

## VISIONS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS OR MARY

There are many accounts about the life of Jesus or Mary from mystics. The mystics claimed they recorded what they saw in visions.

Examples of such mystics are Maria Valtorta, Anne Catherine Emmerich and Mary of Agreda.

Rationalisation is twisting things because you want to believe them and deceive yourself. For example, if a wife catches her husband in bed with another woman and tells herself that it must have been a hallucination that is rationalisation. It is making excuses because you see the truth and don't want to admit it. We would never validate wives doing that. We would challenge them or at least say or do nothing that implies we agree with them for we know she is endangering herself and opposing the truth. Clearly, we all admit that there are things that should be put down to rationalisation. She could have been hallucinating but we believe she wasn't. But that is not the point. The point is that we know human nature's power to lie to itself and so we disbelieve her. There is nothing unfair or biased in saying that people who report miracles are engaging in rationalisation. Why else would we disbelieve in the wife's miraculous hallucination because it is miraculous?

The Roman Catholic Church encounters plenty of tales about the life of Jesus and Mary which were supposedly relayed to the visionaries or mystics by God. But these tales contain contradictions and errors. But some of the Catholics still believe. They explain that the vision is about uplifting the mystic spiritually and making her or him a holier and better person so as to make her or him an inspiration for others. So they say that God gives the vision according to their understanding. He comes down to their level for the sake of the spiritual reasons and it is not about getting all the facts right especially when the details are not very important.

This is a rationalisation because the Church would not take the same view if somebody was reporting visions of the life of John the Baptist that advocated an austere life devoted to prayer and good works but which said that Jesus was a false prophet and a fake. It is sectarian intrinsically and in principle.

It is a rationalisation when the visions never ever claim explicitly or clearly to be representational or artistic rather than factual. It is a rationalisation when the mystics themselves treat them as factual. There is so much self-deception and rationalisation among supporters of the mystic's tales that it is wise to assume that all miracle and vision tales are suspect. The alarming prevalence of rationalisation even among experts shows that people are not rational when it comes to these things.