter a Wittgensteinian approach was presented which sees the mystical text through the *Weltbild* of an *Übersichtliche Blick* that concentrates on the performative aspects of the discourse. It is this approach which will be taken to Teresa's texts in Part Two. However, before that is done it is necessary to explain something of the tradition to which Teresa is heir and which will be referred to as the tradition (or performative discourse) of *theologia mystica*. At the beginning of Chapter Two we saw how commentators such as de Certeau emphasised the origins of *la mystique* as a distinctive area of humanistic study and that out of this 'modern mysticism' would eventually arise. In this chapter it will be argued that there is a distinctive pre-modern tradition of what we term the 'performative discouse of *theologia mystica*' that arises from interpretations of the Dionysian texts in the Parisian schools of the twelfth/thirteenth centuries and thence spreads throughout Europe reaching Teresa via the texts of Francisco de Osuna (whom she terms 'her master') and Jean Gerson. By applying the Wittgensteinian *Blick* developed in the previous chapter, this chapter will concentrate on the language game of *theologia mystica* and highlight two 'performative discourses' that will be explored in Teresa's writings in Part Two of the thesis.

5.1 The Creation of the Medieval Dionysian Tradition: The *Corpus Dionysiacum*

Key to understanding the tradition of *theologia mystica* to which Teresa was heir are the writings variously alluded to as the *Dionysian Corpus*. These writings evolved through one thousand years of interpretation and translation to assume, by the late medieval period, a unique position in the West's understanding of theological exegesis, becoming identified with the tradition of *theologia mystica*.

The four works and epistles (Ep) of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*: the *Mystical Theology* (MT), *Celestial Hierarchy* (CH), *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* (EH) and *Divine Names* (DN) make their first entry in Western intellectual life through the Greek manuscipt presented to Louis the Pious, the Frankish king, by the Eastern emperor, Michael the Stammerer, in 827.[72] Attributed to the Areopagite who appears in Acts 17:34 the works retained semi-canonical status throughout most of the Middle Ages until Erasmus and Lorenzo Valla began to question the attribution in the early sixteenth century. Their doubts were reflected by Luther who used Erasmus's phrase '*Dionyisus ille quisquis fuerit' ('Dionysius, whoever he was')* in his *Psalms Commentary* of 1519-1521.[73] Despite this, the apostolic authority of Dionysius continued to be defended into modern times, however, scholarly work in the nineteenth century by Stiglmayr and Koch (1895) demonstrated conclusively the link between Dionysius and the neo-platonic circle around Proclus, one of the last heads of Plato's Academy in Athens, the Academy itself being closed in 529 by the Emperor Justinian. Accordingly, it looks as though our author could not have been writing before the middle of the fifth century and most likely dates from the turn of the fifth and sixth centuries. In the words of Andrew Louth:

---

[72] The most recent scholarly edition of the original Greek texts is the *Corpus Dionysiacum* edited by Suchla, Heil and Ritter (Berlin 1990). In this section we shall largely be concerned with the twelfth century interpretations of the text that formed the tradition of *theologia mystica* in the West. Accordingly we shall concentrate on the Latin versions of the text found in *Dionysiaca* (Paris 1937 – 1950), *Patrologia Latina* (Paris 1844), Harrington (Paris 2004) and McEvoy (Paris 2003). For English Translations we shall draw on *Pseudo-Dionysius:The Complete Works* trans Luibheid and Rorem (New York 1987), *Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names and Mystical Theology* (London 1920) and *Denis Hid Divinity* edited by McCann (London1924) and Walsh (New York 1988). See Bibliography for full details.

[73] *Luthers Werke,* Weimar Edition 5, 503:9-10

> Denys the Areopagite, the Athenian convert, stands at the point where Christ and Plato meet. The pseudonym expressed the author's belief that the truths that Plato grasped belong to Christ, and are not abandoned by embracing faith in Christ. (Louth 1989:11).[74]

Whoever the real author was, and perhaps we shall never know, the texts represent a fascinating insight into the world of late paganism and emerging Christianity, suggesting as Louth indicates, an interplay between the two forces.

Early on *scholia* were written to the texts by John of Scythopolis and Maximus the Confessor,[75] the former possibly in close contact with the original author.[76] The Dionysian texts are first cited in an ecclesiastical forum at the Council of Constantinople in 532 although the *scholia* were already closely associated with the documents by this time (Louth 1989:112).

As already mentioned, the documents really entered the Western tradition with the gift of a codex from Michael the Stammerer to Louis the Pious in 827.[77] Louis gave the work to Hilduin, Abbot of St Denis in Paris, to translate into Latin, he went further in identifying the author of the texts with St Denis, the bishop and martyr of Paris in his hagiographical *Passio sanctissimi Dionysii* (See Chevallier 1957:319). Compounded with the identification with Dionysius, the first bishop of Athens, (first by Eusebius) the texts now assumed an authority that would be unassailable throughout the Middle Ages (Sells 1994:34, Pelikan 1987:21).

Hilduin's translation (H), made between 832-835, was the first of a long line of Latin translations of the text.[78] Théry, who rediscovered and edited it, believed it to be the

---

[74] The main works drawn upon for this study of Dionysius are as follows: The article in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité (DS), 'Denys L'Aréopagite: Doctrine'* 3:244-86 by René Roques and his 1954 work *L'univers dionysien.* Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius. A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their Influence* (1993). Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (1989), McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism,* (1991), Knowles (1975) and the commentaries and articles found in the texts by Luibheid, Harrington, McEvoy and Walsh mentioned in the previous footnote.

[75] See von Balthasar *Herrlichkeit:einer theologische Ästhetik, II. Fächer der Stile, 1. Klerikale Stile. (*1962)

[76] See Saffrey (1979) 3 –16, Suchla (1980)

[77] Although they were known to Gregory the Great who refers to them in Homily 34 on the Gospels (see Louth 1989: 121)

[78] Unless otherwise stated, our main source for the Latin translations is *Dionysiaca.* The Hilduin translation was rediscovered and edited by Gabriel Théry in 1932 and reprinted in *Études dionysiennes,* vol 1 (Paris, Vrin) 101 –42 using the manuscript of the BN 15645. It is reproduced in *Dionysiaca*

collaborative work of three people. This would accord with medieval practices of translation as found later in centres of scholarly translation such as Toledo in Spain. In both cases one party would read out the manuscript which would then be orally translated from Greek to Latin by a second party, and finally written down by a third party. The result is highly erratic and has been called unreadable (Harrington 2004:1), he employs up to sixteen different translations for some Greek words and there seems to be little understanding of the text being translated. The text was soon superseded by that of Eriugena (810-77) made some thirty years later around 862 on the command of Charles the Bald, Louis's son.

John 'The Scot' Eriugena was a philosophical theologian in his own right, the translation of the *Corpus* being followed by at least three significant works in the area: the *Periphyseon* or *De Divisione naturae* of the 860s, the *Commentary* on Dionysius's *Celestial Hierarchy* and the *Homily and Commentary* on St John's Gospel.[79] The importance of Eriugena's translation of Dionysius was its ability to have greater intelligibility than Hilduin's whilst retaining a lot of the unusual language and terminology of the original Greek. Later translations may have been more accessible but Eriugena retained something of the wildness and rough edge of the original. For example, whenever Eriugena comes across a Greek word with the *ὑπερ-* prefix he simply creates a new word with a *super-* prefix, thus, *ὑπέρθεε* becomes *superdeus* which we could render in English as *over-god* or *hyper-god.* The 'roughness' of the 'mystical text' being a characteristic we have already isolated in the previous chapter as part of their 'performative discourse'. As with Teresa and Wittgenstein it is notable that scholarly approaches to the Dionysian texts have been divided between those who want to 'tidy them up' to produce a coherent theoretical whole, and those who want them to retain their 'rough edges' and concomitant 'oddness'.[80]

When Eriugena's translation was sent to Rome for approval the reaction of the papal librarian, Anastasius, to this seemingly miraculous manifestation of cultural genius

---

[79] See DS 3:250, McGinn 1994: 80 –118

[80] As McGinn points out (1994:80 *passim*) Eriugena holds three distinct cultural streams in his writing: the Latin, Celtic and Greek. The result is a unique synthesis that was to play a significant role in the future development of the *theologia mystica* tradition.

from the far flung outposts of 'civilisation' was summarised in his letter accompanying the manuscipt:

> It is also cause for wonder by what means that uncultivated foreigner (*vir ille barbarus*), placed on the borders of the world, ... could grasp such matters with his intellect and translate them into another tongue: I mean John the Irishman, a man who I know by hearsay is in all things holy. But herein was the working of that creative Spirit who made this man as fervent as he was eloquent... For love was the master who taught this man what he accomplished for the instruction and edification of many.[81]

While marvelling at the work he also lamented the shortfalls in Eriugena's approach. Part of Anastasius's response to the translation was to complement it with translations of the *scholia* to the *corpus* which had been attached to it from its earliest appearance and associated with John of Scythopolis and Maximus the Confessor (See Harrington 2004: 16 –18).[82] Not having to rely on the same (impaired) document as Eriugena held at Saint Denis, Anastasius was also able to correct some aspects of Eriugena's translation as well as adding some scholia of his own.[83]

This process of annotation and correction, usually in the addition of marginalia, would continue for the next three centuries so that by the time the Latin West reengaged with the documents in the 'twelfth century Renaissance' they were already heavily annotated from seven hundred years of commentary. In Harrington's words:

> The thirteenth-century reader came to the text of the *Mystical Theology* with much of the interpretative work already done for him, finding difficult metaphors and foreign concepts set within a more familiar Latin framework. (2004:27)

---

[81] In PL 122:1025, translation Mary Brennan *Materials for the Biography of Johannes Scottus Eriugena* in *Studia Medievali* 3a serie 27 (1986): 431

[82] On the methodology of Anastasius's translation see Neil 1998

[83] eg PG 4:417.6 *Ardentibus: Ardentes quod interpres posuit Graecus on imbutos seu initiatos – id est on conscecratos – habet. Er notandum quod alios indoctos dicat et alios non imbutos – 'Firebrands': Where*

Central to the twelfth century revival of interest in Dionysius was Paris, especially its emerging university and the still influential Abbey of Saint-Denis (see Leclercq 1987:27 also Haskins 1957, Morris 1972, Knowles 1962). [84] In addition, the group of writers and commentators associated with the Abbey of St Victor in Paris took particular interest in the Dionysian *corpus*. The abbey grew with the schools of Paris and was open to the new theological developments of the university and from its inception it was concerned with questions on the relationship between the *intellectus* and *affectus*. The distinctive Victorine tradition established there combined 'a vigorous program of Bible study, serious and creative theological investigation and disciplined pursuit of contemplation all set in the context of a community orientated towards liturgical regularity and shared experience' (Zinn 1979:3). The abbey continued to flourish throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, surviving until the French revolution when it was destroyed.

From the point of view of this thesis, the chief development which would shape future interpretations of the Dionysian texts and indeed the shaping of the tradition of *theologia mystica* itself in the late Middle Ages, which was so important for Teresa, was this very combination of *intellectus* and *affectus* in the understanding of the texts.

Of the first generation of Victorines, the most celebrated was Hugh of St Victor (1096 –1141), probably born in Saxony he moved to St Victor around 1115 being elected abbot of the foundation in 1133.[85] Hugh's *Commentary* on Dionysius's *Celestial Hierarchy* was incorporated into the commentaries on the Dionysian corpus circulating in Paris and became part of the standard Dionysian edition until the late medieval period (See Harrington 2004:3).

---

the Translator puts 'firebrands' the Greek has 'unimbued' or 'unitiated' – that is, 'unhallowed'. Note that Dionysius calls some 'untaught' and others 'unimbued' (Harrington 2004:63)

[84] The Abbey was founded by William of Champeaux, a master of the schools of Paris and described by Abelard as 'the first dialectician of his age', founding the abbey after retiring from the schools in 1108. He set up a small community at the site of an old hermitage on the left bank of the Seine just beyond the walls of Paris. Almost, it seems, by accident a community grew up around William who departed in 1113 to be made Bishop of Chalons. His disciple, Gilduin, was elected first Abbot of the community in the same year and under his leadership the abbey grew and flourished. Following the *Rule of St Augustine*, the community was at the forefront of clerical renewal through prayer, study and liturgy.

[85] A prolific writer he combined theology, biblical exegesis, contemplation, philosophy, rhetoric and knowledge of the original biblical languages. He seems to have had knowledge of both Greek and Hebrew and evidently happy to consult contemporary Jewish authorities on the Jewish sense of the scriptures. (Turner 1995a: 265).

Recent scholarship has highlighted the complexity of the nature of the *corpus Dionysiacum* as it was taught at the University and disseminated throughout Europe.[86] To prepare his 2004 edition of the Paris text of the *Theologia Mystica*, Harrington uses two main manuscripts: MS. *Paris, Bibliotheque nationale, lat.17341(C)* and *lat. 1619 (D)* (Harrington 2004: 34) both dating from the thirteenth century and held by the Dominican convent of Saint-Jacques and the University of Paris respectively. The contents of these manuscripts reveal how the dionysian 'midrash' had developed by this time. As well as the Latin translations of Hilduin and Eriugena there are Hilduin's preface to the whole *corpus*[87], Anastasius's letter to Charles the Bald of 23rd March 875 as well as some of his *scholia*, verses of Eriugena and Eriugena's letter to Charles introducing his translation. Finally there are the contributions of the Victorines: Hugh of St Victor's prologue and commentary, the commentary of John Sarracenus and the paraphrase of Thomas Gallus.

The Victorines were at the forefront of the reintroduction and re-examination of the corpus, introducing innovations that have been referred to as the interpretation of 'affective Dionysianism' (See Rorem 1993:216, McGinn 1998c:84). It is precisely this late medieval 'affective Dionysiasnism' which will produce the *theologia mystica* to which Teresa is heir.

Sarracenus produced his version of the *corpus* in 1166-7, the first full translation since Eriugena, some three hundred years earlier. As Dondaine points out (1953:64), Sarracenus used the glosses of Anastasius and Hugh of St Victor to perfect and advance his own translation.[88] Generally, as we shall see, Sarracenus in his translation (S) smoothes out some of the inconsistencies and hard edges in Eriugena to present a more flowing Latin text. In particular, he avoided the strange Greek-Latin hybrid words that Eriugena often produced from his straightforward transliterations of Greek terms. Thus

---

[86] See especially Dondaine 1953 and the editions of Harrington and McEvoy already cited.
[87] This can be found in PL 106
[88] We know next to nothing of Sarracenus himself, it even being unclear whether he was actually a brother of St-Victor (See Solignac 1988:353). We know that he was translator at St-Denys under the Abbot Odon between 1162-69 and whilst John of Salisbury was in exile in France between 1164 –70. Solignac suggests he may have acquired his *nomme de plume* 'Saracen' during a sojourn in the Middle East during the second crusade (1147 – 49), this may also have been an occasion for him to have access to the Greek manuscripts of Dionysius whilst in the Byzantine territories. The letters of John of Salisbury (see PL 199:143-144) suggest that he was working in Poitiers after his time under Abbot Odon, possibly one of the 'magister scholarum' of the cathedral school. Théry having found nothing to give further evidence of his later career in either the archives of St-Denis or Chartres (1950:45).

he renders *θεοσοφίας* in MT as *divina sapientia (lit: divine wisdom)* rather than Eriugena's *theosophia (lit: theosophy)*. However, he does retain the *super-* terms introduced by Hilduin and Eriugena (*ὑπέρθεε* changes gender from *superdeus* to *superdea* in MT presumably in reference to the holy *Sapientia*, however the text remains ambiguous with the reference to *trinitas*).

To complete our references to the twelfth/thirteenth century translators of Dionysius and the creation of the 'dionysian tradition' we need to finally mention Thomas Gallus and Robert Grosseteste.

The work of Gabriel Théry in the middle of the twentieth century recovered the importance of Thomas Gallus (also known as Thomas of St Victor and Vercellensis) in the interpretative tradition of the *Corpus Dionysiaca.*[89] In regard to the *corpus*, Gallus's lasting achievement can be seen as the introduction of the affective Victorine tradition into the tradition of Dionysian interpretation. Drawing mainly on the translation of Sarracenus, he continued the tradition of glosses on the corpus producing glosses on the whole Dionysian body, completed in 1233. McEvoy's recent edition of the Glosses of Gallus on the *Mystical Theology* contains much previously unedited material of these glosses (he refers to it as the *Expocisio* – McEvoy 2003:5). We shall refer to this below.

Following the Glosses, Gallus completed an *Extractio* of the whole corpus in 1238. In McEvoy's words 'The *Extractio* constitutes a literary genre all of its own... It was, one might say, just the thing required by the busy university minds of his age, who were eager for doctrinal understanding but were largely untroubled by any kind of philological or antiquarian curiosity' (McEvoy 2003:5). The result is a curious document that 'translates' the Dionysian corpus into the Latin world of the thirteenth century and would have considerable influence over the next centuries.[90] This was finally followed by a full *Explanacio* of the whole corpus produced between 1241 and 1243, the date of his

---

[89] Born in France sometime in the late twelfth century (hence 'Gallus', in Italy he was referred to as 'Thomas Parisiensis') we know that he was a canon of St Victor and was a professor of theology at the University of Paris. In 1219, on the invitation of Cardinal Guala Bicchieri, Thomas and two other canons travelled from Paris to Vercelli in Northern Italy (Bicchieri's native town) to found an abbey and hospital. Thomas was subsequently elected prior in 1224 and abbot in 1226. Most of the next seventeen years were spent at Vercelli apart from a lengthy visit to England in 1238 (where he had discussions with Grosseteste, another translator of the dionysian *corpus*). Being finally deposed as abbot in 1243 as a casualty of the thirteenth century conflict between the Guelphs and Ghibelines. He may have been reinstated at the abbey before his death where his remains lie to this day.

[90] Reprinted in Dion 1:710 -712

exile from Vercelli. This has not received a full modern critical edition despite the pioneering work of Théry. [91]

What are the distinctive qualities of Gallus's work? As stated above, Gallus is at the beginning of the second wave of Dionysian reception in the West following the first wave headed by Eriugena in the ninth century. Here, as has been pointed out (see especially Rorem 1993:214–219 and McGinn 1998c) the *affective* interpretation of Dionysius begins to surface. Influenced by Augustine (as passed down from Richard and Hugh of St Victor), Thomas also incorporated the influences of the newly inspired Cistercian movement, especially in Bernard's inspiration found in the *Song of Songs.*[92]

The final commentator and translator we shall refer to in this survey is the Englishman Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (c 1168 – 1253). As the University of Paris and its scholastic culture was growing throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries so too the University at Oxford was developing, where Grosseteste's contribution was significant (See McEvoy 2000). Callus's work in the twentieth century argued for a date of 1240-43 for Grosseteste's translation (Callus 1947) which is now largely accepted (McEvoy 2003:56). Using the translations of Eriugena and Sarracenus, he used his own knowledge of Greek to further refine their work. Significantly, there is a uniformity of Latin word assignment, so that each Greek term tends to receive a constant Latin translation. As with our other authors, his translation was accompanied with a commentary and glosses. We shall use the translation found in *Dionysiaca*: R.[93]

Like Gallus, Grosseteste places importance on the 'affective' interpretation of the Areopagite. However, of the two, Grosseteste had the deeper knowledge of Greek and this shows in his deeper understanding of the Greek inflections of the original text, in this

---

[91] Although much is to be found in J. Walsh's doctoral dissertation on Gallus (Walsh 1957)

[92] Although Leclercq suggests that the Dionysian corpus played only a minor role in the Cistercian reforms of the twelfth century. David Bell notes (1978:265) that Thomas the Cistercian in his Commentary on the Song of Songs 'does not seem to care for Pseudo-Dionysius... It is interesting to note the conspicuous lack of Dionysian ideas and terminology in Thomas's works... Thomas, like Bernard, remains Latin.' The same, Leclercq claims, can be said of Bruno and the founders of the Carthusian order.

[93] As McEvoy points out, the two commentators, Gallus and Grosseteste, as well as sharing the same intellectual resources and milieu were also companions and addressed questions to one another and it seems likely they may have met in 1238 during Gallus's visit to the church of Chesterton.

respect his translations sometimes refers back to the awkward 'Greek-Latinisms' of Eriugena.

Following Dondaine (1953) we can see that by the thirteenth century the University of Paris had amalgamated Eriugena's translation and commentary on Dionysius, as well as sections of the *Periphyseos*, with Sarracenus's and Anastasius's translations and the commentaries of Hugh of St Victor and Sarracenus to produce a Dionysian omnibus for use in the University. The translation and commentary of Thomas Gallus added a new dimension to the Dionysian corpus by its emphasis on the affective and the emphasis on the 'ray of darkness' and 'cloud of unknowing'. Dionysius's mystical union with God is now made through love (*affectus*) rather than intelligence. It is this thread of interpretation of the Dionysian corpus made by subsequent writers that creates what we term the *theologia mystica.*

In subsequent printings of the Dionysian corpus into the early modern periods the work of Gallus and Grosseteste was combined with that of the other authors mentioned. Thus, the Strassbourg printing of the corpus of 1502-03 (Salisbury 1502) contains the Grosseteste ('Lincolniensis') and Sarracenus translations and commentary together with the *Extractio* of Gallus. As McEvoy comments:

> It cannot be too much emphasised that the entire later interpretation of the *Mystical Theology* was deflected into the path it actually followed through the combined influence of Thomas Gallus and Robert Grosseteste. These earliest Latin commentators provided the context within which not only the mystical theology of monastery and university but also the actual spiritual experience of countless souls was to be formed. (2003:128)

5.2 The Mystical Strategies of Dionysius

Having elaborated what we mean by the 'Dionysian corpus' we shall now use the Wittgensteinian approach of this dissertation to look at the Dionysian texts from this perspective. We shall not be looking for 'occult entities' but rather examining the *Sprachspiele,* arguing for a 'mystical strategy' or 'performative discourse' within these

writings. In doing so we shall be concentrating on Dionysius's performative strategies as laying down the basic form of the *theologia mystica* as it will be inherited and used by Teresa in the sixteenth century.

As we are particularly concerned here with the development of the tradition of *theologia mystica* in the Western tradition between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries we shall concentrate mainly on the Latin texts of Dionysius available to Western writers in this area, ie. the translations of Eriugena, Sarracenus, Grosseteste and Gallus as outlined above.

In his striking essay on Dionysius in *Herrlichkeit: Eine theologische Ästhetik* (von Balthasar 1962) von Balthasar emphasises the unique nature of Dionysius's writing and how with him *style* is an essential element in understanding his process:

> With Denys we have a unique case in theology, indeed in all intellectual history. A man of the foremost rank and of prodigious power hid his identity not only from centuries of credulity but also from the critical acumen of the modern period, and precisely through that concealment exercised his influence. That for our modern, and above all German, scholarly world is unforgiveable. After their tank-formations have laid waste his garden, there is for them not a blade of grass left: all that remains is PSEUDO-, written in bold letters, and underlined with many marks of contempt. (von Balthasar 1984:144)

Von Balthasar reminds us of the special nature of the mystical text, and this *Ur*-text of the Western tradition in particular. The attempt, since Koch and Stiglmair, to discover the 'real' Areopagite is not only ill-founded but also missing the point of the texts themselves and the role they have played in the Western tradition: 'All these untenable hypotheses are signs of a certain spiritual 'colour blindness' which prevents them, for all their individual scholarship (which Stiglmair, Pera, Honigmann and the rest doubtless have), from grasping the general flow of the Areopagitic handwriting'(von Balthasar 1984:146).[94] Within the fun that von Baltasar is clearly having with the 'pseudo-nature of

[94] 'Is one telling the Syrian monk in 500AD anything new', von Balthasar asks, ' if one proves to him that he was not converted by the speech on the Areopagus in 50AD? Or does not the whole phenomenon exist

Dionysius, there is also the concealed truth that he is picking up that as a *mystical strategist* the author of the Dionysian *Corpus* understands that he must adopt special strategies to get his reader 'to do their own work'. These are the foundations of the subversive or 'mystical strategies' that Teresa will eventually inherit.

As his teacher Hierotheus did, von Balthasar argues, so Dionysius also engaged in a method of what we might term 'indirect transmission' to get his message across. The text is indeed *performative* rather than *informative* :

> Hierotheus is the surpassing genius, his work "is like a kind of second sacred scripture which discloses itself immediately to those who are divinely inspired", his "vision, self-witnessed, of the spiritual revelations" and his "synoptic manner of teaching" presupposes a spiritual power that stands (*presbytikē*) closer to God (cf. DN III.2). (von Balthasar 1984:150)

Von Balthasar in this commentary limits himself to 'unfolding his teacher's "synoptic" statements'(1984:157). The 'object' of the discourse, that is, our engagement with the material can only be 'grasped' by a 'circling movement' where we are 'mutually implicated' in the method (see Ep.8).

The moment of Dionysius is a moment of 'celebration' – it is a festival or dance (cf CH: 7.4, Ep.8):

> The style strides along so consciously loaded, draped with so many sacred garments, that it makes any haste impossible and compels us not only to follow him in his train of thought but also to join with him in his mood of celebration.[95] (Von Balthasar 1984:172)

---

on an utterly different level?' This 'utterly different level' which contrasts a post-Cartesian scientism with an alternative hermeneutic lies at the heart of this thesis. For Balthasar, Dionysius's 'identification of his task with a situation in space and time immeadiately next to John and Paul clearly corresponds for him to a necessity which, had he not heeded it, would have meant a rank insincerity and failure to respond to truth' (149) 'One does not *see* who Denys *is*, if one cannot see this identification as a context for his veracity,' 'And' he concludes 'one can only rejoice over the fact that he succeeded in vanishing behind the Areopagite for a millennium, and that now afterwards, in the age of opening of graves, he has been brought out, he stubbornly hides his face, I suppose, for ever.'

[95] Cf. Wittgenstein's deliberate 'slowing the reader down' by the style of his writing.

Theology, as Dionysius 'hymns' it, is as much 'initiation' as 'discourse'. This is the 'indirect initiation' of Hierotheus, reflecting the *myesthai* of the classical initiation into the Dionysian cult (see DN:1.8, 3.1,3.2 CH:2.5 and 1.5 where the whole of Christianity is described as a 'mystery religion'). As von Balthasar points out, even the term *thiasōtēs* - that of the participant in the cult of Dionysius - is used by Dionysius in CH: 2.1, 3.2 and EH: 1.1. Dionysius, following Plato and his neo-Platonic interpreters, makes a contrast between the rational philosophy that persuades by dialectic and the means of *logos* and reason and this latter kind of 'initiation' that is formulated through the *mythos* (Louth 1989: 25), cf. Ep.9:

> The traditions of the theologians is twofold, on the one hand ineffable and mystical, on the other manifest and more knowable; on the one hand symbolic and presupposing initiation, on the other philosophical and capable of proof – and the ineffable is interwoven with what can be uttered. The one persuades and contains within itself the truth of what it says, the other effects and establishes the soul with God by initiations that do not teach anything. (Ep: 9, D: 1105)[96]

We have returned again to the Wittgensteinian world of 'saying' and 'showing'. Theology in these texts does not so much 'say' as 'show' – this is the purpose of the discourse. This latter method, the method of *pathein*, suffering, *mythos*, the 'one that does not teach anything' is the one explicity used by Dionysius's master Hierotheus:

> Whatever he learned directly from the sacred writers, whatever his own perspicacious and laborious research of the scriptures uncovered for him, or whatever was made known to him through that more mysterious inspiration, not only learning (*mathōn*) but also experiencing (*pathōn*) the divine things. For he had a 'sympathy' with such matters, if I may express it this way, and he was

[96] Louth also draws the parallel with Aristotle's distinction within the Eleusian mysteries, that the initiate does not *learn (mathein)* anything but *experiences or suffers (pathein*) something – (Aristotle, *De Philosophia frag* 15)

perfected in a mysterious union with them and in a faith in them which was independent of any teaching. (DN: 2.9)

Just as for the ancients in their Dionysian initiation, so his contemporary Christians 'cannot grasp the breadth and length, the height and depth' of the revelation of Jesus Christ' (DN: 2.9, cf. Paul Eph:3).

Louth suggests that Hierotheus is being described as 'some kind of experiential mystic' which immeadiately leads to the fruitless discussion on the nature of 'mystical experience' we analysed in Chapter Two above. Fruitless and ultimately unable to be concluded precisely for the reasons we have already stated: 'whether it is the individual experience of the mystic (maybe of some ecstatic kind) that is involved is not so clear' (1989:25). Von Balthasar avoids this danger by concentrating on the discourse rather than any supposed originary experience (as is adopted in this thesis) and thus avoiding any supposed scientistic links to a post-Cartesian 'mystical phenomenology' (the 'occult entities' of Wittgenstein).[97] As stated above, no one can 'prove' whether Hierotheus, Dionysius, or anyone else for that matter, was or was not a 'mystic' or had 'mystical experience'. What we can do (and do here) is concentrate on the *performative role* of the discourse and its relation to the 'initiation' described by Dionysius, Hierotheus and von Balthasar (following Plato, Aristotle and St Paul). We shall see how this will later feed into the affective interpretation of Dionysius.

How then is this initiation enacted? How does Dionysius, the initiator of *theologia mystica* initiate?

Dionysius begins the *Divine Names* by stating that what he is about to set down, must, by necessity, transcend the 'realm of discourse or of intellect' (DN: 1.1). The 'hidden divinity' cannot be set down by means of 'words or conceptions'. The heart of this revelation lying in the 'sacred oracles' or 'scripture' (DN: 1.4). He talks of a 'divine enlightenment' 'into which we have been initiated by the hidden tradition of our inspired teachers', 'a tradition at one with scripture'.

If such 'divine names' transcend all conception and words, how can we speak of them? For 'the union of divinised minds with the Light beyond all deity occurs in the

---

[97] I am grateful to Gerard Loughlin for clarifying this point.

cessation of all intelligent activity' (DN: 1.5). Drawing from scripture, the names are primarily *praised*. The Trinity, for Dionysius, cannot be expressed, only the 'aporias of unknowing' (see Sells in Chapter Seven below) can contain it. Thus Dionysius introduces his *hyper-* terms in DN:2.4 ('supra-essential subsistence, supra-divine divinity, supra-excellent goodness, supremely individual identity') which will be reproduced at the beginning of the *Mystical Theology*. For God, for Dionysius, is 'beyond every assertion and denial', for in the following chapters of the *Divine Names*, Dionysius does not try and *describe* the divine reality but rather plays with various models and pictures of the divine. As has been pointed out (See McGinn 1991) his first choice of names reflects the neo-platonic structures with which he works: good, light, beautiful, eros, ecstasy and zeal.

It is perfectly possible, following the suggestion of Endre von Ivánka in his *Plato Christianus* (1964) to see the structure of the *Divine Names* as reflecting Neo-Platonic treatises on the Good (cf *The Republic* Books 4–6), the 'neoplatonic triad' of Being-Life-Wisdom and the Constantian Triad of Wisdom-Power-Peace.[98] As McGinn points out (1991:161), the theological heart of the text seems to be how the utterly unknowable God manifests himself in creation in order that all creation may return to this unknowable source. On the level of thought – *intellectus* – the divine is utterly unknowable. This is the point of the aporia, the incomprehensibility, heralded by **the strategy of deconstruction and unknowing** leading to the necessary transformation required by the texts. When we look at the mystical texts of Teresa in Part Two we shall argue that she, following this tradition, accomplishes this by disorientation, contradiction, aporia and the humility of unknowing .

Despite his neo-platonic credentials, Dionysius is primarily a Christian author (as von Balthasar makes abundantly clear) and these processes take place within specifically Christian engagement, in particular the Divine Liturgy and the message of the Scriptures (referred to by Dionysius as the 'divine oracles'). The *theologia mystica* is born within this context and it would be misguided to try and divorce it from this context. Following

---

[98] Von Balthasar presents his own schema based on the neoplatonic emanation and return of God (1984:189)

the process of Dionysius, if *knowledge* of the Divine is not possible, how do we access the 'supra-real'?

Here, Dionysius relies on the other key strategy of the *theologia mystica* which will be explored in this thesis – **the strategy of affectivity/embodiment.** In DN: 4 Dionysius introduces his discussion of *eros* and the erotic and how *eros* connects us to the deity. In McGinn's words:

> The Dionysian program is a cosmic one in which the divine Eros refracts itself into the multiple theophanies of the universe, which in turn erotically strive to pass beyond their mulitiplicity back into simple unity. (1991:161)

All movement in the hierarchy of creation, for Dionysius, comes from above and is 'fundamentally erotic'. Not only do all things strive erotically for the Beautiful and the Good (DN: 4), but the Deity itself is *Eros*: 'Divine *Eros* is the Good of the Good for the sake of the Good' (DN: 4.10, McGinn's translation). Using the Proclean procession of *monē,* (remaining), *proodos* (proceeding) and *epistrophē* (reverting), God in God's being as *eros* is able to proceed out to all creation and remain in the Godhead at the same time:

> It must be said that the very cause of the universe in the beautiful, good superabundance of his benign *eros* for all is carried outside of himself in the loving care he has for everything. He is, as it were, beguiled by goodness, by *agape* and by *eros* and is enticed away from his dwelling place and comes to abide within all things, and he does so by virtue of his supernatural and ecstatic capacity to remain, nevertheless, within himself. (DN: 4.13, translation McGinn)

Thus, the 'sympathetic' initiation described above is also an *erotic* initiation. *Eros*, is the occasion for the 'special experience of knowing' (*pathein*) in contrast to the 'knowing by mental effort' (*mathein*).[99] It is the arena of Hierothus's initiation:

---

[99] The *sympatheia*, as McGinn following Rorem (1982) points out, is a key term in late Neoplatonism in making the connection between the different levels of the 'theurgy' possible: '*sympathy* for Dionysius is not so much an ontological bond by which material things are manipulated to acquire an access to the upper world as it is an affinity for 'reading' the inner meaning of the hierarchies as manifestations of the

> By some more divine inspiration, not only learning the things of God but experiencing them, and through this sympathy with them, if we may say this, having been consummated in initiation into mystical union and faith in them which cannot be taught. (DN: 2.9 translation McGinn).

Or to put it in our terms above, it is a knowing which involves the libidinal or *affectus* as much as the *intellectus*. Within Dionysius's mystical game the strategy of deconstruction is complemented by the strategy of embodied, erotic affectivity.

'What cannot be demonstrated' by the Church, McGinn suggests, is according to Dionysius 'made present both on the material level of symbols used by scripture and in liturgy and also by extension, on the conceptual or intellectual level, where the negation of names and eventually the removal of both affirmation and negation bring the soul to union with the divine mystery' (1991:173). This union, we suggest, being the *erotic union* engendered by eros through the *affectus* and the libido. This is the ex–stasis, the ecstasy: 'Through ecstasy we pass beyond the human condition and become divinised' (McGinn 1991:179).

Letter Nine describes God as a drunken lover 'standing outside all good things, being the suprafullness of all these things' (Ep: 9.5). The model here being St Paul, Dionysius's ecstatic teacher and erotic initiator:

> This is why the great Paul, swept along by his yearning for God and seized of its ecstatic power, had this inspired word to say: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). Paul was truly a lover and, as he says, he was beside himself for God (2 Cor: 5.13), possessing not his own life but the life of the One for whom he yearned (in eros), as exceptionally beloved. (DN: 4.13 translation McGinn)

Thearchy.' (McGinn 1991:172). Hence Dionysius's adoption of the phrase 'so as to speak' to suggest he is adapting a term from the Neoplatonic school.

Following Roques (DS: 2.1908-10) McGinn sees Dionysius's concept of union as based on the transcendentalisation of knowing into unknowing and yearning *eros* into ecstatic possession. The two processes we have identified as key to the 'mystical strategy' of the *theologia mystica* are intimately connected. As we shall see, Dionysius's exposition of **the unknowing-embodied strategy** allows later Christian writers to mine the erotic side, especially through the medium of the exposition of the *Song of Songs.*[100]

As McGinn points out, Dionysius here is standing in already established Christian tradition of equating the *agape* of the New Testament with the *eros* of the Platonic tradition, beginning, he suggests, with Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*:

> The power of love is none other than that which leads the soul from earth to the lofty heights of heaven, and... the highest beatitude can only be attained under the stimulus of love's desire. (Prol, ed 63.9-11 in McGinn 1991:120)

McGinn's exposition of this topic is of a special clarity. However his device of dividing eros into what he calls EROS I, when referred to the Deity and eros ii when referring to the creature seems to defuse the potentially subversive nature of the erotic language which, as we suggest here, is one of the key reasons for adopting it in the mystical strategy. McGinn, as with so many commentators on mystical texts, finds it hard to resist the desire to 'tidy up' and 'smooth over' problems, subversions and other difficulties in the texts which, this thesis argues, are deliberately placed there to 'work on' the reader.

Thus, turning our Wittgensteinian lens on the *Sprachspiele* of the Dionysian texts, especially in their twelfth century interpretations, we can identify two 'mystical strategies' of **unknowing/deconstruction** and the **erotic/embodied/affective.** The unknowing aspect delineates the limits of human knowledge of God, the affective allows the entry into union with the divine through the libidinal and affective. The two processes occur side by side and necessarily compliment each other. This insight was particularly seen by Thomas Gallus and developed by him and would continue throughout the subsequent history of the 'mystical tradition' through the use made of Dionysius by

---

[100] On this, see especially Turner (1995a)

Gallus himself, Hugh of Balma, Gerson, De Osuna and eventually the Spanish mystics, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. A lineage we shall return to in Part Two below.

5.3 Summary of Dionysius: The Mystical Strategies of the *Theologia Mystica*

In summary, then, we can characterise the *mystical strategies* of Dionysius as fitting into a wider perspective (*Weltbild*) that by necessity embraces the strategies of deconstruction and embodiment.

The overall orientation is summarised by von Balthasar thus:

> According to Denys the essence of each being is itself ecstatic towards God (something that so little threatens its individuality that this movement itself determines it at its deepest level); indeed, that this ecstasy of creaturely *eros* is itself an imitation of the ecstatic divine *eros* which out of love goes out of itself into the multiplicity of the world; that therefore mystical experience represents a philosophical and theological realization of that which *is*. (1984:205)

The mystical strategies we have proposed, therefore, are of the *essence* of Dionysius's approach to the *theologia mystica*. Theology, or the reading of *mystical theology*, is by its nature a matter of *initiation* into the erotic mystery of creation. Like the Dionysian rites, this is a secret initiation that must be hidden from scorn and derision of the unitiate: 'If the profane were to see or listen to these rites of ours I think they would laugh heartily and pity us for our misguidedness' (EH: 7.3.1):

> Which to the man in the street appear quite extraordinary (*multis monstruosas* [E], *prodigiales locutiones* [S]). Among uninstructed souls the fathers of unspeakable wisdom (*secretae sapientiae patres* [S]) give an impression of outstanding absurdity when, with secret and daring riddles (S: *per quaedem occulta quidem et praesumpta aenigmata*), they make known that truth which is divine, mysterious, and, so far as the profane are concerned, inaccessible (S: *manifestant divinam et mysticam et inviam immundis veritatem*). (Ep: 9:1)

In the Divine Names, Dionysius exhorts Timothy, his addressee to 'guard these things in accordance with divine command and you must never speak nor divulge divine things to the unitiated' (DN: 1.8) – 'Let such things be kept away from the mockery and the laughter of the unitiated' (S: *et ipsa ab indoctorum risibus et delusionibus auferentes*). Thus, Dionysius distinguishes the 'knowing' that comes from disputation and the 'exoteric sciences' of theology from the 'knowing' that comes from the 'mystical initiation'. Both , as we shall see later, are considered essential for good theological practice:

> Theological tradition has a dual aspect, the ineffable and mysterious on the one hand (S: *hanc quidem secretam et mysticam*), the open and more evident on the other (S: *illam apparentem et notiorem*). The one resorts to symbolism and involves initiation (E: *eam quidem symbolicam et perfectivam*). The other is philosophical and employs the method of demonstration (E: *hanc vero philosophicam et approbativam*). The one uses persuasion and imposes the truthfulness of what is asserted. The other acts by means of a mystery which cannot be taught. (Ep: 9.1, Dion: 638).

This is the 'divine enlightenment' (S: *deifica lumina,* Gk: θεονρνιχά φώία) into which according to Dionysius, we have been 'initiated by the hidden tradition (*occulta traditio)* of our inspired teachers – a tradition at one with scripture' (DN :1.4).

Thus, for Dionysius, when we 'say anything about God...we set down the truth 'not in the plausible words of human wisdom but in the demonstration of the power guided by the Spirit (1 Cor: 2.4)' (DN: 1.1). For there is a 'power by which, in a manner surpassing speech and knowledge, we reach a union superior to anything available to us by way of our own abilities or activities in the realm of discourse or of intellect (S: *secundum quam ineffabilibus et ignotis* [R: *incognitos*] *ineffabiliter et ignote* [*R: incognite*] *conjungimur secundum meliorem nostrae rationabilis et intellectualis virtutis et operationis unitonem'* (DN: 1.1). Which is why 'we must not resort to words or conceptions concerning that hidden divinity (S: *occulta Deitate*) which transcends being,

apart from what sacred scriptures (S: *ex sacris eloquiis*) have divinely revealed' (DN:1.1).

For Dionysius the process of 'initation' is beyond the 'rational processes'. As we saw above, Dionysius will often resort to the strategy of aporia through his *ὑπερ-* words to make this point:

> Mind beyond mind, word beyond speech, it is gathered up by no discourse, by no intuition, by no name, it exists as no other being (S: *et intellectus non intelligibilis et verbum non dicible et irrationabilitas et non-inteligibilitas*) (R: *unintelligibilitas*) *et innominabilitas, secundum nihil existentium existens.* (DN: 1).[101]

As argued above, Dionysius deliberately dances around the nature of the mystical 'initiation' or 'knowledge'. It *cannot* be disclosed in the text, by its very nature: it is not to be learnt from theological disputation in the faculty of reason and intellect. How then is it communicated? As we have seen, Dionysius gives us enough clues as to where to look for this knowledge. His own teacher, Hierotheus, has been initated and in his description of this Dionysius points in the direction we must look:

> Whatever he learned directly from the sacred writers, whatever his own perspicacious and laborious research of the scriptures uncovered for him, or whatever was made known to him through that most mysterious inspiration, not only learning but also experiencing the divine things (S: *non solum discens sed et patiens divina,* E: *non solum discens sed et affectus divina,* P: *verum etiam iis animo affectus et permotus,* Gk: χαί παθών τά θεϊα). For he had 'sympathy' (S: *compassione,* E: *coaffectione*, Gk: συμπαθείας) with such matters, if I may express it that way, and he was perfected in a mysterious union with them and in a faith in them which was independent of any education. (DN: 2.9)

---

[101] See also DN: 2.3 : over-good, over-divine, over-existent, over-living, over-wise (S: *superbonum, superdeum, supersubstantiale, supervivens, supersapiens)*

As we have seen above, this *sympatheia* is the *erotic* initiation of Dionysius (DN: 4.10). The *eros* as 'Good seeking Good for the sake of the Good' (S*: est divinus amor bonus boni propter bonum*) and, following the essential understanding of the human person as *persona ecstatica*, *eros* brings us to our essential ecstatic being: 'Eros brings ecstasy so that the lover belongs not to self but to the beloved' (S*: Est autem faciens exstasim divinus amor*). For Dionysius, God himself is enticed by *eros* 'from his transcendent dwelling place and comes to abide within all things, and he does so by virtue of his supernatural and ecstatic capacity to remain, nevertheless, within himself' (DN:4.13).

From the above we can see that Dionysius presents a synthesis of two strategies: deconstruction/unknowing and erotic/affective, in one overarching survey of the *erotic-ecstatic* nature of the human person. As von Balthasar points out, his text beguiles and plays with us as he stretches us beyond our intellectual and rational limits to make connection with the divine through the play of *pathē* – emotions and affect (Eriugena's *affectus*). The argument here has been that this vision of the ecstatic union and return of the self to God, this erotico-deconstructive strategy is a key aspect of the medieval tradition of *theologia mystica.*

This erotico-deconstructive strategy (Dionysius's *stulta sapientia:* DN 7:1, Gk μωράυ σοφία – which is '*alogos' and 'anous'*) seems to be fundamental to the tradition of *theologia mystica* and it is this, it is argued, that is at the heart of the 'mystical strategies' of Teresa of Avila's writings. We will now turn to these in Part Two of the dissertation.

Part Two:

Applying the Wittgensteinian Approach: The Mystical Strategies of the *Theologia Mystica* Illustrated by an Examination of the Writings of Teresa of Avila

In Part One of the thesis we assessed various methods of viewing *the mystical*. We looked first at that of 'modern mysticism' and challenged its ontological, experientialist and orientalist assumptions. We then surveyed various constructivist approaches and argued that although they resolved some of the problems with the approach of 'modern mysticism' they still left out a certain degree of experiential content from the category. Accordingly, we then outlined the original strategy we would approach to *the mystical* in this thesis which would be based on the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein. We argued that we would not be seeking to find quasi-ontological 'mystical entities' in the texts ie. any originatory 'experiences' that may 'hide behind' the texts. On the other hand, whilst pursuing the *Weltbild* of the discourse we stated that we would not see that discourse as a cold contextualist narrative but rather analyse the discourse from its performative or participatory perspective. Accordingly, we resolved to concentrate on the *transformational* aspect of mystical discourse and how it leads, in a Wittgensteinian sense, from saying to showing to acting. In this respect we examined the foundational texts of Dionysius and saw how such strategies are adopted, in particular what we termed the mystical strategies of *deconstruction/unknowing* and *embodiment/affectivity.*

In our second part we shall elucidate how these strategies are employed in Teresa's writings, referring them back to similar strategies in Wittgenstein's own writings. We shall begin by presenting the context within which Teresa was writing and how she inherits these strategies from the Dionysian tradition before surveying her use of those strategies.

Chapter Six:

The Form of Language: 'Mystical Strategies' in Teresa of Avila

> *When a number of books in Spanish were taken away from us and we were not allowed to read them, I felt it very much because the reading of some of them had given me great recreation, and I could no longer do so since they were only available in Latin. Then the Lord said to me: "Don't be upset, for I will give you a living book".* (Teresa of Avila V:26.6) [102]

In this key passage in her *Libro de la Vida* ('Book of the Life', hereafter V) Teresa hints at some of the external and internal circumstances that led to her own writing career. In the passage we come across some of the key events that were influencing her: the prohibition of spiritual books in the vernacular following the Valdés decree of 1559, her own reliance on just such vernacular books of spirituality in her early life and finally the inspiration for her own writing found in the words she received: 'I will give you a living book'. Central to her own vision of her 'mission' is the next sentence:

> I wasn't able to understand why this was said to me for as yet I had received no visions. Afterwards, after only a few days, I understood very clearly. For what I saw presented to me gave me much to think about and recollect (*recogerme)*, and

---

[102] *Cuando se quitaron muchos libros de romance, que no se leyesen, yo sentí mucho, porque algunos me dava recreación leerlos, y yo no podia ya, por dejarlos en latín; me dijo el Señor: "No tengas pena, que yo te dare libro vivo"*. My translation from the Spanish of the Obras Completas de Santa Teresa de Jésus ed Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink , 9th ed. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1997 and Santa Teresa Obras Completas, ed T Alvarez, 10th ed. Burgos: Editorial Monte Carmelo, 1998. The English translations of Teresa's works will be either my own or, unless stated, Kavanaugh and Rodriguez 1987. V = *El Libro de la Vida* (Book of Her Life), M = *Las Moradas* (The Interior Castle), CE = *Camino de Perfección* (Way of Perfection), Escorial Codex, CV =*Camino*, Valladolid Codex, CT = *Camino*, Toledo Codex, C = *Meditaciones del amor de Dios*, Exc = *Exclamaciones*. For a biographical sketch of Teresa see the author's *Way of Ecstasy: Praying with St Teresa of Avila* (Tyler: 1997).

> the Lord showed me so much love and taught me in so many ways that I had little or hardly any need for books afterwards. (V: 26.6)[103]

Applying the Wittgensteinian *Blick* developed in Part One and observing Teresa's communication as it stands we see that she, like Wittgenstein, is making a move from 'saying' to 'showing', or, in this case, a move from the intellectual book-learning of the *letrados* to the 'vision' of 'what the Lord presents' 'in His love'. The key word here being *recogerme* – 'to recollect myself', a crucial term that links Teresa with the main spiritual currents of her time and especially the writings of the 'vernacular master' she refers to in the previous sentence and had already mentioned in Chapter Four of the *Vida:*

> When I was on my way, that uncle of mine I mentioned who lived along the road gave me a book. It is called *The Third Spiritual Alphabet*[104] and endeavours to teach the prayer of recollection... And so I was very happy with this book and resolved to follow that path with all my strength... For during the twenty years after this period of which I am speaking, I did not find a master, I mean a confessor, who understood me, even though I looked for one. (V: 4.7)[105]

As we analyse Teresa's sense of her own vocation as a writer we have a number of circumstances to 'place before us' in Wittgensteinian fashion to help us make sense of her writings:

a) The circumstances of 1559 which produced the Valdés Index and Teresa's reaction to it.
b) The influence of 'her master', Francisco de Osuna, and what she learnt from him on writing about 'mystical topics', and

---

[103] *Yo no podia entender por qué se me havía dicho esto, porque aún no tenía visions; después, desde a bien pocos días, lo entendí muy bien, porque he tenido tanto en qué pensar y recogerme en lo que vía presente y ha tenido tanto amor el Señor conmigo para enseñarme de muchas maneras, que muy poca u casi ninguna necesidad he tenido de libros.* My translation

[104] By Francisco de Osuna, hereafter TA

[105] *no sabía cómo poceder en oración ni cómo recogerme y así holguémucho con él y determinéme a sequir aquel camino con todas mis fuerzas* (I did not know how to proceed in prayer nor how to recollect myself and therefore I was very delighted with it and determined to follow this way with all my strength)

c) The nature of her own approach to 'saying and showing' through 'that presented to her through recollection'.

We shall deal with each of these in turn before considering how the *theologia mystica* of Dionysius reached her through the writings of de Osuna. Once we have established this we can turn in the next two chapters to those strategies in her texts themselves and make comparisons with similar strategies in Wittgenstein's texts.

6.1 *Alumbradismo*, 1559 and the Valdés Index

Pioneering work from the Spanish scholar Melquíandes Andrés Martín (Andrés Martín 1975) developed and elaborated by North American scholars, in particular Gillian Ahlgren (Ahlgren 1996) and Alison Weber (Weber 1990), has restored the importance of understanding Teresa's writings within the context and constraints within which she was working, in particular the development of Spanish spirituality in the 16th century (what Andrés Martín terms *los recogidos*) against the backdrop of the spiritual movement usually referred to as *alumbradismo.* As Ahlgren puts it:

> Though Teresa never used the term *alumbrados*, the effects of the movement were probably the most important influence on her literary objectives. The suspicions of prophecy and of women's religious experience which the movement had inflamed affected Teresa's credibility. (Ahlgren 1996:29)

Contemporary scholarship differs as to the role, nature and scope of the *Alumbrados* (See especially Marquez 1980), the term *alumbrado* (lit: 'enlightened', 'illumined') seems to have originally been one of mockery and abuse used to denote 'excessive piety and to suggest hysteria and hypocrisy and fraudulence' (Hamilton 1992:28). At the beginning of the sixteenth century it began to be associated in Spain with a loose-knit group who were condemned at various times by the Church and State. The propositions for which they were condemned were first collected together in the Edict of Faith issued by the Inquisitor General, Alonso Manrique (Archbishop of Seville) on 23rd September 1525.

The edict contained forty-eight propositions directed against *'alumbrados, dexados e perfectos'* (lit: 'the enlightened, abandoned and perfect' see Bataillon 1982:166) which comprised of a collection of questionable and heretical statements held by and attributed to the group. As well as certain apocalyptic statements they included propositions such as 'prayer must be mental and not vocal'; the denial of the necessity of any sacramental intermediary between God and humans – thus rejecting the efficacy of external works as well as the authority of the church to interpret scripture; contempt for the cult of the saints, the worship of images, bulls, indulgences, fasting and abstinence. Although the Edict condemned what appeared to be a homogenous and coherent group scholars such as Bataillon and Marquez have concluded that the 'group' was a fragmentary grouping of various collections of people with differing motives, ideas and spiritualities.

It was this emphasis on the importance of personal prayer that caused the most problems for Teresa as one of the thrusts of her own life and work was the restitution of personal prayer as central to the life of the average Christian.

A key phrase used in the condemnations of the *alumbrados* was *dejamiento* (lit: 'abandonment') which was used to describe the type of prayer advocated by the *alumbrados*. It is unclear what exactly was meant by the term however it seems to have arisen as a variant of the prayer of *recogimiento* (lit: 'gathering together') popularised and taught by reforming Spanish Franciscan friars at the beginning of the sixteenth century, most notably described in Francisco de Osuna's 'Third Spiritual Alphabet' (*Tercer Abecedario Espiritual*, hereafter TA) which we shall turn to shortly.

The teaching of *recogimiento,* as Andrés Martín points out, placed an emphasis on the importance of withdrawing from activity once or twice a day, usually to a dark room, for quiet contemplation with lowered or closed eyes. The teaching of *dejamiento*, often ascribed to Isabel de la Cruz, suggested that such a withdrawal was unnecessary and the contemplation could continue in all states and places – even allowing evil thoughts and temptations to arise.

After the Edict of 1525 an inquisitorial process was initiated against Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz and Isabel de la Cruz of Toledo (See Márquez 1980:244-57) who were found guilty of the practices condemned. In 1529 Alcaraz was flogged, their property confiscated and they were condemned to 'perpetual reclusion and habit'. From this time

any groups of laypeople, women and those associated with the Franciscan *recogitorios* were suspect of the heresy[106]. Thus, over the next thirty years, effectively culminating with the Valdés Index of 1559, four separate movements within Spanish society began to be conflated by the Inquisition:

a) The 'alumbrados'.
b) Erasmianism
c) Lutheranism/Protestantism
d) Remaining non-Christian elements, especially the threat of Jewish influence through *conversos.*

It is notable that a number of the 'alumbrados' groups were connected with *converso* or 'New Christian' groups, a group to which of course, Teresa herself belonged. Contemporary commentators have been divided over whether the group were a 'movement' of interior Christianity akin to Erasmianism (Bataillon 1982) or a native, heretical protestant sect with justification by faith as their basic doctrine (Márquez 1980). Hamilton, following Márquez, suggests their emphasis on the working of the Spirit in the individual, their pessimism about human nature, their interest in St Paul and their quest for greater simplicity in religion ally them to the movement of Catholic reform at the time of the Northern European Reformation, known as *evangelism*. It is clear, as Bataillon points out (1982:166) that in the minds of the Inquisition, *alumbradismo* had to have somewhere a connection with the wider religious reforms of Northern Europe, even if, as appears likely, little such connection existed in reality.

The condemnation of the *alumbrados* by the Edict of Seville in 1525 marked in many ways the beginning of the end of the wave of openness and 'renaissance' within the mystical tradition in Spain (See Bataillon 1982: 699 – 737). Teresa of Avila, born in 1515, as we shall see, was able to have access to many mystical works from the tradition of *theologia mystica* mentioned in the previous chapter. As we have seen above, in the period of unrest and unhappiness that she experienced after her profession at the convent of the *Encarnación* in 1537 (including a period of physical collapse), she relates in the

---

[106] For a full list of the condemned propositions see Marquez 1980:250

Libro de La Vida how that during a stay at the house of her uncle, Don Pedro de Cepeda, she first came across de Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual.* The book remained 'her guide' for many years to come as she found no spiritual director who could guide her as well as the book. 'During all those years, except after communion, I never dared begin to pray without a book' (V: 4.9).

As well as Osuna she read Bernardino de Laredo and the classical 'mystical' writers such as Augustine, Gregory and Bernard.[107] However, as her own spiritual life grew and developed the political climate in Spain begun to change again.[108] Teresa had been lucky enough to begin her spiritual learning in the 'early sixteenth century spring' initiated by the reforming Cardinal Cisneros who positively encouraged the reading of spiritual books and approved the publication in popular editions of the writings of 'the spiritual masters' as well as the writings of Gerson, de Balma and Herp. By these means the works of the medieval tradition of *theologia mistica* had been disseminated throughout Spain in the early sixteenth century.

Following years of tension between the 'Erasmians' and the Inquisition, events in Spain came to a head in 1559 when many works of the 'Cisnerosian Spring' of the early 16th century (including Erasmus and Luther) were condemned in the Valdés Index. Valid only for Spain, it contained many of the writings of the people who had already fallen foul of Valdés and the Inquisition: Carranza, Luis de Granada, Juan de Avila and the works of Erasmus in Castilian and Latin. As has been said it also incorporated many of the writers and works who had contributed to the Cisnerosian revolution at the beginning of the century: as well as Francisco de Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario* (but not the other *Abecedarios*), it included Herp's *Theologia mystica* and de Balma's *Via Spiritus* (de Bujanda 1984: 303- 592).

As Hamilton puts it:

> By forbidding so many books published with the approval of Cisneros, the Index could also be regarded as the first official statement condemning his spirituality,

---

[107] References to all four are found in her works.
[108] There are many good analyses of the reasons for these changes. In English good analyses are found in Ahlgren and Hamilton and in Spanish, Andres and Marquez, all referred to above.

> the coronation of the trials which had started in the 1520s and of which the *alumbrados* had been the first victims. (Hamilton 1992:111)

Some works remained uncensored such as those of Alonso de Madrid and Bernardino de Laredo. In total it listed some 253 titles including fourteen editions of the Bible. In addition to the mentioned titles it also created a wider sense of alarm and caution on a whole range of areas[109]. In Ahlgren's words:

> In summary, the Valdés Index of Prohibited Books was not merely a list of books prohibited to the public; it was an edict intended to limit the scope of religious speculation and to define religious faith and practice very narrowly as the province of an educated elite whose task was not speculation but transmission of dogma. (Ahlgren 1996: 17)

For Andrés, the Valdés Index 'tried to banish affective spirituality in its various manifestations, encouraging the traditional spirituality of the practice of virtues and the destruction of vices over other ways of spirituality considered mystical' (Andrés 1976: 1:362).

Commentators such as Ahlgren have noted the paradox that the period after 1559 whilst being one of repression also encouraged a great flowering of 'mystical literature' (Ahlgren 1996:30). She suggests that Teresa of Avila employed four strategies to survive in the post Valdés climate:

a) She was careful about the literary and theological sources she cited.
b) She employed a series of rhetorical devices to justify her right to write as an 'unlettered woman'.
c) She practiced a form of self censorship in the spirit of Valdés: 'her allusions to controversial subjects, such as her *converso* origins, permitted contemporary

[109] Other entries included books by known heretics, partial or whole translations of the Bible, books in Arabic or Hebrew or that tell of Muslim or Jewish practices, books regarding witchcraft and superstition and manuscripts that mention biblical tradition or the sacraments of the church. See Ahlgren 1996: 17

readers (especially those who knew her) to understand the subtext, but she never spoke openly enough to attract attention'.

d) Finally, in exact language she explained 'mystical phenomena as thoroughly and accurately as possible'. Her overall aim being to show how 'charismatic experience did not have to be viewed as a potential danger to the institutional church but could instead be an important source of Roman Catholic identity'.

As she notes:

> As the new mystical pathways opened in the first half of the century narrowed to a dogmatic and disciplined orthodoxy, so did the range of subjects appropriate for theological debate... If the works were to survive intact, certain topics had to be handled with extreme care, and authors used language to hide rather than reveal their intent. (Ahlgren 1996: 19)

As Ahlgren points out this particularly applied to laypeople and especially women.[110] As most women did not read Latin, the Valdés prohibition of spiritual books in the vernacular posed a particular problem. However, as these ideological concerns impacted upon her Teresa was able to respond, largely, it is argued here, because of the 'training' and 'education' she had received from 'her master' Fray Francisco de Osuna and his exposition of the *theologia mystica* in the *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual*. In this respect, we argue, her schooling in the mystical strategies of the *theologia mystica* were ideal preparation for the challenges of the environment within which her mature work was developed.

6.2 Teresa and the *Theologia Mystica*

One of the central arguments of this thesis is that Teresa is heir to, and knowingly uses, the techniques of what we have called the tradition of *theologia mystica* as defined at the end of Part One above. Although, as argued, she relies heavily on this tradition

[110] She notes that between 1550 and 1600 no books by female authors were printed from Alcalá

throughout her works she only makes three explicit references to the *theologia mystica* in her work, these occur in Chapters Ten to Twelve of her *Vida.* It is worth while spending some time on these references and their place in the text of the *Vida.*

The decision to write the text of the *Vida* coincided with Teresa's 're-formation' of the Carmelite houses in Spain. In 1561 the Inquisitor of Toledo, Francisco de Soto y Salazar suggested that Teresa present a description of her experiences and methods of prayer. The first draft was completed in 1562 and the final draft in 1565, which was then to be read by several learned *letrados*: Juan de Avila, her Dominican mentors and probably Balthasar Alvarez, one of her Jesuit mentors.

In 1574 the work came under inquisitorial suspicion – due, amongst other things, to the vindictive malice of the Princess of Eboli, and the manuscript disappeared into the Inquisition's hands until after Teresa's death in 1582. It was later recovered by Ana de Jésus and edited by Luis de Léon.

The context of Chapters Ten to Twelve of the *Vida* is that they are preceeded by Teresa's descriptions of how her life of prayer had gone astray once she had joined the Convent of the *Encarnación.* As she describes the sins into which her soul had fallen she makes a telling comment:

> And helping this was that as my sins grew, I began to lose the pleasure and gift in the things of virtue. (V:7.1)[111]

For Teresa, one of the most distressing things at this time in her life was the loss of the pleasure *(gusto)* of the life of prayer. Deprived of this *gusto*, this link to the affective-deconstructive which we described in the previous chapter, she became 'afraid to pray' instead resorting to 'vocal prayer'. She clearly practised the outward virtues 'So that the nuns had a good opinion of me' whilst retaining this 'inner dryness'. She contrasts at this time her outer shows of piety and holiness (including instructing others on prayer) with her own interior sense of alienation from the source of her being – God. This period of unrest and unhappiness with her spiritual life dated from her profession at the convent of

---

[111] *Y ayudóme a esto que, como crecieron los pecados, comenzóme a faltar el gusto y regalo en las cosas virtud .*

the *Encarnación* in 1537. Significantly, from the point of view of our study, this period of physical collapse had coincided with a stay at the house of her uncle, Don Pedro de Cepeda, when, as we have seen, she first came across de Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual.* As mentioned already the book remained 'her guide' for many years to come as she found no spiritual director who could guide her as well as the book. 'During all those years, except after communion, I never dared begin to pray without a book' (V: 4.9). The experience of this time is one of *recollection*, dryness punctuated by another state of which she finds it difficult to speak (V: 4.8). This period ('of some twenty years' V:8.2) she tells us was a time of neither 'pleasure in God' nor 'contentment with the world'(*yo gozaba de Dios ni traía contento en el mundo*) (V:8.2) for she is adamant that prayer is the source of 'delights/pleasures' (*gustos* V:8.9) from the Lord, it is the place where 'the Lord takes delight in a soul and gives the soul delight' – '*entrar a regalarse con un alma y regalarla'* (V:8.9) – a theme we shall see reiterated at the beginning of the *Moradas* in Chapter Eight below.

In this place of deconstruction – without intellectual concourse (V: 4.7, 9.4, 9.5, 9.9) Teresa enters into a place to which she gives the name *mística teología:*

> It used to happen, when I represented Christ within me in order to place myself in His presence, or even while reading, that a feeling of the presence of God would come upon me unexpectedly so that I could in no way doubt He was within me or I totally immersed in Him... I believe they call this "mystical theology."(V:10.1)[112]

Teresa equates this 'mystical theology' with an indubitable sense of the presence of God:

> The will loves; the memory appears to me almost lost; the understanding does not discourse, so it appears to me – it is not lost, but, as I say, it does not work –

---

[112] *'Acaecíame en esta representación que hacía de ponerme cabe Cristo, que he dicho, y aun algunas veces leyendo, venirme a deshora un sentimiento de la presencia de Dios que en ninguna manera podia dudar que estaba dentro de mí o yo toda engolfada en El... creo lo llaman mística teología.'*

however it is amazed at how much it can understand, because God wants it to understand how little it can understand of what God represents to it.(V 10.1)[113]

Using the classical scholastic/Augustinian typology of the memory-will-understanding Teresa presents here our deconstructive-affective strategy in clear terms. The pull of the text is as though she wants to declare the reason *(entendimiento)* ceases to work – the most extreme position of unsaying. Although her uncertainty allows her to interject the milder *no discurre* – 'does not discourse'. Only the affective/ the libidinal can function at this point, in her short statement *ama la voluntad* ('the will loves'). The mystical strategies of the *theologia mystica* are clearly being employed here (See V:12.5 too). As she describes in 12.5 this 'stopping of the intellect' is not something that is done by voluntary action, but something received from God, 'for otherwise we would be left like cold simpletons'. The intellectual should 'delight in God' (13.11) rather than 'wear themselves out in composing syllogisms'.

Her next mention of the 'mystical theology' in V:11.5 is to distinguish it from the beginning stages of prayer (or as she calls it 'mental prayer') which will form a small discourse from Chapter Eleven to Chapter Twenty Two – the famous analogy of the 'four waters' (See Kavanaugh and Rodriguez CW I: 470). In Chapter Twenty Three she returns to her 'mystical theology', this, she says, is distinguished by being the stage where we 'enjoy' God's presence: *'lo más es gozar'* ('the more to enjoy it') (V: 11.5). The beginning 'mansions', as she will later call them in the *Moradas*, are places lacking in *gustos y ternera*[114] – these are the special attributes of the *teología mística* (see V: 8.5, 9.9. 10.2 and 25.11). At this earlier stage the 'understanding' continues to 'work' and for this she recommends books such as Alonso de Madrid's *Arte de servir de Dios* (V:12.2).The great delight in the Lord's presence in the soul (V :14.2,14.9) reflecting the opening of the *Moradas*:

---

[113] *'ama la voluntad, la memoria me parece está casi perdida, el entendimiento no discurre, a mi parecer, mas o se pierde; mas, como digo, no obra, sine está como espantado de lo mucho que entiende, porque quiere Dios entienda que de aquello que Su Majestad le representa ninguna cosa entiende.'*

[114] See discussion of these terms in Chapter Eight below.

This quietude and recollection is something that is clearly felt through the satisfaction and peace bestowed on the soul, along with great contentment and calm and a very gentle delight in the faculties. (V:15.1)[115]

Therefore in these times of quietude, let the soul remain in its repose, let them put their learning to one side... for he desires that the soul becomes an idiot *(boba),* as indeed it is in his presence as His Majesty humbles himself sufficiently to allow us to be near Him despite what we are. (V:15.8).

> I believe it will never attain true poverty of spirit, which means being at rest in labours and dryness and not seeking consolation or delight (*consuelo ni gusto*) in prayer – for those of the earth have already been abandoned – but seeking consolation in trials of love of Him who always lived in the midst of them. (V: 22.11)

Having suggested that Teresa is deliberately using the strategy of the *theologia mystica*, we shall spend the rest of the thesis illustrating how she does this. However before we do that, it is necessary to delineate where she is getting it from and the influence of Francisco de Osuna - a major influence on Teresa but a work that has not been studied in great deal by contemporary commentators. It is the argument of this thesis that it is precisely through this work that Teresa is schooled in the tradition of *theologia mystica* outlined in the previous chapter.

Osuna is clearly writing within the medieval tradition of *theologia mystica* which he has studied carefully, in particular through the writings of Jean Gerson, one time Chancellor of the University of Paris. In addition, Osuna would influence Teresa, and so move the discourse of *theologia mystica* to another level through his development of the notion of *recogimiento*, partly as a reaction to the condemnation of *alumbradismo* in the Edict of Toledo and to defend a type of contemplative prayer that could not be classed as *dejamiento*. As with de Osuna, Teresa is always careful to avoid this word and in all her

---

[115] *Esta quietud y recogimiento del alma es cosa que se siente mucho en la satisfacción y paz que en ella se pone, con grandísimo contento y sosiego de las potencies y muy suave deleite.*

works there is only one reference to it in *Moradas* 3.1.8: *No hay duda sino que si persevera en esta desnudez y dejamiento de todo, que alcanzará lo que pretende*: 'there is no doubt that if we persevere in this nakedness and *dejamiento* from all things, we shall attain what we aim for'.[116]

6.3 De Osuna, *Recogimiento* and the Tradition of *Theologia mystica*

What little we know of Osuna's life and background is largely due to the painstaking researchs of Père Fidèle de Ros in the nineteen thirties (Ros 1936). [117] After studies it appears that Osuna lived at the *recolectorio* of La Salceda, so important in the Observant reform and under the special patronage of Cisneros. Here Osuna explored *recogimiento*, probably in contact with *alumbrado* groups until 1523, which was eventually described in the *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual*, one of a series of six 'alphabets',[118] published between 1527 and 1554 (after his death).[119] The *alumbrados* of La Salceda were connected with the group that formed around Isabel de la Cruz in nearby Guadalajara.

One of the key elements of de Osuna's structure in the *Tercer Abcedario* is the division made in chapter six between the *theologia speculativa* and the *theologia mystica*.

For de Osuna the *theologia speculativa:*

---

[116] See Astigarraga 2000:688, my translation

[117] We will draw here on the following sources: Andrés (1976, 1982), López Santidrián (1998), Ros (1936), Peers (1951) and Giles (1981). It seems that he was born around 1492 in Osuna in Andalusia where his family had been in service to the counts of Ureña. We know two facts about his childhood from his own references in the *Abecedarios*: that he was present at the capture of Tripoli by Navarro in 1510 and that he undertook the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella sometime between 1510 and 1513. Andrés (1982) speculates whether he belonged to a *converso* family but Santidrián (1998) thinks the family were probably 'old Christians'. Comparing his life as a Franciscan at Salamanca with that of his contemporaries, Ros speculates that he may have entered the Friars Minor of the Regular Observance around 1513 and then have studied for a minimum of eight years humanities, philosophy and theology, the latter at Cisneros's newly founded University of Alcalá.

[118] The 'spiritual alphabet' was a characteristic pedagogical tool during period. Osuna would certainly have been familiar with *Alphabetum divini amoris* attributed to Gerson until the 18th century and customarily reprinted in his collected works. Other precursors of Osuna include the *Suma de los ejemplos por ABC* by Clemente Sánchez de Vercial (d. 1426) and *Parvum alphabetum monachi in scola Dei* of Thomas a Kempis

[119] Apart from the Spiritual Alphabets, other significant works include: *Gracioso Convite (1530), Norte de los estados (1531),* and two collections of Latin sermons: *Sanctuarium Biblicum (1533) and Pars Meridionalis (1533)* as well as the Latin works: *Missus Est(1535), Pars Orientalis (1535), Pars Occidentalis (1536) and Trilogium evangelicum (1536).*

> Uses reasoning, argumentation, discourse and probability, as do the other sciences. It is called scholastic theology, which means it is of learned people (*letrados*) and if someone wishes to excel in it, he needs the learning tools required to excel in any science: a good mind, continual exercise, books, time, attentiveness, and a learned teacher to study under. (TA 6.2)[120]

Whereas the other *theologia*, the *theologia mystica*, is unlike other sciences or learning for it is a 'hidden' (*escondida*) theology that is totally unlike any other branch of learning. It is pursued not through learning, books and teachers but through 'pious love and exercising moral virtues'. No book can teach it, including this one:

> I do not presume to teach it in this alphabet nor can any mortal do so, for Christ reserves to himself the ministry of secretly teaching the hearts where that theology lives hidden like divine science, more excellent by far than the other theology known as speculative. (TA 6.2)

We are back in the world of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* that we explored in Part One: the world of 'saying and showing' where the book can indicate something but cannot say it:

> I wanted to write that my work consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything which I have not written. And precisely this second part is the important one. (Wittgenstein LF:90)

Both Wittgenstein and de Osuna, we contend, are 'delineating a world from within'. They are both presented with the challenge of presenting in words something that cannot be said in words, therefore they must use words to 'show' rather than 'say'. For Wittgenstein, the twentieth century logician, this will be a question of using logic to reveal the limits of logic, for de Osuna, the sixteenth century friar, the book will take us

---

[120] *Usa de rezones y argumentos y discursos y probabilidades según las otras ciencias; y de aquí es que se llama teología escolástica y de letrados, la cual, si alguno quiere alcanzar, ha menester buen ingenio y continuo ejercicio y libros y tiempo, y velar, trabajar teniendo enseñado maestro, lo cual también es menester para cualquiera de las otras ciencias.* my translation

to the 'feet of Christ' at which point Christ alone can reveal God's love in the secrecy of our hearts. A classic strategy, this thesis argues, for the *theologia mystica* (and already shown in Dionysius's 'showing' described in the previous chapter). This 'hidden theology' will work on the affect and the heart (*el corazón*) to transform the reader.

In this same chapter (TA: 6.2) de Osuna refers to the source from whom he receives the *theologia mystica*: Gerson's *De Mistica Theologia* (Hereafter GMT) which he quotes frequently and with which he was clearly very familiar.[121] Both Gerson and Hugh use the 'strategies' of the *theologia mystica* to develop their approach to this 'theology of showing'. Yet although de Osuna is clearly influenced by the deconstruction of the Dionysian school (see, for example TA: 21.5) this is not the deconstruction of a writer such as Eckhart or Tauler, as we shall see in the following chapter. Rather de Osuna, like Gerson, is an heir to what we have already called the 'affective Dionysianism' arising from the Victorine interpretation of Dionysius, especially from Thomas Gallus.

For de Osuna, like Gerson before him, the Dionysian 'unknowing' is a 'delectable knowing' (*sabroso saber*) (TA: 6.5). It is not simply a strategy of unknowing but a 'delectable unknowing'. Indeed, Osuna is always at pains to play on the similarity of the two words *saber* and *sabor* in Spanish:

> It is called wisdom because it allows us to know how God tastes. '*E dicese sabiduría porque mediante ella saben los hombres á que sabe Dios*' – (TA 6.2).

Osuna, like Gerson and Gallus before him, emphasises the libidinal, sensual aspect of the Dionysian unknowing. This is no austere and rarified unknowing but something altogether more sensual:

> (The *theologia mystica*) is also called the art of love (*arte de amor*) because only through love is it realised, and in it love is multiplied more than in any other art or instruction. (TA: 6.2)

The Dionysian unknowing is not about 'thinking of nothing' (TA: 21.5) but developing the 'savour for the things of God'.

If we apply the Wittgensteinian *Blick* to the language games of Osuna we see that he is employing the two now familiar 'language games', or what we can better term 'performative discourse', of the tradition of affective Dionysianism: of unknowing and affectivity/embodiment. For Osuna, this affective-deconstructive strategy is repackaged as the Spanish mystical concept of *recogimiento.* For *recogimiento,* we would argue, is nothing less than the combination of these two strategies within the wider context of Spanish spiritual developments at the time. Also, when we examine Osuna's influence on Teresa, we see that *recogimiento* means for her too the combination of these two strategies of eluciation. Both strategies being deployed to present the move from 'saying to showing to acting' as elaborated in Chapter Four above.

As Osuna puts it in Chapter Twenty One of the *Tercer Abecedario* when explaining the nature of *recogimiento*:

> There are words and works in the spiritual as well as the material. Spiritual words are the thoughts and reasonings we form in the heart and interior works are the most intense, living attention to God alone... Therefore, Our Lord does not respond in this matter with words but with works, seeing that the recollected only pay attention to them. (TA 21.6)

As with Wittgenstein, there is a move in Osuna from saying to showing to acting. A similar movement which Teresa inherits and we shall explore further in Chapter Eight below.

In his monumental study of '*la mistica española'* between 1500 and 1700 (Andrés Martín 1975) Melquíades Andrés Martín stresses the continuity within the Spanish mystical tradition and its origins in the reform movements at the end of the fifteenth

---

[121] The other important text on the *theologia mystica* that he quotes is Hugh of Balma's *Viae Sion Lugent* which had recently been translated into Spanish in Toledo as the *Sol de Contemplativas*. In the late Middle Ages it was often ascribed to Bonaventure and reprinted as Bonaventure's *DeTheologia Mystica.*

century, especially the tension between *conventualismo* and *observantismo*. These movements were often contradictory and unclear and Andrés notes:

> This reform movement oscillated between the study of theology, revivified by the Dominicans, and a certain anti-intellectualism, which would initially invoke a certain anti-verbosity, within the Franciscans and Augustinians, and much later affective prayer (*oración afectiva*) which placed more value on experience and love over study and intellect. (Andrés Martín 1975:2)[122]

Of particular importance to this nascent movement at the beginning of the sixteenth century were the reforms initiated within the Franciscan movement. We have seen that to aid their reform Cisneros permitted the publication in Castilian of numerous of the medieval books on 'spirituality' including many of those representing the tradition of *theologia mystica* outlined above. Beginning with the Seville edition of the *Obras de Bonaventura* of 1497 followed by the *Incendium Amoris* and *Liber meditationum* from the presses of Montserrat. Subsequently we find editions of Augustine, Bernard and Richard of St Victor rapidly being produced. The *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual* of García de Cisneros of 1500 (which was to have such an impact on the young Ignatius Loyola) and, finally the *Viae Lugent Sion* of Hugh of Balma published in Toledo as the S*ol de Contemplativos*.

One strand that is very apparent in this whole nascent Spanish movement which Andrés terms 'the *recogimiento* movement' is 'the meditation that seeks love and knowledge of God through the will called the "affective prayer" (*oración afectiva*)' (Andrés Martín 1975:27).[123] A clear manifestation of the *affective* influence from the tradition of *theologia mystica*. Indeed, Andrés cites in particular the influence of Hugh of Balma's *Viae* and Bonaventura's *Itinerario* in this respect who delineate a process where 'an action characteristic of the will in order to know God when the action of the intellect

---

[122] My translation. 'Este movimiento de reforma oscila entre el estudio de la teología, avivado por los dominicos, y un cierto anti-intelectualismo, que llamaría mejor inicialmente anti-verbosismo, entre los franciscos y agustions, y más tarde oración afectiva por valorar más la experiencia y el amor que el estudio y el entendimiento.'

is suspended' (Andrés Martín 1975:27). Such a process is cited in Mombaer's *Rosetum* of 1494 (XIX Prologue) where it is called *meditación afectiva.*[124] Such descriptions of *meditación afectiva* are found in addition in the works of Juan Wessel Gansfort (*Escala Meditatoria,* 1483), Gómez García (*Carro de dos Vidas,* 1500) and García de Cisneros (*Exercitatorio de la Vida Espiritual,* 1500) which would be later taken up by Alonso de Madrid (*Arte de Servir Dios,* 1521), Francisco de Osuna (*Tercer Abecedario,* 1527), Bernabé de Palma (*Via Spiritus,* 1531) and Bernardino de Laredo (*Subida de Monte Sion,* 1st ed 1535) in the first great flowering of Fransciscan mystical writing.

The *recogidos*, as Andres calls this movement, thus have certain central characteristics in common (Andrés Martín 1975: 55):

a) the universal call to Christian perfection
b) the validation of external works, rites and ceremonies
c) the importance of interiority
d) following Christ in his humanity and divinity
e) relation of the active and contemplative lives and relative importance of the latter.
f) annihilation and quietude
g) importance of 'consolaciones' and 'gustos' (see Chapter Eight below)
h) the role of love
i) the role of the will
j) love without previous knowledge
k) knowledge of affect

Much of this we shall recognise later in Teresa's own 'mystical strategies'. The movement of *recogimiento* thus places the heart and the *oración afectiva* at the centre of its concerns. An *oración* we argue here, that is directly formed from the late medieval schools of affective Dionysianism whose characteristics we have already surveyed. It emphasises the importance of the 'unknowing' as well as the affectivity of embodiment:

---

[123] My translation: *'la meditación que busca el amor y el conocimiento de Dios por la voluntad llamamos*
[124] Mombaer *Rosario de Ejercicios Espirituales y de santas meditaciones*

> The mysticism of the *recogimiento* is one that pertains to the whole of the person: person and spirit, memory, will and understanding. It does not divide the body and the soul, interior or exterior, not deprecating the latter as had been the case with the *alumbrados* and the Erasmians. (Andrés Martín 1975:13)

This is nowhere better expressed than in the First Letter of de Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario:*

> Always walking together – the Person and the Spirit…
> The meaning of our letter is that wherever you go carry your thought (*pensamiento*) along with you, for no one should go divided in themselves. Do not allow the body to travel one path and the heart another. (TA 1.1, 1.2)[125]

Recogmiento then, according to Andrés Martín, is primarily a way of '*contemplativa afectiva'* centred on love *'sin pensar nada'* ('Without thinking of anything') without any necessary prevenient or concomitant understanding. Although, at various times in his work, Andrés Martín seeks to present a systematic presentation of *recogimiento* (notably in his introduction and conclusion) as with the 'modern mysticism' we investigated in Part One, we would argue that his proposal suffers from the same ontological problems. Although the terms *recogimiento* and *recogidos* are useful we will in this chapter continue working with the concept of 'mystical strategy' rather than looking for what we argue are fictive 'mystical' (or 'recognitive') entities – for the reasons given in Part One above.

Although Andrés Martín would like to see a clear distinction between the prayer of the *recogidos* and that of the *alumbrados* it is unlikely that such a stark division existed (as we shall see in the following section). According to Andrés the seperation proper between *recogidos* and *alumbrados* begins in 1523 in Pastrana between Francisco de Ortiz (*recogido*) and Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz (*alumbrado*). Whether such a clear

distinction existed between the two forms of prayer remains a moot point (see below). Whatever the reality of the prayer of *dejamiento* of the alumbrados, it was officially condemned by the Franciscan order in 1524 and, as we have seen, by the Inquisition in 1525. The publication of Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario* in 1527 is clearly a reaction to this condemnation. We turn now to a more detailed study of the mystical strategy of that work.

6.4 Strategies of Osuna's *Teología Mística* and Gerson's *Theologia Mystica* Compared

From the point of view of our study of the mystical strategies of Teresa's writing and by way of an intermediary between the *theologia mystica* of the medieval tradition as exemplified by the Victorine interpretation of Dionysius, an exploration of the writing of Francisco de Osuna is clearly important. It is also the first systematic account of *recogimiento* prayer, so remains an essential text for understanding this phenomenon

As we have seen in his text de Osuna is careful to relate his system to the *Corpus Dionysiacum* and its interpretation, especially through the Victorines (in particular Richard of St Victor) and Gerson, as well as the writings of Gregory Nazianzan, Bernard and Bonaventure. Of these he continually refers back to the *Corpus Dionysiacum:*

> That you may not be able to understand Saint Dionysius does not mean he cannot be understood at all, for Gerson and many other holy theologians have comprehended him and offered advice and caution against the wiles of the devil who strives the harder to deceive us the more we penetrate sublime matters. (TA: 21:5)

---

[125] My translation: *Anden siempre juntamente la Person y Espíritu: El sentido de nuestra letra sera que doquiera que vayas lleves tu pensamiento contigo y no ande cada uno por su parte divididos; asl que el cuerpo ande en una parte y el corazón e otra.*

One of the most frequently cited authors by Osuna is Gerson,[126] whose *Theologia Mystica* was one of the central manuals on the *theologia mystica* at the Universities of Salamanca and Alcalá. Gerson acts as the crucial link between the medieval exegesis of the Dionysian mystical strategy we discussed in the previous chapter, with the Spanish Fransciscan writings on *recogimiento* and *teologia mística* of the early sixteenth century. In the *Tractatus Primus Speculativus* of Gerson's *De Mystica Theologia*, the Chancellor begins by asking: 'whether it is better to have knowledge of God through penitent *affectus* or investigative *intellectus*?' (GMT:1, Prol.1).[127] After much discussion Gerson makes it quite clear that he will employ, what we term in this dissertation, 'unknowing and affective strategies' within his discourse. Thus in Section 27 he declares:

> Thus we see that it is correct to say that as *contemplatio* is in the cognitive power of the intelligence, the *mistica theologia* dwells in the corresponding affective power.(GMT: 1.27.7)[128]

Therefore 'knowledge of God through mystical theology is better acquired through a penitent *affectus* than an investigative *intellectus*' (GMT: 1.28.1). In this passage Gerson contrasts a *theologia mystica* that depends upon strategies of unknowing and affectivity to the intellective or speculative knowledge acquired through the *theologia speculativa.* Clearly Gerson's strategy differs from Dionysius's in his emphasis on the purification of the *affectus* 'through the fervour of penance in compunction, contrition and prayer' (GMT:1.28.2) for Gerson makes fine distinctions between the 'purified *affectus*' and the 'sordid ie. unpurified *affectus*' (*sordidis affectibus*) corrupted by the 'sensual habits of adolescence' (*qui corruptos adhuc habent sensus ab adolescentia)* – for Gerson the *eros* of *affectus* is not an unqualified force for the good as it was in the original text of Dionysius, it may be tainted by the 'sordid *affectus*' of youth.

---

[126] Others include Gregory the Great, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa and Nazianzen as well as the Victorines, Thomas Aquinas, Bernard and Bonaventure

[127] My translation: *an cognitio Dei melius per penitentem affectum quam per intellectum investigantem habeatur*

[128] *et cognoscamus quoniam, appropriate loquendo, sicut contemplatio est in vi cognitive intelligentie, sic in vi affective correspondente reponitur mistica theologia*

He rests with Hugh of Balma's definition of the *theologia mystica* as '*extensio animi in Deum per amoris desiderium'*: 'The extension of the *animus* in God through the desire of love' supplemented by the definitions: '*sursum ductiva in Deum, per amorem fervidum et purum'*, 'a raising movement in God, through fervent and pure love' (GMT:1.28.5) and '*cognitio experimentalis habita de Deo per amoris unitive complexum'*, 'cognition experienced of God through the embrace of unitive love' and, following Dionysius DN.7: '*Theologia mystica est irrationalis et amens, et stulta sapientia, excedens laudantes'*: 'The mystical theology is irrational and beyond mind and foolish wisdom, exceeding all praise'. He later returns to this in GMT:1.43.2, '*mistica theologia est cognitio experimentalis habita de Deo per coniunctionem affectus spiritualis cum eodum': 'theologia mystica* is an experimental cognition of God through the union of the spiritual *affectus* with him' – ' as the blessed Dionysius states this takes place through ecstatic love'.

Therefore, for Gerson, the *theologia speculativa* resides in the *potentia intellectiva* whilst the *theologia mystica* resides in the *potentia affectiva.* Therefore, speculative theology uses 'reasoning in conformity with philosophical disciplines' (GMT: 1.30.2). *Theologia mystica*, on the other hand, needs no such 'school of the intellect' (*scola intellectus*). It is aquired through the 'school of the affect' (*scola affectus)* and (following Gerson's importance attached to the purfication of the affect) through the exercise of the 'moral virtues' that 'dispose the soul to purgation' (GMT:1.30.3). This is acquired through the 'school of religion' (*scola religionis*) or 'school of love' (*scola amoris*). The acquisition of the *theologia mystica* does not therefore require great knowledge or extensive study of books. Therefore, the mystical theology may be acquired by 'any of the faithful, even if she be an insignificant woman or someone who is illiterate' (*'a quolibet fideli, etiam si sit muliercula vel ydiota')* (GMT: 1.30.5). Concurring with St Bernard, Gerson suggests speculative theology can never be complete without mystical theology but the contrary can be the case: we all must acquire this 'affectivity' to reach right relationship with God. Therefore 'the language of mystical theology is to be hidden from many who are clerics or learned or who are called wise in philosophy or theology, so it can be conveyed to many who are illiterate and naïve, provided they have faith' (GMT:1.31.1). At this point, as with

Dionysius, Gerson employs the strategy of concealment for the 'language of mystical theology' is 'to be hidden from many who are clerics or learned or are called wise in philosophy or theology' (GMT: 1.31:1) lest they 'tear apart with the teeth of dogs what they do not understand'. As he states at the end of section 42: 'To explain these matters an endless succession of words could be added, but for experts these few words will suffice, for the inexpert no words will ever suffice for full comprehension' (GMT:1.42.9). It is an 'irrational and mindless wisdom' ('*irrationalis et amens sapientia'* 1.43:3) going beyond reason and mind and translating into the *affectus*.

We are once again in the place of the Wittgensteinian *Blick* at the interface of 'saying and showing' and we find this symbiotic relationship between the unknowing of intellect ('they all agree that they have come to know that they know nothing' GMT: 1.34.3) and the 'wisdom' of the *affectus*. The *affectus,* once purified, possesses all the passionate force of Dionysius's ecstatic *eros*: 'Love takes hold of the beloved and creates ecstasy, and this is called rapture because of the manner in which the mind is lifted up' (GMT:1.36.1) and again 'love ravishes, unites and fulfills' (GMT:1.35.3).

In conclusion, for Gerson, 'the school of prayer (*scola orandi)* is more praiseworthy, other things being equal, than the school of learning/letters (*scola litteras)'.

Accordingly where we see the distinction in Osuna between *theologia speculativa* and *theologia mystica* (which has such an influence on Teresa) we argue here that this is a clear reflection of Gerson. Thus, in the key Chapter Six of the *Tercer Abecedario* where Osuna introduces *recogimiento* (*'Frecuenta el recogimiento por ensayarte en su uso')* we find the following passage reflecting Gerson's distinction. As we have seen above, Osuna gives the *teología mística* the following qualities:

> Some call it (*recogimiento*) '*teología mística'*, with which they mean to say "hidden", because the good master Jesus teaches it in the secret hiddeness of the heart. (TA: 6.2)[129]

[129] *unos la llaman teología mística, que quiere decir escondida, porque en el secreto escondimiento del corazón la enseña el buen maestro Jesús*

Osuna distinguishes this 'mystical theology' from the 'speculative theology' in terms clearly borrowed from (amongst others) Gerson:

> This (theology) has two forms: one is called 'speculative' or 'investigative', which is the same thing, the other is called 'hidden', which is treated of here and which gives the title to this third alphabet. I do not presume to teach it here, as no mortal can, for Christ alone reserves this teaching only for himself, in secret and in the hearts in which this hidden theology dwells as divine science and something much more excellent than the other theology of which I spoke first... This theology (the mystical theology) is said to be more perfect and better and than the first, so says Gerson, as the first serves as an introduction leading to the second. (TA: 6.2)[130]

The teaching must remain hidden as, for Osuna, Christ alone is the teacher, Osuna cannot present it directly, it can only be presented through *indirect transmission.*

The first (speculative) theology makes use of the *intellectus* and reason to prepare the ground for the second, affective, mystical theology precisely as it had done for Gerson. Again we see the affective-deconstructive strategy of the *theologia mystica.* By the process of unknowing we move into the affective:

> The first theology, called speculative, has recourse to reasoning, argumentation, discourse and probability, as do other sciences. It is called scholastic theology, which means it is of learned people and if someone wishes to excel in it, he needs the learning tools of any science: a good mind, continual exercise, books, attentiveness, and a leaned teacher to study under. The hidden theology we are describing, however, is not attained by those tools as much as through pious love and exercising moral virtues to prepare and purge the soul. (TA: 6.2)

---

[130] *la cual aún es en dos maneras: una se llama especulativa o escudriñadora, que es el mismo, y otra escondida, que es la que se trata o a la que se intitula este tercero alfabeto; no que en él presuma yo enseñarla, pues ninguno de los mortales la enseñó, porque Christo guardó para sí este oficio de enseñar en secreto a los corazones en que viviese aquesta teología escondida como ciencia divina y mucho más excelente que la otra teología de que hablamos primer... Esta teología se dice más perfecta o mejor que la primera, según dice Gersón, porque de la primera como de un principio se servir.*

Here Osuna seems to be following Gerson's teaching on the 'purgation of affection' required for the *theologia mystica*. The undifferentiated *eros* of Dionysius is replaced by the 'purified moral affection' of Gerson acquired through pious love and the 'exercise of the moral virtues'. However, the essential unknowing-affective 'mystical strategy' remains the same: 'It happens even more in men than in animals that where knowledge is small, affection and love are greater'.[131] In a reference to Gerson's *theologia mystica* Osuna sees the relation of mystical and speculative theology as that between gold and gold inlaid with precious stones (TA:6.3). This is followed by quoting Gerson's reference to the *affectus/amor* as being like the heat that sets the water to boil in the kettle and makes it 'spill over itself and be carried beyond itself':

> Thus the soul not yet enkindled by the loving heat (*calor amoroso)* of *theologia mystica* seems listless and self-contained, but when the spirit of love is conceived in the fervour of the heart in some way the soul goes jumping outside of itself or flying above itself.[132]

Crucial in Osuna's affective mystical theology is the notion of 'taste' of God rather than knowledge. In this passage he plays on the word *saber* which can mean both taste and 'know'. '*Y dícese sabiduría porque mediante ella saben los hombres a qué sabe Dios'*. In Osuna's words, the 'mystical theology' is a *sabroso saber* – literally, a 'tasty knowledge'. Osuna then goes on to develop this in his notion of the spiritual *gustos*, or 'taste/delight' of God, a key term later taken up by Teresa. He concludes the section by stating that 'This exercise is known as profundity with respect to the depth and darkness (*oscuridad*) of the devotion for it originates in the depths of man's heart, which are dark because human understanding has been deprived of light'.

---

[131] *'Y porque muchas veces acontece aun en los animales, cuanto más en los hombres, que adonde hay menos conocimiento hay mayor afección y amor'.*

[132] See Gerson, GMT: 1.29.7 :'The water in a vessel, which when it is brought to a fire grows warm, at the beginning remains within the vessel, but when it gets very hot and boils seems in a way not to be able to contain itself. Because of the heat, the water rises from itself and is carried away. Likewise the mind, when it has not yet grown warm with love, maintains itself within itself. Once the spirit, however, has been conceived in the love of devotion, it surpasses in a certain manner itself, as if it were leaping and taking flight beyond itself'.

The notion of the *gustos* and *sabroso saber* of the *theologia mystica* is taken up in Chapter Twelve of the Alphabet: '*No entiendo, mas gustando, penses alcanzar reposo*': 'Not by thinking, but more by tasting, think to attain rest'. His statements here build on the previous ones made in Chapter Six, developed within the framework of Gerson's writings, especially in the *theologia mystica*:

> Even though the understanding may discover and analyse numerous sublime matters there is good reason for you to believe that complete, fulfilling repose is not to be found through functions of the intellect (*por la operación intelectiva*) and that ultimately the least part of what we do not know exceeds everything we do know. (TA: 12.1)

For Osuna, 'study steals away everything' and he quotes Ecclesiastes 1:18 *'Cuanto más letrados son, anan más indignados'*, 'the more learned one is, the more angry one is' :

> If having found nothing to satisfy or correspond in magnificence with their knowledge and persumption they go about with sad, flushed faces revealing the anger in their spirit: they are dissatisfied with books, murmur against the authors, yearn for and search out new treatises, thumb through some, then others, grow weary and weighed down with books, pile labour upon labour. Burdened with fetters, burdened with fear. So long as you increase in cleverness and knowledge, you will need more and more books, as they say the cleverer you become, the heavier arms you need. Such people fail to realize that a multitude of books is no more than great spiritual dissolution, excessive work, lack of rest, a burden for the memory, food that will not fill the stomach and cosmetics to cover up deficient knowledge so as to deceive the stupid into believing that since they posssess the books, they must surely understand them. (TA :12.1 cf. GMT:1.34)

Osuna's diatribe against book-learning here is in contrast to the more nuanced approach to the 'unknowing' of the high medieval tradition and caught in Hugh of Balma's *Viae*

Lugent Sion. There the 'anti-intellectual element' was sufficiently tempered for his texts to be employed on both sides of the Tegernsee debate regarding Nicholas of Cusa in the fifteenth century. Osuna, here perhaps going further than Gerson, who equally preferences the *affectus* to the *intellectus*, takes Gerson's points to present a more radical championing of the *affectus* which will shape the later Spanish writers such as Teresa: 'The good religious must first seek kindness and devout discipline, then knowledge and insure that his knowledge, like weeds growing among the wheat, does not choke devotion' (TA:12.2). Quoting Gregory, Bernard and Richard of St Victor, Osuna finds this 'way of love' through the 'tasting of the divine goodness':

> No-one is to think that he loves God if he does not wish to taste him, for the fruit of love is the enjoyment of what is loved , and the more it is loved, the more it is enjoyed (*porque el fruto del amor es el gusto de lo que es amado, y mientras más se ama, mejor se gusta).* Accordingly, Richard says about joyful love: 'Love is a sweetness of intimate flavour, and the more ardently one loves, the more sweetly it tastes; and love is the enjoyment of hope' ('*el amor es una dulcedumbre de sabor íntimo, y cuanto con más ardor ama, tanto más suavemente gusta, y el amor es gozo de la esperanza').* (TA: 12.2)

Once again, Osuna employs the mystical strategy of the *theologia mystica* going beyond Gerson's 'moral purification' into an altogether more sensual and libidinised sense of *eros*. An approach we shall see mirrored in Teresa of Avila. Throughout the medieval *theologia mystica* there is an oscillation from the purity of a 'purged moral *affectus'* to an altogether more libidinal and embodied *eros* which we will return to in Chapter Eight. We must 'taste what we understand' '*gustando lo que entiendes*' to attain the wisdom we are looking for - the *'theologia mística'* or as Osuna also calls it; the *recogimiento*. In this affective version of the *theologia mystica*, the influence of Bernard is very apparent, and Osuna quotes his comments with approval:

> I wanted a vital juice (*un zumo vital*) to be infused through every vein and into the very marrow of my soul so that it might be freed from every other desire and

> know that One alone...If the spur of intimate love does not penetrate your soul with divine desire as deeply as before and if the new desire aroused in you is less ardent than other affections it awakened, then you must doubt if the supreme Lover yet possesses the intimate breast of your desire. (TA: 12.5)

As Osuna comments: 'the absence of pleasure once enjoyed is evidence of your failing', themes we shall return to when we consider Teresa's use of the 'strategy of affectivity' below.

Concluding his chapter, Osuna once again (as he has so many times in this chapter) quotes Gerson directly from the *Theologia Mystica* in seeing that this 'spiritual savour' is not confined to the intelligentsia (indeed, following from his comments in Section One it would seem that they are the least equipped to receive it) but referencing Gerson again, this knowledge is open to (and perhaps preferenced to?) the 'little woman and the fool' '*aunque sea mujercilla e idiota'* (TA: 12.7, cf GMT:1.30:5).

The effects of Osuna's affective-unknowing strategy utilising the spiritual *gustos* are described in Chapter Twenty One of the *Tercer Abecedario*: *Intimamente asoseiga y acalla tu entendimiento*: 'Intimately calm and quiet your understanding'. Again, at the beginning of this chapter there is a passage that mirrors a similar passage in Gerson and points forward to the writings of Teresa. Here it concerns a theme that has already been mentioned but is further clarified here: *reposo*, or the rest or repose of the soul:

> Ultimately security and repose in the heart will not be attained perfectly through speculative meditation (*por meditación escudriñando*) but through recollection, which quiets the heart... we shall find that all natural movements are directed to quietude and that all things work to that end. Nothing moves except for the purpose of finding that repose which all things seek as their ultimate end. (TA:21.1 cf. GMT:1.40-42) [133]

[133] 'It is necessary that our spirit, when it is united and joined to the highest perfection through perfect love, thereby reaches a state of quietude, fulfilment and stability (*quietetur, satietur and stabilitatur*). Thus matter is fashioned in form as a rock is placed in a centred position, and as anything reaches a state of rest when it obtains its end.' GMT: 1.42.2

This sense of 'quietude, repose or rest', developed by Gerson and adopted by Osuna will be used later by Teresa and most memorably by John of the Cross in the final stanza of the *Cantico Espiritual*. For both Gerson and Osuna, the sweetness of the spiritual element (Osuna's *gustos*) brings spiritual relief and repose. Needless to say by now, this repose is found through love and *affectus* rather than understanding:

> The silence of love is marvellous and most admirable and praiseworthy, that silence wherein the understanding is profoundly quieted, receiving the sublimely contenting knowledge of experience. We clearly realize that when lovers are present to each other they fall silent and the love that unites them supplies the want of words. (TA: 21.3)

When Teresa comes to this point in the *Vida* and Mansion Four of the *Moradas*, she concerns herself a great deal with the nature of this 'quietening' of the mind. Osuna deals with this in 21.5. Here he specifies that the *'docta ignorancia'* is not about 'not thinking' but placing thinking in the service of the 'mystical theology' of the affect.

To conclude this passage and 'in support of the entire Third Alphabet' (TA 21:6) Osuna assembles a series of quotations from 'several authentic doctors' to support his arguments. There are no surprises by now amongst the authors quoted: Gerson, Richard and Hugh of St Victor, Gregory Nazianzan, Dionysius, Isaac of Stella, Hugh of Balma (attributed to Bonaventure), Augustine and Bernard. In the end the text, despite all his attributions and descriptions, leaves with the exhortation to engage in *recogimiento* (as he reinvents the *theologia mystica*) without really telling us what it *is*. The practice, as he reiterates many times, can only be comprehended by the practitioner: it remains a 'hidden art' (*ars escondida*). In view of what we have argued as to the *performative* nature of the *theologia mystica* this is perhaps unsurprising.

6.5 Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to examine some of the key elements that we are arguing forms part of the 'mystical strategy' of Teresa's writings. To examine the

writings that are presented before us using the Wittgensteinian *Blick* we have placed particular emphasis on certain aspects of them:

a) The context within which Teresa is writing, especially the constraints placed upon her writing by the controversy of *alumbradismo* and the reactions within Spanish society to that crisis.
b) The influence on her writing of the strategies of her 'master', Francisco de Osuna, whom we know that Teresa read and re-read for over twenty years. Although she only explicitly cites it one or two times, we argue here that it has great implicit impact on her text, perhaps more than many other commentators have given credit for.
c) The clear link provided by Gerson between de Osuna and the Medieval tradition of Affective Dionysianism. We have argued here that Osuna inherits the Affective Dionysianism of the late Medieval period and employs it to describe the new practice of *recogimiento* currently achieving popularity in early sixteenth century Spain.

Accordingly, using our Wittgensteinian *Blick* we have seen how Osuna uses two what we call 'performative strategies' to approach the move from saying to showing implicit to him in the *theologia mystica*. Those strategies being the strategy of unknowing and the strategy of affectivity. In analysing these strategies we have explored the links between Gerson and Osuna at length for two reasons:

1. Very little study of the text of Osuna, and its relation to Gerson, has been undertaken in the English language and, as has been demonstrated above, it can be very productive, revealing the underlying influences to Osuna's text.
2. We have used the exposition of Osuna and Gerson in this chapter to support the argument that there is a distinctive and known *mystical strategy* of *theologia mystica* in late medieval Western Christianity to which Teresa is knowingly heir.

At the beginning of the chapter we heard how Teresa in the *Vida* expressed her desire to write down something of the favours she had been granted by the love of God. It is the argument in this thesis that Teresa specifically uses these two strategies to develop the interface of 'saying and showing' within her writing. It is contended that like Osuna she understands that the task of the *theologia mystica* is not the same as the rational task of the *theologia speculativa* but is something much more along the lines of the performative strategies employed by Wittgenstein to get across his philosophical points. For both parties, Wittgenstein and the followers of *recogimiento* – Teresa and de Osuna, the aim of the strategy is to 'change the aspect' of the reader. In the case of Wittgenstein, to resolve certain philosophical problems as a prelude to a more ethically engaged life. In the case of Teresa to enable the 'change of aspect' which is contemplative prayer, to be taught more readily. A contemplative prayer she realised was so important for her reform yet under such suspicion from the ecclesiastical authorities of mid-sixteenth century Spain. In this respect, and in this climate, it has been argued, she uses the strategies of *theologia mystica* which we have seen had been so intricately constructed by her previous 'masters', notably Gerson and de Osuna, to achieve this end.

Consequently, in the following two chapters we shall concentrate on each of these strategies in turn and see how Teresa uses them to make her argument. Remembering, of course, that like Osuna she always sees the two strategies as operating in tandem. As we look now in greater depth at the two strategies in Teresa we shall also bring back our other 'conversation partner', Wittgenstein, to show parallels in the 'mystical strategies' of both writers.

Chapter Seven:

Unsaying and Unknowing in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein

> *The understanding cannot set eyes on God because of the radiance emanating from his countenance when he descends from his mountain of glory to communicate with us in this vale of tears wherein we live.* (Francisco de Osuna TA: 21.6)

So far in this thesis we have argued for an approach to Teresa's writings that, drawing on our Wittgensteinian methodology, highlights her 'performative discourses of unknowing and affectivity/embodiment'. In the previous chapter we laid out some of the background to Teresa's writings, in particular arguing that she is heir to a form of writing we term the 'tradition of *theologia mystica*'. In the next two chapters we shall demonstrate how she employs these two strategies in her writings. In a reflexive move, we shall also cross reference her 'mystical strategies' with those of Wittgenstein to suggest that the two use similar 'mystical strategies' in their writings. We shall begin in this chapter by looking at the 'mystical strategy of unknowing'. This will begin with a consideration of 'the strategy of unknowing' itself, in particular contrasting it with Sells's 'mystical language of unsaying' before moving into the strategy itself.

7.1 Sells's Mystical Languages of Unsaying

At the beginning of the thesis we reviewed several current approaches to *the mystical*, including those of Kripal and Sells. In the earlier chapter we looked carefully at Kripal's writing but it is now time to compare and contrast Sells's approach with the one adopted here.

Sells's classic text on the apophatic, *The Mystical Languages of Unsaying* (Sells 1994), suggests that from the sixth century onwards, clearly influenced by neo-Platonic writers such as Plotinus, the three Western monotheistic faiths have practiced a highly developed form of apophatic language, or what he calls 'the mystical language of unsaying'. This language, he argues, reaches its greatest development in the High Middle

Ages (he cites Marguerite Porete, Meister Eckhart and Ibn Arabi as the highest developments of the form) only for it to diminish until 1492, 'a convenient end-date for this common world, the year Jews and Arabs were expelled from Spain, the colonial age began and the civilisation held in common by Jewish, Christian and Muslim cultures began to break apart into increasingly separate spheres' (Sells 1994:221). Sells's apophasis evolves as a response to what he terms 'the aporia – the unresolvable dilemma – of transcendence' (1994:2), that is to say, the dilemma that arises when we try to give names to that which is beyond names: 'any statement of ineffability, "X is beyond names", generates the aporia that the subject of the statement must be named (as X) in order for us to affirm that it is beyond names'.

In response to this aporia Sells suggests three responses are possible:

1. Silence.
2. To distinguish between ways in which the transcendent is beyond names and the ways it is not. Here we have the classic Western medieval scholastic distinction between *God as God is in God's Self* and *God as perceived in God's creatures.*
3. The third response, which is the one explored by Sells, is to maintain the tension of the aporia and develop a form of *performative discourse* that realises that every assertion of the nature of the transcendent must be accompanied by another that denies it.

This 'mystical language of unsaying' is primarily a mode of discourse rather than an 'apophatic theory':

> In those writings, the effort to affirm transcendence leads to a continuing series of retractions, a propositionally unstable and dynamic discourse in which no single statement can rest on its own as true or false or even meaningful. In such discourse, a rigorous adherence to the initial logical impasse of ineffability exerts a force that transforms normal logic and semantic structures. (Sells 1994:3)

For Sells, it is primarily a 'discourse of double propositions' 'in which meaning is generated through the tension between the saying and the unsaying' (1994:12). To achieve its ends it uses paradoxes, contradictions and coincidences of opposites.

It cannot be denied that Sells is developing an interesting thesis here, not least in the far reaching effects of the Dionysian corpus on medieval Muslim, Christian and Jewish theologies. However, to use Sells's ideas in our study here we have to reflect on some of his theses.

One of the central theses of the book, which is unsurprising considering Sells's background as a scholar of Islamic mystical texts as well as Christian ones, is that there may have been a common core of influence between Sufi texts, such as the ones of Ibn Arabi that he explores, and the writings of such 'masters of apophasis' as Porete and Eckhart. Thus in analysing the 'Mirror of Simple Souls' Sells makes comparisons between the 'stages' of Porete's spiritual journey and the Sufi 'stages', especially of perplexity (*hairat*) and annihilation (*fanā*):

> The term 'annihilated soul' – which I can find used nowhere else in previous Christian literature – its combination with the reversion to the precreative state, and the reference fusions that take place at the point of mystical union show a multifold affinity to Sufi thought that can hardly be dismissed as pure coincidence... They also suggest that at this particular moment in the history of Western mysticism, Sufism and European Christian mysticism were part of a larger multireligious cultural entity. (Sells 1994:134)

This notion of a fused Sufi-Christian 'multireligious entity' whilst interesting means that Sells does tend to suggest the apophatic is a distinctive language typical of this 'multireligious cultural entity'. Here we seem to be returning to the 'cross-credal ontological entity' of 'modern mysticism' that we critiqued in Chapter Two.

In contrast to this approach (which comes close, in our opinion to the notions of 'modern mysticism' discussed in Part One), when looking at the texts of Teresa of Avila this thesis adopts a more Wittgensteinian *Blick* of placing the texts before us and seeing

how she uses the apophatic without wanting to draw any conclusions about 'occult entities' such as this 'multireligious cultural entity'.

The other point to be noticed about Sells's account of the apophatic is his reference to Wittgenstein's use of apophatic language which he simply dismisses:

> Wittgenstein's statement in the *Tractatus* that unsayable things do exist, followed by the statement that this previous statement 'must be thrown away' is a classically apophatic move, but one that comes as a kind of postscript, rather than being inscribed within the *Tractatus* as a whole. (1994:220)

This thesis has argued that 'Wittgenstein's deconstruction' is an essential part of his project: to show what cannot be said. So in this respect we would disagree with Sells's analysis of Wittgenstein's apophasis. As we will demonstrate in the following chapter, Wittgenstein's apophasis is very much at the centre of the *Tractatus* rather than a 'kind of postscript'.

However, if we take the starting point for Sells's apophasis as the need to respond to the 'aporia of transcendence' then in this respect he is right to dismiss Wittgenstein's apophasis as it is not the apophasis of someone who is self-consciously trying to justify 'God-talk' of the transcendent.

When we turn to our other interlocutor, Teresa of Avila, we find that she too is not so concerned with justifying notions of the transcendent deity, certainly not as part of any explicitly philosophical or theological scheme. Rather, her 'apophasis' if we can call it such, is, as we have seen, part of the tradition of *theologia mystica* inherited from Osuna (and thence from Gerson and the Parisian schools) as opposed to what they see as the *theologia speculativa*. As we saw in the previous chapter, Teresa has to be careful how much knowledge she reveals of this tradition because of the demands of the Inquisition and the Valdés Index and it is telling, as we have seen, that in her writings the term *theologia mystica* (or in Castillian *mística teología*) occurs only four times, and all within the early *Vida* (V 10.1, 11.5, 12.5 and 18.2). By the time she comes to the later works, especially *Las Moradas* it seems she deliberately does not use the term.

Thus, this thesis argues that we will not find in Teresa the 'apophasis of unsaying' analysed by Sells, and more suggestive it would seem of the Sufi mechanisms of writers such as Ibn Arabi, but rather something more akin to the 'unknowing' – the *theologia mystica* – of Osuna and Gerson. This, we argue, has more affinity to the 'affective Dionysianism' of the West than the severe and rather pure apophasis (or *fanā*) of the Sufi tradition. Which is not to say that Teresa does not use apophatic strategies, but rather they are strategies that are part of the affective Dionysianism of Gerson and Osuna than the *fanā* -apophasis of the Sufi tradition.

If, as suggested, Teresa is not attempting to respond to the philosophical problem of the aporia of transcendence in her writing why then would she be employing a 'strategy of unknowing' in her texts and how would she do this? To throw light on this question it is worth looking at how she describes the *Mística Teología* in *La Vida.*

7.2 The Strategies of Teresa's *Mística Teología*

As we saw in the previous chapter in The Book of Her Life (*Libro de La Vida)* Teresa describes the events of her life up to her fiftieth year (1565). Here, as we saw, Teresa uses the term *teología mística* when she wants to directly refer to her experience in the early chapters (Chapters Ten to Twelve) of the book. As she tells us, she enters into a place to which she gives the name the place of *mística teología:*

In these passages, it is argued, Teresa is not so concerned with responding to the aporia of the transcendent as described by Sells but with describing the 'unsaying' that she experiences in prayer: 'the mind, though it is not lost, does not reason'. These bold statements of unknowing are at this point undeveloped and it will only be later in *Las Moradas* that she will return to the theological and philosophical problems raised by these statements, to which we will return in the next chapter. As suggested at this point she is more concerned with enunciating the *ternura* of the soul that comes with the unknowing and is displaying her debt to Osuna, Gerson and their affective Dionysianism. Yet, as with Wittgenstein, she is attempting in her work to describe experiences to people who have themselves 'already had the thoughts that are expressed in it' (*Tractatus*: Preface) and she states time and again 'it will be very obscure to anyone who has not had

the experience' (V:10.9). Throughout, her description of the *mistica teologia* is accompanied by *gustos, ternera, deleites* and *gozos*: ' in the further stages of prayer the chief thing is joy (*gozar*)'. Prayer, she tells us, is like a garden set out 'for the Lord's pleasure' (*se deleite el Señor*) (V:11.6), a theme that will stay with her and return at the beginning of the *Moradas*. As this statement brings forth the encompassing metaphor of the Castle in *Las Moradas* so at this point in the *Vida* it brings forth the famous image of the 'four waters' that water the soul seeking God. However, as will be made clearer in the *Moradas*, Teresa is aware of the danger of advocating a way that abjures the way of thinking totally. She recognises that she cannot deny the role of thinking (see V:12.4) but on the other hand it is clear that her way requires 'unknowing' or at least 'suspension of the intellect':

> Learning is, I think, an invaluable help in this exercise, particularly when it goes with humility... In the 'mystical theology' the understanding ceases to work because God suspends it... We must not cease to work with it (the understanding) or we shall find ourselves stupid and apathetic and the result will be neither the one thing or the other. (V: 12.5)

There is a tension here, which, we suggest, can only be understood by the Affective Dionysianism of Osuna and Gerson – yes, there is unknowing, but also, there is the 'giving of delight' the 'strategy of affectivity' that is necessary for the unknowing to proceed: 'For when the Lord suspends it and makes it still (the *entendimiento*), He gives it something to amaze it and keep in occupied' (V: 12.6).

At the stage of writing the *Vida* in her fifties, then, the necessity of delight and enjoyment are central to her understanding of the mystical union. This is no Sellsian 'language of unsaying' but something quite different and more akin, it is argued, to the 'performative strategies' of Wittgenstein's texts that lead us from the Cartesian solipsism of the 'head' to contact the embodied desire of the body.

7.3 Strategies of Unknowing in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein Compared

Having argued in the previous section that what we find in the *Vida* is not so much a Sellsian 'mystical language of unsaying' but rather Teresa's version of Osuna's *theologia mystica* we are now in a position to describe her particular form of what we have termed 'unknowing'. True to its roots in affective Dionysianism we have highlighted its connection with desire and affectivity. However, this thesis argues that if we are to understood how Teresa is operating in her works, especially the more mature *Moradas* we would be better looking at Wittgenstein's strategies of unknowing and how these reflect Teresa's. Accordingly, for the remainder of this chapter we shall demonstrate some of the parallels between their respective 'performative discourses' as further support to the argument that Teresa's 'strategy' in her writing can be better compared to the 'performative discourse of *theologia mystica'* rather than a Sellsian 'mystical language of unsaying'.

7.3.1 Wittgensteinian Strategies of Unknowing and Deconstruction

> *Anything your reader can do for himself leave to him* (Wittgenstein VB:1948)

> *I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking. But, if possible... to stimulate someone to thoughts of his own.* (Wittgenstein PI: Preface vi)

As has been stated throughout this thesis, it is not possible to make a direct comparison between Teresa and Wittgenstein. Even if this were possible it would probably not be desirable – one is the twentieth century linguistic philosopher seeking to express the nature of meaning in his writing, the other a sixteenth century Carmelite sister trying to describe the nature of the soul's journey to God. However, what we can say, and is being argued for here, is that both writers in coming across the blocks to their expression; in the case of Wittgenstein the limits to meaning in logical form of language, and in the case of Teresa the limits to expression of the 'spiritual' nature of the self, adopt similar strategies

of elucidation. What we can call 'strategies of elucidation' or 'performative strategy'. In all such 'strategies of elucidation' style is as important as content, none more so than in the use of a subversive or deconstructive strategy. Wittgenstein clearly states that he does not want to spare his readers the trouble of 'thinking for themselves' (PI: viii). As we have seen Wittgenstein says of his later philosophy:

> I do philosophy now like an old woman who is always mislaying something and having to look for it again: now her spectacles, now her key. (OC: 532)

For as we seen, this 'new way of doing philosophy' no longer produces the systematic treatise but rather a sequence of numbered remarks designed to beguile and interact with the reader so that the discourse would have the desired performative effect on the person who engaged with it:

> They point or gesture towards ends that are somewhat alien to our current preoccupations. In fact they are written in the form of "striking similes" and "arresting moments" – they have a "poetic quality" their function is to change our "way of looking at things" (PI 144). (Schotter1997:1)

Teresa's writing, likewise, initially strikes one as 'scatter shot' and perhaps incoherent, as de Certeau puts it in his *Mystic Fable*:

> Rugged, rough-and-tumble sentences, torn by opposing impulses (I know, I don't know etc) punctuated with *pues* and *porque*, oral markers, sometimes of a hammering affirmation, sometimes of an appeal to the "sisters" who are right there, close by. (de Certeau 1992:195)

Yet, like Wittgenstein, is there perhaps 'method in the madness'? Is Teresa deliberately fooling us with her 'scattershot' language?

If we look at Wittgenstein we can see certain 'strategies of unknowing' which resemble those of Teresa, both having the aim to subvert and elude their readers' expectations – in both cases, the goal is 'pure performance'. For Wittgenstein, our words become tools, instruments to challenge and wake us up, he refers to them as 'the levers in the cabin of a locomotive' or 'tools in a toolbox'. Throughout his writings he uses them carefully and develops and traces his strategic elucidations with care and caution. Teresa, on the other hand, is using her performative discourse to urge her readers – primarily but not solely her sisters – to *act* through prayer to reach closer union with God in their lives. As we saw in Chapter Four, Schotter (1997:14) isolates four 'linguistic strategies' adopted by Wittgenstein:

1. To arrest or interrupt ('to deconstruct') the spontaneous, unselfconscious flow of our ongoing 'mental' activity. These strategies provoke us into examining whether there is 'more to it' than we expected. We are shocked into 'standing back'.
2. To use certain 'instructive forms of language' that provoke us to give 'prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily made us overlook' (PI:132). They are 'instructive gestures' which point and show.
3. To suggest new ways of thinking by the use of carefully selected images, similes and metaphors which can help the process giving 'first form to such sensed but otherwise unnoticed distinctions, thus to make reflective contemplation of their nature possible' (Schotter 1997:15).
4. To use the comparison of different 'language games' to present 'an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view; one of many possible orders; not the order' (PI: 132).

We also saw that as part of this subversive linguistic toolkit, Genova (Genova 1995:130) isolates four 'subversive stategies' used by Wittgenstein:

1. Talking to himself
2. Contradicting himself

3. Avoiding arguments and conclusions
4. Refusing orientating structures

To these four what we call 'performative strategies of unknowing' we add two more: use of humour and ordinary language, to suggest six strategies of unknowing (U1 – U6) within Wittgenstein's texts:

U1: The Direction of Locution
U2: Contradiction
U3: Avoiding Conclusions: Humility
U4: Disorientation
U5: Humour
U6: Use of Ordinary Speech

All six, it is argued here, are knowingly used by both Wittgenstein and Teresa to 'change the aspect' of the reader. This, we argue, is part of the 'mystical strategy' common to both – along with the 'affective/embodied strategy' we shall investigate in the next chapter. We shall accordingly turn to each strategy in both writers, beginning with Wittgenstein.

U.1. The direction of locution

Nearly all my writings are private conversations with myself (VB: 1948)

Throughout his corpus Wittgenstein talks to himself. As Genova points out, the boundaries between self and others breaks down: 'most times he talks to a host of imagined interlocutors who are fragments of himself and others' (1995:130). Several positions are stated and explored, sometimes all at once. The alternating narrative voice is both disconcerting and liberating, it is almost at times as though he had written the script of a play or film rather than a philosophical treatise (see Derek Jarman's comments on

this aspect of Wittgenstein's work used in the making of his own film *Wittgenstein,* Jarman 1993).

He conducts dialogue with imaginary others and with himself, including 'the author of the *Tractatus*' who takes on the third person:

> PI: 113 "But this is how it is-------" I say to myself over and over again. I feel as though, if only I could fix my gaze absolutely sharply on this fact, get it in focus, I must grasp the essence of the matter.
>
> PI: 114 (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* 4.5): "The general form of propositions is: This is how things are." -------- That is the kind of proposition that one repeats to oneself countless times. One thinks that one is tracing the outline of a thing's nature over and over again, and one is merely tracing round the frame through which we look at it.

Central to Wittgenstein's approach is his relationship with the reader, us, and how we are going to react to his remarks. Even the punctuation and arrangement of the script are important, as he states: 'I really want my copious punctuation marks to slow down the speed of reading. Because I should like to be read slowly (as I myself read)' (VB: 1948). As we shall also see with Teresa we are invited into an imaginary conversation with the narrator. He constantly asks us questions, challenges us, asks us to undergo thought experiments, a technique also found in Teresa. Fundamental to both is *our own experience*: how we write interpretation depends upon the pages of our own experience: in both cases we are understanding something that is already there. In the case of Wittgenstein, 'all that is the case' (T: 1), in the case of Teresa, the *Moradas* that present themselves when we begin to look at and consider ourselves in a prayerful fashion.

Wittgenstein's 'technique', then, as a philosopher, can be said to be one of constructing a series of 'reminders' to us. We have the answers all along, his task is to nudge us in the right direction so 'the fly can escape the fly bottle'. His written style therefore consists of series of these nudges and winks:

If it is asked: "How do sentences manage to represent?" – the answer might be: "Don't you know? You certainly see it, when you use them?" For nothing is concealed.

How do sentences do it? - Don't you know then? For nothing is hidden.

But given the answer: "But you know how sentences do it, for nothing is concealed" one would like to retort "Yes, but it all goes by so quick, and I should like to see it as it were laid open to view". (PI: 435)

The direction of locution, then, helps Wittgenstein in his task of letting his work be a 'series of reminders'. His work, like Teresa's, is essentially dialogic (Incandela 1985: 463) – 'it needs someone else and invites response'. We have to struggle to understand what Wittgenstein is trying to put across, the answers will not come easily or lightly.

U.2. Contradiction

We have already seen from Sells above the role of contradiction in the creation of the aporias of apophasis. Likewise, Wittgenstein enters into this game with his own contradictions and cross examples (See, for example, OC: 400- 405, PI:352 or his debates with 'the author of the Tractatus' eg. PI: 113 – 115). Again, as opposed to the proponent of the *Weltanschauung,* the proponent of the *Weltbild* can only suggest and cajole. She cannot declaim. As with the writers of mystical and psychotherapeutic discourse, Wittgenstein can never present a complete and water-tight system. It flows with the stream of life, sometimes hardening into the channel, sometimes fluid with the stream – 'now losing her spectacles, now her key.' The method of elucidation acts through games, strategies and reminders, some of which will contradict each other. Its special function requires a special form. This is the form of Wittgensteinian analysis or, for that matter, mystical discourse.

U.3 Avoiding Conclusions: Humility

There is accordingly no fixed end point for the discourse: world, language and discourse are endless. His writings contain no final conclusion, rather:

> The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to. – The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* in question. (PI: 133)

We do not need to *win* an argument, rather our aim is to *bring peace* to ourselves and our interlocutors.

As Anthony Kenny points out (Kenny 1959: 235) the *Philosophical Investigations* contains 784 questions, only 110 of which are answered and seventy of these are meant to be wrong! The arraigning of questions is clearly a positive strategy by Wittgenstein to elicit the change of *Weltblick* that he seeks. In *Zettel:* 457, for example, he quotes Augustine with approval: '*quia plus loquitur inquisition quam inventio':* ' because the search says more than the discovery' and perhaps Augustine is the 'missing link' for both Teresa and Wittgenstein. Both were profoundly influenced by reading the *Confessions* and both Teresa's *Vida* and Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* hold more than a passing desire to *confess*. As we saw earlier, for Cavell (1976:71) the style of the *Investigations* is that of Augustine's *Confessions,* the problems of the *Investigations* contain:

> What serious confession must: the full acknowledgement of temptation(s) ("I want to say..."; "I feel like saying..."; "Here the urge is strong...") and a willingness to correct them and give them up ("In the everyday use..."; "I impose a requirement that does not meet my real need..."). (Cavell 1976:71)

As we know from Monk, Wittgenstein at many times in his life made a 'full confession' and the confessional mode was familiar and attractive to him (See Monk 1990: 367 – 371). The 'voices of temptation and correctness' (Thompson 2000:14) are familiar from

U.1 above – they hover before us and may lead us in the right direction or against where we want to be.

Hauerwas in his comments on Wittgenstein in 'Aquinas, Preller, Wittgenstein and Hopkins' (Hauerwas 2004:98) suggests that the *Philosophical Investigations* is 'a form of training in humility'. He quotes Wittgenstein's remarks with approval: 'The edifice of your pride has to be dismantled. And that is terribly hard work' (VB:1937). For Hauerwas, pride is clearly an aspect of the self that stops us 'seeing how things really are'. It obstructs the *Ubersichtliche Darstellung.*

Wittgenstein's aim, as Incandela points out (Incandela 1985:460) was 'not explaining or setting out a position as much as he was confessing temptations – not for others to believe, but for them to test by their own lights, to engage in self-scrutiny, and only then to accept or reject them'. This can only happen if the author has the humility to step to one side, the ladder, as it were 'is pulled up' once it has been used:

> My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognises them as nonsensical, when he has used them – as steps – to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)
>
> He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright (*dann sieht er die Welt richtig*). (T: 6.54)

As Kallenberg comments:

> The use of the adverb 'rightly' (*richtig*) here to modify the verb 'to see' (*sehen*) was deliberate: Wittgenstein's aim was that the reader attain a correct *manner* of viewing rather than secure a correct picture of reality, because, as he would summarize some years later, "the search says more than the discovery". (Kallenberg 2001:22)

As with Teresa we shall see that humility within the author can allow this process of self reflection in the reader to happen. It may be better to see his later writings rather than 'confessions' but as 'collections of reminders' (See Fann 1969:107):

> The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose. If one tried to advance *theses* in philosophy it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them. (PI: 127)

The philosophers who seek to construct a *Weltanschauung* or over-riding theory will need to produce arguments, proof and reasoning. For the philosopher who seeks the *Weltbild* the 'collection of reminders' will be sufficient. As he reminds Drury we must avoid trying to become professional philosophers trying to churn out academic research papers when we have nothing new to say to one another.

U.4 Disorientation

> *For a philosopher there is more grass growing down in the valleys of stupidity than up on the barren heights of cleverness.* (VB: 1949)

Throughout Wittgenstein's texts we are forced to lose our way. We wander around trying to find a coherent way, but do not achieve it. The text is alive and constantly changing. As we have seen, Wittgenstein himself would worry endlessly about the order of his sentences, experimenting, as with a kaleidoscope, with differing versions of the propositions. In Schotter's words he seeks to arrest or interrupt 'the spontaneous, unreflective flow of our ongoing, routine activities' (2006:4) so that he may give 'prominence to distinctions which our ordinary form of language easily make us overlook' (PI:132). As we have seen the works are constructed in ways that make them difficult to read as parts of a systematic treatise. They are full of exclamation marks, non-sequiturs, blind alleys. 'Think of…' 'Imagine…' 'It is like…' 'Suppose…' and similar expressions pepper the text. As well as odd or unusual scenes or thought experiments.

Take, for example, the opening paragraphs of the *Philosophical Investigations* where we are confronted with no less than five differing thought-experiments describing four different situations of '*Sprachspiele*', vis:

- The description of Augustine's encounter with ostensive definition from his account of his childhood in *The Confessions.* (PI: 1)

- The person sent shopping with a slip marked 'five red apples' who has the shopkeeper perform strange activities much like a *Two Ronnies* comedy sketch (who says Wittgenstein has no sense of humour!). (PI: 1)

- The activities of two builders who utter the monosyllabic 'slab', 'block', 'pillar' and 'beam'. (Memories here surely of Wittgenstein's time as a builder-architect constructing his sister's house in Vienna in the nineteen twenties). (PI: 2)

- 'Moving objects about on a surface according to certain rules' – descriptions of board games. (PI: 3)

- An actor interpreting a script 'in which letters are used to stand for sounds, and also as signs of emphasis and punctuation'. (PI: 4)

For the start of the last major work by one of the leading thinkers of the twentieth century it makes for an odd and disconcerting experience. No wonder some people question Wittgenstein's grasp of form, or indeed reality in these last seemingly confused and confusing jottings. Yet, as has been argued throughout this thesis, Wittgenstein knows exactly what he is doing and if we return to our proposal of the importance of the *Überblick* in Wittgenstein's writings as argued above, then the message becomes very clear. As he says in PI: 5:

> We may perhaps get a sense of how much this general notion of the meaning of a word surrounds the working of language with a haze which makes clear vision

> impossible. - It disperses the fog if we study the appearances of language in primitive kinds of application in which one can have an overview *(übersehen)* of the aim and functioning of words.[134]

The aim of the disconcerting thought experiments is to pull the reader from their habitual way of viewing the world, disconcert her and re-orientate her so that she 'sees the world aright':

> His acceptance of the new picture consists in his now being inclined to regard a given case differently: that is, to compare it with this rather than that set of pictures. I have changed his way of looking at things (*Anschauungsweise geändert*). (PI: 144)

U.5 Humour

Humour is not a mood but a Weltanschauung. (VB: 1948)

Wittgenstein famously once said that he wanted to write a work that consisted entirely of jokes but didn't have the necessary sense of humour to do it! Humour is an essential part of Wittgenstein's strategy of moving us into the *Überblick*, and in this he shares the attribute with Teresa:

> Humour is not a mood (*Stimmung*), but a *Weltanschauung.* (VB: 1948)

The examples are numerous:

PI: 250: Why can't a dog simulate pain? Is he too honest?

PI: 268: Why can't my right hand give my left hand money?

---

[134] my translation

The philosophical *Blick* he is trying to achieve in his writings can use humour as much as anything else. As we saw at the beginning of the thesis, by stating that 'philosophy leaves everything as it is' Wittgenstein was as much trying to change *nothing* as to change *everything.* Which is exactly, as he realised in his later writings, how humour works. It is a fundamental *change of aspect.* So with humour, the whole can be changed by a certain comical 'aspect seeing':

> What is incomprehensible is that *nothing*, yet *everything* has changed. (RPP2: 474)

Thus, humour and 'getting the joke' can be just as much part of the process of 'changing aspect' as logical argument or rational discourse. In this respect, humour is a central plank or tool of Wittgenstein's strategies:

> What is it like for people not to have the same sense of humour? They do not react properly to each other. It's as though there were a custom amongst certain people for one person to throw another a ball which he is supposed to catch and throw back; but some people, instead of throwing it back, put it in their pocket. (VB: 1949)

U.6 Ordinary Speech

> *It is wrong to say that in philosophy we consider an ideal language as opposed to our ordinary one. For this makes it appear as though we thought we could improve on ordinary language. But ordinary language is all right.* (BB: 28)

One of the key components of the Wittgensteinian *Blick* is to redirect our gaze away from the abstract entities of theoretical speech to the ordinary that lies before us. As we have seen he is not concerned with developing a new body of systematic theory (PI: 109, 126) but 'putting everything before us' so nothing is either explained or deduced. *Ordinary* use and *ordinary* speech is of vital importance to his *Blick*:

When philosophers use a word ---- 'knowledge', 'being', 'object', 'I', 'proposition', 'name' ---- and try to grasp the *essence* of a thing, we must always ask ourselves: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language which is its original home ----

We bring the words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use. (PI: 116)[135]

By such means the Wittgensteinian *Blick* brings us back from 'one or another piece of plain nonsense' (PI: 119) to clearer understanding of the way we relate to the world. For philosophy can 'in no way interfere with the actual use of language, it can in the end only describe it' (PI: 124).

Again, Wittgenstein *reminds us* how we *use language in ordinary life* (cf. the opening pages of the *Philosophical Investigations*) as a solution to our problems. As we shall see in the next section, Teresa is also very clear that her sisters should use 'ordinary language' when they talk to each other and the faithful, especially when talking about things of God. She, of course, is working within the context of the *letrados/espirituales* debate, yet, like Wittgenstein, she seems to be able to sniff out 'metaphysical claptrap' and is all for plain speaking when talking of 'things of the spirit'.

As with Teresa, there is a suspicion that this language may be 'too coarse and material' (PI: 120), but as Wittgenstein says 'How can another be constructed?' and 'How strange that we should be able to do anything at all with the one we have!' (another example of U5!).

Therefore his 'clear and simple language games are not preparatory studies for a future regularization of language' (PI: 130) but rather a means to enable to say 'now I can go on'.

We have, then six performative strategies by which Wittgenstein deliberately disconcerts us and leads us into 'unknowing':

---

[135] My translation. Anscombe translates *Sprache* with 'language game' rather than 'language' – which seems to me to introduce an unnecessary level of 'Wittgensteinian' terminology (see Chapter Three)

U.1 The Direction of Locution

U.2 Contradiction

U.3 Avoiding Conclusions

U.4 Disorientation

U.5 Humour

U.6 Ordinary Speech

As with Wittgenstein, I will suggest that these six 'strategies' best achieve Teresa's programme of unknowing. In both cases the two authors do not want to impose dogma or a certain way of thinking on the reader but leave the reader to 'do what they can themselves'. For Wittgenstein this is the resolving of 'one or other piece of philosophical nonsense', for Teresa it is the individual soul's journey to God occurring in a place of freedom. Both are natural rebels, but they are rebels that respect the importance of the system they find around them and, in Wittgenstein's phraseology 'use the ladder' they find around themselves to achieve what they want, 'before throwing away the ladder'.

7.3.2 Strategies of Unknowing in Teresa

We have already argued that in Teresa's writings, rather than a Sellsian 'Language of Unsaying' we have something more like a Wittgensteinian 'Strategy of Unknowing'. When examining the 'unknowing' of Teresa we have to remind ourselves once again of the climate of *odium theologicum* within which she was writing (See Llamas Martínez 1972 and Rivers 1984). As a woman presuming to teach men, a daughter of *converso* stock and someone whose teachings came perilously close to that of *alumbradismo* she was suspect on many counts. We remember the famous quote from the Inquisitor Fray Alonso de la Fuente, made in 1589, some seven years after her death:

> The author of the said book passes it off and recommends it as a doctrine revealed by God and inspired by the Holy Spirit; but if in fact the author was that nun whose name is on the title page, it is a matter *praeter naturam* for her to have

written something taught by an angel, because it exceeds a woman's capacity. In any case it could not have been a good angel, but a bad one, the same one that deceived Mohammed and Luther and the other leaders of heretics. This being the case, the so-called miracle of the nun Teresa of Jesus, that her body is today intact and uncorrupted, is a fabulous business, either the work of Satan or the invention of heretics. (Llamas-Martínez 1972: 396)

Within this climate it appears to us now that Teresa deliberately used her own 'vulgar style of substandard written Spanish' (Rivers 1984:120) to survive. Indeed, within the context of the *theologia mystica* her 'anti-rational' style makes complete sense. Her style, as Rivers points out, deliberately avoids the syntax and style of the newly developing Romance Spanish then popular with Renaissance Spanish humanists such as Luis de Granada and Juan de Valdés:

> Teresa's written Spanish is in fact hard for us to read and understand in a wholly rational way; it is comparable, within an American context, to something composed by a writer of Black English, who deliberately tries to avoid the academic sound of white bourgeois correctness. (Rivers 1984:121)

Just how important style was for Teresa can be seen by observing the differences between the various versions of the *Camino* (See Weber 1990: 78 –80). The original text, begun between 1562 and 1566, her next literary venture after the *Vida,* is conserved in an autograph manuscript in the Escorial (Herafter CE) which was then amended by García of Toledo. Between 1566 and 1569 Teresa recopied this manuscript incorporating García's corrections as well as reorganising chapters and headings, this is known to us as the Valladolid codex (Hereafter CVA). As copies of the *Camino* proliferated Teresa planned a version for publication using CVA as its basis. This third version is named the Toledo codex (Hereafter CT), clearly, as Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink put it 'to reach the general public' (1962:181), one instance that we have where Teresa intended her writings to circulate beyond the sisters of the reform to have a wider reading public. As Weber remarks: 'The revisions of the *Way of Perfection* allow us to observe,

with particular clarity, not only the degree to which Teresa's stylistic decisions were deliberate but also the extent to which style was, for Teresa, a pragmatic issue' (Weber 1990:80).

As Ahlgren points out, Teresa criticises the Valdés Index in no less than four places in the *Camino*, albeit indirectly (Ahlgren 1996:89). She famously, remarks, for example, that 'even they (The Inquisition) cannot take the Our Father and the Hail Mary away from (the sisters)' (CE:21.8). To which García remarks 'she seems to be reproving the Inquisitors for prohibiting books on prayer'.[136]

'In sum', as Weber puts it, 'Teresa repeatedly denies possessing any literary skill, much less theological certainty or authority. Disorder, digression and imprecision – these are the tactics that disguise a charismatic text as women's chatter' (Weber 1990:108). Like Wittgenstein, dressed as his 'old woman', it seems that Teresa too would deceive us that the mess and disorder in her writing is just confusion and chaos. As we saw with Wittgenstein, so with Teresa, once we start to examine her style we realise that there is 'method in the madness'. Might she not be doing something else here?

The argument in this thesis is that taking her cue from Osuna and the division between *theologia mystica* and *theologia speculativa*, she is engaging in her own form of 'unknowing' all the better to teach the truths of *theologia mystica* and in particular *recogimiento*. We turn now to her ways of doing this.

U.1 The Direction of Locution

After Teresa's death in 1582 the Discalced Carmelites, on the recommendation of St John of the Cross, approached the *converso* Augustinian friar and professor of Hebrew at Salamanca Univerity, Fray Luis de León, to edit her texts for publication. Luis, as a theologian with a humanistic bent and from *converso* origins who had spent five years in the prisons of the Inquisition himself, knew something of the dangerous climate within which such mystical texts would be received and engaged in his task with perception and insight (See Rivers 1984: 122).The first edition was published with remarkable speed in

[136] 'Haced bien, hijas, que no os quitarán el Pater nóster y el Avemaría' 'Parece que reprehende a los Inquisidores que prohiben libros de oración'

1588 with a dedicatory letter to Ana de Jésus, Prioress of the Discalced in Madrid and close friend of John. Luis begins his letter by stating:

> I never knew, or saw, Mother Teresa of Jesus while she lived on earth; but now that she lives in Heaven I do know her, and I see her almost continuously in two living images of herself which she left us – her daughters and her books. (Peers CW III: 368)

From the beginning Luis recognized how 'alive' Teresa's texts were and how dependent they were on the 'oral community' of Carmelites that she had created:

> I believe that your reverences are important witnesses, for you are quite similar models of excellence: I never remember reading her works without imagining that I am listening to Your Reverence's voices, nor, conversely, do I ever hear you talk without feeling that I am reading the words of the Mother. Those who have experience of this will know that it is the truth. (Peers CW III: 372)

For Luis, Teresa's writings *must* be understood within the context of the oral community. Like Wittgenstein's, they benefit from being read aloud and strive to repeat the patterns, rests and pauses of speech with which she was familiar. The texts are peppered with '*erss*', '*umms*' and '*puess*' as she seeks at headlong pace to transcribe the oral to the written. Take, for example, this breathless interruption to the exposition of the 'Prayer of Quiet' in Mansion Four of the *Moradas*:

> God help the mess I've got in to! I've already forgotten what I'm writing about as business and poor health have forced me to put this work on one side until things were better, and as I have a bad memory everything will come out confused as I

can't return to read it all over again. Perhaps everything I say is confused – that's what it feels like anyway.[137] (M: 4.2.1)

Writing on Teresa's style in 1941 (and possibly having in mind passages such as the above) the Spanish critic Menéndez Pidal wrote:

St Teresa does not really write, but speaks through writing; thus the excitement of her emotional syntax constantly overflows the restrictions of ordinary grammar. (Pidal 1942:135)

Like Wittgenstein she is not adverse to giving snatches of reported dialogue and will often introduce more than one narrative voice into the text:

O Lord, Lord! Are You our Model and Master? Yes, indeed! Well then, what did Your honour consist of, You who honoured us? Didn't you indeed lost in being humiliated unto death? No, Lord, but You won it for all. (CVA: 36:5)

She presents us the reader with open questions:

And supposing my Lord that there are others who are like myself, but have not realized this?...Oh God help me sisters! If we only knew what honour really is and what is meant by losing it! (CVA: 36:3)

Why do we serve the Lord in so doubtful a way...? Who is plunging you into those perils? (CVA: 18.9)

Like Wittgenstein, too, she puts questions in her interlocutors' mouths so that she can answer them:

---

[137] *¡Válame Dios en lo que me he metido! Ya tenía olvidado lo que tratava, porque los negocios y salud me hacen dejarlo al major tiempo; y como tengo poca memoria irá todo desconcertado,por no poder tornarlo*

But why, you will say, does the Prioress excuse us? Perhaps she would not if she knew what was going on inside us. (CVA: 10.7)

What do you think His will is, daughters? That we should be altogether perfect, so as to be one with Him and with the Father, as in His Majesty's prayer. See how far we are from attaining this! (M: 5:3)

As De Certeau suggests, when we read passages such as these later ones from the *Moradas* where she has perfected her craft it is almost as though we can see the sisters round us, pressing nearer to hear what she has to tell us (See also M: 6.4, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2). Her discourse, then presupposes and arranges a community of discourse – a Wittgensteinian *Sprachspiel* in a *Lebensform.*

U.2 Contradiction

In his dedicatory letter Luis de León also defended Teresa's habit of 'failing to carry her argument to its conclusion, but introducing other arguments which often break the thread of her sense' (Peers CW III: 373). Throughout her writings Teresa is not concerned to reproduce the classical Latin style of the new Renaissance humanism. Hers is a 'rough and ready' style whose directness is its appeal.

As befits the *stulta sapientia* of the *theologia mystica* Teresa, like Osuna, frequently employs paradox to shift meaning to the point where it begins to break down. The soul in the third degree of prayer in the *Vida* is:

> Rejoicing in this agony with ineffable joy… the state is glorious folly… a heavenly madness… delectable disquiet… So delectable is this distress that life holds no delight which can give greater satisfaction. (V: 24)

Pidal writes of her style in a similar vein as Luis de León:

---

a leer, y an quizás se es todo desconcierto cuanto digo. Al menos es lo que siento.

> Her incessant ellipses; confused grammatical arguments; enormous parentheses, which cause the reader to lose the train of thought; lines of reasoning that are never completed because of interruptions, verbless sentences. (Pidal 1942:135)

The argument in this thesis is that Teresa *deliberately* writes in this confusing way as a true daughter of the *theologia mystica* of de Osuna and *Los Recogidos*. The understanding, as for Osuna, must be thwarted to allow the soul's direct access to God through *recogimiento*. The tumbling morass of sentences, adverbs, meandering constructions and exclamations only helps to serve that purpose. Rivers again:

> She refuses to accept the analytical or linear sequentiality of linguistic discourse, and she strives for simultaneity, for saying everything all at once, as it actually happens, "writing with many hands". (Rivers 1984:127, see, for example, CV: 20:6)

U.3 Avoiding Conclusions: Humility

> *The whole groundwork of prayer is based on humility and that the more a soul lowers itself in prayer the more God raises it up.* (V: 22.11)

In an important essay on Teresa's *Moradas* published in 1983 (Flasche 1983) Hans Flasche points out the importance of the verb *parecer* – 'it seems, it appears' in *Las Moradas. Parecer,* he writes, 'is one of the most important words in Saint Teresa's lexicon' (Flasche 1983:447). She uses the verb repeatedly in all her texts creating a deliberate atmosphere of incertitude and provisionality which can only assist in the 'disguising' of Teresa's intentions with regard to her exposition of the 'mystical theology'. Pictures and suggestions are 'offered' to the reader as possible solutions and answers she has found: once again we have the familiar 'stammering, broken voice' of Teresa. In the *Moradas,* for example, it appears frequently: *'Paréceme que aun no os veo satisfechas'*: 'It seems to me that you're still not satisfied' (M: 5:1). *'Paréceme que estáis con deseo de ver qué se hace esta palomica'*: 'It seems to me you have a desire to see

what this little dove is doing' (M :5.4). *'Paréceme que os estoy mirando cómo decís'*: 'It seems to me that I can see you asking' (M: 6.6). Once again the rhetorical strategies we identified above are coming into play. Accompanying this studied incertitude is Teresa's continual insistence that as an unlettered *'mujercilla'* she is not qualified to talk on such lofty matters:

> For the love of God, let me work at my spinning wheel and go to choir and perform the duties of religious life, like the other sisters. I am not meant to write: I have neither the health nor intelligence for it. (Peers CW: 1.xxxix)

Frequently she tells us she is unqualified and useless to the task:

> God help me with what I have undertaken! I've already forgot what I was dealing with, for business matters and poor health have forced me to set this work aside just when I was at my best; and since I have a poor memory everything will come out confused because I can't go back to read it over again. And perhaps even everything else I say is confused; at least that's what I feel it is. (M: 4.2.1 immeadiately followed by a *Parece*: 'It seems to me I have explained the nature of consolations in the spiritual life')

It is notable that these linguistic devices become more evident when Teresa talks of the more 'inexpressible' elements of prayer such as in the Fourth Mansions quoted above. The phrase 'little woman' or 'stupid woman' was a typical theological attack on women's inadequacy when it came to questions of doctrine or theology. Bartolomé de Medina had denounced her as *'mujercilla'* saying that her nuns would be better off 'staying in their convents and praying and spinning' (Weber 1990: 36).

As Weber shows in her classic exposition of this tactic, Teresa's defense was to 'embrace stereotypes of female ignorance, timidity, or physical weakness but disassociate herself from the double-edged myth of woman as seducible/seductive' (1990:36). For example in *Vida* 11:14:

As for a poor woman (*mujercita*) like myself, a weak and irresolute creature, it seems right that the Lord should lead me on with favours (*regalos*), as He now does, in order that I may bear certain afflictions with which He has been pleased to burden me. But when I hear servants of God, men of weight, learning and understanding (*de tomas, de letrados, de entendimiento*) worrying so much because He is not giving them devotion, it makes me sick to listen to them... They should realise that since the Lord does not give it to them they do not need it.

As Weber remarks 'With disarming modesty she concedes to women's intellectual inferiority in a way that frees her to explore a new theological vocabulary' (1990:38):

> I shall have to make use of some comparison, for which I should like to apologise, since I am a woman and write simply what I am ordered to writer. But this spiritual language is so difficult to use for anyone who like myself has not gone through studies, that I shall have to find some way of explaining myself, and it may be that most of the time I won't get the comparison right. Seeing so much stupidity will provide some amusement for your Reverence. (V: 11.6)

As Weber comments:

> In these passages, and in many others, Teresa concedes to women's weakness, timidity, powerlessness and intellectual inferiority but uses the concessions ironically to defend, respectively, the legitimacy of her own spiritual favors, her disobedience of letrados, her administrative initiative, her right to 'teach' in the Pauline sense and her unmediated access to scripture. (Weber 1990:39/40)

For both reader and writer, then, humility is required. The opening sections of the *Moradas* stress the need for 'humility', not just morally but intellectually. Only by this *stulta* can the means be prepared for God to impart *sapientia.*

U.4 Disorientation

In Luis de León's letter to Ana de Jésus mentioned above he points out that he does not feel it is necessary to amend the style with which Teresa presents her writing:

> I have neither amended them verbally nor adopted the considerable changes which copies now in circulation have made in the text of them either through the copyists' own carelessness or out of presumption or error... If her critics had a real understanding of Castilian, they would see that that of the Mother is elegance itself. For even though, in certain passages of what she writes, before she completes the sentence that she has begun, she contaminates it with other sentences and breaks the train of thought, often beginning anew with interpolations, nevertheless she inserts her digressions so skilfully and introduces her fresh thoughts with such grace that the defect itself is a source of beauty, like a mole on a lovely face. (Peers CW: III. 373)

As we have seen Luis, her first editor, recognised at the outset that, as with Wittgenstein, the meaning of Teresa's message was inextricably bound up with the medium of the message: that rag-tag bag of flooding prose full of errors, inconsistencies, *puess*, *buts* and *errs*. The very same style that makes the whole work come alive for the reader. Exclamations litter Teresa's text, as do lengthy repetitions and interpolations in the text. In the *Vida* in particular the sentences tumble out making it difficult for the reader, and the translator, to keep up:

> At first these things did me harm - so it appeared (*me parece*) -, and it shouldn't have been her fault, but mine; for afterwards my own wickedness was bad enough, together with the servants we had, whom for every wrong they were able to assist; that if one had given me good counsel, to benefit me; rather self-interest blinded them as did desire me. And because I was never inclined to much wrong – because I naturally abhorred bad things - , but to the pastime of pleasant

> conversation; yet, placed in the situation, I was in the hand of danger, and would be placing my father and brothers in it as well. (V 2.5)[138]

Teresa seems to recognize that in order to maintain the vitality of the spiritual world she is trying to convey to her reader she must also retain the rough edged inconsistency of speech in real time. Like Wittgenstein's texts, her texts 'show' as much through what they do not say as through what they do say. Accordingly, Teresa will often use pictures, metaphors and images to 'disorientate' the discursive intellect and take it to places it would rather not go. We shall see this in the following chapter when we discuss her later work the *Moradas*.

As we have seen above, Teresa frequently uses the 'rhetoric of incompetence', second cousin to Wittgenstein's contradiction. Thus in *Moradas* 1.2.7 we find the following passage:

---

[138] My translation. This is a very difficult passage to translate and should really be left as it stands: '*Al principio dañáronme las cosas dichas – a lo que me parece - , y no devía ser suya la culpa, sino mía; porque después mi malicia para el mal bastava, junto con tener criadas, que para todo mal hallava en ellas buen aparejo; que si alguna fuera en aconsejarme bien, por ventura me aprovechara; mas el interese las cegava, coma a mí la afeción. Y pues nunca era inclinada a mucho mal – porque cosas deshonestas naturalamente las aborrecía -, sino a pasatiempos de Buena conversación; mas puesta en la occasion, estava en la mano el peligro, y ponía en él a mi padre y hermanos*'.
Kavanaugh/Rodgriguez and Allison Peers both give two varying translations which at times verge on the ungrammatical like my crude translation above. I give both in full to illustrate the problems and pitfalls of translating Teresa:

'These things did me harm, I think, at the beginning, and it wasn't her fault but mine. For afterward my malice was sufficient, together with having the maids around, for in them I found a helping hand for every kind of wrong. If there had been one of them to give me good counsel, I perhaps would have benefited by it; but self-interest blinded them as my vanity did me. I was never inclined to great evil – for I naturally abhorred indecent things – but to the pastime of pleasant conversation; yet, placed, in the occasion, the danger was at hand, and my father's and brothers' reputation was in jeopardy as well.' (Kavanaugh and Rodriguez CW I:59)

'At first, I believe, these things did me harm. The fault, I think, was not my friend's but my own. For subsequently my own wickedness sufficed to lead me into sin, together with the servants we had, whom I found quite ready to encourage me in all kinds of wrongdoing. Perhaps, if any of them had given me good advice, I might have profited by it; but they were as much blinded by their own interests as I was by desire. And yet I never felt the inclination to do much that was wrong, for I had a natural detestation of everything immodest and preferred passing the time in good company. But, if an occasion of sin presented itself, the danger would be at hand and I should be exposing my father and brothers to it.' (Peers CW I:15)

These interior matters are so obscure for our minds *(tan oscuras de entender)* that anyone who knows as little as I will be forced to say many superfluous and even foolish things in order to say something that's right. Whoever reads this must have patience, for I have to have it in order to write about what I don't know. Indeed sometimes I take up the paper like a fool ('*una cosa boba*'),[139] for I don't know what to say or how to begin. (M: 1.2.7)

Following Gerson and Osuna, the 'fool' (or 'little woman') is the one who is wise in the '*theologia mystica*'.[140] Again, Teresa refers to these things '*tan oscuras de entender*' - is this another reference to the dark and obscure knowledge of Dionysius's 'theologia mystica' which we have already analysed in Chapter Five? Perhaps, she implies, all of us, writer and reader alike, must become fools before we can enter the strategy of the 'mystical theology'.

U.5 Humour

> *The soul sometimes laughs to itself when it sees seriously religious and prayerful persons make a big issue out of some rules of etiquette which it has already trampled under foot.* (V: 21.9)

As is attested by many of her contemporaries and is clear from her writing, humour was always an important part of Teresa's armoury in her struggles to establish the Discalced reform. Although examples of this abound throughout her work perhaps the clearest examples are in the *Libro de Las Fundaciones* ('Book of the Foundations', hereafter F) describing in open fashion the recent events around the founding of her convents in Spain. As Weber points out (Weber 1990:126) the topics dealt with had to be done so with tact and care as many of the protagonists were still alive and the tension between the Discalced reform and the Carmelites of the Mitigated Rule remained high. Interestingly enough, with reference to U.6, she describes her style in the prologue to the book as *tan*

---

[139] cf Osuna and Gerson on the 'fools and women'
[140] cf Wittgenstein doing philosophy 'disguised as an old woman' see above

pesado ('too heavy') and suffering from too much *groseria* ('coarseness'). Weber describes the history as 'picaresque':

> She slyly reveals that in her determination to do God's work she must rely on her charm, ingenuity, and, at times, deception in order to outwit unenlightened souls, be they landlords, town councilmen, or archbishops. (Weber 1990:128)

A few examples will suffice:

- Chapter Thirty One describes the difficult foundation at Burgos. Here the Archbishop, Don Cristóbal Vela was initially enthusiastic, encouraging the sisters to come prior to his granting a licence for the foundation.[141] Teresa describes the struggles to get to Burgos, the rivers in full spate and her own illness. Having finally arrived Teresa describes how the Archbishop does not want them there and tells them if they do not have an income and a house of their own they should leave to which Teresa comments: 'The roads of course were charming and it was such nice weather!' (F 31: 21).

- Chapter 19 describes the foundation of Salamanca with the full vigour of the picaresque. The house they had chosen (which still presently stands on the Plaza de Santa Teresa) had previously been occupied by students and Teresa's description of the first night herself and an elderly sister, terrified of the evicted students returning on Hallowe'en is a masterpiece:

  'When my companion found herself shut up in the room, she seemed to be a little calmer about the students, though she did nothing all the time but look about her fearfully, first in one direction then in another... "What are you looking for?" I asked her. "Nobody can possibly get in here." "Mother", she replied, "I am wondering what you would do all alone if I were to die here."... So I said to her: "Well, sister, I shall consider what is to be done if the occasion arises: now let me go to sleep".' (F: 19:5)

---

[141] His uncle was Teresa's godfather, see Peers Cw III:184 fn 2

One of the most interesting depictions of humour occurs in Chapter Six which begins with Teresa back with her favourite topic of the *Vida* and the *Moradas* – vis. the spiritual life and how progress can be made in prayer. Almost immeadiately she reaches the 'point of unknowing': 'I wish I knew how to explain myself here, but it is so difficult that I do not know if I shall be able to do so' (F6: 2). However in this chapter she touches on the controversial subject of raptures and ecstasies, so easily associated with the *Alumbrados* (See the previous chapter). The chapter also deals with the controversial topic of the relationship between spirituality and sexuality and the proximity of sensual with spiritual delights. She gives clear guidelines that prioresses should beware these prolonged 'swoons' or 'raptures' and not encourage them in their sisters. To make her point with humour she refers to an incident that took place at Medina del Campo with a choir nun, Alberta Bautista and lay sister Inés de la Concepción (See Peers CWIII:30 fn 1). In their desire to experience ecstasy they asked for frequent communion from their confessor: 'the result was such an increase in distress that unless they communicated daily they thought they were about to die' (F: 6.10). Teresa realizes how unhealthy this attachment has become but has to deal with an obdurate confessor who refuses to believe this can cause anything but good for the sisters. Let Teresa complete the story herself:

> I started to talk to the nuns and to give them many reasons, sufficient, in my opinion, to prove to them that the idea that they would die without this particular help was pure imagination. But the notion was so deeply rooted in their minds that no argument could eradicate it and it was useless to reason with them further. So, seeing that it was in vain, I told them that I had those very desires myself and yet I should stay away from Communion, so that they might realize that they ought not to communicate except when all the nuns did so together: we would all three die together, I said. (F: 6.11)

Potential heretics, timid and difficult nuns, wavering clerics, Teresa encounters each with humanity and warmth allowing her humour to pepper the narrative and convince us, her readers, of the correctness of her remedies and solutions.

Perhaps the key to her use of humour in the *Fundaciones* lies at the beginning of the prologue where she stresses the need for humility (*humildad*) in the enterprise (see U.3 above). Humility, humour and grounded or ordinary language: all three rotate around each other to produce the necessary effect on the reader. As we read the accounts we realize that she is gently laughing at us the reader – with all our pomposities, obsessions with prayers, worldly concerns and judgemental attitudes. Yes, we can laugh at the targets of her humour in the *Fundaciones,* but we must always remember that her comments are directed equally at us, her readers.

U.6 Ordinary Speech

As we have seen Teresa herself is conscious of her style, she calls it 'my rough style rather than that of those more elegant' (*mi grosero estilo que por otros elegantes)* (CVA:16: 9) full of 'imperfection' and 'poverty' (CVA: Prologue). As Peers points out in his 1953 essay *Saint Teresa's Style: A Tentative Appraisal* (Peers 1953) the key note in her style is down-to-earthiness and naturalness. Here again she appears to be a disciple of Osuna and the simple direct style of the *theologia mystica* of the *Tercera Abecedario.* She states that the manner of writing (like talking) adopted by nuns should be:

> Simple, frank and devout, rather like that of hermits and people who live in retirement. They must use none of the newfangled words – affectations, as I think people call them – which are current in a world always eager for new-fangled things. In all circumstances let them give preference to common expressions rather than to unusual ones. ('Method for the visitation of convents of the Discalced Carmelite nuns' in Peers CW: 3.251)

As Peers points out, she avoids learned words (Peers 1953:84) and her text is notable for the lack of precise theological terms especially concerning 'mystical theology'. Indeed, as we have seen, the word 'mystical theology' is only used a handful of times in the *Vida* before it is dropped not to be used again in her work. The humility of ordinary language

is close to the humility of humour and central to the effect she wants to produce in her readers.

In his study *The Vernacular Mind of St Teresa* (Rivers 1984), Elias Rivers points out how Teresa's 'vernacularism' was a part of the sixteenth century Spanish humanist movement which deliberately sought to communicate to 'ordinary people' through Castilian rather than Classical Latin. Rivers suggests that in this, as we have seen before, the simple Latin of Augustine's *Confessions*, an influential text on the young Teresa, was clearly an important influence (Rivers 1984: 117):

> Teresa of Jesus knew very little Latin, and she deliberately refused to imitate the new style of classical Spanish prose; in a true patristic spirit, she invented her own vulgar style of substandard written Spanish, a style that is clearly anti-academic and even anti-rational. (Rivers 1984:120)

Thus, in her prose we find that 'classical' Castilian spellings are twisted and subverted, often using more phonetic spelling than grammatical. Thus she uses *ylesia* and *yglesia* for *iglesia* ('church'), *naide* for *nadie* ('no-one'), *relisión* for *religion* ('religion') as well as a host of diminutives and familiarisations of words: *mariposita* (a little butterfly), *pastorcito* (little shepherd boy), *avecita* (little bird). Peers suggests that she creates words of her own invention 'charging them with emotional content which another language can only approximately express' (Peers 1953:85): *un disgustillo* (V:12) ' a little annoyance' / 'a little feeling of frustration'; *estos temorcillos* (V:31) 'these little fears'; *centellica pequeñita* (V:15) 'the tiniest of tiny sparks' – this latter being her appropriation of the classical phrase *scintilla* from the *theologia mystica* to describe the point at which the soul meets the divine.

Her conversational and immeadiate style, Rivers suggests, is deliberate and intentional:

> She learned to read Spanish fluently as a young girl and knew that she had an advantage there that she could never have in the official Scholastic language of the Western Church, with its exclusively male priesthood. Her Spanish was not

> structured, as Louis of Granada's and John de Valdés's was, by a familiarity with written Latin, whether ecclesiastical or neo-classical. When she wrote, she neglected, or perhaps deliberately avoided, the normal spelling and syntax of the Spanish texts that she had voraciously read. (Rivers 1984:121)

Marcos (1997:153) suggests that she deliberately uses the *'avulgarización intencionada'* of the *'estilo de ermitaños'*. If this is the case, Teresa in her 'rough speech' is deliberately positioning herself in her writings with her beloved *espirituales* of the *recogimiento* movement such as Pedro de Alcantara rather than the sophisticated *letrados* with their more polished and scholastic Latin rhetoric.

7.4 Summary

This chapter has argued that Teresa's prose style in her writings is deliberately provocative and unusual. She sets down her writing in determined contradistinction to the refined and elegant Latin and Castilian prose of 'Golden Age' Spain. Her intention, we have argued, derives from her knowledge and familiarity with the medieval tradition of *theologia mystica* and in particular its exposition by Francisco de Osuna. From him she has learnt that the language of prayer manuals has to respect the limits of intelligent and rational order ('What can be said, cannot be shown. What cannot be said, can be shown'). She sees language as a particular tool to be 'used' to convey the spiritual message she wants to get across. Her *Sprachspiel* may be considered coarse, vulgar or stupid, but she is happy with this as it serves the purpose she wants, to 'change the aspect' of her reader:

> Your behaviour and language must be like this: let any who wish to talk to you learn your language; and, if they will not, be careful never to learn theirs: it might lead you to hell. It matters little if you are considered coarse (*groseras*) and still less if you are taken for hypocrites: indeed, you will gain by this, because only those who understand your language will come to see you. (CVA: 20:4-5)

As with Wittgenstein her texts 'show' as much as they 'say', and they 'show' through her grammatical and linguistic devices in the text. Just as Wittgenstein uses his aporias, strange stories and constructions to create the necessary *Überblick,* so too Teresa uses similar devices to convey the nature of spiritual transformation through *recogimiento.*

Unlike some of the mystical writers examined by Sells, Teresa is not intending to launch us into a full blown aporia of unknowing. Rather she is using her text, as does Wittgenstein, as a 'guide to the perplexed' – a way of prodding and prompting us, through hints, sarcasm, humour and ordinary language to see all that lies before us already that our lack of vision had blinded us to. Like Wittgenstein, she helps remove the scales from our eyes so that we may have a clearer vision of 'all that is the case'.

Chapter Eight: 'A Transformational Process': Strategies of Affectivity and Embodiment in Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein

> A religious question is either a "life question" or (empty) chatter. This *Sprachspiel*, we could say, only deals with "life questions". (Wittgenstein BEE 183:202) [142]

> When I see people very diligently observing the sort of prayer that they have and very wrapped up in it when they have it (for it seems that they will not let the thought move or stir in case they lose a small morsel of the *gusto* or devotion that they have had), I realise how little they understand of the road to the attainment of union. They think that the whole business lies in such things.
>
> No, sisters, no! The Lord desires works and that if you see a sick woman to whom you can give some help, never be affected by the fear that your devotion will suffer, but take pity on her: if she is in pain you should feel pain too; if necessary, fast so that she may have your food, not so much for her sake as because you know that the Lord desires it. (Teresa of Avila M: 5.3)

Having demonstrated in the previous chapter how Teresa of Avila and Ludwig Wittgenstein both use what were termed 'strategies of unknowing' in their writing, which were also characterised from the interpretation of Dionysius as 'mystical strategies', this chapter will now review the other 'mystical strategies' mentioned in Chapter Five – namely, the use of the text to direct the reader from what the Victorines called the *intellectus* to the *affectus.*[143] As has been made clear throughout this dissertation a direct comparison between the two writers is not simple or perhaps desirable, for reasons elaborated already. However, using the example of writers such as Pound (2007) this thesis aims to create a space where the one writer can 'interrogate', or fall into

---

[142] My translation. *'Eine religiöse Frage ist nur entweder Lebensfrage oder sie ist (leeres) Geschwätz. Dieses Sprachspiel – könnte man sagt – wird nur mit Lebensfragen gespielt.'*

[143] See Chapter Five above.

conversation with, the other. Whilst this was important in the previous chapter it is particularly so in this one, for although the 'strategies' being detailed here can be found, we argue, in both writers, the origins, aims and results of the strategies are different in both cases.

In the case of Wittgenstein, we argue, applying his own search for the *Sprachspiel* to his own writings, the move is from the disembodied Cartesian 'I' to the embodied self of the final philosophy (See in particular Kerr [1997] for a good analysis of this). However, following themes developed in Chapter Three when we considered his *Nachlass*, we will use a study of his unpublished writings, especially the so-called *Geheime Tagebücher* and the *Koder Tagebuch* to demonstrate how this 'move towards embodiment' is evident in these works, in this respect Wittgenstein has occasionally been misinterpreted by his commentators. Some of this, as Baum (1992) and others have argued, seems to stem from a fear to engage with the notion of Wittgenstein as an embodied being – both humanly and sexually. The second aspect of the 'embodiment' of Wittgenstein's writings is to take seriously his description of religious faith as 'a passion', and as he clearly states in the quotation that heads this chapter, the need to see religion as essentially tackling *Lebensfrage* or else talking rubbish. Out of this, we argue, flows his views on the religious life as an ethical life, inspired no doubt by his reading, amongst others, of Tolstoy in the World War One trenches. In this respect, and in the perspective of the later remarks in the *Tractatus* wherein Wittgenstein deals with *das Mystische*, this chapter argues that the key moment in the young Ludwig's development was his experiences on the Eastern Front in the latter stages of the First World War. Accordingly, we will spend some time in this chapter analysing his remarks during this period to relate them to the 'strategy of embodiment' which will emerge in his subsequent writing.

In the case of Teresa, on the other hand, the chapter argues that her own *Sprachspiel* of embodiment has its roots directly in the Victorine *theologia mystica* which we explored in Chapter Five. Here we see her appreciation of the need for an *affective* embodiment of prayerful strategy, leading as we see in the quote at the beginning of the chapter to the necessary *Obras* for us to function as rounded human beings. As with the strategy of unknowing, both have differing objectives but what is remarkable about their

texts is that both undergo the same process of movement which we characterised in Chapter Four as that from saying to showing to acting; for both, the end of all philosophical/theological speculation is *action.* As Wittgenstein so well sums in up in his notebook of 1946, five years before his death:

> One of the things Christianity says amongst others, I believe, is that all sound doctrines are useless. You have to change your *life* (Or the *direction* of your life).
>
> It says that all wisdom is cold; and that you can no more use it for sorting out your life than you can forge iron when it is *cold.*
>
> The point is that good teaching need not necessarily *grab* you; you can follow it as you would a doctor's prescription. – But here you need something to grab you and turn you round. – (ie. this is how I understand it.) Once you have been turned round, you must *stay* turned round.
>
> Wisdom is passionless. But faith by contrast is what Kierkegaard calls a *passion.*
>
> (VB: 1946).

In both Teresa and Wittgenstein, this chapter argues, we see a style of writing that aims to *grab* the reader and *turn them round.* Although 'sound doctrine' and 'good teaching' is important for both of them they both appreciate that their writings must somehow be more than a 'prescription we follow from the doctor'. For Wittgenstein, the aim of this process is to 'see the world aright' and as we shall see, live in right relationship to it too. In the case of Teresa it is to draw us closer into what she believes is God's action on earth and our place in the building up of God's kingdom here on earth. Both embody a transformational strategy that re-turns us to the community out of which we arise.

8.1 Transformational Strategies in Wittgenstein and Teresa

In Chapter Four above we characterised the essential move in the later writings of Wittgenstein as that from 'saying to showing to acting'. In the previous chapter we showed how Wittgenstein's 'performative discourse of unknowing' facilitated the move from 'saying to showing', or more specifically from a particular *Weltanschauung* to the *Weltbild* of 'aspect seeing' manifest in his later philosophy. This chapter will complement the last by presenting the Wittgensteinian 'strategies of embodiment' that allow the move from 'showing to acting'; in this respect we are characterising Wittgenstein's approach to philosophy as essentially 'transformational'. As we saw in Chapter Three the notion of Wittgenstein's philosophy as somehow 'therapeutic' in that 'it gets something done' is one that has gained increasing ground in recent years, it is out of this strand of interpretation that the argument arises.

However, rather than 'therapeutic' we argue in this chapter for a 'transformational' interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophy, by this is meant the basic idea that philosophy (or indeed speculative thought) cannot be an end in itself but must *necessarily* entail a movement from contemplation to action. But perhaps even here Wittgenstein once again subverts even the lineal pattern of the doctorate student, as *'im Anfang war die Tat'*: has not action been there all along, right at the beginning? Indeed, it only *seemed* that thought had come first, philosophy is indeed a 'battle against the bewitchment of our understanding by the medium of language' (PI: 109).[144] He suggests in *Zettel* (Z: 540) that these sorts of expression are 'pre-linguistic', that 'the language game is based upon them', ' it is a prototype of a way of thinking and not itself the result of thought':

> What, however, should the word "primitive" say? Certainly, that the relationship is pre-linguistic: that a *Sprachspiel* rests upon it, that it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not itself the result of thought. (Z:541)[145]

---

[144] *Die Philosophie ist ein Kampf gegen die Verhexung unsres Verstandes durch die Mittel unserer Sprache.* My translation

[145] *'Was aber will hier das Wort 'primitiv' sagen? Doch wohl, dass die Verhaltungsweise vorsprachlich ist: dass ein Sprachspiel auf ihr beruht, dass sie das Prototyp einer Denkweise ist und nicht das Ergebnis des Denkens'* My translation

As he states at the beginning of the *Philosophical Investigations*, he regards this pre-linguistic 'primitive form of language' as pre-dating all that comes after it:

> A child uses such primitive forms of language when it learns to talk. (PI: 5)

Wittgenstein's approach, then, can be characterised as a 'transformational epistemology' which has as its goal the transformation of the interlocutor through participation in the linguistic strategies of performative discourse. He is not simply concerned with acquiring knowledge of ourselves, the world or others, but rather that our engagement with the task presented will transform us ontologically 'in our sensibilities, in the things we notice and are sensitive to, the things we seek and desire etc.'(Schotter 1997:1).[146] In this respect, this chapter argues, he shares a common aim with Teresa in her own 'transformational strategies', for Schotter, Wittgenstein's 'transformational methods' are practical, not utopian, they are embodied and 'lay'.[147] What we are left with is a much more active transformational mode of understanding that is not built upon 'occult ontological entities'. Our 'mystical strategies' are simply this – strategies to be explored, to 'make connections' (*Zwischengliedern*) rather than referring to ontological entities – whether supposed 'mystical states', 'mystical phenomena' or 'mysticism' itself.

As we have seen, although Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Investigations* (see PI: 109, 124) states that philosophy 'leaves everything as it is' by the time of the last writings, especially *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein is supplementing the 'way of seeing' – the *Ubersichtliche Blick* - with a 'way of acting':

---

[146] See also Kerr 1997:158 where he states Wittgenstein in his later work 'strives to show that neither feeling nor reason but *action* is the foundational thing.' Whilst completing this thesis Kerr's most recent publication appeared (Kerr 2008), in this text he reiterates his view that Wittgenstein's later philosophy is to be seen as a call to 'work upon oneself'.

[147] 'In being multidimensional, indeterminate, fluid, flexible, unfinished, contested, changeable, and still developing, the kind of knowledge involved must, in itself, be amenable to disciplinary confines: that is, these practices must be continuous with, and work from within, our ordinary everyday practices, without it being necessary, so to speak, to step outside them. Hence, theoretical explanations are not only unnecessary, but inimical to what is required' (Schotter 1997: 7)

> Giving grounds, however, justifying the evidence, comes to an end; - but the end is not certain propositions striking us immeadiately as true, ie. it is not a kind of *seeing* on our part, it is our *acting*, which lies at the bottom of the language game. (OC: 204)

The frame of reference of the mystical discourse in the 'way of life' is essential:

> What has to be accepted, the given, is – so one could say – *forms of life*. (PI: 226)

We have moved 'out of the head' to find understanding and meaning in the wider arena of games. Our aim is not to 'refine or complete the system of rules for the use of our words in unheard-of ways' (PI 133), there is not one 'philosophical method' but 'methods, like different therapies' (*gleichsam verschiedene Therapien*).

As we saw above it is possible to interpret Wittgenstein here as encouraging a move from the Cartesian 'I' to a more embodied self. Fergus Kerr in his *Theology after Wittgenstein* (Kerr 1997) spells out perhaps more than the most the consequences of this approach for Christian theology and spirituality. Wittgenstein's dethroning of the Cartesian 'I' presents a spirit 'unlike anything I know in Western thought and in many ways opposed to aims and methods of traditional philosophy' (Malcolm quoted in Kerr 1997:187). What Malcolm is suggesting, Kerr observes, 'is a radical questioning of the whole way of thinking about the self, and hence of others, of the world and of the divine, which has captivated Western Christian culture for a long time'. In essence, Wittgenstein's later project is about 'subverting the entire metaphysical tradition which is constituted by rancour against the *physical and historical conditions of human life*.' (Kerr 1997:188, my emphasis). It has been the argument throughout this thesis that this Wittgensteinian 'anti-metaphysic' so well described by Kerr was preserved through the Middle Ages in the performative discourse of *theologia mystica* especially in its deconstructive embodiment, or in Wittgensteinian terms, in the move from saying to showing to acting.

Thus, the Wittgensteinian move from *Weltanschauung* to *Weltbild* under the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* - from mind/body Cartesian dualism to a post-enlightenment

suspicion of the Cartesian 'I' - mirrors the strategies of 'mystical discourse'. The mystical strategies we have already identified – those of unknowing and embodiment – are held alike by the contemporary post-enlightenment discourse of Wittgenstein and the pre-enlightenment discourse of *theologia mystica*; with the 'post-modern' critique of Cartesian dualism we return to a 'pre-modern' notion of self. Both discourses share similar stategies and as we have seen for both 'style' is as important as 'content'. This, we shall see, is particularly emphasised by Teresa in the embodied libido of her works.

As Monk points out in his biography and is well depicted in Jarman's film *Wittgenstein*, Wittgenstein's life encapsulated a slow (and often painful) process of embodiment; unsure of his own sexuality he latterly was able to sustain physical relationships with others. From the later writings the *embodiment* of his discourse becomes clearer: 'The delightful difference of temperature of the parts of a human body' (VB: 1931) and in the letter to Drury: 'The thing now is to live in the world in which you are, not to think or dream about the world you would like to be in. Look at people's sufferings, physical and mental, you have them close at hand, and this ought to be a good remedy for your troubles' (Rhees 1987:95).

This embodiment accompanies a desire to distract our attention from the search for 'occult entities' that 'occupy our heads'; from concern with the 'purely mental' Wittgenstein wants us to touch, smell, taste, see and hear. All our senses are activated as we enter his text.

Likewise with Teresa, her texts are a feast for the senses and all the time she is telling us to touch, taste, sense, feel and smell. In this respect she resembles her older contemporary, St Ignatius of Loyola, who in his *Ejercitos* encourages his retreatants to make a similar movement. Teresa was in good contact with the emerging Society of Jesus and had a Jesuit confessor, so such influence would appear plausible.

Both Teresa and Wittgenstein, we argue here, are in their own ways inviting their readers to move 'out of the head' into embodied practices – this is the key 'transformational strategy' of both Teresa and Wittgenstein.

8.2 Wittgenstein's Hard Road to Embodiment

The so-called *Geheime Tagebücher* of 1914-16 and the *Koder Tagebuch* from the nineteen thirties both illustrate the points that are being made in this chapter, that is, that Wittgenstein's approach to life and philosophy can only be understood through the need for embodiment and what he terms the *passion of religious belief.* It is notable that both works are not available in English translation and in this chapter we will work from the *Bergen Electronic Edition* (BEE).

The *Tagebücher* first came to light in 1952 in the possession of Wittgenstein's sister, Margarethe Stonborough, shortly after Wittgenstein's death (see GT: 162). Wittgenstein, during his last visit to Vienna in 1950, had suggested they should be destroyed but fortunately this did not occur. They were subsequently deposited in the Wren Library at Cambridge and classified by von Wright as 'Notebooks 101 – 103' in the *Nachlass* (See PO: 486). The *Tagebücher* were first translated and published in English as *Notebooks 1914 -16* by Elizabeth Anscombe in 1961. In her preface Anscombe suggested that the Notebooks were being published 'as an aid to students of the *Tractatus*' (NB: v) which seemed to justify quite a radical editing of the work that has come in for a lot of later criticism. Although she states that 'very little has been left out' the subsequent publication of the complete Notebooks, both in the *Nachlass* and Baum's edition show, as we shall see, just how much Anscombe had decided to omit. She had once remarked that, 'if by pressing a button it could have been secured that people would not concern themselves with his personal life, I should have pressed that button' (LPE: xiv); yet her desire to 'clean up' Wittgenstein's works has inevitably led to a distortion of the impact of his writings, not least in the questions investigated here around embodiment and desire.

If we read the preface to the 1977 edition of *Vermischte Bemerkungen* (published in English with the title *Culture and Value* in 1980) von Wright states that the criteria for publishing his collection were as follows:

> In the end I decided on the only principle of selection that seemed to me unconditionally right. I excluded from the collection notes of a purely "personal"

> sort - ie. notes in which Wittgenstein is commenting on the external circumstances of his life, his state of mind and relations with other people – some of whom are still living. Generally speaking these notes were *easy* to separate from the rest and they are on a *different* level of interest from those which are printed here. (CV: preface)

Subsequent commentators, some of whom have already been mentioned in Chapter Three, whilst acknowledging the sterling work of von Wright *et al* in the publication of Wittgenstein's notebooks have also recognised that von Wright's hidden hermeneutic may have distorted a balanced reading of Wittgenstein's work – especially the notion that his 'philosophy' can be extracted from his 'life'. As we saw in Chapter Three, the groundbreaking biographies of Monk and McGuinness raised the question of a reintegration of Wittgenstein's life and writings to enable an understanding of his philosophy (See especially Klagge 2001 for an extended discussion on this). Accordingly, as we approach the question of Wittgenstein's strategy of embodiment here we have no hesitation in reuniting the published version of his notebooks by Anscombe, von Wright *et al* with the 'personal' notes, often unpublished and only available through study of the *Nachlass,* in this respect the work done in this chapter is original.

With respect to the First World War diaries considered here it became clear that once the *Nachlass* was in the public domain there was not only a fuller 'notebook' but also an encrypted, so-called 'secret notebook'. This had a simple encryption of replacing a with z, b with y and so on. Thus the first edition of what became known as the 'Secret Notebook' was first published, through the efforts of Baum and Pascual in Spanish, Catalan and German in the Spanish journal *Saber* in 1985. This eventually appeared in a German- Spanish edition published by Alianza in Madrid in 1991. For Baum, the publication of the work showed the importance of understanding Wittgenstein's context and interpretation through 'Christian Form of Life with Religion as one of the chief matrices for understanding his work' (GT: 175). To date, as has been pointed out, no English translation has yet appeared.

8.2.1 The *Tagebücher*

To illustrate the point, the importance of embodiment and the passion of embodiment to Wittgenstein's philosophy, we will concentrate on the diary entries from 1916. Wittgenstein, serving as an ordinary soldier for the Austrian army on the Russian front, was moved on 21st March of that year from a place of relative security to great danger in the 4th battery of the 5th Field Howitzer Regiment (See McGuinness 1988:238).

The placement was one of the worst experiences of his life and the diaries detail his struggle to make sense of it all. On 21st April he finds himself in battle for the first time, at this time he remained in solitary duty on the observation post. On 4th June the Austrian offensive was followed by an equally severe Russian offensive. Wittgenstein clearly acquitted himself well during this hellish time and was awarded a silver *Tapferkeitsmedaille* Second Class on 6th October. His decoration recommendation stated:

> Ignoring the heavy artillery fire on the casement and the exploding mortar bombs he observed the discharge of the mortars and located them... On the Battery Observation Post, Hill 417, he observed without intermission in the drumfire, although I several times shouted to him to take cover. By this distinctive behaviour he exercised a very calming effect on his comrades. (McGuinness 1988: 242)

Although not at Wittgenstein's battalion, the Russian offensive was ultimately successful north of Wittgenstein's location. The Austrian army was thus plunged into a chaotic retreat of which Wittgenstein was part in July so that by then his unit was seeking shelter in the Carpathian mountains.

By the time Wittgenstein was withdrawn from the frontline in August he had been continuously in the firing line for five months. Of the notes made at this time McGuinness comments: 'they testify to a change in his thinking as great as that which he himself saw in his countenance...It was as if he had bridged – or was about to bridge – some gap between his philosophy and his inner life' (1988: 245). From this point onwards there is no separation between the remarks on logical form and remarks on

religion, ethics and the general *Lebensfrage* which we cited at the beginning of the chapter: 'Yes my work has broadened out from the foundations of logic to the essence of the world' (NB 2.8.16). Both of his biographers, Monk and McGuinness suggest that at this point in his life, having pushed himself hard on the logical boundaries of language both in Cambridge with Russell and on his own in his retreat in Norway before the outbreak of World War One, it was as though he 'sought embodiment' and needed the experiences of the trenches to bridge gaps between how he experienced his thought and how he experienced his life. In this respect his experiences on the Eastern Front in 1916, are, we argue, central for understanding the move in his philosophy from the disembodied exploration of logical form to the embodied researches of the later (or perhaps better 'post-1916') Wittgenstein.

Anscombe gives us the first entry for 15th April 1916 as follows:

> We can only foresee what we ourselves construct.
> But then where is the concept of a simple object still to be found?
> This concept does not so far come in here at all.
> We must be able to construct the simple functions because we must be able to give each sign a meaning.
> For the only sign which guarantees its meaning is function and argument. (NB: 71e)

As they stand these bald statements do show resemblance to the *Tractatus* ,especially 5.556, but how much richer do they become when we add the coded entries from the full notebook:

> In eight days we go into the Firing Line. May I be fortunate enough to wager my life in a challenging position! (BEE: 103)[148]

[148] *In 8 Tage gehen wir in Feuerstellung. Möchte es mir vergönnt sein, mein Leben in einer schweren Aufgabe aufs Spiel zu setzen!'* All the quotes that follow are from the Bergen Electronic Edition, my own translation. Many have not been published in English before.

The 'pure' philosophising of the *Tractatus* seems to have arisen from a distinctively embodied context. One that includes *Glaubensfragen,* prayers and entreaties to God:

> Now comes inspection. My soul shrivels up. God give me light! God give me light! God give light to my soul! (BEE: 103: 29.3.16) [149]

The following day he adds:

> Do your best. You cannot do more: and be cheerful... Help yourself and help others with all your strength. And at the same time be cheerful! But how much strength should one need for oneself and how much for others? It is hard to live well!! But it is good to live well. However, not mine, but Thy will be done. (BEE: 103: 20.3.16)[150]

The fervent and passionate quality of his entries at this time are almost certainly a result of the two works which he carried with him throughout all his time in the War: Tolstoy's *Gospel in Brief* and Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov.* The former, as we have seen, he had come across in a strange fashion towards the beginning of the war whilst stationed at Galicia, here he had entered a bookshop to find that the only book in the shop was the Tolstoy *Gospels*. He would carry it with him for the rest of the war, so much so that he became known as 'The Man with the Gospels' (See Monk 1990:115, McGuinness 1988:220): 'He read it and re-read it, and thenceforth had it always with him, under fire and at all times' (Letter from Russell to Lady Ottoline Morrell, LR: 20.12.19). It had a profound impact upon him and was somehow able to open up his heart to the possibility of religious belief and service of others in the world. As he later wrote to von Ficker 'If you are not acquainted with it, then you cannot imagine what an effect it can have upon a person' (Letter from Wittgenstein to Ludwig Ficker, LF: 24.7.15).

---

[149] *Jetzt Inspektion. Meine Seele schrumpft zusammen. Gott erleuchte mir! Gott erleuchte meine Seele!*

[150] *Tu dein Bestes! Mehr kannst du nicht tun: und sei heiter... Hilf dir selbst und hilf anderen mit deiner ganzen Kraft. Und dabei sei heiter! Aber wieviel Kraft soll man für sich , und wieviel für die anderen brauchen? Schwer ist es, gut zu leben!! Aber das gute Leben ist schön. Aber nicht mein, sondern Dein Wille geschehe!*

Monk suggests (Monk 1990:116) that the *Gospel in Brief* had a galvanising impact on Wittgenstein, turning his philosophy from 'an analysis of logical symbolism' to 'the curiously hybrid work which we know today, combining as it does logical theory with religious mysticism'. Monk sees this period as one of increasing 'seperation between body and spirit', which would make sense if he understands 'mysticism' in terms of the 'modern mysticism' we defined in Chapter Two. Yet, if, as has been argued throughout this dissertation, we dispense with the illusion of 'modern mysticism' and concentrate, in Wittgensteinian fashion on the *Sprachspiele* of the 'mystical performative discourse' then it is possible to interpret Wittgenstein's remarks in the diaries as a growing sense of embodiment and, as Monk puts it, 'duty' towards the world and fellow people. Yes, there is no doubt that Wittgenstein found the encounter with his fellow soldiers *feuchterlich,* but the reading of the diaries presented here suggests a desire to struggle with this situation, knowing that here, rather than in the logical abstract symbolism of Cambridge, he will find what he is looking for, in embodied life.[151] On 5th September 1914, shortly after reading *The Gospel in Brief*, he writes 'I am on the path to a great discovery, But will I reach it?!' (5.9.14), followed by 'I feel more sensual than before. Today I masturbated again'.[152] Rather than a separation of mind and body, even Monk recognises that for Wittgenstein, from this point onwards 'sensuality and philosophical thought were inextricably linked – the physical and mental manifestations of passionate arousal' (Monk 1990:117). Despite later getting hold of the Eighth Volume of Nietzsche's collected works, including *The Anti-Christ,* it seems as though his original inspiration from Tolstoy was not shaken. So much so that he could write on 8th December 1914:

> Christianity is indeed the only sure way to happiness but what if someone spurned that happiness?! Might it not be better to perish unhappily in the hopeless struggle

---

[151] Which would surely also explain his immeadiate desire after the war to dispense with his immense fortune and live in the hardest and demanding conditions of an ordinary primary school teacher in Upper Austria. Indeed, much of the later life of Wittgenstein after 1916 is marked by this need to 'be embodied' and to act ethically

[152] *Ich bin auf dem Wege zu einer grossen Entdeckung. Aber ob ich danhingelangen werde ?! Bin sinnlicher als früher. Heute wieder onaniert.*

against the external world? But such a life is senseless. But why not lead a senseless life? Is it unworthy? (BEE 103)[153]

In his exposition of Tolstoy, Sontag (2000) notices the similarites between Tolstoy's relation to Christianity and the position Wittgenstein will ultimately adopt to philosophy. Both want to 'leave everything as it is' and allow the scriptures/ordinary language to speak for themselves. Tolstoy, like Kierkegaard, feels that Christianity must be stripped down to its essentials leaving each person to make their own decision on its truth uninfluenced by the rhetoric and opinions of the Churches. 'Truth' Sontag notes 'can be found in simple language, as it was for Wittgenstein too' (Sontag 2000:125). Yet Sontag, like Monk, is still keen to talk about Wittgenstein's 'mysticism' without explaining what this may be, apart from something akin to our 'modern mysticism'. Wittgenstein, he says 'adds a mysticism that is missing in Tolstoy'. A statement which we hope by now the arguments in this dissertation have shown as questionable, if only because of the incomprehensibility, and sheer un-Wittgensteinian notion, of 'adding' 'mysticism' as a quasi-ontological category to something. Rather, as has been argued throughout this dissertation, if we want to discover the filiations between Wittgenstein and Tolstoy we would be better off looking at the *Sprachspiele* and *Weltbild* within the two writers, and also how they relate to the *Lebensformen* expressed through our threefold progression of 'Thinking-Seeing-Acting'.

If it was not a case of Wittgenstein 'finding mysticism' (whatever that means) in Tolstoy, what then did he find there?

Reading the first lines of Tolstoy's *Gospel* again it is not surprising that it had such an explosive impact on Wittgenstein, after the logical searching of Cambridge, Norway and the pre-war years. The words could have been Wittgenstein's own:

> Reason without faith had already brought me to despair and to a denial of life, but when I once really examined into the life of humanity, I became convinced that

---

[153] *Gewiss, das Christentum ist der einzige sichere Weg zum Glück. Aber wie, wenn einer dies Glück verschmähte?! Könnte es nicht besser sein, unglücklich, im hoffnungslosen Kampf gegen die äussere Welt augrunde zu gehen? Aber ein solches Leben ist sinnlos. Aber warum nicht ein sinnloses Leben führen? Ist es unwürdig?*

> despair cannot be the destiny of man, and that people have lived, and are now living by faith...
>
> I tried to arrange my life after the lives of those who believe, tried to become one with them, to fulfill the same rules of life and laws of conduct, imagining that in this way the idea of life would be revealed to me also. (Tolstoy 1895:xv)

It is perhaps not too fanciful to compare the effect these sentences had on the young Wittgenstein to the effects de Osuna had on the young Teresa. Both were in turmoil, loneliness and despair at the time – physically, psychologically, emotionally and spiritually. Both found in their 'masters' a person who writes for the need of personal transformation, commitment and, most of all, engagement with the world. In the case of Tolstoy through the adoption of a life of faith, in the case of Osuna, through the 'path of the heart' embodied in the *theologia mystica* rather than the *theologia speculativa*. In this sense we can understand Tolstoy's work as an example of *theologia mystica* (in contrast to *theologia speculativa* – something which he is at pains to dismiss in his book) rather than an example of 'modern mysticism' which we critiqued in Chapter Two:

> At first I sought counsel and a solution to my difficulties from priests, monks, bishops and learned theologians (cf Teresa's *letrados*). But I often noticed in them a want of frankness, and still more frequently flagrant self-contradictions in their explanations and interpretations. (Tolstoy 1895:xvi)

Having turned his back on the *theologia speculativa* with its hair-splitting, creeds and dogmas, Tolstoy rather find what he is looking for in 'such people who carried out in the works of their lives the teaching of Christ'.

Where Tolstoy (and probably Wittgenstein) would differ from Teresa and de Osuna is in the role of the Church in living out this faith. For Teresa and Osuna it is absolutely central, for Tolstoy the truth is received directly to the individual without any intermediary.

So then, the Wittgenstein who approached the Front in Spring 1916 was not the young logician who had left Cambridge some two years earlier, his own questing spirit

and the encounter with Tolstoy had led him to see the necessity for a form of knowledge that was not just 'head knowledge' (*intellectus*) but rather the embodied knowledge of which Tolstoy talks about. With this in mind the entries from his arrival on the Front begin to fall into place.

As he approaches the batteries he writes:

> Tomorrow or the day after we will be in the firing line. Therefore, Courage! God will help. (BEE:18.4.16. 103 5v) [154]
>
> God improve me! Then I would be become more joyful. Today will probably be in the Firing Line. God help me. (BEE: 20.4.16. 103 5v) [155]

This did indeed prove to be the beginning of the firing after which he writes:

> Have been a few days in the Firing Line. The whole day is taken up with heavy physical work, no time to think. God help me; I have a monstrous amount to suffer. I have asked today to be put in the Observation Tower. Half the people here hate me because no-one understands me and because I am no saint! God help me! (BEE: 23.4.16)[156]
>
> Now I am almost always with people who hate me. And this is the one thing that I have never been able to come to terms with. The people here are wicked and heartless. It is virtually impossible to find even a trace of humanity in them. God help me to live... God be with me! Amen. (BEE: 27.4.16)[157]

---

[154] *Morgen oder übermorgen in die Feuerstellung. Also Mut! Gott wird helfen.*
[155] *Gott bessere mich! Dann werde ich auch froher werden. Heute wahrscheinlich schon in Feuerstellung. Gott helfe mir.*
[156] *Seit ein paar Tagen in neuer Stellung. Den ganzen Tag über schwere körperliche Arbeit; ausserstande zu denken. Gott helfe mir. Ich habe ungeheuer viel zu leiden. Habe heute angesucht, auf den Beobachtungsstand zu kommen. Beim Halbzub hasst mich alles, weil mich keiner versteht. Und weil ich kein Heiliger bin! Gott helfe mir!*
[157] *So bin ich jetzt fast immer umgeben von Leuten, die mich hassen. Und dies ist das Einziges, womit ich mich noch nicht abfinden kann. Hier sind aber böse, herzlose Menschen. Es ist mir fast unmöglich, eien Spur von Menschlichkeit in ihnen zu finden. Gott helfe mire zu leben... Gott sei mit mir! Amen*

Finally, Wittgenstein, from his new position on the watchtower finds himself in the mortal danger he has long sought:

> Afternoon during reconnaissance I was shot at. Thought of God. Your will be done! God be with me!' (BEE: 29.4.16)[158]

> Again during the firing today returned to the insight: People only need God. (BEE: 30.4.16)[159]

> It is very difficult! God protect me and stand by me. Amen. Would that this bitter cup passed me by.[160] However Your will be done. (BEE: 3.5.16)[161]

Which climaxes in the entry for 4.5.16:

> Tomorrow I will perhaps be sent to the Observation Post, at my own request. Then the War will finally begin for me. And – perhaps – Life too!
>
> Perhaps the nearness of Death will bring light into my life! May God enlighten me! I am a worm however God wants me to be a human being. God stand by me. Amen.[162]

The 'nearness of death' and his constant prayer seemed to slowly affect his attitude to his fellow soldiers with whom he had tried so hard to get on. On 8th May he writes

> The people I am with are not so much nasty as *terribly* limited. This makes relations with them almost impossible as they almost always misunderstand me.

---

[158] *Nachmittags bei den Aufklären. Wurden beschossen. Dachte an Gott. Dein Wille geschehe! Gott sei mit mir.*
[159] *Gehe heute während eines Feuerüberfalls wieder zu den Aufklären: Nur Gott braucht der Mensch.*
[160] Cf. Matthew 26:39
[161] *Habe es schwer! Gott beschütze mich und stehe mir bei. Amen. Möchte der schwerste Kelch an mir vorübergehen. Aber Dein Wille geschehe.*
[162] *Komme morgen vielleicht auf mein Ansuchen zu den Aufklären hinaus. Dann wird für mich erst der Krieg anfangen. Und kann sein – auch das Leben! Vielleicht bringt mir die Nähe des Todes das Licht des Lebens. Möchte Gott mich erleuchten. Ich bin der Wurm, aber durch Gott werder ich zum Menschen. Gott stehe bei mir. Amen.*

> They are not stupid, but limited. Within their circles they are clever enough. But they lack character and with that a breadth of understanding. "The right-believing Heart understands everything". (BEE: 8.5.16. 103 10v)[163]

A study of these diaries reveals two aspects of Wittgenstein's character and philosophy that are central to the exposition presented here. First, the need to understand his logical investigations within the context of which they are written. Out of these terrible experiences on the Eastern Front during the Brusilov Offensive of spring/summer 1916 would not only arise the final sections of the *Tractatus*, including the passages on *das Mystische* which we discussed in Part One, but also the major shift in Wittgenstein's consciousness that produces the unique fusion which is his later philosophy. If, as we suggested in Chapter One, we want to try and understand what Wittgenstein understands by *das Mystische* in Tractatus 6 we cannot ignore the context out of which they arose – his experiences on the Front and in particular the 'nearness of Death which will bring some light'. Thus many of the passages that will later form the end of the *Tractatus* arise from these very notebooks:

> The solution of the problem of life is to be seen in the disappearance of this problem. NB 6.7.16

Cf. Tractatus 6.521:

The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of the problem.

(Is not this the reason why those who have found after a long period of doubt that the sense of life became clear to them have then been unable to say what constituted that sense?).

Again:

---

[163] *Die Leute, mit denen ich beisammen bin, sind nicht so sehr gemein, als ungeheuer beschränkt. Das macht den Verkehr mit ihnen fast unmöglich, weil sie einen ewig missverstehen. Die Leute sind nicht dumm, aber beschränkt. Sie sind in ihrem Kreise klug genug. Aber es fehlt ihnen der Charakter und damit die Ausdehnung. 'Alles versteht das rechtgläubige Herz'.*

Death is not an event in life. It is not a fact of the world

If by eternity is understood not infinite temporal duration but non temporality, then it can be said that a man lives eternally if he lives in the present. NB 8.7.16

Cf Tractatus 6.4311:

Death is not an event in life: we do not live to experience death.

If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present.

Our life has no end in just the way in which our visual field has not limits.

Secondly, the influence of Tolstoy, in particular the importance of *Menschlichkeit* and the 'return to the ordinary', finding God in the everyday, and especially in the muck, slime and profanity of the Front. Wittgenstein is at this point no longer seeking enlightenment through books or transcendentalism, but rather in the ordinary living out through the everyday in embodiment. He neither repudiates nor denies the sexual either and it is noteworthy that during this period he is sustained by letters from his beloved David Pinsent, who is killed during the war and to whom he will eventually dedicate the *Tractatus,* with the epigram from Kürnberger: 'Whatever a man knows, whatever is not mere rumbling and roaring that he has heard, can be said in three words'.

Finally, there is no doubting the depth and authenticity of Wittgenstein's religious faith at this point in his life. Despite attempts to downplay it, it is clear from reading the passages above that this is a *passionate* faith (he would later appreciate this point in Kierkegaard) which admits of no middle way. Here again the influence of Tolstoy (and Dostoyevsky) is manifest. It is a faith that does not *transcend* the world but a faith that brings us *into* the world, with all its mess, human relationships and tragedy. Ultimately the goal is to live and to '*Lebe Glücklich!* Live Happily!' (NB 8.7.16):

The happy life seems to be justified, of itself, it seems that it is the only right life. (NB 30.7.16)

Some commentators (See Chapter Three) have argued that Wittgenstein's faith and attitudes expressed in the War Diaries were a 'flash in the pan' which he did not sustain throughout his life. Yet, the argument in this chapter has been that the events of 1916 mark a watershed in Wittgenstein's life, which ultimately find expression in the 'mystical' final two sections of the *Tractatus*. In this respect they form the springboard out of which the later 'interactional' philosophy, famously expressed in the *Philosophical Investigations,* arises. This we characterised in Chapter Four as the move from 'saying to showing to acting'. The position is clearly stated in two diary entries from *Nachlass* notebooks 125: 1942. Interestingly enough, again written during bombardment in war, but now the Second World War. This time Wittgenstein had asked for a simple job (he became porter at Guy's Hospital, London) in an area of aerial bombardment in London. As in World War One he showed great courage under continual bombardment and was able to encourage the younger doctors and nurses who were inexperienced in such things. This notebook entry was written during a brief break with John Ryle's family in Sussex (see Monk 1990:434):

> 3.1.42.
>
> Every word stands in a field of relationships, at a distinctive point of the speech-field (*Sprachfeld*): if then we choose this word rather than another we are choosing *one* place in the field rather than another, one group of relationships rather than another. (BEE: 125 2v)[164]

Our words, our speech, cannot be extracted from our life and our meaning in words comes from the *Sprachfeld* – the series of relationships within which we dwell. Again, from the same notebook:

---

164 *'Jedes Wort steht in einem Feld von Beziehungen, an einem bestimmten Punkt des Sprachfeldes: wer also geneigt ist dies Wort zu wählen und nicht jenes, wählt einen Ort des Feldes statt eines anderen, eine Gruppe von Beziehungen statt einer anderen.'*

9.2.42

I am not interested in an unmediated understanding of a Truth, but the phenomenon of unmediated understanding. Not a particular *seelische* understanding but understanding in the affairs of people. Yes, it is as though the idea-picture of experience is led into particular channels so that we can now see one experience laid together with another. (like an optical instrument brings together light from different sources in a particular way to produce a picture) (BEE 50r).[165]

The complexity of 'ordinary life' in the 'affairs of people' will finally reach its fullest exposition in the *Investigations.* Yet, as these unpublished remarks show, Wittgenstein was keen to make his readers realise the need for *embodiment* in the 'field of relationships' which constitutes the *Sprachfeld.*

'Bring der Mensch wieder in das richtige Element', 'Bring the person into the right element' he writes on 18.5.42 *'und alles wird sich entfalten und gesund erscheinen',* 'and everything will unfold and appear well' (BEE: 125 58r).

As with his philosophical life so with his personal life Wittgenstein realised at this later period the need of what he had expressed in the *Koder* diary in 1930:

> I often feel as though there is something in me like a lump which, if it melted, I would then be able to cry or find the right word (or perhaps a melody). But this 'something' (Is it the Heart?) feels like leather and cannot melt. Or am I perhaps too cowardly to allow the temperature to rise enough for this to happen? There are people who are too weak to break. I belong to this type. The only thing in me which might break sometime, and this I am anxious about, is my mind. (BEE: 183: 3 / 26.4.30)[166]

---

[165] *'Mich interessiert nicht das unmittelbare Einsehen einer Wahrheit, sondern das Phänomen des unmittelbaren Einsehens. Nicht (zwar) als einer besondern seelischen Erscheinung sondern als einer Erscheinung im Handeln der Menschen. Ja; es ist, als ob die Begriffsbildung die Erfahrung in bestimmte Kanäle leitete so dass man nun die eine Erfahrung mit der andern auf andere Weise zusammensieht (Wie ein optisches Instrument Licht von verschiedenen Quellen auf bestimmte Art in einem Bild zusammenkommen lässt)*

[166] *'Oft fühle ich dass etwas in mir ist wie ein Klumpen der wenn er schmelzen würde mich weinen liesse oder ich fände dann die richtige Worte (oder vielleicht sogar eine Melodie). Aber diese Etwas (ist es das*

Parallel to the openness to the possibilities of embodiment held in these entries we find that the heartfelt declamations of faith presented in the War diaries are still there, again, the influence of Tolstoy and his *Gospel in Brief* remain apparent. Thus on 15.2.37 we find him writing:

> As the insect buzzes to the light, so I return to the New Testament (BEE: 183:168)[167]

As Monk points out (Monk 1990:364) the turn of 1936/37 was again a key moment in Wittgenstein's life as he tried the first formulation of his later thoughts in the *Brown Book* which he had taken with him to Norway. As would finally be the case with the beginning of the *Investigations* his thoughts returned to Augustine. (who, as we have seen, was such an important influence on Teresa) whose *Confessions* he was re-reading and wanted to emulate. Monk writes that for Wittgenstein '*All* philosophy, in so far as it is pursued honestly and decently, begins with a confession' (Monk 1990:366). As we saw in the previous chapter, the true path of philosophy must pass through humility and unknowing:

> The edifice of your pride is broken down. And that is terrible work. (VB: 1937)

The remarks he wrote at this time, which would basically form untouched the first 188 paragraphs of the *Investigations* (about a quarter of the book) were written, as Monk points out, 'at a time when he was most ruthlessly honest about himself – when he made the most intense efforts to "descend into himself" and admit to those occasions on which his pride had forced him to be deceitful' (Monk 1990:367); both in his personal life and

---

Herz?) fühlt sich bei mir an wie Leder und kann nicht schmelzen. Oder ist es dass ich nur zu feig bin die Temperatur genügend steigen zu lassen? Es gibt Menschen die zu schwach zum Brechen sind. Zu denen gehöre auch ich.
Das Einzige was vielleicht ein Mal an mir brechen wird und davor fürchte ich mich manchmal ist mein Verstand.'

167 *'Wie das Insekt das Licht unschwirrt so ich ums Neue Testament'*

in his public life, such as the time he struck school children when he worked as a school teacher in Upper Austria after the First World War. His desire for confession and humility led him to return to the village he had taught in and ask forgiveness from his former pupils (movingly described in Monk 1990:370-1).

This period of confession was still linked with his entreaties to God and in the private notebooks we see the clearest expression of these thoughts:

> God! Help me come into a relationship with you in which I can be happy with my work. I believe that in every moment God can demand <u>everything</u> from you! Is really conscious of you! So I ask that he gives you the gift of life! (BEE: 16.2.37, 183:202)[168]

From this point too comes the quote about *Lebensfragen* with which we headed this chapter.

It is clear that even in 1937, twenty years after the incidents on the Eastern Front, Wittgenstein still somehow felt the need to engage with the theistic, however, and perhaps more importantly from the point of view of this thesis, that engagement took the form of seeing:

1. The inextricable link between the ethical and the philosophical
2. The need for confession, as the true source of philosophy
3. The proposal of a linguistic strategy that returned the reader to the 'relationships of everyday life', and
4. A linguistic strategy with transformative power.

As he makes clear in one of his later attempts to codify his philosophy – the so-called *Big Typescript* of 1932 (BT), for the 'later' (we argue post –1916) Wittgenstein, the aim of

---

168 *'Gott! Lass mich zu dir in ein Verhältnis kommen, in dem ich fröhlich sein kann in meiner Arbeit! <u>Glaube</u> daran dass Gott von Dir in jedem Moment <u>alles</u> fordern kann! Sei Dir dessen wirklich bewusst! Dann bitte dass er Dir das Geschenk des Lebens gibt!'*

philosophy is to produce transformative change through working on *affect* as much as *intellect*: 'a resignation, but one of feeling and not of intellect' is required for 'work on philosophy is – as work in architecture frequently is – actually more of a kind of work on oneself. On one's own conception. On the way one sees things' (PO:161/2).

Again, as has been argued throughout this dissertation, it is precisely *this* process of affective change that we have already observed in the tradition of *theologia mystica* and to which we return now.

8.3 Teresa's Transformational Strategies

As with Wittgenstein, when we consider transformational strategies of embodiment in Teresa we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

1. How far can our Wittgensteinian methodology help in investigating Teresa's writings?
2. If we suggest linguistic strategies in her writings where does she get them from?
3. What is she hoping to achieve through these strategies?

In brief we can give preliminary answers as follows:

a) It should be clear by now that our Wittgensteinian methodology gives us an appreciation of the linguistic strategies of her writing. That we are not looking for anything like an ontological mystical entity in her writings but rather concerning ourselves with how her mystical text acts as a 'performative strategy'.
b) Secondly, as has been argued throughout this dissertation, these strategies, what we term 'mystical' strategies, derive from the tradition of *theologia mystica* which she has imbibed primarily, but not exclusively, from her reading of de Osuna.
c) Her aim in doing this is to help move her reader, through 'unknowing' and 'embodiment' to a deeper relationship with God, which, for her, is a *sine qua non*

for the Christian life of prayer and action. As with Wittgenstein she is encouraging a *change of affect* as much as a *change of intellect.*

As with Wittgenstein, we will argue here, that like Osuna she embodies a notion of 'thinking-seeing-acting' in her writing. That is to say, a process that goes in tandem with the strategy of unknowing that moves the reader from thinking to seeing to action.

A constant theme in this thesis is how we interpret Wittgenstein's writings as giving us a blueprint or guide to a *form of life*. We have argued that the primary goal of his philosophy is not to make grand sweeping speculations but to change our *way of being* through the movement from saying to showing to acting.

Similarly, we argue now, Teresa's writings are to be seen in the same light as a set of manoeuvres, or indeed to use the language of her contemporary, Ignatius of Loyola, a set of exercises to move us from one position to another. As with Wittgenstein, we argue that her writings are to be read as a 'manual' for ontological transformation.

8.3.1 Teresa's Language of Embodiment

*I would like to know how to explain myself here and it is so difficult that I do not know if I shall be able to do so...I am quite sure, however that souls who are deceived in this way will understand if only they will believe me. I know some, souls of great virtue, who have been in such a state for seven or eight hours and everything appeared to them to be rapture (*arrobameinto), *and every virtuous exercise affected them in such a way that they immeadiately relinquished control of themselves, because they thought that it was not right to resist the Lord; and little by little they might die or become fools if a remedy is not procured. What I understand to be the case here is that when the Lord begins to caress* (regalar) *the soul, our nature, being so fond of pleasure/delight (*deleite), *abandons itself completely to this pleasure* (gusto) *such that it would not move, or lose what it has*

gained, for anything in the world. For, in truth, it is much more pleasureable than anything of the world. (F: 6: 2) [169]

Gustos, gozos, regalos, deleites and ***sabors*** pepper Teresa's works. On the one hand, as Allison Peers argues (Peers 1944:xxi), they can be seen as manifestations of her 'rough hewn style', the homely style of ascetics and hermits that we analysed in the previous chapter; a desire to avoid the hifalutin terms of a spiritual elite (the *letrados)* for more simple homely words which her audience will respond to. The words themselves are ambiguous and Teresa's use of them opens up a whole new 'epistemology of delight' for her exploration of the supernatural and mystical. In her use of the erotic and spiritual, the blending of *eros* and *agape*, the human and divine, the key style and tone, as we may have become accustomed to by now, is *ambiguity.* Before we analyse her use of the terms it is useful to review them.

Gusto is a favourite of Teresa's. Despite attempts to 'tidy up' her prose both Peers (1944) and Kavanaugh and Rodriguez (1987) convey something of the ambiguity in their translations. In all the word appears one hundred and eighty-five times in her works, fifty-two in the *Vida,* twenty in the *Fundaciones,* nineteen and twenty-two in the *Camino* Valladolid and Escorial codex respectively, thirty-two in the *Moradas* and thirty-three in the *Meditaciones.* As her writing and style evolves so does her subtlety and use of the word.

The term first appears in Chapter Three of the *Vida* where Teresa contrasts her new (enforced) life in the Augustinian convent of *Santa María de Gracia* with her previous life of sensuality: *Mirava más el gusto de mi sensualidad y vanidad quo lo bien que me estava a mi alma* (V: 3.2): 'I looked more to the pleasure of sensuality and vanity than to what was good for my soul'.[170] Thus at its earliest appearance *gusto* is associated with the dubious sensual pleasures she has described in the previous two chapters:

---

[169] my translation
[170] my translation

> I began to dress in finery and to desire to please and look pretty, taking great care of my hands and hair and about perfumes and all empty things in which one can indulge, and which were many, for I was very vain. (V: 2.2)

This process led eventually to some sort of sensual dalliance with one of her cousins. This struggle between the 'things of God' and the *'contentos y gustos y pasatiempos sensuales'* (V: 7.17) continues throughout the early stages of the young girl's journey to discover herself. Teresa herself was clearly a lady of some sensuality and she found in prayer a difficulty to reconcile the two 'so inimical to each other'. At this stage in the *Vida*, and in her writing about these experiences, Teresa contrasts the *gustos* and *contentos* with the *mercedes*, the greater 'favours' that the Lord will give her in prayer (V: 7.17). Yet already by Chapter Eight she talks of the *gustos* 'bestowed by God'; one of her first uses of the term as a description of that which occurs in prayer rather than that which is connected purely with the sensual appetites. Of these *gustos* ('delights' [Kavanaugh and Rodriguez V:8.9], 'consolations' [Allison Peers V:8]), as she now begins to call them, she will tell us more later. But she makes clear, and this will be a constant theme throughout her writing, one of the purposes of prayer is *gusto* – delight, sensuality, sensousness – and 'The Lord' will indeed 'take delight' (*regalarla)* by entering the soul. This new description of prayer in terms of sensuality and delight climaxes towards the end of *La Vida* in passages such as the famous description of the soul caressed by the Golden Cherub in the *Vida* 29:13 (and so memorably immortalised by Bernini's great statue of 'Teresa in Ecstasy' at Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome). However before this point we find this memorable passage from V: 27:

> In this other case, nothing: even that little bit of just listening, which it did in the past, is all gone. One finds everything already cooked and eaten, there's nothing to do but enjoy, (*gozar*), like someone who without learning or working to know how to read, or even studying at all, would suddenly find all knowledge already known in itself, without knowing how or where, for he hadn't even ever worked even to learn the ABC's. (V: 27:8)

As we have seen above, Teresa's ambiguous use of *gusto* is often accompanied by ***regalo***. Of the two terms it is perhaps the more ambiguous. Although Peers translates it as 'comfort of the soul' in the passage from the *Fundaciones* with which we began this section he adds the following note:

> The real meaning of this ubiquitous word here is 'show signs of affection for'; and 'pet', 'caress', 'fondle' though hardly seemly in the context, would not, as far as the actual sense is concerned, be too strong. (Peers CW: iii:27)

What we see in the passage from the *Fundaciones* with which we began this chapter is some of Teresa's most mature reflection and use of the terms. Peers is not the only one to feel unease with her sensual and ambiguous language here, a strategy that she will employ in those other two mature works, the *Moradas* and the *Meditaciones*. Further on in this passage Teresa describes how love will cause the novice 'sense pleasure' *(gusto en el sentido)*. Gracián, one of the first of her reader-editors, substituted this with *sensible en el sentido* which perhaps is less ambiguously sensual than *gusto en el sentido*. However, her later editor Báñez restored the original. Such problems arise throughout the manuscript and suggest the problems her first readers had with her sensual language (see Peers 1944:27, De la Madre de Dios and Steggink 1997: 693 –695). Despite, or perhaps because of this ambiguity *regalo* remains one of her favourite words for describing things of God and occurs frequently in her works, especially her later works.

Like *regalos* and *gustos*, ***deleites, gozos*** **and** ***sabor*** again occur with abundance throughout her works. *Deleites* appears one hundred and eight times, almost as many as *gustos,* and *gozos* eighty-two times. Together with *sabor* Teresa frequently uses them to convey the right mixture of the sensual and spiritual that she hopes to achieve. By these means, we argue in this chapter, she is able to initiate the necessary *transformation of affect* so central to her 'mystical strategy'. Before we look at this in greater detail in the *Meditaciones de Amor de Dios* and the *Moradas* we will review again Teresa's debt to the tradition of *theologia mystica* as manifest in the works of de Osuna and illustrate the similarities of their approaches.

8.3.2 Strategies of Embodiment in De Osuna

As with the strategies of unknowing that we discussed in the previous chapter we can find a strong precedent for Teresa's approach to affectivity in the writing of Francisco de Osuna. It is a constant theme in the *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual,* as we would expect from a writer who begins his treatise with the phrase *'Anden siempre juntamente - la persona y espíritu'* – 'Always walking together – the person and the spirit' (TA 1.1), in which he emphasises the importance of what would today be called a 'holistic' approach to the spiritual life where the body and the spirit are given equal respect:

> The meaning of our letter is that wherever you go carry your mind along, for no one should go divided unto himself. Do not allow your body to travel one path, the heart another. (TA: 1.2, see also TA: 8.4)

Like Teresa, De Osuna's approach to spirituality is very much an *embodied* one. The primary concern of the *Abecedario* is the teaching of the prayer of *recogimiento*, so important for Teresa. Yet the theme of the *gustos* and the importance of spiritual desire or yearning is a key theme of the book. Chapter Twelve is dedicated almost totally to it: *'No entendiendo, mas gustando, pienses alcanzar reposo'* – 'Not by understanding much, but by tasting much, think to obtain repose'. The title itself reveals how Osuna makes a connection between the two strategies proposed in this thesis – that of unknowing and that of embodiment. Early on in the treatise he had spoken of the importance of desire in the search for God (TA: 4.3, 11.5) and in Chapter Twelve he explicitly connects this with the unknowing and emphasises the role that the *gustos* play in this. He begins with the classic statement of unknowing which we have already explored:

> Even though the understanding may discover and analyse numerous sublime matters, there is good reason for you to believe that complete, fulfilling repose is not to be found through functions of the intellect and that ultimately the least part of what we do not know exceeds everything we do know. (TA: 12.1)

Knowledge, for Osuna, is derived not from 'knowing' (*saber*) but from 'tasting' (*sabor*), in particular tasting the delights of the *gustos espirituales,* the spiritual delights. This *gusto espiritual* is 'so excellent that it is almost impossible for a person who has experienced it not to praise it...We should realise that he who tastes spiritual food hungers to taste and enjoy more' (TA: 12.6). Here Osuna gives a quote purportedly from St Bernard from *De interiori domo* '*Quanto amplius delectaris...*' However, as López Santidrián points out (1998:351), this is a misattribution, the passage is from a twelfth century Cistercian manuscript that transcribes a passage from Richard of St Victor's *Beniamin Maior*, thus once again relating this tradition of *deleite* and *gusto* to the Parisian school of *theologia mystica* and the 'Affective Dionysianism' we explored in Chapter Five.

Osuna continues by justifying the use of pleasure as a marker of spiritual progress, dismissing those who object for 'not differentiating among the types of pleasure' and classing them all together. He calls on Gerson to justify his approach which is, as we saw previously, the emphasis on the importance of experience over understanding. At this point Osuna employs a quote from Proverbs 8.31 which we shall see later is of fundamental importance to Teresa. The original verse from Proverbs reads:

> The Lord created me at the beginning of his work
> The first of his acts of long ago.
> Ages ago I was set up,
> At the first, before the beginning of the earth...
> When he established the heavens,
> I was there,
> When he drew a circle on the face of the deep...
> When he marked out the foundations of the earth.
> There I was beside him, like a master worker.
> And I was daily his delight
> Rejoicing before him always.
> Rejoicing in his inhabited world

And delighting in the human race. (Proverbs 8:31)

De Osuna transcribes this thus:

> Our souls would delight in an increase of consolation, and, as we delighted in God, he would grant the petitions of our hearts, for it is said that his delights are to dwell in the sons of man so they will cause them to delight in him.' (TA: 12.4)[171]

Thus by combining his exposition of the ancient Jewish texts with the medieval tradition of *theologia mystica* inherited through Gerson and the Victorines, Osuna provides the materials that Teresa will later incorporate into her mature mystical writing (see also TA: 4.3). 'If you enjoy God' (*Si gustas en Dios*) he says 'you have in your soul the greatest possible sign of God's supreme love and so you should not let anyone frighten you by saying it is self-love'. 'There is nothing', he says, 'which is more delightful than spiritual consolation'. In passages such as this we can see why the young, confused Teresa of Avila took such great comfort from the work and found the confirmation of the spiritual journey she was seeking from her confessors and only finding in De Osuna's book 'her master'. *Los gustos* are for Osuna 'a foretaste of heaven on earth' (TA 5.3): 'God gives the soul spiritual pleasure as a promise of future glory', 'When you receive it do not be curious about where it comes from but open your hearts to the Lord's gift and accept it'. It is not over fanciful to see how passages such as this spoke to the young Teresa, with their affirmation of passion and integration of the life of the heart with the life of the mind, in a similar way that the passages from Tolstoy we reviewed earlier spoke to the young, confused Wittgenstein. Both seemed to find an integration of their intellectual 'unknowing' with the embodiment that it had become impossible to avoid.

[171] As well as Prov 8.31, Osuna also makes reference here to Ps 103:27 and Prov 5.19

8.4 Teresa's Use of the Strategy of Embodiment

We are now in a position to return to Teresa's language of *gustos, regales, deleites, contentos and sabor* and see how she uses the material she has inherited from the medieval tradition in her own writing. To do this we will take two examples from her writings, from the *Meditaciones* and the *Moradas.*

8.4.1 Strategies of Embodiment in The *Meditaciones Sobre Los Cantares*

As Kavanaugh and Rodriguez make clear in their introduction to their translation of the *Meditaciones*, a commentary on the sensual Hebrew poem *The Song of Songs*, it is unclear how Teresa would have had access to a translation of this text into the vernacular. Although the Council of Trent had not forbidden the use of scriptures in the vernacular to lay people, as we have seen above the Valdés Indices of 1551, 1554 and 1559 did, especially for 'idiots and *mujercillas'*. Kavanaugh and Rodriguez suggest various ways in which Teresa could have had knowledge of these scriptures (1980:iii.209) including: [172]

a) She would have read the verses in Latin in the church office. Despite her lack of knowledge of Latin she says:

> For a number of years now the Lord has given me great delight (*dado un regalo grande*) each time I hear or read some words from Solomon's Song of Songs. The delight is so great that without understanding the vernacular meaning of the Latin, my soul is stirred and recollected more than by devotional books written in the language I understand. And this happens almost all the time, and even when the Latin words were translated for me into the vernacular I did not understand the text any more. (C: Prol:1)

[172] See Also Kavanaugh and Rodriguez 1980: 212-213 for a summary of the manuscripts available of the work and the origins of its composition.

b) She may have used a translation from one of the Spanish offices then available: 'And so you can see, my daughters, in the Office of our Lady which we recite each week, how much its antiphons and readings is taken from this Song of Songs'. (C: 6.8)

c) She may have asked some *letrado* or confessor to translate for her or she may have got the passages from a spiritual book.

Green (1989), following writers such as Swietlicki (1986), suggests that Teresa had been shown Luis de León's translation of *The Song* into the vernacular (for which he was ultimately arrested by the Inquisition) by Martín Gutiérrez (Green 1989:114).[173] If true, this opens up the possibility of Luis's kabbalistic knowledge indirectly influencing Teresa's interpretation of the Song.[174] On the advice of her confessor, Diego de Yanguas, the original manuscript of the *Meditaciones* was burnt, however sufficient copies survive for us to reconstruct the original (See Peers CW:ii.352-356 and Kavanaugh and Rodriguez CW:ii.211-214).

The *Meditaciones* presents seven extended meditations on seven lines from the Song of Songs:

> *Let the Lord kiss me with the kiss of his mouth, for your breasts are better than wine.* (Cant 1:1)
>
> *Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth.* (Cant 1:2)

---

[173] Although this is disputed by other commentators, eg see Howells 2002: 179

[174] It is now widely accepted that Luis, a *converso*, had extensive knowledge of both the Christian and Jewish kabbalistic interpretations of the Song of Songs. Benito Arias Montano, librarian to El Escorial, supplied Luis with prohibited books from the Netherlands – the Escorial, of course, holding one of the finest collections of books on esoterica, kabbala and Islamic mysticism in Western Europe (Green 1989:124 ff). Kottman (1972) has argued that Luis's commentary on the Song of Songs relates to that part of the *Zohar* known as *The Greater Holy Assembly, s*ee also Swietlicki (1986). Regarding Teresa's knowledge of such matters, it is harder to draw definite conclusions. Both Swietlicki and Green argue for deliberate knowledge in Teresa's work, in this they stand out. However it may well be that some aspects of the Hekhalot/Zoharic tradition did linger within the oral tradition of the *conversos* (see Green 1989:119).

Your breasts are better than wine, and give forth the most sweet fragrance. (Cant 1:2-3)

I sat down under the shadow of Him whom I desired and his fruit is sweet to my taste. (Cant 2:3)

The King has brought me into the wine cellar and ordered charity within me. (Cant 2:4)

Sustain me with flowers and surround me with apples for I am dying of love. (Cant 2:5)

The lines themselves (translations of Teresa's Spanish versions) are corruptions of the original lines of the Song of Songs, however the explicitly erotic nature of the original is still clear from Teresa's transcriptions. In contrast to the *Moradas* and *Vida*, Teresa is at her most explicit in the *Meditaciones* and it is perhaps the clearest example of the importance of embodiment to her writing - this could be what prompted de Yanguas to advise Teresa to burn the manuscript.

The combination of the strategies of unknowing we saw in the previous chapter with this strategy of embodiment is most explicit in 'chapter' five, the commentary on *I sat down under the shadow of Him whom I desired and his fruit is sweet to my taste* (Cant 2:3).[175]

Here Teresa contrasts the unknowing of the 'shadow' of the Lord with the knowledge that comes from the taste of the Lord. In the previous chapter she reflects de Osuna's play on *sabor/saber* (which we have already discussed) when she writes:

---

[175] The work was not included in Luis de Léon's original edition of Teresa's work, perhaps because of his own trouble with the 'Song' and was first edited and published by Jerome Gratian in Brussels in 1611. He divided it into seven 'chapters' and gave each a heading (Rodriguez and Kavanaugh 1980:ii.212-213). Kavanaugh and Rodriguez suggest a date of composition of between 1566/1567 for a possible first draft, written in Avila and 1572/1575 for a possible second draft.

> Oh my daughters! May our Lord give you an understanding or, to put it better, a taste (for there is no other way to understand), of the joy of the soul when it is in this state. [176]

As with Osuna she emphasises the *gustar* of the Lord rather than the *entender*. This is made more explicit in Chapter Five:

> While the soul is enjoying the delight (*deleite*) which has been described, it seems to be wholly engulfed and protected by a shadow, and, as it were, a cloud of the Divinity, whence come to it certain influences and a dew so delectable (*tan deleitoso*) as to free it immeadiately, and with good reason, from the weariness caused it by the things of the world. (C: 5.4)[177]

The similarity to the Victorine passages we discussed in Chapter Five, such as Gallus's contrast between the 'ray of dazzling darkness' and 'cloud of unknowing' in his transcription of Dionysius, with this passage is striking at this point. [178] Is Teresa making an explicit reference here? The stylistic resemblance to the passages of Affective Dionysianism we have discussed seems hard to resist here. She continues:

> So she says that *His fruit is sweet to the throat.* For here all is enjoyment/taste (*Porque aquí todo es gustar*) without any labour of the faculties, and in this shadow of the Divinity (which is well termed 'shadow' for with clarity we cannot see it as we are below this cloud), this splendid sun; sent through the medium of love - a sign of the proximity of His Majesty, of whom it is not possible to speak. (C: 5.5)

---

[176] *¡Oh hijas mias! Déos nuestro Señor a entender o, por major decir, a gustar (que de otra manera no se puede entender) qué es del gozo del alma cuando está asi.* (C:4.7)
[177] *Parece que estando el alma en el deleite que queda dicho, que se siente estar toda engolfada y amparada con una sombre y manera de nube de la Divinidad, de donde vienen influencias al alma y rocío tan deleitoso, que bien con razón quitan el cansancio que le han dado las cosas del mundo.*
[178] See also *The Cloud of Unknowing* Ch.8

Here, again, we see echoes of Part One of Dionysius's *De Theologia mystica* and the stammering as he comes near to the ineffable breakdown of words. Both Kavanaugh/Rodriguez and Peers 'tidy up' this passage to make it seem neater and more coherent. The original passage possesses the 'rugged, rough-and-tumble' quality noted by de Certeau above. The translation presented here tries to revive that quality, which we feel brings it closer to the verbal disintegration of certain passages in Dionysius's *Theologia mystica*:

> *Y ansí dice "que su fruto es dulce para su garganta". Porque aquí todo es gustar sin ningún travajo de las potencies, y en esta sombre de la Divinidad (que bien dice sombre, porque con claridad no la podemos acá ver, sino debajo de esta nube), está aquel sol resplandeciente; envía por medio del amor una noticia de que se está tan junto Su Majestad, que no se puede decir ni es posible.*(C: 5.5)

Many of our linguistic strategies from the previous chapter are present here, especially the *Paraceme,* the uncertain humility with which she approaches the subject and the 'roughness' of the prose which threatens, as with Dionysius, to break down at any moment into gibberish.

The theme of the necessary connection between the wisdom of the *gustos* in the taste/enjoyment of God and the need for 'unknowing' of the intellect remains throughout the *Meditaciones*. Thus, in Chapter Six we find the following passage when Teresa is talking about the Virgin Mary:

> She (Mary) did not act as do some *letrados* (whom the Lord does not lead by this mode of prayer and who don't have the beginnings of *espiritú*), for they want to be so rational about things and so precise in their understanding that it doesn't seem anyone else but they with learning can understand the grandeur of God. If only they would learn something from the humility of the most Blessed Virgin! (C:6.7)

This is followed by an analogy exactly the same as that used by Gerson and Osuna:

For my own part I think His Majesty is here enamelling gold which He has already prepared for this process by His gifts and has tested, by a thousand ways and means which the soul that has reached this state can describe... This soul, which is the gold in question, remains all the time motionless and as inert as if it were really gold; and the Divine Wisdom, well pleased to see it so, since so few love Him with such strength, continues to set in the gold many precious stones and much elaborately worked enamel. (C: 6.10)

She expounds this passage in C:6.10 by bringing together the soul's 'loving' with its 'lack of understanding':

> The King's most intense love, which has brought the soul to this high state, must have joined this soul's love to itself in such a way that the intellect (*el entendimiento*) does not deserve to understand; but these two loves become one again. (C: 6.10)

As Howells (2002:88) points out the *Meditaciones* occupies an important transitional period in Teresa's writings from the earlier works such as the *Vida* where the emphasis is more on union rapture, to the later works such as *Moradas* where union is expressed more in terms of service to humanity. As he says:

> It is typical of Teresa's approach to allow that both kinds of union are compatible: 'union' was always a flexible term for her, meaning a number of different states, and now the new union is simply added to these as the highest state. (Howells 2002:88)

This 'union through action' – the embodied transformation which we are describing in this chapter – is, as for Wittgenstein, an embodiment that leads to:

1. An inextricable link between the theological and the ethical

2. The need for self knowledge, as the true source of contemplation
3. A strategy that returns the reader to the 'relationships of everyday life' and
4. A strategy with transformative power to make a difference in those relationships

As with Wittgenstein, in these later passages in the *Meditaciones,* and as we shall soon see in the *Moradas*, we have transition from thinking about God, to experiencing God to acting upon the experience of God. In *Meditaciones*: 7, written perhaps just two years before the *Moradas*, she describes it with reference to the 'flowers' mentioned in Chapter Two of the *Song of Songs:*

> Sustain me with flowers and surround me with apples, for I am dying of love. (Cant 2.5)

As she comments in C 7.3:

> I understand by these words that the soul is asking to perform great works (*grandes obras*) in the service of our Lord and of its neighbour. For this purpose it is happy to lose that delight and satisfaction (*deleite y contento*)...For in the active – and seemingly exterior – work the soul is working interiorly.

Thus, the strategy of embodiment and delight has been necessary to *lead us* to the 'good works' to our fellow humans. With Wittgenstein we saw how a strategy of embodiment led us away from the solipsistic fiction of the Cartesian 'I', here, as with Wittgenstein, the divisions between an 'interior' and 'exterior' 'I' are broken down. Teresa does not use the philosophically precise language of Wittgenstein, but through her poetical conceit of the *flores* she suggests the same strategy. An example again of Teresa using a striking metaphor to convey a complex philosophico-theological statement. This is confirmed in C 7.4 where, as with Wittgenstein, she stresses the importance of self examination of motivation for action – just as we saw in Wittgenstein's 'confessions':

Someone preaches a sermon with the intention of benefiting souls, but he is not so detached from human considerations that he doesn't make some attempt to please, or to gain honour or credit; or he has his mind set on receiving some canonry for having preached well. There are also many things people do for their neighbour's benefit – many things – and with a good intention, but with much care not to lose anything through them and not to displease. (C: 7.4)

Thus, as she makes clear in the final sections of the *Meditaciones,* her strategy of embodiment and delight has as its end or goal, personal transformation *leading to re-engagement with the world.* Just as Wittgenstein's philosophical exercises enable the solipsistic fly to escape its fly bottle so that we re-enter the world of relationships; so Teresa's mystical exercises allow the self-contented, self-seeking Christian to escape the prison of their attachment for service of others.

> So I say that much good is done by those who, after speaking with His Majesty for several years, when receiving His gifts and delights, want to serve in laborious ways even though these delights and consolations are thereby hindered. I say that the fragrance of these flowers and works produced and flowing from the tree of such fervent love lasts much longer. (C: 7.7)

8.4.2 Strategies of Embodiment in *Las Moradas*

As already stated, the *Meditaciones,* written between 1566 – 1575, act as a transitional stage between Teresa's early thought in the *Vida* to the later work of the *Moradas.*[179] In this respect the *Moradas* takes the themes of the *Meditaciones* and develops them into their final stage.

Following conversations reported with Jerónimo Gracián (see Peers CW:ii.188) and others Teresa tells us that she began work on the *Moradas* on Trinity Sunday (2nd June), 1577 in Toledo. Some ten years after the first draft of the *Meditaciones* and five years before her death, she was at this point sixty two and her reform of the order was

[179] Lit.'The Mansions' or 'El Castillo Interior' ('The Interior Castle'), hereafter M

going badly.[180] As well as conflict between the Discalced and Carmelites of the Ancient Observance, Teresa's health was poor at this point (she writes of headaches, nausea and a 'great noise in her ears' in M: 4). The most high profile casualty of this conflict was St John of the Cross who was imprisoned in Toledo at this time. From this time we also have the famous description of her by the new papal nuncio in Spain, Felipe Sega, who took up his post in June 1577:

> A troublesome, restless, disobedient and stubborn female, who under the guise of devotion invented bad doctrines, running around outside the cloister against the order of the Tridentine Council and prelates, instructing like a teacher in defiance of what St Paul taught, who ordered women not to teach.[181]

In July, seemingly as a result of Sega's appointment, she left Toledo and completed the work at San José, Avila on November 29th the same year – a remarkably short six months required for completion. Due to crises within the order both at Toledo and Avila, commentators suggest that she spent a mere three months in actual writing. This included being re-elected Prioress of the *Encarnación* in October (which was later reversed by Tostado - commisary general of the Spanish Carmelites appointed in 1576) and the appearance of a scurrilous pamphlet denouncing both Teresa and Gracián (See Kavanaugh and Rodriguez CW: ii:265).

As well as the original autograph held in the convent of the Discalced sisters in Seville there are several copies. The Toledo copy bears the date 1577 which seems to have been the copy made as Teresa wrote. The Discalced sisters of Córdoba hold a copy in Gracián's hand while the University of Salamanca possesses P. Ribera's copy (1588). Gracián described her decision to write the Moradas in a conversation recorded after the event:

---

[180] For more detail see Efrén de la Madre de Dios y Otger Steggink, *Tiempo y vida de Santa Teresa*, Madrid: Católica, 1977:701-805

[181] 'Fémina inquieta, andariega, desobediente y contumaz, que a título de devoción inventaba malas doctrinas, andando fuera de la clausura contra el órden del concilio tridentino y prelados, enseñando como maestra contra lo que San Pablo enseñó, mandando que las mujeres no enseñasen' in Francisco de Santa

Being her confessor and speaking with her once in Toledo about many things concerning her spirit, she said to me: "Oh, how well that point is written in the book of my life, which the Inquisition has!" And I said to her, "Well, since we can't recover it, write down what you remember, and other things, and write another book, and explain the basic doctrine without identifying the person who has experienced what you say there".[182]

Suggesting, that like the *Vida*, the dialectic of concealment with the Inquisition was present in the work from its inception, Weber notes, referring to the often times ramshackle rhetoric of the *Moradas*: 'A bride is hidden in Teresa's castle: the dangerous language of erotic spirituality is concealed by a proliferation of competing images. Her avowed incompetence constitutes in reality a rhetoric of obfuscation' (Weber 1990:99). For Weber, the 'bride' of the Interior Castle, both 'concealed and protected' by Teresa's rhetoric is erotic spirituality itself, so dangerous in open expression in Spain of the 1570s (Weber 118 –122).

Following the arguments of this thesis we agree that Weber is right to see a sensual or erotic side in the *Moradas.* The argument of this chapter, and of the whole thesis however, is that Teresa, true heir of the masters of the *theologia mystica,* sees the need to activate the *affectus* if contemplative transformation is to be effected in the listener. However, as we have already seen from our consideration of the *Meditaciones,* it would be a mistake to see Teresa as understanding this process as an end in itself. As with the *Meditaciones,* the end of the sensual self-examination of the *affectus* is to return us to the world, our responsibilities to our fellow human beings and the possibilities that arise from our human relationships with each other. For Weber, the erotic is an end in itself for Teresa, and although as she says 'Teresa, who found herself on the frontiers of contemporary orthodoxy, nevertheless felt the idea of spiritual marriage so crucial that she was willing to continue to take risks' (Weber 1990:121). It is not so clear from her

---

María *Reforma de los descalzos de Nuestra Senora del Carmen de la primitiva observancia, hecha por Santa Teresa de Jesüs* (Madrid 1644-55). 1:556

[182] Quoted in Ahlgren (1996:61) from Gracián, *Anotaciones al P Ribera* in Antonio de San Joaquín *Año Teresiano, diario histórico, panegyrico moral, en que se descruben las virtudes, succesos y maravillas de la seráphica y mystica Doctora de la Iglesia Santa Teresa de Jésus,* Madrid 1733-69, 7:149

description just *why* Teresa should go to these great lengths and what was she hoping to achieve by them - the third question we raised at the beginning of section 8.3.

One of the attractions of interpreting Teresa's writings through a Wittgensteinian 'strategy of embodiment' presented here is that, unlike Weber's notion of 'concealed erotic spirituality' this question is answered. As we have seen, Teresa, using her heritage and understanding of the *theologia mystica* inherited from de Osuna, is able to couple a strategy of unknowing with a strategy of embodiment which will lead, as in the *Meditaciones*, to *Obras* and responsible action in the world for others.

Weber has argued that Teresa deliberately obscures the erotic spirituality of the *Moradas* - 'like a bride in the castle'- all the better to protect it from the Inquisition. She suggests that in the fifteen sixties when Teresa wrote the *Meditaciones* it was possible to be more explicit about the 'erotico-maternal' matrix that she describes there in the *Song of Songs*. By 1577 the situation had become more difficult, exemplified by Gracián's order for Teresa to burn the text of the *Meditaciones* in 1580 (See Weber 1990:117). As remarked already, none other than Luis de León had been imprisoned between 1572 and 1575 for publishing his vernacular version of the *Song of Songs*. Weber also mentions the *beatas* of Llerena, burnt at the stake in 1579 for reporting, amongst other things, erotic visions of Christ's humanity and his union with his followers (See Llorca 1980:103-121, Weber 1990:120).

While accepting that Weber's thesis reveals something of the tension that went into the writing of the *Moradas* it is argued here that the work may have been more than an attempt to 'conceal or hide erotic spirituality'. As we have seen throughout this thesis, from Dionysius through the Victorines, Gerson and Osuna a mystical strategy (the *theologia mystica*) runs throughout the Western Christian tradition. As we have argued, this tradition possesses several strategies, that of embodiment being one of them.[183] We have already shown how Teresa uses these strategies in her writings. In passages such as those examined in the previous section we have seen her using the strategies of

---

[183] Using a Wittgensteinian approach this dissertation has examined two strategies of the *theologia mystica*: that of unknowing and embodiment. However, we do not wish to suggest that these are the only strategies of the tradition of *theologia mystica*. The argument here is that these two are clearly visible and their influence from one set of writers to another can be clearly traced, as has been done here. It seems from the authors surveyed here that this 'thread' forms an essential component of the tradition of *theologia mystica*.

embodiment and unknowing with clear references to the 'ray of darkness' and 'cloud of unknowing' of Dionysius. Accordingly, if as we suggest Teresa was familiar with these strategies, we should see this also happening in the *Moradas*, being aware, and taking up Weber's suggestion, that she was more cautious in this work than any other preceeding work not least because, by now, she knew the perils associated with writing in the climate of sixteenth century Spain.

Therefore, we argue here that the *Moradas* is better interpreted, from our Wittgensteinian perspective, as using linguistic strategies of unknowing and embodiment to lead the reader to personal affective transformation for engagement in *Obras* in the world. There is insufficient space here to give a full exposition of the *Moradas* but we will draw out some of the main passages that support this interpretation.

8.4.2.1 The First Mansions

If we see the *Moradas* along the lines that are being suggested here then in the very first paragraph of the 'first mansion' we see laid out the strategy we have presented in this chapter:

> While I was beseeching our Lord today to speak for/through me (*por mí*),[184] as I was unable to find a thing to say (*no atinaba a cosa que decir*),[185] or how to begin to comply with this obedience, what I will say now presented itself (*ofreció*)[186] to begin with this starting point: that we consider our soul to be like a castle, totally of diamond or very clear crystal, where there are many abodes (*aposentos*),[187] as in heaven there are many mansions. Now if we consider it carefully, sisters, the

---

However, we acknowledge there may be other, equally important threads. that future studies will reveal. Weber's concentration on the strategy of concealment is a good candidate and needs more follow up.

[184] Peers gives 'through', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez give 'for'

[185] Peers gives 'I could find nothing to say', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez, 'I wasn't able to think of anything to say'

[186] Peers: 'a thought occurred to me', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez: ' there came to my mind'

[187] Peers 'a rather more pretentious word than the English 'room': dwelling place, abode, apartment', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez, 'Teresa uses the Spanish words *moradas, aposentos y piezas* in approximately the same sense; they refer to rooms or dwelling places within the castle... Most people today think of a mansion as a large stately home, not what Teresa had in mind with the term *moradas*.'Dwelling places'

soul of a just person (*el alma del justo)*[188]is nothing else but a paradise where He says he takes his delights (*El tiene sus deleites).*[189] Well then, what do you think such an abode would be like where a King so powerful, so wise, so pure, so full of good things, takes his delight? I cannot find anything with which to compare the great beauty and capacity of the soul; and truly our intellects will no more be able to grasp this than they can comprehend God, no matter how keen they are, for He Himself said that He created us in his own image and likeness. (M 1.1.1)[190]

Our intellects (*nuestros entendimientos*) cannot grasp that which we seek – whether it be the nature of God or the nature of the soul (Teresa boldly implies that epistemologically they present the same situation to the intellect). Rather than presenting an intellectual or conceptual notion of the soul, something 'presents itself' to her (*ofreció*, lit 'offers itself', it is not 'thought' as Kavanaugh and Rodriguez and Peers translate it nor is it an 'idea' as other translators present it eg Benedictines of Stanbrook translation 1906). Teresa seems quite precise in her language that the image or trope of the Castle offers itself or presents itself rather than is thought, for, as she says, our intellects and understanding cannot grasp what is being presented. Rather, it is talked about in terms of being 'enjoyed' (*se deleita*) by 'the King'. The dialectic of affectivity lies at the heart of this epistemology, just as it did in the *Meditaciones*. The true nature of ourselves, our relation to God, and God in God's self are described in terms of affectivity and delight. Just as de Osuna quoted Proverbs 8:31 in his chapter on the *sabrosa saber*, so again Teresa makes allusion to the same passage when she describes the soul as the place 'wherein our Lord takes delight'.

---

turns out to be a more precise translation of Teresa's *moradas* than is the classic 'mansions' and more biblical and theological in tone.

[188] Peers: 'the soul of the righteous man' , Kavanaugh and Rodriguez:'the soul of the just person'

[189] Peers :'He takes His delight', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez: 'He finds His delight' see also V14:10 and Excl 7, allusion to Proverbs 8:31

[190] *'Estando hoy suplicando a nuestro Señor hablase por mí, porque yo no atinaba a cosa que decir ni cómo comenzar a cumplir esta obediencia, se me ofrecio lo que ahora dire, par comenzar con algün fundamento: que es considerar nuestra alma como un Castillo todo de un diamante o muy claro crystal, adonde hay mucho aposentos, así como en el cielo hay muchas moradas. Que si bien lo consideramos, hermanas, no es otra cosa el alma del justo sino un paraíso adonde dice El tiene sus deleites. Pues ¿qué tal os parece que sera el aposento adonde un Rey tan poderoso, tan sabio, tan limpio, tan lleno de todos los bienes se deleita No hallo yo cosa con que comparar la gran hermosura de un alma y la gran capacidad; y verdaderamente apenas deben llegar nuestros entendimientos, por agudos que fuesen, a comprenderla, así como no pueden llegar a considerar a Dios, pues El mismo dice que nos crió a su imagen y semejanza.*

As with Osuna, so with Teresa, knowledge is obtained from 'tasting' the delights of the *gustos espirituales,* this will become apparent as the reader moves through the 'castle'.

Within the context of the linguistic strategies of unknowing presented in the previous chapter the passage is revealing. Teresa presents a series of metaphors, one after another, for the soul – each one is piled one after the other: a castle, totally of diamond or other clear crystal, of many abodes, like the heavenly mansions, a paradise where He takes His delights, and like God Him/herself and the effect certainly leads to spatial and emotional disorientation.[191] This spatial instability continues throughout the chapter and indeed the whole book. As she states in M: 1.1.3, the aim of this disorientating metaphor is to illustrate the 'favours' which the Lord will grant:

> It is necessary that you keep this comparison in mind. Perhaps God will be pleased to let me use it to explain something to you about the favours He is happy to grant souls and the differences between these favours. (M: 1.1.3)

The recipients will be 'delighted and awakened' (*se regalarán y despertarán* M: 1.1.4) by these favours for the castle itself is not just beautiful but 'full of delight' (*deleitoso* 1.1.5) to those who enter it. It defines itself in terms of 'delight'.

As well as the necessity for delight the first part of the mansion frequently mentions 'self knowledge' (*el propio conocimiento* M:1.1.8, 1.2.8[192], M: 1.2.9, 1.2.13[193]) this, as we have seen, is not the 'head knowledge' of ideas and thought, but more an 'experiential knowledge' closely connected to the libidinal springs of delight, the *affectus* of the Victorines. 'Without experience' (*si no hay experiencia* M:1.1.9), she says, it is difficult to understand what she is talking about. Experiential reflection is a necessary component of her presentation – her 'offering'.

Self-knowledge, humility and delight: all the components of our strategy of unknowing/embodiment are presented in these dense first pages of the *Moradas*. The final element of Teresa's strategy – the 'mystical strategy as transformational' is brought

---

[191] In 1.2.1 more metaphors are introduced: 'this pearl from the Orient, this tree of life'. In 1.2.8 it is a 'palmetto fruit'.

[192] 'Oh but if it is in the room of self knowledge! How necessary this room is – see that you understand me – even for those whom the Lord has brought into the very dwelling place where He abides' M 1.2.8

out towards the end of the first mansions. Here she notes that the soul 'will not be able to enjoy' (M:1.2.14) the pleasures of the Lord if there are impediments in our outer life such as 'possessions, honour or business affairs'.

To proceed further, 'to enter the second dwelling place', the seeker 'must give up unnecessary things and business affairs' (M: 1.2.14). Only by transforming our 'outer' attachments can 'inner' attachments be altered. In Wittgenstein's terms, only by a new 'Form of Life' can we be liberated from the 'flybottle' in which we find ourselves. As with Wittgenstein (and Augustine), a *confessio* is necessary to prompt a 'change of life'. In M: 1.2.16 she describes the necessity of each individual sister making 'a good beginning', observing faults and that which leads us from the interior transformation to the exterior. This leads inevitably to her final paragraphs:

> Let us understand, my daughters, that true perfection consists in love of God *and neighbour* (my emphasis); the more perfectly we keep these two commandments the more perfect we will be. (M: 1.2.18)

She concludes her impressive opening chapter by giving an example to illustrate the embodied, practical, ethical action she is recommending. In this case that sisters, especially superiors, must be careful about admonishing one another and how they upbraid others for not keeping convent rules, for 'much discretion is necessary'.

The first mansion, as has been said, is a *tour de force* of mystical strategy, combining as it does all the elements of unknowing and embodiment which we have presented in this thesis. The movement in the chapter from the opening passages saturated in metaphor and scriptural allusion, the subtle use of strategies of unknowing and embodiment, and the final presentation of a practical 'case study' will be typical of how she proceeds throughout the book. Each chapter will contain all three elements and, seemingly to emphasise the point, each chapter will end with a very practical example to illustrate the points that have been made. Mansion Four, for example, having discussed the 'prayer of quiet' and 'raptures' give some guidelines at the end for how to deal with nuns who

---

[193] 'self-knowledge is the most important thing for us'

appear to be suffering from such raptures but are simply physically ill. This is done with humour (see previous chapter), discretion and discernment:

> Since (these sisters) feel some consolation interiorly and a languishing and weakness exteriorly, they think they are experiencing a spiritual sleep (which is a prayer a little more intense that the prayer of quiet) and they let themselves become absorbed. The more they allow this the more absorbed they become because their nature is further weakened, and they fancy they are being carried away with rapture (*arrobamiento*). I call it being carried away in foolishness (*abobamiento*) because it amounts to nothing more than wasting time and wearing down one's health... By sleeping and eating and avoiding so much penance the person got rid of the stupor. (M: 4.3.11)

This recurring structure is typical of the *Moradas* and marks it out, we argue here, as her most mature expression of all the elements of the *theologia mystica* that she has inherited from de Osuna.

8.4.2.2 The Remaining Mansions

As already stated, space does not permit a line by line account of the *Moradas*. Indeed it could be argued that the main themes are sketched out in the first mansions and then developed throughout the book: the strategies are constantly present throughout the work and numerous more examples than are enumerated here can be cited to support the interpretation. As is clear, each chapter takes the same general form of the first chapter and encourages the reader to move, through unknowing, self-awareness and affectivity towards that transformed place which will allow the necessary *Obras* as we return to embodied existence in the world around us.

In overview, the *Moradas* takes the basic form of three mansions which prepare the self in the way described for transformation. True to her roots in de Osuna and the *theologia mystica* she does not describe this transformation, but through the sort of verbal strategies we have explored suggests how this may come about for the person. Thus, after

the preparations of the first three mansions, the fourth is essentially the 'mansion of transformation' where the change can occur. Thereafter the final three mansions discuss the consequences of the transformation with particular emphasis on the move from 'rapture' to 'works'/*obras*. We recall the quote with which we began this chapter:

> When I see people very diligently observing the sort of prayer that they have and very wrapped up in it when they have it (for it seems that they will not let the thought move or stir in case they lose a small morsel of the *gusto* or devotion that they have had), I realise how little they understand of the road to the attainment of union. They think that the whole business lies in such things.
>
> No, sisters, no! The Lord desires works and that if you see a sick woman to whom you can give some help, never be affected by the fear that your devotion will suffer, but take pity on her: if she is in pain you should feel pain too; if necessary, fast so that she may have your food, not so much for her sake as because you know that the Lord desires it. (M: 5.3)

Thus, in the second and third mansions she emphasises (M: 2.1.7 cf Vida: 4.2, 11.10 –15) that the *gustos* cannot be strived for: 'souls shouldn't be thinking about consolations *(regalos)* at this beginning stage'. Our non-thinking extends towards not desiring the *regalos*. Once again she emphasises that this is an *experiential* process and we 'cannot begin to recollect yourselves by force but only by gentleness' *'y cómo no ha de ir a fuerza de brazos el comenzarse a recoger, sin con suavidad'* (M: 2.1.10). As always with this experiential learning 'it is very important to consult persons with experience' (cf. Dionysius and the initiation of Hierathus). In these second mansions Teresa talks of the disturbance of the intellect: 'Here the intellect (*entendimiento*) is more alive and the faculties (*potencias*) more skilled. The blows from the artillery strike in such a way that the soul cannot fail to hear' (M: 2.1.3). The devils 'represent the esteem one has in the world, one's friends and relatives, one's health a thousand other obstacles'. The power of intellectual representation is clearly a block to *recogimiento*, and in Teresa's language, is used by the devil for that purpose. The dangers of the intellect are clearly delineated here.

In so far as the intellect is to be used it is to remind the person of the importance of persevering with *recogimiento* (M: 2.1.4) it must not be used as a critical tool in itself. Even in these early mansions, the intellect is there to serve the function of helping the soul find *gustos, mercedes* and *regalos* within *recogimiento*, rather than striving after intellectual comprehensions. We are being prepared '*para gozar su gloria'* – 'to enjoy his glory' (M: 2.1.11).

Regarding the third mansions, she characterises the people at this stage of the journey as being:

> Fond of doing penance and setting aside periods for recollection (*horas de recogimiento*); they spend their time well, practising works of charity towards their neighbours; and are very balanced in their use of speech and dress and in the governing of their households. (M: 3.1.5)

Clearly the *entendimiento* is well developed! To pass this level, which she compares with the rich young man of Mt 19 :16-22, we must pass into the place of unknowing and delight/*gusto*:

> Let us prove ourselves, my Sisters, or let the Lord prove us, for He knows well how to do this even though we often don't want to understand it. (M: 3.1.7)

The action required 'must not be fabricated in our imaginations but proved by deeds' (M:3.1.7): the person must move from interior reflection to embodied action. As she says in M:3.1.9 a certain humility of intellect is required for this process to work: 'The Lord will give you understanding of them so that out of dryness you may draw humility – and not disquiet, which is what the devil aims after'.

The possession of the *entendimiento* is also connected with worldly success:

> After these years, when it seems they have become Lords of the world or at least clearly disillusioned in this regard. His Majesty will try them in some minor

> matters, and they will go about disturbed and afflicted that it puzzles me and makes me fearful. (M:3.2.1).

She helps these people by 'compassion'/'*sentimiento*' and not 'contradicting their reason' (3.2.2). The process of unknowing is not initiated through the intellect but the affect. For these people 'their reason is still very much in control. Love has not yet reached the point of overwhelming reason' (M: 3.2.7).[194] She exhorts us to 'let us abandon our reason (*dejemos nuestra razón*) and our fears into His hands' (M: 3.2.8).

This 'letting go of the reason' and the move to the affect will occur in the all-important fourth mansions of transformation. At the beginning of this mansion (4.1.1) she once again returns to the dilemma that she had encountered in the *Vida*: how can the *theologia mystica be explained*: what literary mechanisms, or indeed *strategies* can be employed to do this.[195]

Her solution is to take Wittgenstein's path: from saying to showing to acting. She cannot *explain* the process:

> As these mansions are much closer to where the King lives, they have great beauty and there are things so delicate to see and understand there, which the understanding does not have the capacity to grasp them, although something might turn out to be well put and not at all obscure to the inexperienced; those who have experience, especially a lot of it, will understand very well. (M: 4.1.2)[196]

As we saw with Wittgenstein, she appeals to those 'who may have had these thoughts already' (cf. T:3) and she will demonstrate by *showing* rather than *saying*. The unknowing of the *theologia mystica* will be maintained although the *gustos* will be an

---

[194] *'porque su razá muy en sí; no está aún el amor para sacar de razón'*

[195] 'Although I think I now have a little more light about these favours the Lord grants to some souls, knowing how to explain them is a different matter' M: 4.1.1

[196] *'Como ya estas moradas se llegan más adonde está el Rey, es grande su hermosura y hay cosas tan delicadas que ver y que entender, que el entendimiento no es capaz para poder dar traza cómo se diga*

important part of that transformative process when eventually, in the later mansions as we should expect, they too will fall away as the importance of embodied existence in the *Obras* takes hold.

Consequently, as well as delineating the nature of the 'mystical strategy' as an unknowing-affective strategy Teresa goes into greater depth here than she has ever done before to map this affective territory. Following Weber's suggestions, Teresa must know of the dangers here (The *Meditaciones* had not long been burnt) so she treads very carefully in defining her 'pleasures of the Lord' ('*gustos*') in such a way as to retain their affective power but to protect her from unwelcome attention (and suppression) from the Inquisition.

She distinguishes these *gustos* from the '*contentos*':

> The *contentos* appear to me that what we can call we have acquired from our meditation and petitions to our Lord, which proceed from our natural nature, although in the end God helps this. (M: 4.1.4)[197]

The '*contentos*' are, for Teresa associated with the *entendimiento* (intellect) and their reception is linked with the work of the intellect described in the first three mansions. During this fourth mansion, the move to the unknowing-embodied strategy is emphasised and with it the move from the '*contentos*' to the '*gustos*' (delights):

> For we obtain them (the *contentos*) through thoughts (*con los pensamientos*), assisting ourselves, using creatures to help our meditation, and tiring the intellect (*cansado el entendimiento*). (M: 4.2.3).

---

siquiera algo que venga tan al justo que no quede bien oscuro para los que no tienen experiencia; que quien la tiene muy bien lo entenderá, en especial si es mucha.'

[197] *'los contentos me parece a mí se pueden llamar los que nosotros adquirimos con nuestra meditación y peticiones a nuestro Señor, que procede de nuestro natural, aunque en fin ayuda para ello Dios'*
Kavanaugh and Rodriguez translate this passage as 'the term consolations, I think, can be given to those experiences we ourselves acquire through our own meditation and petitions to the Lord'. Teresa, significantly, does not use this language of 'naming experiences', here as in many other passages Kavanaugh and Rodriguez show that they are tending towards an epistemological bias based on 'modern mystical' experientialism, see Chapter Three above.

For Howells (2003:94) the process is defined by a 'developed knowledge or familiarity with the field of prayer', as opposed to 'learning that comes from books'. Which she describes as a distinction between 'having experience *of* something' and 'having experience *in* something':

> Experience is the skill brought by one who knows not just something *about* the object under view but how to orient and position oneself in *relation* to this object in order to grasp it accurately. (Howells 2003:94)

As Howells makes clear in his footnote here he understands the problem with a 'modern mystic', 'experiential' (or indeed Jamesian) interpretation of Teresa:

> In modern English, feelings suggest a merely *emotional* sense, whereas Teresa's emphasis is on the *sensory*, epistemological value of these feelings, which the translators judge is better rendered as "experience". The problem is that Teresa's distinction between feelings and experience is then lost. (Howells 2001: 182)

We would go further, in accord with the general thrust of the thesis, by arguing that on such interpretation hangs Teresa's use of the language of *theologia mystica* to describe the *affective changes* she is asking her reader to respond with. This, as with Wittgenstein, is done through *showing* rather than *saying.* A movement that seems akin to Wittgenstein's increasing familiarity with the 'Field of Language' which ultimately comes from *Lebensformen.* Only precisely *this* sort of knowledge can effect transformation, not 'head knowledge' or 'book knowledge'.

In this vein Teresa now makes very clear (M: 4.1.5) that the unique locus of the mystical knowledge is not the 'understanding' but the 'heart' (*el corazón*). At this point she again dissembles claiming: 'I don't know much about these passions of the soul' (*estas pasiones del alma*) 'for I am very stupid' (*muy torpe*). Again we hear the 'stuttering, broken voice' of the strategy of unknowing using the Wittgensteinian strategies of contradiction and humility (that voice with which are so familiar now from Dionysius to Gerson to Osuna). To proceed on the spiritual journey, she says, we must

'not think much but love much' *'no está la cosa en pensar mucho, sino en amar mucho'* (4.1.7 cf. F: 5.2 'and so do that which best stirs you to love'). This love, this '*amar*' is seen in *deeds* rather than thoughts.

In M: 4.3 she returns to her earlier thought in the *Vida* and her earlier reading in relating what she is presenting to the prayer of *recogimiento*. As with Osuna, there is a clear statement that the *recogimiento* is connected with 'unknowing': 'Don't think this *recogimiento* is acquired by the intellect (*entendimiento*) striving to think about God within itself, or by the imagination (*imaginación*) imaging Him within itself'(4.3.3).[198] However such 'unknowing' is accompanied by the increase of the affective and cannot exist on its own: 'love must already be awakened' (M 4.3.4.). The *entendimiento* cannot be stopped without this:

> When His Majesty desires the intellect to stop, He occupies it in another way and gives it a light so far above what we can attain that it remains absorbed. Then without knowing how the intellect is much better instructed than it was through all the soul's efforts not to make use of it. (M: 4.3.6)

Thus the intellect moves into unknowing as the affect is quickened by the encounter with God. 'Without any effort or noise the soul should strive to cut down the rambling of the intellect (*el dicurrir del entendimiento*) but suspending either it or the *pensamiento'* (M: 4.3.7). Teresa seems here to be treading the fine path between ending the discursive intellect and recognising the danger of an *alumbradismo* like quietism. Her compromise – 'cutting down the rambling' without suspending it seems to suggest a way out. She has moved from Osuna's total reliance on the affect at the expense of the intellect. However, although this is what she states in M: 4.3 there are enough contradictory statements, as we have seen above, to suggest an alternative reading and that her position is not so far from Osuna's (and possibly the *alumbrados*) as she would have us believe.

The soul must 'enjoy' the new place without trying to understand it (M: 4.3.7).[199]

---

[198] Two explicit references to Osuna in this chapter in 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 show that she is clearly thinking of Osuna at this point

[199] *goza sin ninguna industria*

As we have seen, Teresa ends the fourth mansions with spiritual advice warning sisters who experience a sort of 'spiritual stupor' which she calls being carried away with 'foolishness' - *abobamiento*. Although there is an element of tongue-in-cheek Teresa is of course strengthening her anti-*alumbrado* credentials by these sort of remarks whilst using the strategy of humour we described in the previous chapter. Unlike the *Vida* which contained lengthy accounts of these practices, visions, levitations, locutions etc, the *Moradas* presents the considered views of a spiritual master on how such phenomena should be treated.

The final three mansions of the *Moradas* are thus concerned with showing how the living out of the transformation she has described is effected through action in the world. What she is proposing is *union with God through action in the world.*

Again, she emphasises that 'the intellect is not capable of understanding' the 'riches treasures and delights (*la riqueza y tesoros y deleites* M 5.1.1) of the fifth mansions. As we would expect by now, although they cannot be grasped by the intellect they can be 'enjoyed' (*gocen*).

Yet from this point on she emphasises 'service of the Lord' (*el servicio de nuestro Señor*) as much as 'self-knowledge' (M 5.3.1). Through a virtuous life one affects others and so ultimately does God's work. She returns once again to her earlier theme, the importance of love of neighbour as much as love of God:

> The Lord asks of us only two things: love of His Majesty and love of our neighbour. These are what we must work for...The most certain sign, in my opinion, as to whether or not we are observing these two laws is whether we observe well the love of neighbour...The more advanced you see you are in love for your neighbour the more advanced you will be in the love of God. (M: 5.3.7-8)

Out of this she concludes her fifth mansion (with the customary practical example of holy living) to the exhortation on 'Good works' we have already quoted above. This, for her 'is the true union with His will' (M: 5.3.11).

These final mansions enshrine the movements we noticed earlier in Wittgenstein's transformative philosophy of embodiment. That is:

1. An inextricable link between the theological and the ethical
2. The need for self knowledge, as the true source of contemplation
3. A strategy that returns the reader to the 'relationships of everyday life', and
4. A strategy with transformative power to make a difference in those relationships.

All this takes place within the threefold Wittgensteinian path of Saying-Showing-Acting. For Teresa this is based on an epistemology of affect, coupled with the path of unknowing. Thus by the time of the sixth mansions Teresa talks of the *vista* of the soul with God[200] - not 'seen in a way that can be called seeing, even by the imagination' but the encounter is determined and defined by desire and 'enjoyment' *'que todo su deseo es tornarla a gozar'*: '(the soul's) whole desire is to enjoy it once again' (6.1.1). Knowledge and vision are gone, only desire remains.

The first chapter of the sixth mansions looks back on the 'trials' of the previous mansions (and the previous forty years of Teresa's life, see M: 6.1.7) again couched in these terms of the incomprehension of the intellect when faced with the stirrings of the affect (and, also, often the body): *'porque no estaba el entendimiento capaz'* : 'for the understanding had no capacity to comprehend' M: 6.1.9. Looking back on her experiences she sees that intellectual comprehension was of little help in dealing with it:

> In sum, there is no remedy in this tempest but to wait for the mercy of God. For at an unexpected time, with one word alone or a chance happening. He so quickly calms the storm that it seems there had not been even as much as a cloud in that soul, and it remains filled with sunlight and much more consolation (*consuelo*). (M: 6.1.10)

---

[200] Peers translates as 'sight', Kavanaugh and Rodriguez as 'meeting' - from the sense of the first passage of 6.1 'sight' would seem a more appropriate translation

The process was one of suffering and difficulty, 'having seen itself totally incapacitated' to 'make it understand its nothingness' (*nuestra nonada* M: 6.1.11). At such times, for Teresa, 'the best remedy is to engage in external works of charity' (6.1.13).

The *gustos* that led us to this place our now transcended, as we have seen, to allow the fullness of the life of 'action in union'.

Having clearly moved from the intellectual discernment of the earlier mansions much of the rest of these mansions are given over to the question of discernment within the realm of unknowing and the affect. Thus in M: 6. 3 she talks of locutions received, often 'when in darkness of intellect' (M: 6.3.5 *oscuridad del entendimiento*) and how they are to be discerned from God, the devil or 'melancholy' (Teresa's term for what we would now refer to as 'mental illness').

As Teresa points out in M: 6.7.13, the *gustos* of the 'prayer of quiet' are not an end in themselves and although she uses the mystical strategies we have delineated they are for her a 'means to an end', in this case 'the prayer of union' or '*vista*' that she mentions at the beginning of the sixth mansions. These moments of union involve the theological entrance into relation with Christ, the Trinity and the Mother of God. Throughout it all, however, the faculty of the intellect has to be circumvented and the Strategy of Unknowing remains:

> You will ask how if nothing is seen one knows that it is Christ, or a saint, or His most glorious Mother. This, the soul will not know how to explain, nor can it understand how it knows, but it does know with the greatest certitude. (M: 6.8.6.)

Teresa stipulates throughout a 'divine unknowing' – the Dionysian *stulta sapientia* we described in Chapter Five – this, for Teresa, is the 'realm of the supernatural' (see M: 6.9.18). She concludes these extraordinary sixth mansions by suggesting two aspects that remain from the states she has mentioned here: the one is pain, the other is 'overwhelming joy and delight' '*muy excesivo gozo y deleite'* (M 6.11.11). Even through it all, and the discussions of the supernatural unknowing of these states she returns to the epistemology of delight. Although mixed with pain, as we shall see in the seventh mansions, that delight remains to the end, long after the pain has dropped away. The pain

of this union is that which achieves the 'true union' rather than the 'delightful union'. As Howells makes clear (Howells 2003:106/7) this 'true union' – the union with God in the world, is achieved by transcending the *gustos* and so reaching true embodied service in the world. For Teresa, unlike Wittgenstein, this can only be achieved through identification with Christ. At this point we have one of the clearest contrasts between Teresa's approach and Wittgenstein's. Wittgenstein can allow for the possibility of this *Lebensform*, but his job is to provide a vision of it through a *Weltbild.* Teresa, on the other hand, is able to choose the Christian *Weltanschauung* which enables the self to be 'grabbed and turned round' by the passion of union with Christ.[201]

Therefore the final seventh mansions present both the strategy of embodiment/affect combined with the newer 'true union' of action in the world. This, of course, all happens through her theological eyes in union with Christ in Trinitarian perspective.

Thus, at the beginning of the seventh mansions, Teresa repeats her phrase from the first page of the first mansions and reflecting Proverbs, when she states that the soul is the place where 'The Lord finds his delight' *'almas con que tanto se deleita el Señor'* (M: 7.1.1). However, in contrast to the earlier mansions she seems to imply that in this 'spiritual marriage' (*'el matrimonio espiritual'*), as was the case implied with the raptures and the prayer of union in the previous mansions, there is here a passing over of the strategies of affect and unknowing 'for all the faculties are lost'. There is a vision of the Trinity and a 'certain representation of the truth'. At this point Teresa has moved completely into the theological realm – a realm of 'theological' not 'intellectual' knowing. (eg. M :7.3.8, what Howells refers to as the 'mystical knowing' of Teresa, see Howells 2003). It is a time of quiet 'like the building of Solomon's temple when no sound was heard' (M: 7.3.11). 'There is no reason for the intellect to stir or seek anything… the faculties are not lost here, but they do not work, remaining as though in amazement'. The theological content is at its strongest here which fits with Teresa's theological strategy of returning us to Christ through the processes of the *theologia mystica*. Yet, as commentators such as Howells point out (Howells 2003: 117) Teresa must 'work hard' to bridge philosophico-psychological divides in her picture of the self

---

[201] See footnote, p.132

with theological imagery and thought, centred around the resemblance of the self to Christ's own union of two natures – the divine and the human. Needless to say, Wittgenstein's anthropology never moves in this direction and does not have such tensions as these to deal with.

Yet although Teresa insists that the soul has now 'gone beyond delight' she persists in using the language of delight to describe this place: M: 7.3.13 'Here one delights *(se deleita)* in God's tabernacle'. To the end she seems happy to use paradox as a linguistic strategy to *show* rather than *say* what she is trying to express in these last mansions. Yet, as has been stressed repeatedly, for Teresa, the end point of her *theologia mystica* are the 'good works, good works', *'Obras, Obras'* which will enable action in the world:

> This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works...I repeat it is necessary that your foundation consist of more than prayer and contemplation. If you do not strive for virtues and practice them, you will always be dwarfs. (M: 7.4.6)

Weber was right to state that at the heart of the *Moradas* lies an 'erotic spirituality', however, as Teresa makes clear in this final chapter such erotic spirituality, and by implication the strategy of unknowing and concealment, have ultimately, for her, to be directed towards 'good works' and the 'practice of virtues'. This is her means for discerning the authenticity of the spiritual path that has been followed: 'Let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve' (7.4.12).

Yet, despite it all, and though the end of the journey is clearly the creation of good works, twice in the epilogue Teresa exhorts her sisters to 'delight in the castle' (M: Ep1 and 2 *a gozar de esta castillo*). Even though ultimately the strategy of affect must fade away Teresa clearly intends it as a key strategy in bringing her daughters (allied with the strategy of unknowing) to the place of theological union with the Trinity that she herself underwent. She concludes with the reflection of those verses from Genesis and Proverbs

with which she began and which we have seen re-echo throughout the lines of the *Moradas*, forming as it were a counterpoint to the strategy of desire throughout the castle:

> Although no more than seven dwelling places were discussed, in each of these there are many others, below and above and to the sides, with lovely gardens and fountains and labyrinths, such delightful things (*cosas tan deleitosas*) that you would want to be dissolved in praises of the great God who created the soul in His own image and likeness. (M: Ep1)

Teresa's remarkable achievement in the *Moradas* is to blend the linguistic strategies of the *theologia mystica*, to which she was heir, with theological imagery to present a radical proposal of how the Christian should act in the world through 'embodied unknowing' in selfless action. The final result is a sophisticated text which reflects the Wittgensteinian tripos of saying-showing-acting giving the text an unprecedented experiential force in the literature of Western Christian spirituality. In this respect it is a supreme example of *mystical* writing carefully using 'mystical strategies' developed, we have argued, over the previous three hundred years.

8.5 Summary

This chapter has argued that for both Wittgenstein and Teresa 'mystical strategies of unknowing' are accompanied by 'mystical strategies of embodiment/affectivity'. As with the former strategy explored in the previous chapter, this latter strategy has differing aims with respect to both authors. Wittgenstein is employing it to enter into a deeper embodied expression of the *Lebensform.* Sought whilst he is writing the *Tractatus,* we have argued that he only really achieves it, and with it concludes the *Tractatus* with its final 'mystical' paragraphs, through his war experiences of 1916 as recorded in his *Notebooks*. This sense of an 'embodied philosophy' remains with him until the end of his life. Thus, as we saw, in the 'Big Typescript' of 1932 we find him describing the purpose of philosophy as requiring: 'a resignation, but one of feeling and not of intellect' for 'work on philosophy is – as work in architecture frequently is – actually more of a kind of work on oneself. On

one's own conception. On the way one sees things' (PO:161/2). The idea of a disembodied philosophy that does not *engage* us, body, heart, mind and soul, is anathema to Wittgenstein.

For Teresa, on the other hand, embodiment, desire and affect are aspects of the *theologia mystica* which she has received from Osuna and needs to use to convey the correct approach to the spiritual life that she wants to induce in her readers. Her use of subversive and sometimes shocking language is not, as we have argued, to present some form of 'erotic spirituality' (*pace* Weber) as an end in itself, but rather that she sees that *transformational change* can only be achieved in her interlocutor by the 'seizing' of the affect in order to 'turn her around'. The embodied language of *deleites, gozos* and *regales* in the *Moradas,* we have argued, is a deliberate strategy to effect that change in her readers.

In this respect then, this chapter has argued, as the previous one, that both Teresa and Wittgenstein can be said to both be using similar strategies in their desire to 'turn their reader round' in the 'passion of desire'. Both, we have contended here, recognise that 'wisdom is passionless but faith by contrast is a *passion'* and it is exactly to awaken that passion which leads to true wisdom that they adopt the strategies that they do.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

"There is indeed that which is unutterable. This makes itself *manifest*, it is the mystical" (T 6.522) (but not a "bluish haze surrounding things" and giving them an interesting appearance [as Wittgenstein once said in conversation]). (Paul Engelmann in LPE: 98)

> If you and I are to live religious lives, it mustn't be that we talk a lot about religion, but that our manner of life is different. (Wittgenstein to Drury quoted in Rhees 1987: 114)

9.1 Summary

It is now time to draw together the main arguments of the thesis and to highlight its conclusions. We began the dissertation with a quote from Wittgenstein's conversations with Drury and we begin these conclusions with another, together with some recollections of Wittgenstein's friend and fellow architect, Paul Engelmann. Together the two quotes encapsulate some of the key arguments of this dissertation. Namely:

1. That we find in Wittgenstein's writings a method of looking at 'the mystical' by means of employing his essential division between 'saying and showing'. The 'mystical' for Wittgenstein is unutterable, but, it can however *be manifest through showing.*
2. The 'perspicuous view' suggested by Wittgenstein enables us to 'see connections' in discourse as we relate them to a 'form of life'. We shall, in his words, 'see a new aspect'.
3. Consequently, if we look at religious texts and life we are as much concerned with *acting* as with *thinking.* For Wittgenstein, 'a religious form of life' *must* be embedded in action.

At the beginning of the dissertation we posed the dilemma of how the words *mysticism, mystical* and *the mystic* were to be meaningfully employed in academic discourse, especially in relation to the Christian tradition. To this end we reviewed the *use* to which the words had been put, primarily in the last century and argued that an essentialist view of 'the mystical' had arisen that suggested 'the mystical' was an ontological, cross-credal, experientialist category, what we termed 'modern mysticism'. Applying a Wittgensteinian *Blick* we argued that such a 'perspicuous view' frees us from the 'bluish haze' of 'modern mysticism' and allows us to concentrate on *mystical discourse* rather than the 'occult entity' of mysticism. In our analysis of James, Vaughan, Inge and Underhill in Chapter Two we demonstrated how such an 'occult entity' can pervade our talk of the mystical. Whilst reviewing contemporary developments on the academic discourse of 'the mystical' in the same chapter we analysed a 'constructivist approach' from writers such as Katz. This, we suggested, was moving in a more helpful direction, however, as critics like Forman point out, it misses the necessary 'psychological content' of the discourse in its desire to 'make an idol of no idols': in Wittgensteinian terms, it 'says' but does not 'show'. Central to the notion of 'mystical strategy' in this thesis has been the sense of *holding the balance* between saying *and* showing. It has been argued that forms of our approach have been adopted by other writers, notably Sells and Kripal, however, in Chapters Two and Seven we argued for a differing approach from these two writers. In the case of Sells we wanted to distinguish our 'mystical strategy of unknowing' from his 'mystical language of unsaying' as we saw the latter as concentrating more on a theological or theoretical claim to the apophatic nature of God, common, so Sells argues, to medieval Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Our 'mystical strategy of unknowing', on the other hand, was not another theoretical system but a *practical strategy* that led the reader, through methods outlined in Chapter Seven, to a place of greater openness to the transcendent.

On the other hand, we contrasted the 'mystical strategy of embodiment' with Kripal's 'mystical erotics' on the grounds that although the writer analysed in depth here, Teresa of Avila, uses *eros* in her work, it is rather to lead the reader to *embodied action* rather than to the erotic itself (again, as an 'occult entity'). In Chapter Eight we also noted how commentators such as Weber want to find an 'erotic spirituality' in the writings of

Teresa. Rather we interpret Teresa's writings as using a 'strategy of affect or embodiment' to effect a certain transformational change in her reader.

To demonstrate the proposals we examined the writings of Teresa of Avila in Part Two of the thesis. The perspective we took on her writings was as part of a tradition of mystical discourse that we termed the *theologia mystica*. We argued that this form of discourse arose in the Parisian re-appropriation of the writings of Dionysius especially in the Latin commentaries of Victorine writers such as Thomas Gallus. We identified the two 'mystical strategies' of unknowing and embodiment as central to this tradition which has been termed by Rorem amongst others as 'Affective Dionysianism'.

We further argued that this tradition of discourse reaches Teresa through the writings of the *recogido* Franciscan, Francisco de Osuna, whom Teresa had read as a young woman and called 'her master'. We demonstrated in Chapter Six how de Osuna inherited his style of writing from, amongst others, Jean Gerson, and developed an approach to devotion that contrasted what he termed the *theologia mystica* from the *theologia speculativa.*

To illustrate how Teresa employs this *theologia mystica* in her writing we argued that she adopts various 'mystical strategies' to achieve this. In this, we argued, she is working along Wittgensteinian lines by 'showing' as well as 'saying'. At the heart of her texts, we argued, was a strategy of unknowing coupled with a strategy of embodiment. To illustrate how she did this we compared her 'strategies' with Wittgenstein's to show how both use similar strategies to 'do the work' of their texts.

As we have made plain throughout this dissertation, a direct comparison of the two is neither possible nor desirable. Yet, the argument here has been that a study of the Austrian's philosophical approach reveals much of the linguistic strategies of a 'mystical writer' such as Teresa. Not least, that when we approach such a 'mystical writer' we should specifically not be looking for cleanly polished theories and theses. As we have seen, Wittgenstein was concerned throughout his life with a) the boundary of what can be said and what can be shown and b) how he could express this in his writing. As his writing developed he realised increasingly, it has been argued, that for philosophy to lead to action, or as Cavell has called it, 'therapy', it cannot use the traditional methods of theoretical treatises and discourse. Rather, as his later writings show (although as we

argued in Chapters Three and Eight it is also apparent in the early *Tractatus*) the *style* of writing must change to reflect the new purpose or *way of doing philosophy.* Similarly, when we turn to a 'mystical' writer such as Teresa we should not expect a theoretical *Denkweise* but an equally unsystematic and arresting *style* that forces us to reappraise our relation to ourselves, the transcendent and the world around us. This arresting style, we have argued here, is the 'mystical strategy' of the *theologia mystica.* In this respect, we can conclude that Teresa can best be interpreted as a master of 'practical theology' (See Chapter One) whose primary concern is not theoretical speculation on, for example, the nature of the Trinity, but rather provoking *practical transformation* in the lives of her readers. In this, we have argued, she is a true heir to the great Medieval tradition of *theologia mystica.*

Schotter (1996) sees the revolutionary nature of Wittgenstein in the following three aspects:

1. He orientates us to a new task
2. Introduces us to a new set of methods relevant to its pursuit
3. 'Opens up a strange new creative space, a relational space in which we can originate new forms of life, new living connections and relations between aspects of our lives not before noticed'. (Schotter 1996:404)

The argument of this thesis has been that both Wittgenstein and Teresa, by differing but similar means challenge conventional ways of seeing to open up a new 'creative, relational space' where new 'connections and relations between aspects of our lives' can be opened up. Wittgenstein uses the tools of linguistic philosophy to subvert that very genre into a 'new way of seeing', whereas Teresa uses the tools of the venerable tradition of *theologia mystica* to present an equally subversive 'way of looking' that changes our way of viewing, our way of being and ultimately our way of acting in the world. Both of them were unconcerned with generating 'grand theories'. In the case of Wittgenstein his work often explicitly challenges this notion which he sees as being all-pervading in the Western twentieth-century world:

It was true to say that our considerations could not be scientific ones. It was not of any possible interest to us to find out empirically "that contrary to our preconceived ideas, it is possible to think such-and-such" ---- whatever that may mean. (The conception of thought as a gaseous medium.) And we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation* and description alone must take its place. (PI: 109)

Teresa, on the other hand is not concerned with the theorising of the *letrados* and the *theologia speculativa* but rather the 'change of life' that can occur through the *theologia mystica.*

9.2 Family Resemblances

The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to.

The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer being tormented by questions which bring itself into question.

Instead we now demonstrate a method by examples; and one can break off the series of examples.

But more correctly, one should say: Problems are solved (uneasiness//difficulties//eliminated), not a single problem...

- But then we'll never get finished with our work!

Of course// certainly // not, because it doesn't have an end. (PO: 195)

Once you have been shown how to enjoy this castle, you will find rest in everything - even those which give you the most trouble - , with hope you will return to it, which no one can take from you.

Although no more than seven dwelling places were discussed, in each of these there are many others, below and above and to the sides, with lovely gardens and fountains and labyrinths, such delightful things that you would want to be

> dissolved in praises of the great God who created the soul in His own image and likeness. (M: Ep. 2.1)

For Wittgenstein, as we have seen, philosophical problems arise from a certain sense of unease or discomfort about particular propositions, phrases, twists in the fabric of our language:

> The philosopher strives to find the liberating word, that is, the word that finally permits us to grasp what up until now has intangibly weighed down our awareness.
> (It is as if one had a hair on one's tongue; one feels it, but cannot grab it, and therefore cannot get rid of it). (PO: 165)

It was the contention at the beginning of this thesis that the terms: *the mystical, the mystic* and *mysticism* present such an intangible discomfort. They cause problems in use and we tie ourselves up in knots using them. Throughout the thesis we have made a Wittgensteinian case against the following uses of the words:

1. Seeing 'mysticism' as a cross-credal ontological *category* that is somehow *possessed* by a religion such as Christianity.

We have given numerous examples of this, arising, as argued, with people such as James, Underhill, Inge and Vaughan and continuing to be used in this way by many Academics.[202] We have argued that the 'myth' of 'mysticism' as an 'occult entity' arises from an error of our speech. We want to talk about 'it' as an entity and so want to suppose it is a distinctive category. It is however, we have argued, a manner of speaking that can beguile us.

2. To talk about the 'mystical experience'.

Taking the cue from writers such as Lash we have argued that the notion of a discreet 'mystical experience' is equally meaningless. To ascribe an experiential existence to such an entity is likewise an error of the use of our language.

3. To refer to individuals as 'mystics'.

Just as we must be cautious of how we use the terms 'mysticism' and 'mystical experience' we have equally argued that it is meaningless to talk about so-and-so as 'being a mystic'. If the first two categories are empty then this third one is equally so.

Having warned, in Wittgensteinian fashion, against the use of these terms in quasi-ontological fashion we have also wanted to argue against a pure constructivism that removes any process from 'mystical language'. To illustrate the point here we have argued that the 'mystical language game' can best be compared to a Wittgensteinian choreography between 'saying and showing'. From this choreography arises the third necessary aspect of the 'mystical language game' – ethical action in the world.

Applying this approach to Teresa of Avila it has been demonstrated how we can acquire an innovative and original sense of her works which involves seeing them as a language game which is part of the wider 'language game' of the tradition of what we have termed *theologia mystica*. In concentrating on this language game, *pace* the constructivists, we have not wanted to concentrate on 'destroying the idol' of mysticism by 'creating a new idol' of 'no idols' (cf. PO: 171). Rather, in Wittgenstein's approach we have argued that we see the light and shadow of the play of mystical speech as the agent of 'mystic speech' works on the edge of language and meaning.

By necessity this 'mystic speech' will be broken, stammering, un-theoretical and contingent: there is an incompleteness to the 'mystic speech act' which is a necessary part of its existence. Throughout this thesis, in the case of Wittgenstein, Dionysius and

---

[202] See, for example, the following phrase from a recently published book *Mystics of the Christian Tradition* (Fanning 2002:5): 'among the seemingly myriad differences of Christian denominations and the

Teresa, we have had numerous examples of well-meaning translators and executors trying to 'tidy up' the rough and tumble of 'mystic speech'. On the contrary we have argued that this 'broken-down nature' is intrinsic to the very nature of mystic speech. In examining Teresa's writings in this way we hope to have demonstrated that we should not look for perfection and smoothness in those writings. The very coarseness and inconsistency is what makes them alive and gives them the 'passionate intensity' as they grapple with the transcendent.

The other main theme of the thesis has been how the investigation of the Christian tradition of *theologia mystica* throws light on Wittgenstein's own religious search. Rather than bracketing him as a 'modern mystic' (*pace* Sontag) we have argued that this study has demonstrated how his religious faith, or as he put it, his 'religious point of view' can best be understood as belonging to the tradition of *theologia mystica* as 'mystical speech act'. In his use of aporia, unknowing, embodiment and humility he is about the same 'game' as writers such as Teresa to 'turn his reader around' to see the world aright. For Wittgenstein, as we have demonstrated, 'seeing the world aright' is about seeing beyond the dominant Western *Weltanschauung* of positivistic scientism to a *Weltblick* that 'sees connections' within ourselves, those around us and the world we inhabit. Although we do not want to conclude that Wittgenstein is 'a mystic' we want to suggest that Wittgenstein is engaging in the same linguistic strategies – what we term in this thesis 'mystical strategies' – as writers such as Teresa of Avila. In this respect, one of the key arguments of this dissertation has been that one of the central 'family resemblances' between Wittgenstein and Teresa is their shared preoccupation with 'making pictures' to stimulate a 'change of aspect' in our way of seeing and acting in the world. Accordingly we conclude that their writing is fundamentally *transformational* in purpose. As Wittgenstein put it:

> I wanted to put this picture before your eyes, and your *acceptance* of this picture consists in your being inclined to regard a given case differently; that is, to

---

competing claims of the world's faiths, it is in mysticism that they meet on a common ground'.

compare it with *this* series of pictures. I have changed your *Anschauungsweise* (way of viewing). (Z: 461)

9.3 Conclusion

Finally, returning to the original research question:

> Can a new approach to problems of 'the mystical', as expressed in the Christian tradition of medieval 'mystical' writers such as Teresa of Avila, be revealed by adopting an approach based on the philosophical writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein?

We affirm that this is so for the following six reasons:

First, the interpretation of 'Wittgensteinian methodology' based primarily on the notion of the *Übersichtliche Darstellung* ('Clear Overview') and the importance that Wittgenstein gives for a distinction between *Weltanschauung* and *Weltbild* allows us to see 'mystical speech' as essentially a device for enabling the reader to move from Saying to Showing to Acting.

Secondly, mystical speech stands in incomplete relation to the reader allowing the reader to move into the action or space sought by the writer. This we have termed a *performative* strategy, rather than an *informative* one which deliberately does not develop a systematic body of theory or learning. What at first sight appears 'unsystematic and incoherent' (whether in Wittgenstein or Teresa) upon investigation proves to be part of a wider strategy of transformation.

Third, we have argued that this 'performative strategy' of mystical writing is developed in the Western tradition through the re-appropriation of the writing of Dionysius in the twelfth/thirteenth centuries creating a 'mystical tradition' which we term 'theologia mystica'. In particular, we have concentrated on two 'mystical strategies': 'strategies of

unknowing' and 'strategies of affectivity/embodiment'. However, we have also suggested other strategies may be present (eg. a strategy of concealment) which may need further exploration in these writers or other proponents of 'mystical speech'.

Fourth, we have argued that Teresa of Avila receives this method from writers such as de Osuna and finds it is ideally suited to the particular circumstances under which she has to write in the mid sixteenth century.

Fifth, that by comparing the linguistic strategies of Teresa and Wittgenstein to demonstrate how they both reveal these 'mystical strategies' we can see how they both adopt similar strategies for the ends that they wish to achieve. We have highlighted in particular their mystical strategies of unknowing and embodiment.

Finally, for both Teresa and Wittgenstein, we have argued that *affect* is as important as *intellect* for effecting transformational, ethical change in the life of their readers. Their writings can only be understood correctly, we have argued, if they are understood as proposing *affective* as well as *intellective* change in the reader.

The purpose of this thesis has been to generate 'a new aspect' on the 'mystical writing' of Teresa of Avila and, by extension, on the wider Western tradition. Also, that this thesis has demonstrated that it is possible to take an 'agnostic' view towards the 'occult entities' of 'mysticism' without losing the very power and passion of that writing.

In that we contend there is a clear *Sprachspiel* of *theologia mystica* in the Western medieval Christian tradition it is to be expected that similar 'strategies' will be found in many writers of this genre. As well as Dionysius, the Victorines, Gerson, de Osuna and Teresa many other authors, we suggest, will reveal these sort of 'mystical strategies'. In Chapter Six Hugh of Balma was mentioned and his translation into Spanish during the 'Cisnerosian Spring' of the early fifteen hundreds. As part of the research for this thesis we endeavoured to trace the mystical strategies of this work which we found exhibiting the same characteristics outlined here. Lack of space and the need for coherence meant that this material had to be put aside. However it is clear that there is much here that

echoes the main theses and which merits future research and elucidation. Similarly, it was originally hoped that this study would embrace the writings of Teresa's contemporary John of the Cross. This research also had to be put on one side in the interests of coherence and clarity of the central thesis. However, as with de Balma, it is clear that John (who also owes a debt to Osuna) is also using the 'mystical strategies' of unknowing and affectivity for his own purposes. Once again we suggest that this would also merit future research.

The thesis began by locating its discussion within the emerging disciplines of pastoral/practical theology and the academic study of Christian Spirituality. By deliberately taking an engagement between a philosopher and a theologian both known for being 'on the edge' of their disciplines the study has demonstrated how fruitful such a dialogue can be and how the liminal status of a discipline such as the academic study of Christian spirituality will allow such fruitful exchanges to occur.

In conclusion then, we reiterate that by taking the view of a philosopher such as Wittgenstein and applying it to a 'practical theologian' such as Teresa new avenues are revealed for elucidating a discourse that may at first sight be perplexing or confusing. By these means a 'strategy' such as the 'mystical strategy' described here is clarified and revealed in its ingenuity and appropriateness for the task of bringing about affective transformation in the reader.

Bibliography

Primary Texts

Ludwig Wittgenstein

AS 'Some Remarks on Logical Form' in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society.* Supp. Vol 9, 1929

BB *The Blue and Brown Books.* Oxford: Blackwell. 1958

BEE *Wittgenstein's Nachlass*: *The Bergen Electronic Edition.* Oxford: OUP, 2000

BT *The Big Typescript – TS213: German-English Scholar's Edition.* Ed C. Grant-Luckhardt and M. E. Aue. London: Wiley Blackwell, 2005

BW *Briefe, Briefwechsel mit B Russell, G. E. Moore, J.M.Keynes, F.P.Ramsey, W. Eccles, P. Engelmann and L von Ficker,* ed McGuinness and von Wright. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980

CLA *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1932 – 1935, from the Notes of Alice Ambrose and Margaret Macdonald.* ed A. Ambrose. Chicago: Chicago University Press. 1979

CLL *Wittgenstein's Lectures: Cambridge 1930 -1932, from the Notes of John King and Desmond Lee.* ed D Lee. Oxford: Blackwell, 1980

CV *Culture and Value.*ed G. von Wright and H. Nyman. Oxford: Blackwell.1980

GT *Geheime Tagebücher 1914 -1916*, ed W Baum, Vienna: Turia and Kant, 1992

LC *Lectures and Conversatons on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief.* Ed C. Barrett. Oxford: Blackwell 1989

LF *Letters to Ludwig von Ficker* in 'Wittgenstein: Sources and Perspectives' ed C.G.Luckhardt. London: Harvester 1979

LO *Letters to E.K.Ogden with an Appendix of Letters by Frank Plumpton Ramsey.* Ed G. H. von Wright. Oxford: Blackwell, 1973

LPE *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir by Paul Engelmann.* Ed B. McGuinness. Oxford: Blackwell. 1967

LPP *Lectures on Philosophical Psychology 1946 – 47. From the Notes of P. Geach, K.Shah and A. Jackson.* Ed P. Geach. London: Harvester. 1988

LR *Letters to Russell, Keynes and Moore*.ed von Wright and McGuinness. Oxford: Blackwell 1974

NB *Notebooks 1914 – 1916.* trans G. E. M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell

OC *On Certainty.* Ed G.E.M Anscombe and G.H.von Wright. Oxford, Blackwell. 1969

PG *Philosophical Grammar.* Ed R. Rhees. Oxford, Blackwell. 1974

PI *Philosophical Investigations.* Ed G.E.M. Anscombe and R. Rhees. Oxford, Blackwell. 1958

PO *Philosophical Occasions 1912 – 1951* ed Klagge and Nordmann. Cambridge: Hackett, 1993

PR *Philosophical Remarks.*Ed. R.Rhees. Oxford: Blackwell, 1975

RC *Remarks on Colour*, ed Anscombe, G.; trans McAlister, L. and Schättle, M. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977

RFGB *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough,* reprinted in 'Philosophical Occasions 1912 – 1951' ed Klagge and Nordmann. Cambridge: Hackett. 1993

RPP1 *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology, Vol I.* ed G. Anscombe and G. von Wright. Oxford: Blackwell. 1982

RPP2 *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Vol II.* ed G. von Wright and H. Nyman. Oxford: Blackwell. 1980

T *Tractatus Logico-Philsophicus.*trans D. F.Pears and B. McGuinness. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1961

VB *Vermischte Bemerkungen* in Volume 8: *Werkausgabe in 8 Bände,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp. 1993

W *Werkausgabe in 8 Bände,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp. 1993

WA *Wiener Ausgabe,* ed Nedo, M., Vienna: Springer Verlag, 1993 -

WB *Wőrterbuch für Volks- und Bűrgerschulen.* Vienna: Hőlder-Pichler-Tempsky

Z *Zettel.* Ed G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von Wright. Oxford, Blackwell. 1967

Teresa of Avila

Obras Completas de Santa Teresa de Jésus ed Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink , 9th ed. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1997

Santa Teresa Obras Completas. Ed T Alvarez, 10th ed. Burgos: Editorial Monte Carmelo, 1998

The Collected Works of St Teresa of Avila. Trans K. Kavanaugh and O. Rodriguez. 3 Vols. Vol. 1: 2nd ed.; Vols 2 & 3; 1st ed. Washington: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1980 -87 (Kavanaugh and Rodriguez CW)

The Complete Works of St Teresa of Jesus. Trans by E. Allison Peers. 3 vols. London: Sheed and Ward, 1946 (Peers CW)

The Way of Perfection. Trans by the Benedictines of Stanbrook. London: Thomas Baker, 1925

The Interior Castle or The Mansions. Trans by a Benedictine of Stanbrook. London: Thomas Baker, 1930

Abbreviations

C =	*Meditaciones del amor de Dios*
CE=	*Camino,* Escorial Codex
CV =	*Camino,* Valladolid Codex
CT =	*Camino,* Toledo Codex
Exc=	*Exclamaciones*
M =	*Las Moradas*
V =	*El Libro de La Vida*

Other Primary Texts

Dionysius

Corpus Dionysiacum edited by Suchla, Heil and Ritter. Berlin 1990.

Dionysiaca: Recueil donnat L'ensemble des traditions latines des ouvrages attributes au Denys de l'Aréopage. ed M. Chevalier. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer. 1937 -50

Opera Veteris ac novae translationis cum Hugonis, Alberti, Thomae et aliorum. Strassbourg 1502 (Salisbury Cathedral A 5.8, 1502)

A Thirteenth-Century Textbook of Mystical Theology at the University of Paris. The *Mystical Theology* of Dionysius the Areopagite in Eriugena's Latin Translation with the Scholia translated by Anastasius the Librarian and Excerpts from Eriugena's *Periphyseon.* Ed and Trans by L. M. Harrington. Paris: Peeters. 2004

Mystical Theology: The Glosses by Thomas Gallus and the Commentary of Robert Grosseteste on De Mystica Theologia. Ed and Trans by J. McEvoy. Paris: Peeters. 2003

Pseudo-Dionysius:The Complete Works trans C. Luibheid and P. Rorem. New York:Paulist. 1987

Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names and Mystical Theology and *Denis Hid Divinity* edited by McCann. London: Burns and Oates. 1924

Jean Gerson

Ioannis Carlerii de Gerson De Mystica Theologia. Ed A Combes. Lugano: Thesaurus Mundi. 1958

Jean Gerson: Early Works. Trans B McGuire. New York: Paulist. 1998

De Theologia mystica. Unpublished translation by B. McGuire. Made available by permission of the translator.

Francisco de Osuna

Tercer Abecedario Espiritual de Francisco de Osuna, ed. S. López Santidrián. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos. 1998

Francisco de Osuna: The Third Spiritual Alphabet Trans M. Giles. New York: Paulist. 1981

Hugh of Balma

de Balma, Hugues, *Théologie Mystique,* trans F. Ruello. Paris: Editions du Cerf. 1995

Others

Scripture Quotations from the *New Revised Standard Version.* London: Harper. 2007

The Cloud of Unknowing, Anonymous ed JJ Walsh. New York: Paulist. 1981

Denis Hid Divinity by the Anonymous Author of *The Cloud of Unknowing.* ed JJ Walsh in *The Pursuit of Wisdom* . New York: Paulist. 1988

*The Cloud of Unknowing : together with The epistle of privy counsel by an English mystic of the XIVth century.*Ed J. McCann. London : Burn & Oates, 1964.

Inge, W. R. *Christian Mysticism.* London: Methuen and Co. 1899

Luther, M. *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe.* Weimar Edition, 60 vols. Ed G. Ebeling and H. Schilling. Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger. 1980.

Underhill, E., (1907), A Defence of Magic, in *The Fortnightly Review,* Vol LXXXII, July-Dec 1907. London: Chapman and Hall

(1910), *Mysticism: The Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness.* 12th Ed 1930, reprinted 1993 Oxford: Oneworld

(1943), *The Letters of Evelyn Underhill,* ed with introduction by C Williams. London: Longman, Green and Co.

Vaughan R.A. (1858), *Essays and Remains of the Revd Robert Alfred Vaughan edited with a memoir by the Revd Robert Vaughan.* London: John W Parker and Son

(1856), *Hours with the Mystics: A Contribution to the History of Religious Opinion.* 3rd ed. 1895, London: Gibbings and Co

Other Abbreviations

CM = *Christian Mysticism,* W. R. Inge

***Dion* =** *Dionysiaca*

DM = *A Defence of Magic,* Evelyn Underhill

DN = *On the Divine Names*, Dionysius

DS = *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascétique et Mystique Doctrine et Histoire*. Eds M. Viller, F. Cavallera, J de Guibert, A. Rayez, A Derville, P.Lamarche, A. Solignac. 1937 – . Paris: Beauchesne

GMT = *De Mistica Theologia,* Jean Gerson

HM = *Hours with the Mystics,* Robert Vaughan

MT = *De Mistica Theologia,* Dionysius

PG = *Patrologiae Cursus Completus:* Series Graeca. Ed by J.-P. Migne. Paris 1857-66. 161 volumes

PL = *Patrologiae Cursus Completus.* Series Latina. Ed by J.-P. Migne, Paris 1844 - 64. 221 volumes.

TA = *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual,* Francisco de Osuna

UM = *Mysticism,* Evelyn Underhill

VSL = *Viae Lugent Sion,* Hugh of Balma

Secondary Works

Adams, H. (1784) *Dictionary of All Religions and Religious Denominations, Jewish, Heathen, Mahometan, and Christian, Ancient and Modern.* New York: Eastburn

Ahlren, G. (1996), *Teresa of Avila and the Politics of Sanctity.* Ithaca: Cornell UP

Allison Peers, E. (1953), 'Saint Teresa's Style: A Tentative Appraisal' in *Saint Teresa of Jesus and Other Essays and Addresses.* London: Faber and Faber

Almond, P. (1988) *The British Discovery of Buddhism.* Cambridge: CUP

Andrés Martín, M. (1975), *Los Recogidos: Nueva Vision de la Mistica Española (1500 – 1700),* Madrid: Fundacion Universitaria Española, Seminario 'Suarez'.

(1976) *La teología española en el siglo XVI.* Madrid: Biblioteca de autores cristianos

(1982) *Osuna (François de)* in *DS,* pp 1037 – 1051

Antonio Marco, J. (1997), 'Recurrencias y Concatenadores: La Cohesión en el Discurso

Teresiano' in *La Recepción de los Místicos Teresa de Jesüs y Juan de la Cruz'* ed R. Gancia. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Pontificia

Armstrong, C.J.R. (1975), *Evelyn Underhill (1875 –1941). An Introduction to Her Life and Writings.* London: Mowbrays.

Arrington, R. (2004), *Wittgenstein and Philosophy of Religion.* London: Routledge. and Addis, M (ed)

Astigarraga, J.L. (2000), *Concordancias de los Escritos de Santa Teresa de Jesus.* Rome: Editoriales OCD

Astley, J. (2002) *Ordinary Theology: Looking, Listening and Learning in Theology.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Ballard, P. and Pritchard, J. (2006), *Practical Theology in Action.* London: SPCK

Barnard, G.W. and Kripal, J.J.,(ed) (2002), *Crossing Boundaries:Essays on the Ethical Status of Mysticism.* New York: Seven Bridges

Barrett, C. (1991) *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief.* Oxford: Blackwell

Bataillon, M. (1982) *Erasmo y España*, Mexico: Fondo de cultura económica

Bell, D.N. (1978) 'Love and Charity in the Commentary on the *Song of Songs* of Thomas the Cistercian' in *Citeaux* 29 (1978)

Blount, T. (1656), *Glossographia: Or, A Dictionary, Interpreting All Such Hard Words, Whether Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, Teutonick, Belgick, British or Saxon; As Are Now Use in Our*

Refined English Tongue. Also the Terms of Divinity, Law, Physick, Mathematicks, Heraldy, Anatomy, War, Musick, Architecture; and of Several Other Arts and Sciences Explicated, with Etymologies, Definitions, and Historical Observations on the Same. London: Newcomb.

Bonnard, F. (1907) *Histoire de L'abbaye Royale et de L'ordre Des Chanoines Régulaires de St-Victor de Paris.* Paris

Bouveresse, J. (1995) *Wittgenstein Reads Freud: The Myth of the Unconscious.* Trans C. Cosman. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP

Butler, C. (1926), *Western Mysticism. The Teaching of Augustine, Gregory and Bernard on Contemplation and the Contemplative Life.* 2nd edition with Afterthoughts, republished in 2001. Oregon: Wipf and Stock

Carr, W. (2002) *Handbook of Pastoral Studies.* London: SPCK

Callus, D.A. (1947) 'The Date of Grosseteste's Translations and Commentaries on Pseudo-Dionysius and the *Nichomachean Ethics*' in *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale'* 14 (1947), pp 186 -209

Campbell, A. (1997) 'The Nature of Practical Theology' in Woodward, J and Pattison, S. (2007), *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell

Carlson, T.A. (1991) Transcending Negation: The Causal Nothing and Ecstatic Being in Pseudo-Dionysius's Theology in *Indiscretion:*

Finitude and the Naming of God. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Carrette, J. and R.King (2005) *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion.* London: Routledge.

Cavell, S. (1976) *Must We Mean What We Say?* Oxford: OUP

(1979) *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality and Tragedy.* Oxford: OUP

Chambers, E. (1751 – 52) *Cyclopeadia: Or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences.* 2 vols. London: Innys

Chase, S. (2003) *Contemplation and Compassion: The Victorine Tradition.* London: DLT

Chatterjee, R. (2005), *Wittgenstein and Judaism: A Triumph of Concealment.* New York: Peter Lang

Chevallier, P. (1957) 'Influence du Pseudo-Denys en Occident' in DS III, pp318 - 323

Chorpenning, J.(1979)'The Literary and Theological Method of *The Interior Castle'* in *Journal of Hispanic Philology* 3 (1979) pp. 121 - 133

Cioffi, F. (1969) 'Wittgenstein's Freud' in *Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein,* ed P. Winch. London: Routledge

Clack, B. (1999a), *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Religion.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

(1999b), *Wittgenstein, Frazer and Religion.* London: Macmillan

Coventry, H. (1761) *Philemon to Hydapses: Or, the History of False Religion in the Earlier Pagan World, Related in a Series of Conversations.* Glasgow: Urie

Crary, A. and Read, R. (2000), *The New Wittgenstein.* London: Routledge.

Cropper, M. (1958), *Evelyn Underhill: with a memoir of Lucy Menzies by Lumsden Barkway.* London: Longmans.

Cupitt, D. (1987) *The Long Legged Fly: A Theology of Language and Desire.* London: SCM

(1998). *Mysticism after Modernity.* Oxford: Blackwell

de Bujanda (ed)(1984) *Index de L'Inquisition Espagnole 1551,1554,1559/Index des Livres Interdit, Vol 6.* Geneve

de Certeau, M. (1992), *The Mystic Fable: Vol One, The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.* (trans Smith). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Diamond, C. (2001) *The Realistic Spirit: Wittgenstein, Philosophy and the Mind.* Cambridge, Mass. MIT

Dolejšová, I. (2001) *Accounts of Hope: A Problem of Method in Postmodern Apologia.* Oxford: Peter Lang

Dondaine, H. (1953) *Le Corpus dionysien de l'université de Paris au XIIIe siècle.* Rome: Edizioni di Storia et Letteratura

Drury, M. (1973) *The Danger of Words.* London: Routledge

Dubourg, P. (1927) 'La Date de la *Theologia Mystica*' in *Revue d'ascetique et de mystique* 8 (1927), pp 156-61

Dumeige, G. (1952) *Richard de Saint-Victor et l'idée chrétienne de l'amour.* Paris

Dummett, M. (1991) *The Logical Basis of Metaphysics.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press

Encyclopaedia Brittanica (1797). 'Mystics', vol 12:598, Edinburgh: A. Bell and C. Macfarquhar.
(1858), 'Mysticism', vol 15:755-758, Boston: Little, Brown

Endean, P. (2004) *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality.* Oxford: OUP

Evans, D. (1989) 'Can Philosopher's Limit what Mystics can do? A Critique of Steven Katz' in *Religious Studies,* 25,1

Fann, K.T. (1969) *Wittgenstein's Conception of Philosophy.* Oxford: Blackwell

Fanning, S. (2002) *Mystics of the Christian Tradition.* London: Routledge

Ferrer, J.N. (2001) 'Toward a Participatory Vision of Human Spirituality' in *ReVision* Vol 24:2
(2002) *Revisioning Transpersonal Theory – A Participatory Vision of Human Spirituality.* New York: SUNY
(2003) Integral Transformative Practice: A Participatory Perspective in *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology.* Vol 35:1

Flasche, H. (1983) 'El Problema de la Certeza en el 'Castillo Interior'' in *Actas de*

Congreso Internacional Teresiano ed T. Egido Martínez, V García de la Concha and O. Gonzalez de Caredal. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca

Forman, R. (1990) *The Problem of Pure Consciousness.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

ed (1998) *The Innate Capacity: Mysticism, Psychology and Philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Fox, A. (1960) *Dean Inge.* London: Murray

Frothingham, O. (1891) *Recollections and Impressions,* New York: Putnam's Sons.

Gadamer, H-G. (1990) *Truth and Method (2nd Ed),* (Weinsheimer and Marshall Trans). New York: Crossroad.

Gagey, H. (2007) The Project of Pastoral Theology'. Unpublished paper given at Heythrop Conference: 'Theology for Church and Society: Developing Resources' University of London, November 2007

García de la Concha, V. (1978), *El arte literario de Santa Teresa.* Barcelona: Ariel

Genova, J. (1995) *Wittgenstein: A Way of Seeing.* London: Routledge.

Gilbert, R.A. (1983) *The Golden Dawn. Twilight of the Magicians.* Wellingborough: Aquarian Press

Gimello, R.M. (1983) 'Mysticism in its Contexts' in Katz (ed), *Mysticism and Religious Traditions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

(1990) 'Remarks on the Future Study of Mysticism', unpublished manuscript presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 1990, cited *in Herman 2000:99*

Graham, E. (2007) 'Practical Theology as Transforming Practice' in Woodward, J and Pattison, S. (2007), *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell

Green, D. (1989) *Gold in the Crucible: Teresa of Avila and the Western Mystical Tradition.* Shaftesbury: Element

Greene, D. (1991) *Evelyn Underhill: Artist of the Infinite Life.* London: DLT
(1988) *Evelyn Underhill: Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy.* Ed with introduction. New York: SUNY
(2004) Article in *Dictionary of National Biography.* Oxford: OUP

Grimley, M. (2004) 'William Ralph Inge' in *The Dictionary of National Biography, pp 241 – 243.* Oxford: OUP

Guinan, P.A. (1994) *Carthusian Prayer and Hugh of Balma's Viae Sion Lugent.* San Francisco: Catholic Scholar's Press

Habermas, J. (1971) *Knowledge and Human Interest* (Shapiro, Trans). Boston: Beacon Press

Hacker, P.M.S. (2001) *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies.* Oxford: Clarendon

Halbfass, W. (1988) *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding.* Albany: SUNY Press

Hamilton, A. (1992) *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth Century Spain: the Alumbrados,* Cambridge: James Clarke

Harrington, L. (2004) *The Mystical Theology of Dionysius the Areopagite in Eriugena's Latin Translation with the Scholia translated by Anastasius the Librarian and Excerpts from Eriugena's Periphyseon.* Paris: Peeters

Harris, H. and Insole, C. (2005) *Faith and Philosophical Analysis: The Impact of Analytical Philosophy on the Philosophy of Religion.* Aldershot: Ashgate

Hartley, T. (1764) *Paradise Restored: Or, a Testimony to the Doctrine of the Blessed Millennium with Some Considerations on it Approaching Advent from the Signs of the Times to which is added, A Short Defence of the Mystical* London, Richardson.

Haskins, C.H. (1957) *The Renaissance of the 12th Century.* New York: Meridian

Hauerwas, S. (1983) *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics.* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press

(2004) 'Aquinas, Preller, Wittgenstein and Hopkins' in *Grammar and Grace: Reformulations of Aquinas and Wittgenstein* ed J. Stout and R MacSwain. London: SCM

Heiler, F. (1932) *Prayer: A Study in the History and Psychology of Religion.* (Trans: McComb). London: Oxford University Press

Herman, J.R. (2000) 'The Contextual Illusion: comparative mysticism and postmodernism' in Patton K.C and Ray B. C (eds), *A Magic*

Still Dwells: Comparative Religion in a Postmodern Age. Berkeley: University of California Press

Hertz, H. (1957) *Principles of Mechanics,* trans D. Jones and J. Walley. New York: Dover

Hosseini, M. (2007) *Wittgenstein und Weisheit.* Stuttgart: Kohlhammer

Howells, E. (2002) *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila: Mystical Knowing and Selfhood.* New York: Herder and Herder

Hutto, D. (2003) *Wittgenstein and the End of Philosophy: Neither Theory nor Therapy.* London: Macmillan

Huxley, A. (1946) *The Perennial Philosophy.* London: Chatto and Windus

Insole, C. (2006) *The Realist Hope: A Critique of Anti-Realist Approaches in Contemporary Philosophical Theology.* Aldershot: Ashgate

James, W. (1895) *The Will to Believe and other Essays in Popular Philosophy.* London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1912

(1902) *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature.* London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1928

Jaenke, K. (2004) The Participatory Turn: Review of Jorge N Ferrer, Revisioning Transpersonal Theory: A Participatory View of Human Spirituality in *ReVision* Vol 26:4

Jantzen, G. (1995) *Power, gender and Christian mysticism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jarman, D. (1993) *This is not a film of Ludwig Wittgenstein* in *Wittgenstein: The Terry Eagleton Script, The Derek Jarman Film.* London: BFI

Javelet, R. (1962) 'Thomas Gallus et Richard de Saint-Victor mystiques.' in *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 29/30. 1962/1963

Jones, R.M. (1914) *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries.* London: Macmillan

Kallenberg, B. (2001) *Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject.* Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press

Kamen, H. (1997) *The Spanish Inquisition,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson,

Katz, S. (1978) Language, Epistemology and Mysticism in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis* ed Katz. London: Sheldon.

Ed.(1978) *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis* London: Sheldon.

(1983) *Mysticism and Religious Traditions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

(1992) *Mysticism and Language.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Kerr, F. (1982) 'Wittgenstein and Theological Studies' in *New Blackfriars,* Vol 63, Dec 1982

(1983) 'Stories of the Soul' in *New Blackfriars* Vol 64, March 1983

(1984) 'The Need for Philosophy in Theology Today' in *New Blackfriars,* Vol 65, June 1984

(1986,1997) *Theology after Wittgenstein.* Oxford:Blackwell

(1987) 'Charity as Friendship' in Language, Meaning and God: Essays in Honour of Herbert McCabe OP. ed B Davis. London: Chapman.

(2008) *Work on Oneself: Wittgenstein's Philosophical Psychology.* Arlington, Virginia: The Institute for Psychological Sciences Press

Kierkegaard, S. (1992) *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to the Philosophical Fragments.* Trans H and E Hong. Princeton: Princeton University Press

King, R. (1999) *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and the 'Mystic East'.* London: Routledge

King, U. (1985) *Indian Spirituality and Western Materialism,* in Ideas For Action, No1. Delhi: India Social Institute

Klagge, J. (2001) *Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy.* Cambridge: CUP

Knowles,M.D. (1962) *The Evolution of Medieval Thought.* London: Longmans

(1975) 'The Influence of Pseudo-Dionysios on Western Mysticism' in *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp,* ed P. Brooks. London: SCM

Koch, A. (1895) 'Proklus als Quelle des Ps-Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre von Bösen' in *Philologus,* 54/1, pp 438-54

Kottman, K. (1972) *Law and Apocalypse: The Moral Thought of Luis de Léon.* The Hague: Nijhoff

Kripal, J.J. (1995) *Kali's Child: The Mystical and the Erotic in the Life and Teachings of Ramakrishna.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

(2001) *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom: Eroticism and Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

(2004) Comparative Mystics: Scholars as Gnostic Diplomats in *Common Knowledge*, volume 10, issue 3 (Fall 2004).

Laguardia, G. (1980) 'Santa Teresa and the Problem of Desire' in *Hispania*, Vol 63, 1980:3

Lartey, E. (2007) 'Practical Theology as Theological Form' in Woodward, J and Pattison, S. (2007), *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell

Lash, N. (1988) *Easter in Ordinary: Reflections on Human Experience and the Knowledge of God.* London. University of Notre Dame Press

Laurant, J-P. (1992) The Primitive Characteristics of Nineteenth-Century Esotericism in *Modern Esoteric Spirituality,* ed Faivre and Needleman. London: SCM

Levinson, H.S. (1981) *The Religious Investigations of William James,* University of North Carolina Press

Levy, D. (1996) *Freud Among the Philosophers.* New Haven: Yale University Press

Llamas Martínez (1972) *Santa Teresa de Jesüs y la Inquisicion española.* Madrid: CSIC

Llorca, B. (1980) *La Inquisición española y los alumbrados (1509 – 1667)* Salamanca: Universidad Pontíficia

López Santidrián, S. (1998) Introduction to *Tercer Abecedario of Francisco de Osuna.* Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Christianos

Loughlin, G. (2007) *Queer Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell

Louth, A. (1989) *Denys the Areopagite,* London: Geoffrey Chapman

Malcolm, N. (1993), *Wittgenstein: A Religious Point of View?* London: Routledge
(2001) *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir.* Oxford: Clarendon

Márquez, A. (1980) *Los alumbrados: orígenes y filosofía (1525 –1559),* Madrid: Taurus

Matter, E.A. (1990) *The Voice of My Beloved:The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity.* Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

McCutcheon, F. (2001) *Religion Within the Limits of Language Alone: Wittgenstein on Philosophy and Religion.* Aldershot: Ashgate

McEvoy, J. (2000) *Robert Grosseteste.* Oxford: Oxford University Press
(2003) *Mystical Theology: The Glosses of Thomas Gallus and the Commentary of Robert Grosseteste on De Mystica Theologia.* Ed with introduction. Paris: Peeters

McGinn, B. (1989) 'Love, Knowledge and *Unio Mystica* in the Western Christian Tradition' in *Mystical Union in Judaism, Christianity and Islam: An Ecumenical Dialogue.* ed Idel and McGinn. New York: Continuum
(1993) The Letter and the Spirit: Spirituality as an Academic Discipline, *Christian Spirituality Bulletin. 1(2),1-10*
(1991) *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism. Vol I: The Foundations of Mysticism.* London SCM
(1994) *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism. Vol 2: Gregory the Great through the Twelfth Century.* London:

SCM

(1995) 'God as Eros: Metaphysical Foundations of Christian Mysticism' in *New Perspectives on Historical Theology: Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff* ed B Nassif. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

(1998a) *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism. Vol 3: The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism, 1200 – 1350.* London SCM

(1998b)'Quo Vadis? Reflections on the current study of mysticism' in *Christian Spirituality Bulletin* 6, no1 (1998), pp 13 – 21

(1998c)'Thomas Gallus and Dionysian Mysticism' in *Studies in Spirituality* 8/1998

(2005) *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism. Vol 4: The Harvest of Mysticism in Medieval Germany.*New York: Herder and Herder

(2005a) *Mysticism* in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality.* Ed P. Sheldrake. London: SCM

McGuinness, B. (1988) *Wittgenstein: A Life. The Young Ludwig (1889 – 1921).* London: Penguin

(2001) 'Wittgenstein and the Idea of Jewishness' in Klagge (ed) *Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy.* Cambridge, CUP

(2002) *Approaches to Wittgenstein.*London: Routledge

McIntosh, M. (1998) *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell

Menéndez Pidal, R. (1942) ' El estilo de Santa Teresa' in *La lengua de Cristobál Colón* Buenos Aires: Espasa

Milner, V. (1872) *Religious Denominations of the World,* Philadelphia:Bradley, Garretson

Monk, R. (1990) *Ludwig Wittgenstein – The Duty of Genius.* London: Jonathon Cape

Moore, G. (1996) *Believing in God: A Philosophical Essay.* Edinburgh: T and T Clarke

Morris, C. (1972) *The Discovery of the Individual 1050 –1200.* London: SPCK

Moyal-Sharrock, D. (ed), (2004) *The Third Wittgenstein: The Post-Investigations Works.* London: Ashgate

Neil, B. (1998) *Anastasius Bibliothecarius' Latin Translation of Greek Documents Pertaining to the Life of Maximus the Confessor.* Ann Arbor: UMI

Nedo, M., Moreton, G. Finlay, A. (2005) *Ludwig Wittgenstein: There Where You Are Not.* London: Black Dog

Nielsen, K. (1967) 'Wittgensteinian Fideism' in *Philosophy,* July 1967

Nygren, A. (1957) *Agape and Eros: A Study of the Christian Idea of Love.* trans P. Watson. London: SPCK

Otto, R. (1957) *Mysticism East and West,* New York: Kessinger

Palmer, E.H. (1867) *Oriental Mysticism: A treatise on the Sufistic and Unitarian theology of the Persians compiled from native sources with a dedication to Napoleon III.* Cambridge:Deighton, Bell and Co

Pears, D.F. (1988) *The False Prison: A Study of the Development of Wittgenstein's Philosophy.* 2 Vols. Oxford: Clarendon.

Peterman, J. (1992) *Philosophy as Therapy: An Interpretation and Defense of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophical Project.* New York: SUNY Press

Phillips, D.Z. (1965) *The Concept of Prayer.* London: Routledge

(1976) *Religion without Explanation.* Oxford: Blackwell

(1986) *Belief, Change and Forms of Life.* London: Macmillan

(1988) *Faith after Foundationalism,* London: Routledge

(1993) *Wittgenstein and Religion,* London: Macmillan

Ed.(1997) *Rush Rhees on Religion and Philosophy,* Cambridge: CUP

(2001) *Religion and the Hermeneutics of Contemplation,* Cambridge: CUP

Pike, N. (1978) 'On Mystic Visions as Sources of Knowledge' in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis ed* Katz. London: Sheldon.

Pound, M. (2007) *Theology, Psychoanalysis, Trauma.* London: SCM

Rhees, R. ed (1981) *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections.* Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield.

(1987) *Recollections of Wittgenstein.* Oxford: Oxford Paperback

Ricoeur, P. (1970) *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation.* Trans D. Savage. New Haven: Yale University Press

(1984) *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning.* Fort Worth: Texas: Texas Christian University Press.

Rivers, E. (1984) 'The Vernacular Mind of St Teresa' in *Carmelite Studies*, 1984. Washington: ICS

Rorem, P. (1982) 'Iamblichus and the Anagogical Method in Pseudo-Dionysian Liturgical Theology' in *Studia Patristica*, vol 18 ed Livingstone. Oxford: Pergamon

(1993) *Pseudo-Dionysius. A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their Influence.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Rorty, R. (1979) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature.* Princeton: Princeton UP

(1982) *Consequences of Pragmatism (Essays 1972 – 1980),* Brighton: Harvester

Rothberg, D. (1986) Philosophical Foundations of Transpersonal Psychology: An Introduction to Some Basic Issues. in *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology.* Vol 18:1.

(1994) Spiritual Inquiry in *ReVision,* Vol 17, 2, Fall 1994

(1996) Ken Wilber and Contemporary Transpersonal Inquiry: An Introduction to the *ReVision* Conversation in *ReVision* Vol 18:4

Rowe, W. and Wainwright, W. ed (1998) *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings.* Fortworth: Harcourt Brace.

Ruello, R. (1981) 'Statut et rôle de l'intellectus et de l'affectus dans la Théologie Mystique de Hughes de Balma' in *Kartäusermystik u mystiker,* Vol 1, Analecta Cartusiana, 55.1. Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik u Amerikanistik.

Saffrey, H.D. (1979) 'Nouveaux liens objectifs entre le Ps-Denys et Proclus' in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 63(1979), pp.3 - 16

Said, E. (1978) *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient.* Reprinted in Penguin, 1995, London.

Sass, L. (2001) 'Deep Disquietudes: Reflections on Wittgenstein as Antiphilosopher' in *Wittgenstein, Biography and Philosophy* ed Klagge, J.C. Cambridge: CUP

Savickey, B. (1998) 'Wittgenstein's *Nachlass'* in *Philosophical Investigations* 21:4, October 1998

Schotter, J. (1996) 'Now I Can Go On: Wittgenstein and Our Embodied Embeddedness in the Hurly-Burly of Life' in *Human Studies*, 19, 1996, pp 385 - 407

(1997) 'Wittgenstein in Practice: From 'The Way of Theory' to a 'Social Poetics'' in Tolman, Cherry, van Hezewijk and Lubek (eds), *Problems of Theoretical Psychology.* York, Ontario: Captus Press

Schreiter, R. (2007) *Pastoral Theology as Contextual.* Unpublished paper given at Heythrop Conference: 'Theology for Church and Society: Developing Resources' University of London, November 2007

Sedgwick, M. (2004) *Against the Modern World: Traditionalism and the Secret Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century.* Oxford: OUP

Sells, M. A. (1993) 'From a History of Mysticism to a Theology of Mysticism' in *The Journal of Religion.* Vol 73:3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

(1994) *Mystical Languages of Unsaying.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Sheldrake, P. (1991) *Spirituality and History: Questions of Interpretation and Method.* London: SPCK

(1994) Review of McGinn *The Foundations of Mysticism:Origins to the Fifth Century* in *The Heythrop Journal,* Jan 1994, pp 76 -78

(1996) Review of McGinn *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism, Vol II: the Growth of Mysticism* in *The Heythrop Journal,* April 1996, pp 227 - 228

(1998) *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd

Slade, C. (1986) 'Saint Teresa's *Meditaciones Sobre Los Cantares*: The Hermeneutics of Humility and Enjoyment in *Religion and Literature.* 1986, Vol 18:1

Smart, N. (1958) *Reasons and Faiths.An Investigation of Religious Discourse: Christian and Non-Christian.* London: Routledge.

(1962) 'Mystical Experience' in *Sophia,* 1:19-25

(1967) 'Mystical Experience' in *Art, Mind and Religion* ed Capitan and Merrill: Pittsburgh

(1978) Understanding Religious Experience in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* ed Katz, London: Sheldon

Smith, JE. (1983) *William James's Account of Mysticism; A Critical Appraisal* in 'Mysticism and Religious Traditions' ed S. Katz, Oxford: OUP

Smitheran, L.H.(1997)'Santa Teresa y la 'Noche Oscura del Alma' in *La Recepción de los Místicos Teresa de Jesüs y Juan de la Cruz'* ed R. Gancia. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Pontificia

Solignac, A. (1988) 'Sarrazin (Jean), traducteur du Pseudo-Denys' in DS, Fas XCI, pp.351 -355

Sontag, F. (2000) *Wittgenstein and the Mystical: Philosophy as an Ascetic Practice.* Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press

Sorell, T. (1991) *Scientism.* New York: Routledge

Spengler, O. (1923) *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte.* Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlag
(1926) *The Decline of the West: Form and Actuality.* Trans C. F. Atkinson. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Stace, W.T. (1960) *Mysticism and Philosophy.* Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott

Stern, D. (1996) 'The Availability of Wittgenstein's Philosophy' in *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*, ed H. Sluga and D. Stern. Cambridge: CUP
(2001) 'Was Wittgenstein a Jew?' in Klagge (ed) *Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy.* Cambridge, CUP

Stiglmayr, J. (1895) 'Der Neuplatoniker Proclus als Vorlage des sog. Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre vom Übel' in *Historisches Jahrbuch* 16(1895), pp 253 -73

Stoelen, A. (1969) 'Hughes de Balma' in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique* ed Viller, Vol 7. Paris: Beauchesne

Stout, J and MacSwain, R. (2004) *Grammar and Grace: Reformulations of Aquinas and Wittgenstein.* London:SCM

Suchla. B.R. (1980) 'Die sogenannten Maximus-Scholien des Corpus Dionysiacum Areopagiticum' in *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse,* 3:33-66

Suzuki, D.T. (1957) *Mysticism Christian and Buddhist.* London: Allen and Unwin

Swietlicki, C. (1986) *Spanish Christian Cabala: the works of Luis de Léon, Santa Teresa de Jésus and San Juan de la Cruz.* Columbia: University of Missouri Press

Swinburne, R. (1979) *The Existence of God.* Oxford: OUP

Tanesini, A. (2004) *Wittgenstein: A Feminist Interpretation.* Cambridge: Polity

Tarnas, R. (2001) A New Birth in Freedom: A (P)Review of Jorge Ferrer's *Revisioning Transpersonal Theory: A Participatory Vision of Human Spirituality* in *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology.* 33 (1)

Tellechea Idígoras, J.I. (1962) 'Textos inéditos sobre el fenómeno de los alumbrados' in *Ephemerides Carmeliticae,*13, pp 768-74
(1968) *El arzobispo Carranza y su tiempo.* 2 vols, Madrid

Théry, G. (1950-51) 'Documents concernant Jean Sarrazin réviseur de la traduction érigénienne du 'Corpus Dionysiacum'' in DS, Fas XCI, pp.351 -355.

Thompson, C. (2000) 'Wittgenstein's Confessions' in *Philosophical Investigations* 23:1, January 2000

Tolstoy, L. (1895) *The Four Gospels.* Croydon: The Brotherhood Publishing Company

Tugwell, S. (1993) Review of *The Foundations of Mysticism* in *Journal of Theological Studies,* Vol 44:2,pp 685 – 687. Oxford:OUP

(1996) Review of *The Growth of Mysticism* in *Journal of Theological Studies,* Vol 47:2,pp 713 - 722. Oxford:OUP

Turner, D. (1995) *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

(1995a) *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs.* Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications

Tyler, P.M. (1993) *Realism and Anti-Realism in Wittgensteinian Understandings of Religion.* MA Dissertation presented at University of London for completion of MTh in Philosophy of Religion.

(1997) *The Way of Ecstasy: Praying with St Teresa of Avila.* (Norwich: Canterbury Press)

(1999) *Wittgenstein, Frazer and Superstition.* Research Paper given at Sarum/STETS Research Seminar, Sarum College, Salisbury, October 1999

(2000) *The Birth of Psychotherapy from the Spirit of Mythos: Nietzsche and the Origins of Psychotherapy.* MA Dissertation for completion of the MA in Integrative Psychotherapy presented to Middlesex University.

(2005) *Alumbrados, The Triple Way* and *Sufism and Christian Spirituality* in Sheldrake, P. ed. *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality.* London: SCM/Canterbury Press

von Balthasar, H.U. (1961-1969) *Herrlichkeit: Eine theologische Ästhetik.*(Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag) trans 'The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetic'(1982 –1989) ed. Fessio, J. and Riches, J. trans. Davies, O., Louth, A., Sayward, J., Simon, M., McNeil, B., McDonagh, F., Riches, J., Leiva-Merikakis, E. and Williams, R. Edinburgh: Tand T Clarke

von Hügel, Baron F. (1908) *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and her Friends.* London: Dent

von Ivánka, E. (1964) *Plato Christianus: Übernahme und Umgestaltung des Platonismus durch die Väter.* Einsiedeln: Johannes-Verlag

von Wright, G.H. (1971) *Explanation and Understanding.* London: Routledge
(1982) *Wittgenstein.* Oxford: Blackwell

Waite, A.E. (1938) *Shadows of Life and Thought.* London: Dent

Waismann, F. (1965) *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy,* ed R Harre. London: Macmillan

Walach, H. (1994) *Notitia experimentalis Dei – Erfahrungserkenntnis Gottes: Studien zu Hugo de Balmas Text 'Viae Sion lugent' und deutsche Übersetzung.* Analecta Cartusiana. 98.1. Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur.

Walsh, J.J. (1957) *Sapientia Christianorum: The Doctrine of Thomas Gallus, Abbot of Vercelli on Contemplation.* Dissertatio ad Lauream in Facultate Theologica, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome.

Washington, P. (1993) *Madame Blavatsky's Baboon: Theosophy and the Emergence of the Western Guru.* London: Secker and Warburg.

Weber, A. (1990) *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP

Webster N. (1828) *American Dictionary of the English Language.* 2 vols. New York: Converse

Weeks, A. (1993) *German Mysticism from Hildegard of Bingen to Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Literary and Intellectual History.* New York: SUNY

Westcott, W.W. (1915) *The Rosicrucian Society of England.* London: Allen

Wilkins, C. (1785) *The Bhagvat-Geeta or Dialogues of Kreeshna and Arjoon in 18 Lectures with Notes.* London: C Nowse.

Williams, R. (1983) 'The Prophetic and the Mystical: Heiler revisited.' in *New Blackfriars,* 64, pp 330 - 47

(1984) 'Butler's *Western Mysticism*: Towards an Assessment.' in *The Downside Review,* 102, pp. 197 - 215

(1991) *Teresa of Avila.* London: Continuum

Winch, P. (1958) *The Idea of a Social Science.* London: Routledge

(1987) *Trying to Make Sense.* Oxford: Blackwell

Woodward, J. and Pattison, S. (2007) *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology.* Oxford: Blackwell

Zaehner, R.C. (1957) *Mysticism Sacred and Profound.* Oxford: Galaxy (1961)

(1970) *Concordant Discord. The Interdependence of Faiths being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at St Andrews in 1967-1969.* Oxford: Clarendon Press

Zinn, G.A. (1979) *Richard of St Victor: The Twelve Patriarchs, The Mystical Ark, Book Three of the Trinity.* Trans with Introduction. London: SPCK

oOo