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ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL POETICS OF LIGHT IN THE SEQUENCES OF ADAM OF ST VICTOR

In Adam's sequences, the frequent use of terms related to the semantic sphere of light as a metaphor for the divine is immediately noticeable. It is very easy to notice the frequent use of terms attributable to the semantic sphere of light as a metaphor for the divine. His sequences, in keeping with the Victorine tradition, reflect a meticulous integration of biblical symbolism and doctrinal teaching, particularly through the pervasive theme of light. However, the rigorous compositional meticulousness of the sequence does not allow us to consider the capillarity of this theme as a generic literary device capable of expressing the divine, the reasons for which can be found in the fortuitous use (the cases are there but they are rare) by the poet of a particularly congenial image or, rather, in echoes of the liturgy. The reflection on Adam's work can be enriched by a hermeneutic approach that emphasizes the symbolic and theological dimensions of light in his sequences.

In the Easter sequences, light assumes various nuances of meaning, each accords with the theological significance of Easter as a celebration of resurrection and renewal. Light symbolizes the transition from death to life, from despair to joy, reflecting the transformative and salvific power of Christ's resurrection. For instance, the beginning of sequence XIII, *Ecce dies celebris*, indeed recalls from the outset the event of Christ's resurrection, declining it as the cause and ultimate end of a series of opposites, perfectly placed from a rhetorical point of view:

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Ecce dies celebris,
lux succedit tenebris,
morti resurrectio.

Letis cedant tristia
cum sit maior gloria
quam prima confusio.

Umbram fugat veritas,
vetustatem novitas,
luctum consolatio.¹

With the exception of the first, which serves as an introduction, the following verses are divided according to two opposing poles, *confusio* and *gloria*, which, in their antithesis, indicate the very meaning of Easter as a passage.² The order of opposing terms lends itself to games of parallelisms and chiasms; the absence of copulas or verbs enhances the rhetorical power of these contrasts, emphasizing their role in illustrating theological oppositions and associating and dissociating the extremes: there can indeed be no resurrection without death, nor consolation without mourning; darkness, deprivation of light, is like joy that supplements sadness and renews it. Again, *umbra*, which is linked to *tenebris*, signifies the *lex antiqua* that opposes the *nova*, according to the norm of liturgical and patristic texts.³

¹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, “Sequentia XIII, Ecce dies celebris,” in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2023), 99, 1-9. In this essay, all citations of the Adam sequences will refer to this edition.

² The term *confusio* has an ambivalent meaning here. Biblically, *confusio* indicates the state after sin, which is restored by the resurrection, but in the school of St Victor the word indicates primarily the state before creation, the primordial chaos before the beginning. See Sir 4,25: “Est enim confusio adducens peccatum, et est confusio adducens gloriam et gratiam”; HUGH OF ST VICTOR, “De sacramentis christianae fidei, I, I, IV,” in *Patrologia Latina* 176, 189D: “In prima forma confusionis prius materialiter omnia corporalia simul et semel creata sunt.” About this theme, see Lenka KARFIKOVÁ, *De esse ad pulchrum esse, Schönheit in der Theologie Hugos von St Victor* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 54-55. See also RICHARD OF ST VICTOR, “Liber exceptionum, II, I, 2,” in *Patrologia Latina* 175, 636A: “Mundus in prima confusione est homo in iniquitate sua.”

³ On the question of the Old Testament as *umbra futurorum*, a veiled anticipation of the New one, there are many biblical and medieval texts. See, by way of example only, Col 2,17: “Quae sunt umbra futurorum, corpus autem Christi”; Eb 10,1: “Umbram enim habens lex bonorum futurorum”; AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, “In Evangelium Iohannis tractatus CXXIV, CVIII, 2,” in *Patrologia Latina* 35, 1915: “Sanctificantur itaque in veritate haeredes Testamenti Novi, cuius veritatis umbrae

In sequence XIV, *Lux illuxit dominica*, the theme of light returns, associated, as it should be for an Easter song, with the Son, light of light, splendor of the Father.⁴ But worthy of attention is the following sequence, *Salve dies dierum gloria*, which, in celebrating Christ's victory over death, opens up to a very peculiar sonority:

Salve dies dierum gloria,
dies felix Christi victoria,
dies digna iugi leticia,
dies prima!

Lux divina cecis irradiat
in qua Christus infernum spoliat,
mortem vincit et reconciliat
summis yma.⁵

fuerunt sanctificationes Veteris Testamenti"; ALAIN DE LILLE, "Distinctiones dictionum theologicalium," in *Patrologia Latina* 210, 986A: "[Umbra]. Dicuntur figurae Veteris Testamenti, unde solet dici quod adveniente Veritate, cessare debet umbra. Dicitur obscuritas legis"; RICHARD OF ST VICTOR, "Liber exceptionum, II, III, 12," in *Patrologia Latina* 175, 664: "Vetus Testamentum significat Novum, lex gratiam. Lex data est per Moysen, gratia per Christum. Lex data est die quinquagesima post resurrectionem Domini. Lex data est in monte excelso, gratia data est sursum in cenaculo. Lex data est in fulgoribus igneis, gratia data est in linguis igneis. Lex data est duodecim tribubus, gratia data est duodecim apostolis." The theme also returns frequently in Adam. See ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XVIII, Zyma vetus expurgetur," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicon, 2023), 118, 19: "Lex est umbra futurorum"; ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XXII, Simplex in essentia," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicon, 2023), 137, 7-9: "Lex precessit in figura,/ lex penalis, lex obscura,/ lumen evangelicum."

⁴ See ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XIV, Lux illuxit dominica," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicon, 2023), 103, 1-4: "Lux illuxit dominica,/ lux insignis, lux unica,/ Lux lucis et leticie,/ lux immortalis glorie." See also: ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia V, Splendor Patris et figura," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicon, 2023), 67, 1.

⁵ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XV, Salve dies dierum gloria," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicon, 2023), 107, 1-8.

The redundancy of the word *dies* here does not represent a simple rhetorical figure, but highlights, in its abundance, all the reasons for celebrating Easter: the same day is a day of glory for redemption, of happiness for the restoration of creation, of victory over death, of joy for the faithful, of rebirth. On Easter day, when Christ has stripped the underworld of the souls of the righteous,⁶ the power of his resurrection restores sight to the blind⁷ and conquers death, reconciling the lower world with the heavenly one. Furthermore, the discourse on light becomes a discourse on truth in some sequences of Pentecost. In *Lux iocunda, lux insignis*, light is a necessary condition for the opening of hearts, which are now ready for Revelation, the unveiling of Truth:

Lux iocunda, lux insignis,
qua de throno missus ignis
in Christi discipulos,

Conda replet, linguas ditat,
ad concordem nos invitat
cordis lingue modulos.⁸

Here, the light no longer represents Christ, but the Holy Spirit sent on his behalf: there are evident Easter resonances (it is the same structure as *Lux illuxit dominica*) and of the Gospel of John, but this time the Pentecostal event represents the occasion for the singer to celebrate the birth of the Church. However,

⁶ See Col 1,20; 2Cor 5,19, but one could also detect an echo of the final chapters of the apocryphal gospel of Nicodemus, in which we read of Christ's descent into the underworld to free the righteous of the Old Testament. See Rémi GOUNELLE, and Zbigniew IZYDORCZYK, eds., *L'Évangile de Nicodème ou Les Actes faits sous Ponce Pilate (recension latine A) suivi de La lettre de Pilate à l'empereur Claude* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 180-213. That the text was known is proven by the fact that a poetic reworking of this gospel, the *Roman de la Résurrection*, by André de Coutances, was widespread in 12th century France; see Robert REINSCH, "Maître André de Coutances, «Le roman de la résurrection de Jésus-Christ». Bearbeitung des Evangeliums Nicodemi, nach der einzigen Londoner Hs. des XIII. Jahrhunderts," *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 64 (1880):161-194; Gaston PARIS, and Alphonse BOS, eds., *Trois versions rimées de l'Évangile de Nicodème par Chrétien, André de Coutances et un anonyme* (Paris: Didot, 1885) 76-236.

⁷ Obvious biblical references to Sal 145(144),8: "Dominus inluminat caecos"; Mt 11,5 e Lc 7,22: "Caeci vident."

⁸ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XX, Lux iocunda lux insignis," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2023), 127, 1-6.

there is something more than the mere historical data represented by the evocation of the feast day, as already explicitly transpires from the first verses: Adam here in fact invites to reveal the tropological sense of the Pentecostal event, which consists in the appeal addressed to all men to establish the agreement between the content of each one's heart and what is expressed by the song (*ad concordem nos invitat/ cordis lingue modulos*). Therefore, as the message of the apostles was understood by all the faithful whatever was their language, so this prayer sung to God will have the same sense, regardless of the language used. Thus is born, thus is accomplished the *Ecclesia fidelium*.

In *Gratulemur in hac die*, Adam uses more than one stanza, loading it with images that recall the semantic field of light, this time in reference to the Mother of God:

Fontis vite tu cisterna,
ardens, lucens es lucerna,
per te nobis lux superna
sum fudit radium,

Ardens igne caritatis,
luce lucens castitatis,
lucem summe claritatis
mundo gignes filium.⁹

If Christ is a living source, Mary is a cistern, a place where the water is still, but still generates life; the virginal chastity of Mary is luminous, since the charity of the Mother of God is burning (*ardens igne caritatis*) and from it a son is generated, light of supreme splendor.

Furthermore, in *Splendor Patris et figura*, Adam describes the virginal birth of Mary, prodigious only for the human mind (divine omnipotence has no obstacles): if, in fact, almonds germinated from a withered rod,¹⁰ why could a virgin not generate a sinless son? This place, very frequent in the Middle Ages (I think about Peter Damian), is used by Adam to introduce the image of the walnut¹¹ as a symbol of Christ:

⁹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XXXVI, Gratulemur in hac die," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2023), 209, 61-210, 68.

¹⁰ The allusion is to Aaron's rod in Nm 17,8.

¹¹ The Latin term *nux* is here to be understood in its more generic sense of a woody-shelled fruit, a nuance that has remained in the major European languages such as English, French and German. For metrical reasons *nux* becomes *amigdala* at v. 44.

Cur, quod virgo peperit,
est Iudeis scandalum.

Cum virga produxerit
sicca sic amigdalum?

Contemplemur adhuc nucem:
nam prolata nux in lucem
lucis est mysterium.

Trinam gerens unionem
tria confert: unctionem,
lumen et edulium.

Nux est Christus: cortex nucis
circa carnem pene crucis,
testa corpus osseum,

Carne tecta deitas
et Christi suavitas
signatur per nucleum.

Lux est cecis, et unguentum
Christus egris, et fomentum
piis animalibus.¹²

The walnut is the symbol *par excellence* of the light that is God, because it is one and trine, since it produces three gifts: oil, light, and nourishment. For this reason, the walnut signifies Christ: the husk represents the pains of the cross, the shell is the flesh that suffered on that cross; the deity and goodness of Christ are symbolized by the core, light for the blind and ointment for the suffering. Another curious example of this tripartite structure is also found in the sequence *Templum cordis adornemus*, performed at St Victor during the feast of the Purification of Mary (or Presentation of Jesus at the Temple), where it is no longer the walnut, but the candle, the very symbol of the celebration, that lends itself to the triadic scheme:

¹² ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia V, Splendor Patris et figura," 41-59.

Templum cordis adornemus,
novo corde renovemus
novum senis gaudium,

Quod, dum ulnis amplexatur,
sic longevi recreatur
longum desiderium.

Stans in signum populorum,
Templum luce, laude chorum,
corda replens gloria.

Templo puer presentatus,
post in cruce vir oblatus,
pro peccatis hostia.

Hinc Salvator, hinc Maria,
puer pius, mater pia
moveant tripudium.

Sed cum votis perferatur
opus lucis quod signatur
luce luminarium.

Verbum Patris lux est vera,
virginalis caro cera,
Christus splendens cereus.

Cor illustrat ad sophiam,
qua virtutis rapit viam
viciis erroneus.

Christum tenens per amorem
bene iuxta festi morem
gestat lumen cereum,

sicut senex Verbum Patris
votis strinxit pignus matris
brachiis corporeum.¹³

¹³ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia XII, Templum cordis adornemus," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2023), 95, 1-96, 30.

In the exordium, Adam immediately shows the historical-literary sense of the use of blessing candles during this feast and describes how Jesus, called by the old Simeon at the time of the presentation at the Temple of Jerusalem, illuminated all people, filling the Temple with light, the choir with praises, the hearts with glory. That same child who is presented at the Temple will then be a man sacrificed on the cross, an expiatory victim for the sins of man. As such a work of light is symbolized by the light of the candles, likewise each candle represents the light of God: the Word of the Father is the true light, while the wax signifies the virginal flesh of Mary, Christ instead the candle itself that illuminates the darkness. This divine light illuminates the heart, leads it to wisdom and through it those who are lost in vices take the path of virtue. For this reason, who loves Christ, according to the custom of this feast, does well to carry within himself the light that is symbolized by the candle, just as the old Simeon, who so awaited the arrival of the Messiah, held in his arms the body of that child, a guarantee (*pignus*) of our salvation.

Furthermore, a more in-depth examination of the text highlights the overlap of meanings of the biblical passage commented on in rhyme by Adam, which allows his writings to be well framed in the channel of the Victorine *magisterium*, primarily of Hugh. It is indeed in Hugh that there is a new and meticulous attention to the literal sense, considered foundational and preliminary to a subsequent correct allegorical reading of the Sacred Page.¹⁴ Thus, also in Adam, the importance of the historical-literary data is eminent, represented by the event that the evangelist Luke narrates of the old Simeon and the Presentation of the Baby Jesus at the Temple. This historical fact is, however, also the basis for understanding the figurative or allegorical meaning of the candles, a symbol of this feast because they recall the entrance of light into the Temple, as well as,

¹⁴ See Henri DE LUBAC, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, vol. 3 (Paris: Aubier, 1961), 287-372. For the critique levelled by Hugh at young exegetes who venture into allegorical interpretations while neglecting historical or literal meaning, see HUGH OF ST VICTOR, "De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris, I, 5," in *Patrologia Latina* 175, 13D-14A: "Noli itaque de intelligentia Scripturarum gloriari, quamdiu litteram ignoras. Litteram autem ignorare est ignorare quid littera significet et quid significetur a littera. Nam quod significatur a primo, tertium significat. Cum igitur res illae quas littera significat, spiritualis intelligentiae signa sint, quomodo signa tibi esse possunt quae necdum tibi significata sunt? Noli ergo saltum facere, ne in praecipitium incidas. Ille rectissime incedit, qui incedit ordinate. Primum igitur illarum significationem stude legendo comparare notitiam, ut ex iis specie cognitis, postmodum meditando colligas quod vel ad fidei aedificationem vel ad instructionem morum per similitudinem adducas." On the exegetical structure of Hugh and the entire school of St Victor, see also Ceslas SPICQ, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latine au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Vrin, 1944), 107-108; Beryl SMALLEY, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (London: Blackwell, 1952), 129-165.

always allegorically, Jesus who meets the old Simeon marks the transition from the Old to the New Testament. The moral or tropological sense is then suggested by Adam in the pressing invitation to the purification of the hearts of the faithful and to deep love for Christ, on the model of the old Simeon, full of love for God and uncontrollably happy to have the Son in his arms, thus manifesting the perfect example of the harmony that must prevail between thought and action. Finally, the eschatological or anagogical sense is immediately grasped in the prefiguration of the sacrifice on the cross of the Word made flesh, grafted onto a perfect parallelism with the image of Jesus who offers himself to the Temple (*Templo puer presentatus, / post in cruce vir oblatus*).

It may perhaps surprise that such an abundance of symbols and scriptural and patristic references can be found in a portion of text as circumscribed as that of the sequences, but it is clear that such a meticulous and accurate composition manifests Adam's intent to convey his own message of teaching and moral edification.

It can therefore be affirmed that in Adam there is a non-random insistence on the theme of light, to the point that it can no longer be spoken of merely as a theme. The language of light that Adam employs embraces various forms: from nouns such as *lux, sol, stella, lucerna*, but also *splendor, claritas*, to verbs like *luceo, corusco, praefulgeo* and their adjectival forms. But in Victorine's Latin, even words from the domain of beauty, excellence, knowledge or dignity fall within the semantic spectrum of light: *gratia, gloria, numen, fides* and everything that concerns fire (*ardeo, ignis...*) refers to it, as do groups of words of opposite sense that oppose light (*nubes, nox, obscuritas, umbra...*) and thus contribute to forming a well-defined picture of their meanings, manifest or hidden. Light is simply contrasted with darkness, to indicate the binomial good-evil or life-death, but the image is also nourished by numerous biblical quotations, which Adam uses repeatedly, to suggest the dynamic of sin-redemption, but above all to signify the presence and glory of the divine. The light then perfectly associates with Christ as a synonym for full knowledge, of *sapientia*, in accordance with the Victorine doctrine according to which man's knowledge must culminate in the contemplation of Christ.¹⁵ Light is therefore God and the Trinity, the Holy Spirit and his work in the world, or also the Mother of God or the Baptist, but

¹⁵ See Roger BARON, *Science et Sagesse chez Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Paris: P.Lethielleux, 1957); Giacinta SPINOSA, "Plaisir de la connaissance comme émotion intellectuelle chez Hugues de Saint-Victor," in *The pleasure of knowledge*, eds. Pasquale Porro, and Loris Sturlese (Turnhout-Bari: Pagina, 2015), 373-382; Hideki NAKAMURA, "Spiritualium gaudiorum plenitudo in der Erkenntnislehre Richards von St Viktor," in *The pleasure of knowledge*, eds. Pasquale Porro, and Loris Sturlese (Turnhout-Bari: Pagina, 2015), 383-392.

always described as lesser light sources compared to the Sun that is the Son.¹⁶ Light still has an evident cognitive value of Augustinian derivation, as well as it is not to be excluded an influence of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, whom Hugh contributed to make known, mainly with his commentary on *De coelesti hierarchia*.¹⁷

Staying on Hugh, it has been shown how Adam's sequences translate it into verses, with their calibrated combination of biblical and natural images that converge into a composite idea of Ecclesia, the theological magisterium, with all its urgencies (one above all, the need for a reform of the clergy, which must be pure and united in intentions, because the life of its representatives serves as an example for the faithful).¹⁸ Adam's poetry is thus built around these natural images, linked to the semantic field of plants or water, and transforms them into sacraments, according to Hugh's dictum. For these, in fact, the sacrament is the material and visible means through which a resemblance with an invisible and spiritual entity is manifested and signified: this is the reason for its institution, for this it is capable of sanctifying.¹⁹ The song then becomes a sacrament for the edifying

¹⁶ For example, see ADAM OF ST VICTOR, "Sequentia LI, O Maria, stella maris," in Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, *Sekwencje*, eds. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Patrice Sicard, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Akademicon, 2023), 269, 1.

¹⁷ See PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE, "De coelesti hierarchia, I, 1," in *Patrologia Graeca* 3, 121; *De coelesti hierarchia, De ecclesiastica hierarchia, De mystica theologia, Epistulae*, eds. Günter Heil, and Adolf M. Ritter (Berlin–Boston: de Gruyter, 2012), 7, 3-8; PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE, "De coelesti hierarchia, III, 1," in *Patrologia Graeca* 3, 426. See Jean GROS-FILLIER, "Étude littéraire," in *Les sequences d'Adam de Saint-Victor: étude littéraire (poétique et rhétorique)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 235-236. For the dynamics and developments of the metaphysics of light in the Latin Dionysian tradition, see Dominique POIREL, "Métaphysique de la lumière dans la tradition dionysienne latine," in *Lumière et vision dans les sciences et dans les arts. De l'antiquité au XVIIe siècle*, eds. Michel Hochmann, and Danielle Jacquart (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2010), 75-104; republished in Dominique POIREL, *Des symboles et des Anges. Hugues de Saint-Victor et le réveil dionysien du XIIe siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 363-394.

¹⁸ About the reformist spirit of the early years of School of St Victor, see Jean CHÂTILLON, "Les écoles de Chartres et de Saint-Victor," in *La scuola nell'Occidente latino dell'alto medioevo* (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1972), 806; republished in Patrice SICARD, ed., *Le mouvement canonial au Moyen Âge. Réforme de l'Église, spiritualité et culture* (Paris–Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 355-392.

¹⁹ See HUGH OF ST VICTOR, "De sacramentis christianae fidei, I, IX, 2," in *Patrologia Latina* 176, 317D: "Sacramentum est corporale vel materiale elementum foris sensibiliter propositum ex similitudine repraesentans, et ex institutione significans, et ex sanctificatione continens aliquam invisibilem et spiritalem gratiam."

power it holds, for the faculty it has to create a place in the liturgy destined for the prayer of the clergy with which to manifest the correct conduct of life.

If one wishes to praise God worthily, therefore, it is first necessary to bend the upright heart to His love, but it is also necessary to lead a sober and just life consecrating it to the Lord: only in this way, in the end, a song of praise to God will come out of the chest with natural violence.

It is therefore clear that for Adam of Saint Victor, who now finally reveals himself in the dual role of poet and theologian, light is the sacrament par excellence, because it is the joint and *signum* of Revelation. Man, in fact, following the Fall, has preserved within himself a trace of the original divine light, which he recognizes, like Augustine, every time he discerns a truth in the field of the sensible or of the *scientiae*. But again, light is the first creature of God, therefore it is the most suitable visible reality to evoke the invisible, because it is the first, immediate and perfect connection between the physical order and the metaphysical one.

ABBREVIATION

Patrologia Graeca – *Patrologiae cursus completus: seu Bibliotheca universalis, integra, uniformis, commoda, oeconomica omnium ss. patrum, doctorum, scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum, sive latinorum, sive Graecorum, qui ab aevo apostolico ad aetatem Innocenti III (ann. 1216) pro Latinis et ad Photii tempora (ann. 863) pro Graecis floruerunt*. Edited by Theodor Hopfner, and Jacques Paul Migne. Parisiis: Apud Garnier fratres editores et J.-P. Migne successores, 1856–1866.

Patrologia Latina – *Patrologiae cursus completus: seu bibliotheca universalis, integra, uniformis, commoda, oeconomica, omnium SS. Patrum, doctorum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum... Series latina prior in qua prodeunt patres, doctores, scriptoresque ecclesiae latinae a Tertulliano ad Innocentium III*. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. Parisiis: Apud Garnier fratres editores et J.-P. Migne successores, 1844–1855.

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ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL POETICS OF LIGHT IN THE SEQUENCES
OF ADAM OF ST VICTOR

Summary

The philosophical poetics of light in Adam of St. Victor's sequences are pursued in this paper with special focus on the interdependence of the metaphor of light for the divine and their theological undertones in the Victorine tradition. Through close hermeneutical analysis, the study reveals the way in which Adam's use of light transcends being mere literary trope but rather constitutes profound exploration of biblical imagery and doctrinal teachings. In the context of the Easter sequences, light signifies transition from death to life and represents the redemptive power of Christ's resurrection. This paper also investigates Adam's evocative vocabulary in terms of polyvalence of meanings of light as it relates to knowledge, grace, and moral edification. By intermingling elements of theology and liturgy, the paper argues that the theme of light is sacramental sign of divine revelation that goes beyond the physical and metaphysical in ways that reflect the human experience of truth and faith. This study not only shows a greater insight into Adam's literary purposes but also enhances the discussion of the philosophical basis of religious imagery in medieval thought.

Keywords: School of St. Victor; Adam of St. Victor; Sequences; Light; Theology

FILOZOFICZNA POETYKA ŚWIATŁA W SEKWENCJACH ADAMA ZE ŚW. WIKTORA

Streszczenie

Filozoficzna poetyka światła w sekwencjach Adama ze św. Wiktora jest przedmiotem analizy w niniejszym artykule, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem wzajemnej zależności metafory światła w odniesieniu do boskości oraz ich teologicznych podtekstów w tradycji wiktoryńskiej. Poprzez szczegółową analizę hermeneutyczną, badanie ukazuje sposób, w jaki użycie światła przez Adama przekracza jedynie literacki chwyt, a raczej stanowi głęboką eksplorację biblijnej ikonografii i nauk doktrynalnych. W kontekście sekwencji wielkanocnych światło symbolizuje przejście od śmierci do życia i reprezentuje zbawczą moc zmartwychwstania Chrystusa. Niniejszy artykuł bada również sugestywny zasób słownictwa Adama w odniesieniu do wieloznaczności pojęcia światła, związanego z wiedzą, łaską i moralnym uformowaniem. Poprzez przeplatanie elementów teologii i liturgii, artykuł dowodzi, że motyw światła jest sakramentalnym znakiem boskiego objawienia, które wykracza poza fizyczne i metafizyczne sposoby, odzwierciedlając ludzkie doświadczenie prawdy i wiary. To badanie nie tylko dostarcza głębszego wglądu w literackie cele Adama, ale także wzbogaca dyskusję na temat filozoficznych podstaw religijnej ikonografii w myśli średniowiecznej.

Słowa kluczowe: szkoła świętego Wiktora; Adam ze Świętego Wiktora; sekwencje; światło; teologia