



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university

FACULTÉ DES ÉTUDES SUPÉRIEURES
ET POSTDOCTORALES



FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND
POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

Felicity Maxwell

AUTEUR DE LA THÈSE / AUTHOR OF THESIS

M.A. (English)

GRADE / DEGREE

Department of English

FACULTÉ, ÉCOLE, DÉPARTEMENT / FACULTY, SCHOOL, DEPARTMENT

Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ:*
Continuity and Cultural Change

TITRE DE LA THÈSE / TITLE OF THESIS

Dr. Andrew Taylor

DIRECTEUR (DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS SUPERVISOR

CO-DIRECTEUR (CO-DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS CO-SUPERVISOR

EXAMINATEURS (EXAMINATRICES) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS EXAMINERS

Dr. David Carlson

Dr. Geoff Rector

Gary W. Slater

Le Doyen de la Faculté des études supérieures et postdoctorales / Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*:

Continuity and Cultural Change

Felicity Maxwell

Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the MA degree in English

Department of English
Faculty of Arts
University of Ottawa

© Felicity Maxwell, Ottawa, Canada, 2008



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-50905-0
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-50905-0

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract		iii
Acknowledgements		iv
Introduction		1
Chapter 1:	Laying the Foundation: The <i>Meditationes vitae Christi</i>	
	The <i>Meditationes</i> as Meditations	8
	The Audience and Dissemination of the <i>Meditationes</i>	17
	The Texts and Origins of the <i>Meditationes</i> : A Survey of Problems and Partial Solutions	29
Chapter 2:	Love's <i>Mirror</i> : Constructing an Audience	
	The Dissemination and Readership of the <i>Mirror</i>	40
	Love's Lay Audience: Some Problems	59
Chapter 3:	Christ, Community, and the Power of the Image: The Passion Meditations and the Treatise on the Sacrament	
	Christ's Humanity in the Passion	76
	Seeing the Substance: Christ's Sacramental Body in the Treatise	85
Bibliography		94

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates Nicholas Love's negotiation of the social and religious tensions of early fifteenth-century England—caused by increasing lay literacy, the ongoing Wycliffite controversy, and the aftermath of the Lancastrian takeover—in the *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, his translation of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi*. It demonstrates that although Love's Middle English translation extended the *Meditationes* to a broad lay readership, manuscripts of the *Mirror* circulating ever more widely as the fifteenth century progressed, the work was early associated with figures in positions of power, ranging from Archbishop Arundel, the leader of the orthodox suppression of Lollardy, to Thomas Beaufort, an extender of Lancastrian military power abroad, to Sibyl de Felton, the abbess of a prosperous and somewhat worldly convent, who might have used the *Mirror* to stir up orthodox zeal among her nuns. It is argued that despite these connections, the intentional conservatism with which Love condescends to his lay readers, and even the aggressive orthodoxy of the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, which is original to Love, this work is more than a piece of Church propaganda, for, retaining the *Meditationes*'s emphasis on Christ's human relationships, it invites its readers to an intimate and emotionally charged encounter with Jesus, the divine human being who is both the instigator and the object of their devotion. Finally, it notes the paradox that in the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, which closes the work, Love incorporates material that is dramatically powerful but theologically problematic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Andrew Taylor, and my mother, Lynda Windmill Brasset, for their exemplary support; Oliver Pickering of the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds for helpfully answering several questions about the Ripon manuscript of the *Meditationes*; and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for funding this MA.

INTRODUCTION

The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ, one of the most widely circulated of all Middle English works, is a translation by Nicholas Love, prior of the Carthusian charterhouse of Mount Grace in North Yorkshire, of the highly popular Latin *Meditationes vitae Christi*. The *Meditationes* were written in fourteenth-century Tuscany by an anonymous Franciscan, perhaps to be identified as Iohannis de Caulibus, a friar of San Gemignano; however, from the middle ages until well into the nineteenth century, this work was incorrectly ascribed to Bonaventure, and it has since become customary to refer to its author as pseudo-Bonaventure. As its title suggests, the *Meditationes* is a series of affective meditations on Christ's earthly life rather than a gospel harmony, gospel paraphrase, or life of Christ, genres that adhere more strictly to the biblical text. The *Mirror* follows the *Meditationes* in omitting most of the gospels' theological content—most importantly, Christ's teachings—and in offering instead the teachings of church authorities—notably Bernard of Clairvaux—and homiletic exhortations to virtue as the didactic framework surrounding the meditations, which, in turn, bring out the visual and emotional appeal of the selected narratives from Christ's life. The *Meditationes*'s and the *Mirror*'s non-biblical sources (which are not completely identical) are well documented in the critical editions, edited by Mary Stallings-Taney and Michael Sargent respectively.¹

¹ M. Stallings-Taney, ed., *Iohannis de Caulibus: Meditationes vite Christi olim S. Bonaventuro [sic] attributae*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis 153 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997) and Michael G. Sargent, ed., *Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Critical Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686* (New York: Garland, 1992). All quotations are from these editions.

It is impossible to meaningfully discuss Love's translation without some knowledge of his source, as the relationship between the two texts is complex. Love made his translation of pseudo-Bonaventure's work according to the medieval understanding of translation as an adaptation and appropriation of source material, an activity that could at times be more akin to original composition than to translation as we now define it. Love indicates that he has added, omitted, and rearranged various passages in his rendition; nevertheless, his work retains the overall spirit of his source with the important exception of the added anti-Wycliffite passages. Insofar as the *Mirror* adapts the Latin text to the social and religious tensions of early fifteenth-century England—caused by increasing lay literacy, the ongoing Wycliffite controversy, and the aftermath of the Lancastrian takeover—it is not what we would consider a faithful translation of the *Meditationes* as a whole, though the great textual variety of the *Meditationes* itself, which spread across Western Europe in a yet-unknown number of different versions, has until recently made it difficult to determine what the *Meditationes* “as a whole” looks like.² More importantly for the present discussion, how complete a version Love worked from and, consequently, the extent of his alterations, are currently unknown, although a manuscript of the *Meditationes* that belonged to Mount Grace in the fifteenth-century merits study as a possible source.

Love states in his original introductory material and in a number of Latin notes throughout his translation that he has altered the text in order to accommodate the needs of its new, English lay audience, but these statements are problematic for a number of reasons, not least because they are written in Latin despite Love's repeated assertions that

² Stallings-Taney's edition is the first to present the long, unabbreviated version of the text.

he is writing for those who can read only English. Furthermore, Sargent has shown that several of Love's notes actually paraphrase pseudo-Bonaventure's comments on his treatment of the biblical material.³ Love's claim that he is bringing the work to the laity for the first time is also suspect: although both in the prologue to the *Meditationes* and throughout that work, pseudo-Bonaventure explicitly addresses himself to a Poor Clare for whose spiritual guidance he writes, the *Meditationes* also includes passages clearly intended for lay readers, and members of the laity are known to have owned copies of earlier vernacular translations of the *Meditationes*; conversely, Love includes some of pseudo-Bonaventure's passages addressed to enclosed religious and recluses, and one of the earliest known owners of Love's translation, Sibyl de Felton, was a trilingual abbess. The textual instability of the Latin source and its ambiguity about its audience must be kept in mind in investigations of the *Mirror*'s intended audience and indeed of any other aspects of the *Mirror*'s content or style, to which its textual relationship with the *Meditationes* is crucial if not completely clear.

In this thesis, I shall respond to the relevant existing scholarship on the *Meditationes* and the *Mirror* with my own sense of the overall continuity of their intended and actual audiences and of their meditational method despite the new cultural conditions of Love's translation. Love, a defender of the Church's meditative tradition no less than of its sacramental doctrine, clearly fostered such continuity in response to the social and religious challenges of his day. Indeed, the *Mirror*'s first readers were members of the secular and religious elite who seem to have been drawn to its conservatism. It appears, for example, that Felton might have obtained her copy of the

³ See Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. xxxv-xxxvii.

Mirror as part of a push to revitalize the devotion of her somewhat worldly abbey, while aristocratic readers of Love's text found in it the opportunity to participate in the traditionally monastic exercise of meditation without actually entering the cloister. Owning a copy of the *Mirror* might also have been a way for aristocrats to express their orthodoxy, for Love's translation of the *Meditationes* includes passages of anti-Wycliffite polemic—particularly in the Treatise on the Sacrament—and the work is closely associated with the orthodox reaction against Lollardy.

It seems likely that Love completed the main body of his translation before 1408, the year in which Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, legislated the Constitutions banning the unlicensed translation or reading of the Bible in English. Arundel was given confraternity in Mount Grace in that same year;⁴ in 1410 Love was promoted from rector to prior of Mount Grace;⁵ and about 1410 Arundel approved Love's *Mirror* for dissemination as an antidote to perceived heresy, as a Latin "Memorandum" attached to twenty manuscript copies of the work testifies.⁶ Due to these circumstances, it has been argued that the *Mirror* was designed as an official alternative for the Wycliffite Bible translation, encouraging lay people to engage in devotional meditation of little worth rather than to read Scripture. Indeed, Love's condescending description of his lay audience and his provision of meditations whereby his readers can

⁴ James Hogg, "Mount Grace Charterhouse and Late Medieval English Spirituality," *Collectanea Cartusiana*, vol. 3, *Analecta Cartusiana* 82.3 (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg, 1980), 18-21 (p. 21, n. 64).

⁵ Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, p. xxii.

⁶ For a list of which manuscripts include the "Memorandum" and a discussion of its significance as an indicator of manuscript affiliations, see Sargent, "The Affiliations of the Waseda Manuscript of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," *Nicholas Love at Waseda: Proceedings of the International Conference, 20-22 July 1995*, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle, and Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 175-95 (pp. 179-80).

come to imitate Christ's virtues without necessarily understanding his teachings oppose the Wycliffite emphasis on the importance of understanding the Scriptures and on the laity's ability to do so; however, Love translates many biblical quotations throughout the *Mirror* and nowhere denounces the Lollards for their translations, while his affective meditations on the passion invite his readers to a meaningful encounter with the human Christ.

Finally, while much has been made of Arundel's approbation of the *Mirror* as a weapon for combating Lollardy, the relationship between the polemical passages and the non-polemical majority of Love's work has received less scholarly attention than it deserves. Focusing on the passion narrative and the Treatise on the Sacrament, I shall argue that Love's meditational translation and his politically charged treatment of transubstantiation are opposed in their Christology and method of creating Christian community although unified in their support of Arundel's agenda and their rhetorical use of images. Love's translated meditational narrative retains the *Meditationes*'s sense that Christ's humanity is defined by the intimate relationships he develops with the people he encounters in his earthly life (particularly his mother, John, and Mary Magdalene) and, like the *Meditationes*, it draws its readers into these same relationships by inviting them to sympathize or even identify themselves with the biblical characters and to imagine themselves present in the depicted scenes of joy or woe. Avoiding theological debate, the meditations offer the reader little opportunity for dissent while reinforcing a sense of Christian community that is based on a shared imaginative and emotional experience. The polemic of the Treatise, by contrast, reduces Christ's humanity to the elements of sensational fiction—a gobbet of bloody flesh that miraculously appears in the eucharistic

bread and wine, converting the unbelieving to true faith. The orthodox community is defined doctrinally but presented through the rhetorical exclusion of others, particularly the Lollards, whom Love depicts as allied with the Antichrist. The Treatise's defence of transubstantiation, which was made official Church doctrine by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, does not in fact stand up to theological investigation, for it invites readers to see what according to that very doctrine should be believed without being seen; thus, Love undermines the very teaching that he intends to uphold. Although theologically problematic, Love's Treatise is nevertheless successful as an illustration of transubstantiation, offering the most striking and memorable images to be found in his text. Love's goal was clearly not to write a theological exposition but to convince his readers of the reality of transubstantiation by the most effective means available: ocular proof. Despite their significant differences, both the meditational rhetoric of Love's translation and the polemical rhetoric of his original Treatise successfully support orthodox doctrine and Arundel's anti-Lollard agenda in their very avoidance of genuine theological discussion; both rely not on argumentation but on the creation of vivid mental images to stimulate emotional responses—whether of compassion and love or of shock and revulsion—intended to lead to belief and devotion.

To summarize, this thesis presents both new analysis of the primary works in question and reminders of important past discoveries in an attempt to challenge or modify several currently predominant views of Love's *Mirror*: that Love wrote for a lay audience exclusively and that his intended and actual audiences were identical to each other but significantly different from those of the *Meditationes*; that in order to accommodate his intended audience, Love fundamentally changed the meditational text in the process of

translation; that Love's literary project is in all respects antithetical to the Wycliffite bible translation; and that the *Mirror's* added polemical passages in support of Arundel's suppression of Lollardy are the most significant parts of Love's text, the remainder of which has little literary or spiritual value. In addition, this thesis provides for the first time an investigation of the appended Treatise on the Sacrament's polemical method and its relationship to the meditational translation that makes up the greater part of Love's *Mirror*.

My title, "Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: Continuity and Cultural Change*," alludes to influential works by two scholars whose interest in Love's *Mirror* and the milieu in which it was produced and read has sparked my own: Elizabeth Salter's "Continuity and Change in Middle English Versions of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*" and Nicholas Watson's "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England."⁷ This thesis is in part a response to them.

⁷ Elizabeth Zeeman [Salter], "Continuity and Change in Middle English Versions of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Medium Ævum* 26 (1957), 25-31; Nicholas Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409," *Speculum* 70 (1995), 822-64.

CHAPTER I

LAYING THE FOUNDATION: THE *MEDITATIONES VITAE CHRISTI***The *Meditationes* as Meditations**

The pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi* was written for the benefit of a Poor Clare by an anonymous fourteenth-century Tuscan Franciscan, possibly one Iohannis de Caulibus of San Gemignano.¹ The author compiled the work from the gospels, numerous non-biblical sources, and his own imagination for the stated purposes of aiding his memory in his own daily meditations, advancing the spiritual development of the Poor Clare to whom the work is addressed, and bringing glory to Christ.² The author explicitly addresses his intended reader as a spiritual daughter and follower of Clare: “Si legas de beato Francisco et de beata uirgine Clara matre ac dulcissima tua ...” [If you read about blessed Francis and about the blessed virgin Clare, your mother and a most sweet woman];³ “... antiqui patres ... beatus Franciscus ac ducissa tua beata Clara

¹ Several references within the text imply that the author was a Franciscan of San Gemignano writing for a Poor Clare in a nearby convent. For a convenient collection of these references, see the appendix to Cainneach Ó Maonaigh’s edition of the medieval Irish translation of the *Meditationes*: Cainneach Ó Maonaigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe Beatha Chríost i Innsint Ghaelge a chuir Tomás Gruamdha Ó Bruacháin (fl. c. 1450) ar an Meditationes vitae Christi*, ed. Cainneach Ó Maonaigh (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944), pp. 323-66 (pp. 332-33). Further discussions of authorship and date will follow below.

² See M. Stallings-Taney, ed., *Meditaciones, Prologus*, p. 10 and Chapter 61: “*De ceco de Ierico illuminato a Domino*,” pp. 222-23. For identification of pseudo-Bonaventure’s sources, including biblical and liturgical references, see the *Index Locorum S. Scripturae*, *Index Fontium*, and *Initia Locorum Liturgiae* on pp. 357-72, 373-79, and 380-89 of this edition.

³ *Meditaciones, Prologus*, p. 8. Love’s *Mirror* does not include these or other Franciscan references; these omissions are adequately explained by Love’s Carthusian vocation, but it is possible that his copy of the Latin did not include them. See below for a discussion of the great variety of manuscript versions of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*. English translations are my own.

...” [... the ancient fathers ... blessed Francis and your leader, blessed Clare].⁴

Furthermore, he states that he has written the work specifically for her, recording the meditations he had found the most beautiful and uplifting from among those he had repeated to himself weekly over the course of many years; he requests that she read his little book carefully in order to repay him for the time his writing has taken from his other duties,⁵ and he provides her with two meditative role models to follow: himself and Saint Cecilia. In fact, the prologue opens with a hortative account of Cecilia’s meditative practice:

Inter alia uirtutum et laudum preconia de sanctissima uirgine Cecilia legitur quod Euangelium Christi absconditum semper portabat in pectore. Quod sic intelligi debere uidetur quod ispa de uita Domini Iesu in Euangelio tradita quedam deuociora sibi preelegerat. In quibus meditabatur die ac nocte, corde puro et integro, attencione precipua et feruenti; et completa circulacione reincipiens iterum, dulci ac suauu gustu ruminans ea, in arcano pectoris sui prudenti consilio collocabat. Simile tibi suadeo faciendum. Super omnia namque spiritualis exercicii studia hoc magis necessarium magisque proficuum credo, et quod ad celsiorem gradum producere possit. Nusquam enim inuenies ubi sic edoceri possis contra uana blandimenta et caduca et contra tribulaciones et aduersa, contra hostium tentamenta et uicia, sicut in uita Domini Iesu, que fuit absque omni defectu perfectissima. Ex frequenti enim et assueta meditacione uite ipsius adducitur anima in quandam familiaritatem, confidenciam et amorem ipsius, ita quod alia uilipendit et contemnit. Insuper fortificatur et instruitur quid facere quidue fugere debeat.⁶

[Among the other merits of the virtues and praises of the most holy virgin Cecilia, it is read that she always used to carry the Gospel of Christ hidden in her heart, and it seems that this ought to be understood in this way, that she had chosen for herself certain more devout things on the life of the Lord Jesus handed down in the Gospel. She meditated on these things day and night, with a pure and whole heart, with particular and zealous attentiveness; and, when she had completed the cycle, beginning again, chewing them over with a sweet and pleasant appetite, she arranged them

⁴ *Meditaciones*, Chapter 44: “*Quomodo discipuli Christi uellebant spicas propter famem*,” p. 167.

⁵ *Meditaciones*, Chapter 61, pp. 222-23.

⁶ *Meditaciones*, *Prologus*, p. 7.

by wise counsel in the secret place of her heart. I urge you to do likewise. For, in fact, I believe that above all the pursuits of spiritual training, this is the most necessary and the most beneficial and that it could lead to a higher level. For you will find nowhere where you could be thoroughly instructed against vain and transitory delights, against tribulations and adversities, and against the temptations and vices of enemies, as in the life of the Lord Jesus, which was completely perfect, without any defect. For the soul is led through frequent and accustomed meditation on his life to a certain intimacy, confidence, and love of him, such that it despises and slights other things. Moreover, it is strengthened and instructed in what it ought to do or to shun.]

This passage describes meditation as a spiritual discipline akin to the singing of the daily offices in its regular working through and repetition of a cycle of set exercises, a practice in which the book's Poor Clare recipient would be immersed. In fact, communal worship through the liturgy and private worship through meditation both owe their existence to the monastic ideal of the continual praying of biblical phrases as a means of accessing divine revelation more directly than through an intellectual study of the Scriptures. Whereas centuries of rote repetition of the liturgy may perhaps have worn away the memory of its initial purpose, private meditation is inherently imaginatively and emotionally engaging and would thus have remained for pseudo-Bonaventure an attractive way to seek an encounter with the divine.

Perhaps more surprisingly, pseudo-Bonaventure depicts even unwritten meditation as a form of literary composition, in which the selection and arrangement of material create a new compilation that allows the meditator to imaginatively relive another's cognitive experience. This complex process begins in the very first sentence of the prologue with the author's recorded reading and selection (punning on "legitur") from the life of Cecilia functioning as a metatextual initiator of the meditations that also parallels Cecilia's selection ("preelegerat") and collective arrangement ("collocabat") of

material from the life of Christ not on a sheet of parchment for another to read but “in the secret place of her heart” (“in arcano pectoris sui”). This opening image of Cecilia hiding, carrying (“portabat”), and meditating (“meditabatur”) in her heart the things related about Jesus in the gospel creates a further parallel, for early in Luke’s gospel the Virgin Mary herself continues to keep and observe (“conservabat”), collecting, carrying, and discussing in her heart (“conferens in corde suo”) the shepherds’ and Jesus’ own claims that her young son is the saviour, the Son of the Father.⁷ Mary is the first to meditate on the life of Christ and thus becomes the ultimate role model who is imitated by Cecilia, pseudo-Bonaventure, the Poor Clare, and all who meditate.⁸ This embedded reference to Mary enriches pseudo-Bonaventure’s introductory meditation on Cecilia by attaching it more firmly to the gospel texts from which the whole *Meditationes* derives (and with which pseudo-Bonaventure assumes his reader to be familiar), thus creating for the reader an avenue for further, unwritten devotional thought, in which she can place herself in Mary’s position in the story, imaginatively reliving her wonder and anticipation of the adult life of the divine and human Jesus.

The prologue’s account of Cecilia’s meditations is a particularly fine example of the *Meditationes*’s usual method of providing simple narrative as a means of creating mental images that are the focus of affective meditation on scenes from the lives of Christ and his mother. The actual narration draws primarily on the gospels but omits much of Christ’s teaching in favour of emotionally charged encounters with individuals,

⁷ Luke 2:19 and 51, *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, 5th revised edn., ed. Roger Gryson et al. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

⁸ On the depiction of the Virgin within the meditative tradition, see Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968), Chapter 4: “Lyrics on the Virgin and her Joys.”

particularly the Virgin Mary, the disciples, and Mary Magdalene (who appears among the disciples but is also occasionally singled out, like John, for the intensity of her love for Christ and his for her). The *Meditationes* also includes some apocryphal material that tends to increase Mary's role in her son's life. Indeed, the work seems to emphasize the female characters of the gospels as a means of accommodating its primary reader. Throughout the work, the author incorporates meditations that explicitly call on the Poor Clare to make herself imaginatively present, sympathetically watching and lovingly participating in events as they unfold, explaining that this is the way in which she will receive spiritual benefit from her reading of the meditations he offers in his book:

Tu autem si ex his fructum sumere cupis, ita presentem te exhibeas his que per Dominum Iesum dicta et facta narrantur ac si tuis auribus audires et oculis ea uideres, toto mentis affectu diligenter, delectabiliter et morose, omnibus aliis curis et sollicitudinibus tunc omissis.⁹

[But if you want to obtain fruit from these, you should present yourself in person in this way to these things that are said to have been said and done by the Lord Jesus, as if you heard them with your ears and saw them with your eyes, with the whole passion of the mind diligently, delightfully, and scrupulously, after all other cares and anxieties have been laid aside.]

Columban Fischer, a pioneer of the study of the *Meditationes*, picks up on the dramatic potential of this meditative literary technique:

En une suite merveilleuse et vivante de “tableaux” [l’auteur] “réalise” ... la vie du Christ, gardant à la naissance, à l’enfance et à la passion surtout leur place privilégiée. Il “compose la scène”, y conduit l’âme, l’arrête devant le “sujet de méditation” réalisé par lui et ne cesse de lui répéter: “Regarde, contemple chaque détail, ne te fatigue pas de les méditer; rends-toi présente à tout ce qui se dit, à tout ce qui se fait (chap. IV); délecte-toi et réjouis-toi, compatis aux souffrances; par la familiarité, par la confiance, par l’amour, de tout ton cœur, de toutes tes forces imite ton Jésus.” L’auteur . . . pratique et fait pratiquer “l’application des sens”

⁹ *Meditationes, Prologus*, p. 10.

d'une manière très active, par une contemplation typiquement franciscaine.¹⁰

The life of Christ was a particular focus for Franciscan meditation, and Sargent credits the early Franciscans with raising meditation on the humanity of Christ, formerly regarded as “an exercise for spiritual beginners” due to its emphasis on the carnal, “to a level where it became an end in itself.”¹¹ Its emphasis on the familiar within salvation history—Jesus’ everyday life among family, friends, and opponents—made this type of meditation accessible to the laity among whom the Franciscans worked. The *Meditationes* of pseudo-Bonaventure had a prominent place within this Christocentric meditation and, thereby, within later medieval devotional culture; as Elizabeth Salter has said,

in its marked stress on the emotional aspect of the Life of Christ as against theological issues, [the *Meditationes*] allies itself with that part of Franciscan activity which aimed at popularising the great devotional themes set by the foregoing centuries. The sections of the *Meditationes* which had the most influence on medieval thought and literature are those which recreate in imaginative detail the Gospel scenes, especially those of the Childhood and Passion of Christ.¹²

The *Meditationes* is typically Franciscan as well in its emphasis on Christ’s poverty and humility and the spiritual benefits to be gained by the imitation of these virtues—virtues perhaps particularly suitable for a follower of Clare but by no means

¹⁰ Columban Fischer, “Bonaventure (Apocryphes attribué à saint),” *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, vol. 1 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937), cols. 1843-56 (cols. 1851-52).

¹¹ Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. x-xii. The quotation is from p. xii.

¹² Elizabeth Salter, *Nicholas Love’s Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*, ed. James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 10 (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg, 1974), p. 43. See also pp. 42 and 44-46.

limited to members of the Franciscan vocation.¹³ Nor, indeed, is its meditative genre, which began not with the friars but with the monks and which was extending into lay devotional use well before pseudo-Bonaventure expressed his conviction that meditation, “above all the pursuits of spiritual training, ... is the most necessary and the most beneficial” and that it could conduct his sister in religion “to a higher level” or “step” (“gradum”)—certainly to a holier life as she imitates Francis in imitating Jesus, and perhaps also, eventually, to the practice of mystical contemplation, “de quibus non est sermo ad presens.”¹⁴

Pseudo-Bonaventure upholds the discipline of meditation as an affective and effective means to a spiritual goal, pictured as the reading meditator’s ascent up a staircase, conducted by the meditations through which Jesus himself teaches her how to grow in the virtues and resist temptations.¹⁵ This medieval understanding of meditation as a mental activity that is also a spiritual journey, literally conceived, is the subject of Mary Carruthers’s celebrated monograph *The Craft of Thought*. Carruthers studies monastic meditation as an example of orthopraxis, “a set of experiences and techniques, conceived as a ‘way’ to be followed” towards “enlightenment” and that is also a kind of rhetoric.¹⁶ She writes,

¹³ Francis X. Taney, Sr, Anne Miller, and C. Mary Stallings-Taney (known in earlier publications as M. Jordan Stallings, Mary Stallings, and M. Stallings-Taney) remark in the introduction to their English translation of Stallings-Taney’s Latin edition, “The very lengthy discussions on virtues are those which are distinctly Franciscan: humility (chh. 15-17), poverty (chh. 7, 44), love of prayer (ch. 36), imitation of Christ (ch. 17).” See Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, trans. and eds., *John of Caulibus: Meditations on the Life of Christ* (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1999), p. xv.

¹⁴ *Meditaciones, Prologus*, pp. 7 and 9.

¹⁵ *Meditaciones, Prologus*, p. 10.

¹⁶ Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 1.

One of the chief contributions of monasticism to rhetoric was to develop the craft of meditation upon one's reading as a self-conscious, practical art of invention, grounded in familiar rhetorical and mnemotechnical principles.

Monastic rhetoric developed an art for composing meditative prayer (its typical product) that conceived of composition in terms of making a "way" among "places" or "seats," or (in a common variation on this trope) as climbing the steps of a ladder. These "places" most commonly took the form of short texts from the Bible, or of stories also taken from that source. The trope of "steps" or "stages" was commonly applied to the affective, emotional "route" that a meditator was to take ...¹⁷

That emotional route was marked out for meditative author and reader alike by the strategic placement of striking and memorable mental images that function as catalysts for further mental activity. Carruthers stresses that such images are more important for their instrumental role in creating further cognition than for their specific content, which may or may not represent reality:

A cognitive image is designedly functional ... In monastic rhetoric such an image can have effects that are both pedagogical and ethical, but those effects occur within the alert mind and coloring emotion of a viewer/listener. The image is used by its fashioner and, if it finds artistic form, by its audience as a cognitive tool. The first question one should ask of such an image is not "What does it mean?" but "What is it good for?"¹⁸

Pseudo-Bonaventure draws a similar distinction between truth and utility, writing,

Non autem credas quod omnia que ipsum dixisse uel fecisse meditari possimus scripta sint. Ego uero ad maiorem impressionem ea sic ac si ita fuissent tibi narrabo prout contingere uel contigisse pie credi possunt, secundum quasdam imaginarias representationes quas animus diuersimode percipit. Nam circa diuinam Scripturam meditari, exponere et intelligere multifarie, prout expedire credimus possumus: dummodo non sit contra ueritatem uite, iusticie aut doctrine, id est non sit contra fidem uel bonos mores. Cum ergo me narrantem inuenies: Ita dixit uel fecit

¹⁷ Carruthers, *Craft*, p. 60. A prime example of the ladder trope is Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*. Love highly regarded Hilton's English works, several of which circulated with Love's translation of the *Meditationes*. For Love's reference to Hilton, see Michael G. Sargent, ed., *Mirror*, "De uita actiua & contemplatiua," p. 124. For a list of the *Mirror* manuscripts' other contents, see Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. lxxii-lxxxvi.

¹⁸ Carruthers, *Craft*, p. 118. See also pp. 3 and 72.

Dominus Iesus, seu alii qui introducuntur, si id per Scripturam non possit probari, non aliter accipias quam deuota meditacio exigit. Hoc enim inde accipe ac si dicerem: Mediteris quod ita dixit uel fecit Dominus Iesus. Et sic de similibus.¹⁹

[But may you not think that all the things we can meditate that he said or did have been written. Indeed, I shall tell them to you in this way for a greater impression, as if they were thus, exactly as they can piously be believed to happen or to have happened, according to certain pictured representations, which the mind perceives in different ways. For concerning divine Scripture, we can meditate, expound, and understand it in many ways, just as we think expedient: provided that it be not contrary to the truth of his life, justice, or teaching, that is, provided that it be not contrary to the faith or good customs. Therefore, when you find me saying, “Thus said or did the Lord Jesus” or others who are introduced, if it cannot be proven by Scripture, you should receive it not otherwise than as devout meditation prescribes. For take this henceforth as if I should say, “You will meditate in this way about what the Lord Jesus said or did,” and also about similar things.]

Pseudo-Bonaventure is not concerned that some meditations are based on imagined incidents not recorded in the gospels; he reminds the Poor Clare—and, by extension, us—that his meditations are concerned not so much with fact as with function. So long as they contradict neither the gospel accounts nor morality, the *Meditationes*’s “pictured representations” simultaneously amplify Scripture and provide through the “greater impression” they make on the mind an alternative way of “perceiv[ing]” those same Scriptures. As art historian Louis Gillet has remarked, “Ce livre sans prétention devint en quelque sorte un cinquième évangile, en marge des quatre autres, les complétant sur une foule de points, qui comble leurs lacunes et interprète leur silence.”²⁰ The meditations make the silence of the gospels speak by not only interpreting it, but also exploiting the emotional potential that is hidden in the gospels’ matter-of-fact style: Stallings-Taney

¹⁹ *Meditationes, Prologus*, p. 10.

²⁰ Louis Gillet, *Histoire artistique des Ordres mendiants: Essai sur l’art religieux du XIII^e au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1939), p. 97.

observes that in the *Meditationes* “There is seldom a simple narration of events without the emotional effect of the events on the various personages. Mary, Jesus, the disciples and even the enemies of Jesus are described as joyous, angry, anguished, excited, beside themselves with grief, resentful, and suspicious, to mention just some of the emotions.”²¹ These meditations amplify and embellish the Scriptural narratives with emotive incidents and images as a means of engaging the reader’s imagination and stirring up her devotion to the one in whose sufferings she participates “with the whole passion of the mind” by making herself present to what she reads of him “as if [she] heard them with [her] ears and saw them with [her] eyes.”²² Later in this thesis, I shall examine Love’s use of affective images, arguing that his translation of pseudo-Bonaventure’s meditational images and his compilation of sacramental images correspond to two kinds of rhetoric—the orthopractic rhetoric of meditation as defined by Carruthers and a rhetoric of persuasion—and that, while opposed in many respects, both kinds of rhetorically charged images are united in their purpose of combating the spread of Lollardy among the English laity.

The Audience and Dissemination of the *Meditationes*

Hitherto, I have for convenience written of the Poor Clare whom pseudo-Bonaventure explicitly addresses as though she were the sole reader of his meditative work, but there is textual evidence that he intended to reach a wider audience that included members of the laity, while the large number of surviving manuscripts and

²¹ Stallings-Taney, Taney, and Miller, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxiii.

²² *Meditationes, Prologus*, p. 10. Stallings-Taney, Taney, and Miller also note that pseudo-Bonaventure uses the historical present and parataxis to create the effect of an eye-witness account: Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxviii.

vernacular translations reveal that the work's actual audience was large and socially diverse. Carruthers explains that she ends her study of monastic meditation at A.D. 1200

not because I think some wholly new cognitive practices came into being then but because European demography changed significantly, and with it, the occasions to which the monastic rhetoric I discuss was asked to respond. Specifically, the twelfth century in Europe marks the development of a much larger, much more disparate, more urban audience, with a large contingent of vernacular-speaking, uncloistered, married laypeople. Such a citizenry makes for very different rhetorical dynamics than does the relatively small, relatively homogeneous citizenry of a monastery.

The *Meditationes*, a mid-fourteenth century product of Franciscanism—which itself both responded and contributed to this new demographic and was characterized by its popular preaching among the laity—clearly seeks to meet the spiritual needs of a diverse audience despite the prologue's single addressee. It does so by directing different passages to different groups of readers. Enclosed religious and recluses are reminded that although they have withdrawn from the world for their protection and education, bodily retreat profits little or nothing without a mental one (“ad tutelam reclusi sumus ... corporalis reclusio nichil, aut paru[u]m sine mentali prodesset”).²³ Rulers and courtiers, who might be prone to extravagance and pride, are given the example of the queen of heaven's poverty and humility:

Conspice hic quomodo uadit sola cum sponso suo regina celi et terre, et non eques sed pedes. Non ducit frequentiam militum uel baronum, non camerariarum et domicellarum comitiuam. Vadunt autem cum ea paupertas et humilitas et uerecundia, omniumque uirtutum honestas. Est enim Dominus secum: magnam et honorabilem comitiuam habet, sed non huius seculi uanam et pomposam.²⁴

²³ *Meditationes*, Chapter 6: “*De conversacione et habitacione et vita quam Domina fecit cum sponso*,” p. 30.

²⁴ *Meditationes*, Chapter 5: “*Quomodo Domina nostra iuit ad Elizabeth*,” p. 25.

[Observe here how the queen of heaven and earth advances with her husband only and not on horse but on foot. She leads neither an escort of soldiers or barons nor a retinue of personal attendants or maids. But poverty and humility and modesty and the integrity of all the virtues go with her. For the Lord is with her: she has a great and honourable retinue, but not a vain and pompous one of this world.]

Those who have taken a vow of poverty are especially warned not to despise the poor since they represent Christ, who was poor and rejected in his earthly life;²⁵ this teaching would also speak to wealthy aristocrats and bourgeoisie. There is even the surprising *exemplum* of the “pessimus mercator” [most wicked merchant], whom pseudo-Bonaventure surely wishes his readers engaged in business not to imitate: “Iudas,” the traitor who sold his lord and friend.²⁶

The variety of social references in the *Meditationes* ensured that there was something for everyone, and the surviving manuscripts, translations, and derivative works of art show that this work was widely disseminated, both geographically across Western Europe and across the social spectrum, exercising a detectable influence on later literature, art, and drama in a number of countries.²⁷ Known medieval readers of the *Meditationes* range from rulers to urban professionals. Various incipits recorded in Columban Fischer’s groundbreaking 1932 study of the *Meditationes*’s manuscript transmission reveal that a number of French translations were made for royalty and members of the aristocracy, including Isabelle de Bavière, wife of Charles VI of France;

²⁵ *Meditaciones*, Chapter 44, p. 162.

²⁶ *Meditaciones*, Chapter 75: “*Meditacio passionis in hora matutinali*,” p. 261.

²⁷ Much has been and continues to be written about the *Meditationes*’s influence in these areas. For an overview of foundational studies on these topics, see Ó Maonaigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe*, pp. 348-62.

Jean, duc de Berry; and Henry V of England.²⁸ The *Meditationes* was disseminated in professional as well as monastic and courtly circles. Dianne Phillips has recently shown that one extant mid-fourteenth-century manuscript of an Italian translation was produced for a well-to-do Bolognese lawyer, its series of illustrations “adjusted to appeal to the married lay reader enmeshed in a worldly urban setting.”²⁹ Such readers are a far cry from pseudo-Bonaventure’s explicitly intended one, but they are striking examples of the broad lay audience his text was inherently able to and did in fact reach.

The remarkable numbers of surviving manuscripts and vernacular translations listed by Fischer testify to the text’s immense popularity throughout late medieval Europe, but particularly in England, as a less theologically challenging and, thereby, more accessible narrative of Christ’s life. Fischer describes 113 surviving Latin manuscripts of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* and a further fifty-two manuscripts containing various Italian translations, twenty-seven containing English translations, and twenty-five containing French and Provençal translations.³⁰ Michael Sargent warns, however,

Because Fischer was unable to examine more than one-third of the manuscripts listed, but had to depend on printed catalogues and earlier surveys for the greater part of his information, the impression of the transmission of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* that this survey gives is incomplete, and possibly inaccurate. Fischer refers, for example, to the opinion of English scholars that the *Meditationes* were more popular in

²⁸ See Columban Fischer, “Die *Meditationes vitae Christi*. Ihre handschriftliche Ueberlieferung und die Verfasserfrage,” *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 25 (1932), 3-35, 175-209, 305-48, and 449-83 (pp. 197-205).

²⁹ Dianne Phillips, “The *Meditations on the Life of Christ*: An Illuminated Fourteenth-Century Italian Manuscript at the University of Notre Dame,” *The Text in the Community: Essays on Medieval Works, Manuscripts, Authors, and Readers*, ed. Jill Mann and Maura Nolan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), pp. 237-81 (p. 266).

³⁰ Fischer, “Die *Meditationes*,” pp. 13-35, 176-87, 188-95, 197-205.

England in the middle ages than elsewhere in Europe. Certainly, taking the numbers of manuscripts listed at face value, this would seem to be true: forty-four of the 113 manuscripts of the Latin text are to be found in English libraries, and few if any of these seem to be of anything but English provenance.... For reference to continental manuscripts of the *Meditationes*, Fischer had to depend on Fidelis a Fanna's late nineteenth-century description of manuscripts of the works of Bonaventure, or upon his own observations—and he was able to examine personally only the libraries of five cities: Florence, Bologna, Paris, Troyes and Munich.... We may well expect that a search of other continental libraries as thorough as that reported for England, or carried out by Fischer in the libraries of the five cities that he was able to visit, would discover many more manuscripts of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* in Latin and the vernacular, than Fischer listed. Even in England, which may have been disproportionately well represented, we now know of nearly four times as many manuscripts of the prose translations alone as were listed.³¹

Fischer's numbers have continued to be supplemented and corrected by subsequent research. Alberto Vaccari describes nine more manuscripts containing Italian translations and subtracts one from Fischer's list as a different work.³² Giuliano Gasca Queirazza subtracts two Latin manuscripts from Fischer's list and adds one.³³ Luis Sala Balust writes of one manuscript containing a Spanish translation and of another Latin manuscript, while Stallings-Taney in her 1965 edition of the independently circulating passion section, known as the *Meditationes de passione Christi*, cites a further three Latin

³¹ Michael G. Sargent, "Bonaventura English: A Survey of the Middle English Prose Translations of Early Franciscan Literature," *Spätmittelalterliche Geistliche Literatur in der Nationalsprache*, vol. 2, ed. James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 106.2 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1984), pp. 145-76 (pp. 149-50).

³² Alberto Vaccari, "Le Meditazione della Vita di Cristo in Volgare," *Scritti di erudizione e di filologia*, vol. 1, *Filologia biblica e patristica* (Rome: Edizioni Storia e Letteratura, 1952), pp. 341-78 (pp. 350-54).

³³ Giuliano Gasca Queirazza, "Intorno ad alcuni codici delle *Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 55 (1962), 252-58; 56 (1963), 162-74 (p. 163); and 57 (1964), 538-51 (pp. 541 and 543).

manuscripts not listed by Fischer and subtracts one from his list.³⁴ Kurt Ruh describes an Alemannish translation surviving in three manuscripts, a Bavarian translation likewise surviving in three manuscripts, a single manuscript of an East-Swabian translation, and three separate Dutch translations, each surviving in a single manuscript.³⁵ Late medieval translations of the *Meditationes* were also made into Irish Gaelic and Swedish.³⁶

Elizabeth Salter and Jason Reakes have identified eight separate partial English translations of the *Meditationes*, extant in a total of at least nineteen manuscripts—ten of these being copies of a single translation of the *Meditationes de passione Christi*³⁷—while Sargent states in one of his most recent works that there are sixty extant manuscripts containing once-complete texts and another four containing extracts of the only Middle English translation of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* to cover all of Christ's life: *Love's Mirror*.³⁸ To summarize, 115 manuscripts of the Latin *Meditationes* are now

³⁴ M. Jordan Stallings, ed., *Meditaciones de passione Christi, olim Sancto Bonaventurae attributae* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1965), pp. xiii, 47, and 8 n. 14. Balust's findings are cited by Stallings (now known as C. Mary Stallings-Taney) at p. 8 n. 14.

³⁵ Kurt Ruh, *Bonaventura deutsch: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Franziskaner-Mystik und -Scholastik*, Bibliotheca Germanica 7 (Bern: Francke, 1956), pp. 269-72 and "Meditationes vitae Christi," *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexicon*, vol. 6 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1985), cols. 282-90.

³⁶ Cainnach Ó Maonigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe*, pp. 343-44.

³⁷ See Elizabeth Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, pp. 103-05 and Jason Reakes, "The Middle English Prose Translation of the *Meditaciones de Passione Christi* and its Links with Manuscripts of *Love's Mirror*," *Notes and Queries* 27.3 (June 1980), 199-202 (p. 200).

³⁸ Michael G. Sargent, Introduction, *Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Reading Text: A Revised Critical Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2004), p. ix. For descriptions of most of these manuscripts, see Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror* (1992), pp. lxxii-lxxxvi. Three *Mirror* manuscripts also contain the separate Middle English translation of the *Meditationes de passione Christi*; one used to contain this material, which has been excised; and a further six descend from exemplars with such an excision. See Reakes, "Middle English," pp. 200-02 and Sargent, "The Textual Affiliations of the Waseda Manuscript of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*,"

known to survive in Europe³⁹ (45 of them in England), while late medieval translations survive in at least 10 vernaculars and 180 manuscripts (80 or so of these containing English translations). These more recent manuscript finds have tended to confirm rather than contradict Fischer's early conclusion that the *Meditationes* was particularly popular in England; that more than a third of all known manuscripts of the Latin *Meditationes* and nearly half of all known vernacular translations are English certainly suggests peculiar interest in the text. However, much work remains to be done on the *Meditationes* and its translations on the Continent. Further research in, particularly, Spanish, French, and German libraries will also likely reveal greater numbers of Latin and vernacular manuscripts of the *Meditationes* and broaden our understanding of the text's transmission and cultural importance in Western Europe.

Love's Middle English translation of the *Meditationes* has received a disproportionate amount of scholarly attention (an imbalance to which this thesis contributes).⁴⁰ This situation can be accounted for in a number of ways. Love's text, which was widely used by orthodox Catholic readers of the late medieval and early modern periods as an aid to private devotions, has attracted attention in the twentieth century as a means of illustrating the struggle for socio-religious control in the Wycliffite-ecclesiastical conflict of late medieval England. The *Mirror*, as an obviously

Nicholas Love at Waseda: Proceedings of the International Conference, 20-22 July 1995, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle, and Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 175-95 (pp. 176-77).

³⁹ Nineteen of these are of the *Meditationes de passione Christi*, that is, of solely the passion section of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*.

⁴⁰ For a detailed account of post-1995 scholarship on the *Meditationes* and the *Mirror*, see my "Mapping the Meditations: A Survey of Recent Research on the Pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi* and Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," forthcoming in the *Bulletin of International Medieval Research*.

orthodox text that provides affective meditation rather than theological argumentation or even gospel paraphrase, that includes polemical anti-Wycliffite material, and that was even promoted by Arundel in his campaign against heresy, provides an obvious and useful contrast to more challenging Wycliffite texts, including the English Bible itself. Thus, Margaret Deanesly has argued that the *Mirror* was an archiepiscopally commissioned alternative to the Wycliffite Bible:

There is indeed a piece of evidence that Arundel was, in 1408, seriously considering the provision of some English book in which the faithful might study the life of Christ, with due guidance from the doctors. He seems to have decided that an actual translation of the biblical text, however well accompanied by glosses, was impossible, because it afforded the heretics grounds for argument, and for the appeal to isolated texts. He therefore fell back upon a translation of the most popular gospel harmony of the middle ages, the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* then ascribed to S. Bonaventura.⁴¹

Love's *Mirror*, then, was Arundel's "counter-move to the Lollard efforts to publish the gospels in English" and was recognized as such in its own time, becoming "the orthodox reading-book of the devout laity."⁴² Deanesly concludes with the statement that Arundel's approval of the *Mirror* for mass dissemination "shews that the licensing ... of a translation of the gospels ... would have been a perfectly possible event at the date, and it is significant to note what book he did, in fact, authorise instead."⁴³

Many other scholars, interested in histories of religious and intellectual freedom or of resistance in various guises, have recently found in Love's *Mirror* the epitome of

⁴¹ Margaret Deanesly, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), p. 321.

⁴² Deanesly, *Lollard Bible*, p. 321.

⁴³ Deanesly, *Lollard Bible*, p. 321. See also pp. 322-26 and 342-43 and Arundel's seventh Constitution: "*Ne quis texta S. scripturae transferat in linguam Anglicanam*," printed in David Wilkins, ed., "*Constitutiones domini Thomae Arundel, Cantuariensis archiepiscopi ... contra haereticos*," *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, vol. 3 (London, 1737), pp. 314-19 (p. 317).

what was and is wrong with repressive, anti-intellectual organized religion, while others see the *Mirror*'s meditations as opening up possibilities for imaginative freedom.⁴⁴ Situating the *Mirror* in this debate lends immediacy to the historical subject, makes it urgent, personal. An alternative approach, which draws a strong connection from medieval to (post)modern in a non-political way, is to investigate who specifically read the *Mirror* in the fifteenth century and how they read it, what role it had in their devotions and, thus, in their daily lives, household relations, and worldview.⁴⁵ This use of the *Mirror* as a focus for exploring English lay piety in this period is a recognition and a natural consequence of the *Mirror*'s early popularity and influence: the work clearly merits study on the basis of its far-reaching impact on the religious culture of its day. Finally, the very existence of Sargent's recent editions and of Lawrence Powell's before them⁴⁶ and the text's clear, comprehensible Middle English make the *Mirror* accessible

⁴⁴ For strong critiques of the *Mirror*'s perceived political agenda, see Nicholas Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409," *Speculum* 70 (1995), 822-64 and David Aers, *Sanctifying Signs: Making Christian Tradition in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), pp. 12-28. For accounts of the *Mirror*'s open or subversive permission of imaginative freedom, see James Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution, The Oxford English Literary History*, vol. 2, 1350-1547 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 434-37, and Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 69-70.

⁴⁵ For an example of this type of study, see Carol M. Meale, "'oft siþis with grete deuotion I þought what I mi3t do pleysyng to god': The Early Ownership and Readership of Love's *Mirror*, with Special Reference to its Female Audience," *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 19-46 (especially pp. 36-38).

⁴⁶ Powell edited the *Mirror* for the Roxburgh Club in 1908, using as his base text Oxford, Brasenose College MS e.ix, collated with Oxford, Bodleian Library MS e Museo 35 and "the Sherard MS (in the possession of Lord Aldenham)," which could be the present New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 324: L. F. Powell, ed., *The Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), pp. xi-xii. The edition reached a wider audience in its 1911 Oxford reprint and its 1989 two-volume reprint by James Hogg as *Analecta Cartusiana* 91. Both reprints retain the textual layout and

for study by specialists and students alike, while the lack of editions of other European vernacular translations has made it virtually impossible for them to receive sustained scholarly attention.

A particularly relevant example of this lack of attention is the French translation entitled *Le livre dore des meditations de la vie de notre Seigneur Jesu Christ selon Bonaventure*, made in Normandy by Jehan Galopes and dedicated to Henry V and his uncle, Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter. Fischer lists four copies of the *Livre dore*, three of which include Jehan Galopes's self-identificatory dedication:⁴⁷

A tres hault, tres fort, et tres victorieux prince Henri quint de ce nom, par la grace de dieu roy d'Angleterre heritier et regent de France et duc d'Irlande, votre humble chapelain Jehan Galopes, dit le Galoys, doyen de l'eglise collegial Mons. Saint Louys de la Saulsoye en diocese d'Evreux, en votre duchie de Normandie et en la terre de la conte de Harecourt appurtenant, a tres excellent et puissant prince et mon chier monseigneur le duc d'Excestre vostre beaux oncle, honeur, obedience, et subjection.⁴⁸

One manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS français 923, introduces the dedication with the statement that Henry V commissioned the translation: "Sensuit le preambule du translateur nommé Jehan Galopes lequel à la requeste de henri quint Roy dangleterre translata de latin en francoys le livre dore de la vie de nostre seygneur Jhesus

pagination of Powell's first edition, though they differ in their front matter. Salter's works, which predate Sargent's 1992 critical edition, refer to the 1911 reprint of Powell's edition. Sargent's 2004 *Reading Text* is a slight revision of his 1992 critical edition that is probably intended for classroom use. It retains selections from the critical edition's apparatus but substitutes a new, shorter introduction.

⁴⁷ Fischer, "Die *Meditationes*," pp. 195-205. The four manuscripts are Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 213, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MSS français 922 and 923 and nouvelle acquisition français 6529; of these, Bibliothèque nationale, MS français 922 is the only one that, according to Fischer's catalogue, does not mention Jehan Galopes or include the dedication.

⁴⁸ This is the incipit to the Cambridge manuscript, as transcribed by Deanesly in "The Gospel Harmony of John de Caulibus, or S. Bonaventura," *Collectanea Franciscana*, vol. 2, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Manchester: British Society of Franciscan Studies, 1922), pp. 10-19 (p. 11).

Crist, duquel livre lacteur est nommé bonne adventure.”⁴⁹ Although this note’s garbled version of Bonaventure’s name might cast some doubt on its overall accuracy, one might wonder how far the author of this fulsome dedication was engaged in legitimizing Henry V’s rule over both England and France.

Galopes’s translation no less than Love’s was affiliated with Lancastrian power. Love’s connection with the Lancastrian regime comes through his association with Arundel, who was not only the archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the English church—and, in this role, the legislator against Bible translation and approver of Love’s *Mirror*—he was also the usurping Henry IV’s chancellor, the virtual head of state. Just how “heritier” is Henry V’s kingship of England in the light of his father’s usurpation? Imitating his father’s use of force, Henry established his regency over France by means of conquest. His claim to each kingdom was somewhat tenuous, and Jehan Galopes’s dedication of his French translation to him and to Thomas Beaufort, one of the most prominent English military figures in France at the time, reads as flattery or even possibly collusion.⁵⁰

A study of this translation, near contemporary with Love’s but made across the channel, in French, and in the context of the Hundred Years’ War, would no doubt reveal a very different and dynamic picture of the *Meditationes*’s political and devotional use by fifteenth-century clerical and lay elites, while contributing a third dimension to questions of literacy and language politics and troubling the notion of the nationalistic rise of the

⁴⁹ This is a rubric on folio 4r, as given by Fischer in “Die *Meditationes*,” p. 200.

⁵⁰ Beaufort forms a further link between Galopes and Love: his wife owned a copy of the *Mirror*, in life he was a patron of Mount Grace, representing its economic concerns to his nephew the king, and he was buried at Mount Grace upon his death in 1426. See pp. 51-53 below.

English vernacular in this period. However, no such study has yet been made. Galopes's translation has been referred to only briefly by Deanesly, Salter, and Kantik Ghosh.⁵¹ Whereas the political significance of Love's translation is a long and ongoing topic of academic debate, Galopes's has fallen through the crack between English and French literary history, remaining unedited and unstudied despite its potential significance.⁵²

However, Jehan Galopes's is only one of many known but neglected medieval, Continental translations of the *Meditationes*, in which there is an apparent lack of interest. Cainneach Ó Maonaigh's 1944 edition of the medieval Irish translation does not seem to have instigated any further studies of this text, and Karl-Ernst Geith, one of very few scholars working on the German reception of the *Meditationes* and textually related lives of Christ, has stressed that there is still much to be done and called for a parallel-text critical edition of Michaelis de Massa's *Vita Christi* and its two major medieval German translations as a crucial first step; Massa's *Vita Christi*, like Ludolph of Saxony's better known work of that name, derives from the *Meditationes*.⁵³ I am not aware of any tradition of textual or literary scholarship on the *Meditationes* and its translations in France. Although the interests of modern scholarship account for the much greater attention the English translations have received, and although much work on the manuscripts, especially those in other vernaculars, remains to be done, it nevertheless

⁵¹ Deanesly, "Gospel Harmony," p. 11; Deanesly, *Lollard Bible*, p. 325; Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, p. 45; and Kantik Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 248, n. 12.

⁵² I hope to work on the *Livre dore* in the future.

⁵³ See Karl-Ernst Geith, "Lateinische und deutschsprachige Leben Jesu-Texte: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung," *Jahrbuch der Oswald von Wolkenstein Gesellschaft* 12 (2000), 273-89.

appears as if the *Meditationes* was indeed more popular in England than anywhere else, as Fischer's study suggests.

The most recent translators of the *Meditationes* have surmised that this is due in part to "the ubiquitous influence of the Franciscans" in England,⁵⁴ but the *Meditationes* circulated beyond Franciscan control (as witnessed by its translation by a Carthusian) and in a number of abbreviated versions, many of which did not include the specifically Franciscan references.⁵⁵ I would suggest, then, that the *Meditationes*'s popularity in late medieval England arose primarily as part of the wider orthodox reaction against Lollardy and was further increased by the wide dissemination of Love's approved translation, which circulated alongside and likely drew educated readers' attention back to its Latin source.

The Texts and Origins of the *Meditationes*: A Survey of Problems and Partial Solutions

Before investigating the nature of Love's adaptation of the *Meditationes* and of his work's intended and actual audience, it would be well to examine the complex question of the *Meditationes*'s textual history, which has furnished a topic for sporadic and largely inconclusive scholarly debate over the past seventy-five years, though the study of the *Meditationes* began as early as the eighteenth century. The work circulated in the middle ages in at least two distinct Latin versions and an indeterminate number of miscellaneous abridgements and translations. Arguments over its origins—content, author, and language of composition—often hinge on the relationships between these

⁵⁴ Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxix.

⁵⁵ Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxv. The authors seem unaware that the textual evidence they provide undermines their argument about Franciscan influence.

various forms of the text. I cannot hope to clarify these issues, but I believe it important to acknowledge them in some detail since ignorance of the difficulties surrounding Love's source has rendered even some of the best work on the *Mirror* in some respects misleading.

The key piece of scholarship that initiated the modern study of the *Meditationes*, and of its origins and textual transmission in particular, was Columban Fischer's 1932 "Die *Meditationes vitae Christi*." This lengthy article on the *Meditationes*'s Latin and vernacular manuscript tradition was followed five years later by Fischer's entry in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* on the works commonly (and erroneously) attributed to Bonaventure; this article includes a useful summary of Fischer's hypotheses about the *Meditationes*'s origins.⁵⁶ These hypotheses concern two main topics: the relationships between various textual versions of the *Meditationes* and the authorship of the original version. Fischer's works opened a debate on these issues that carries on to this day.

In "Die *Meditationes*," Fischer delineates three separate manuscript versions of the *Meditationes*: a long text, consisting of ninety-five chapters; a short text, consisting of forty chapters; and the *Meditationes de passione domini nostri Jesu Christi*, comprising only the chapters narrating Christ's life from the last supper to the descent into hell (commonly referred to as the passion section), which circulated independently as well as within the other versions.⁵⁷ Even this division is somewhat too tidy. In response to Fischer's provision of exact numbers of chapters for the long and short versions, Michael Sargent warns that the number of chapters in any given manuscript is determined by omissions and "the normal scribal variation in division of the material," and Fischer

⁵⁶ Fischer, "Bonaventure," cols. 1848-53.

⁵⁷ Fischer, "Die *Meditationes*," pp. 312-40.

himself specifies that manuscripts of the long version tend to vary in their division of the lengthy tract *De vita contemplativa et activa* that follows the chapter *De ministerio Marthe et Marie*, while manuscripts of the short version generally lack this chapter and the following tract, the chapter *De missione Spiritus Sancti*, and the Franciscan references, direct addresses to intended recipients (by which he presumably means the Poor Clare and Franciscans more generally), legends, and private revelations scattered throughout the long text.⁵⁸ Fischer avoids stating an opinion as to whether the short version is an abridgement of the long or the long an expansion of the short, but he boldly puts forth his controversial view that the *Meditationes de passione Christi* was the original version, written by Bonaventure himself. It has been the work of scholars ever since to reject, support, or modify various aspects of this claim.

From its composition until the eighteenth century, the *Meditationes vitae Christi* had been consistently if incorrectly ascribed to Bonaventure, perhaps due in part to certain similarities in subject matter (though not in treatment) to his *Lignum vitae* and *Vitis mystica* and the *Stimulus amoris*, which was possibly composed by James of Milan but was also ascribed to Bonaventure in the middle ages.⁵⁹ This traditional view of the *Meditationes*'s authorship was so firmly entrenched that, as Stallings-Taney observes, "From 1495 until 1868, the MVC was included in every edition of the *Opera* of Saint Bonaventure."⁶⁰ However, the 1868 edition, A. C. Peltier's reprint of the 1596 Vatican

⁵⁸ Sargent, "Bonaventura English," p. 149 and Fischer, "Bonaventure," cols. 1850 and 1851. Fischer's list of common omissions is supplemented in Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxv.

⁵⁹ See Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, p. 41; Sargent, "Bonaventura English," p. 158; and Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. xiii-xiv.

⁶⁰ C. Mary Stallings-Taney, "The Pseudo-Bonaventure *Meditaciones vite Christi: Opus Integrum*," *Franciscan Studies* 55 (1998), 253-80 (p. 254).

edition of the *Meditationes*, also acknowledges the scepticism of the eighteenth-century scholar Benedetto Bonelli, whose ground-breaking argument for a Tuscan author, perhaps Iohannis de Caulibus, it reprints as an introduction to the text.⁶¹ Many subsequent editors, translators, and scholars have referred to the author of the *Meditationes* cautiously as “pseudo-Bonaventure,” with the exception of Stallings-Taney, who ascribes the work to Iohannis de Caulibus, and the partial exception of Fischer, who sought to recover Bonaventuran authorship for what he considered the earliest version of the text.

In opposition to the attribution of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* to Iohannis de Caulibus, Fischer modified the traditional view that Bonaventure wrote the entire *Meditationes vitae Christi*, proposing instead joint authorship between Bonaventure and a group of anonymous Franciscans. Fischer maintains that Bonaventure did in fact compose the *Meditationes de passione Christi*, in Latin, and that this is the earliest form of the text, the rest of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* being a later compilation made in Italian by a number of unidentifiable Franciscans, who together translated the *Meditationes de passione Christi* and incorporated it into their own, longer account of Christ’s life.⁶² Presumably, the whole was later (re)translated into Latin and thence into the variety of European vernaculars found in the manuscripts listed by Fischer and others.

The basis of Fischer’s belief that the *Meditationes de passione Christi* was written by Bonaventure is his observation that although most manuscripts of the *Meditationes*

⁶¹ Benedetto Bonelli, “*Meditationes vitae Christi ad quamdam monialem sanctae Clarae*,” *Prodromus ad opera omnia S. Bonaventurae* (Bassano, 1767), cols. 697-700, repr. A. C. Peltier, ed., *Opera Omnia Sancti Bonaventurae*, vol. 12 (Paris: Vives, 1868), pp. xli-xliv. The text of the *Meditationes* appears on pp. 509-630.

⁶² Fischer, “*Die Meditationes*,” pp. 449-83 and “Bonaventure,” cols. 1850 and 1851.

vitae Christi do not name an author and a few make various other attributions, a number of manuscripts, especially English ones and ones of the *Meditationes de passione Christi*, do in fact name Bonaventure: “selon ce témoignage unanime, saint Bonaventure en est seul l’auteur.”⁶³ Trusting that these witnesses are reliable, Fischer concludes that “Si saint Bonaventure n’est pas l’auteur des *MVC*, il l’est du moins des *Meditationes de Passione*: toute la tradition manuscrite le prouve et rien de la part du texte ne s’y oppose.”⁶⁴ This is simply not the case. A number of factors, including sustained attention to the manuscript texts, have combined to disprove Fischer’s theory.

Cainneach Ó Maonaigh provides in the “English Appendix” to his otherwise Irish-only publication a thorough summary of the authorship debate, detailing several reasons for rejecting Fischer’s view. I shall quote this passage at length as it is a good illustration of just how “thorny [the] question of authorship” can be and as it raises a number of points to which my discussion will return.⁶⁵ Ó Maonaigh writes:

The *MVC* has all the evidence of being a homogeneous text. There is no reason from the point of view of language, style, or content, for postulating different authors for the section on the passion and the rest of the text. On the other hand, the *Meditationes de passione* has no particular resemblance to any of the genuine writings of Bonaventure on the passion.⁶⁶

Other objections are that the passion section is more likely an extract than the original version of the text; that the attribution to Bonaventure found in the *Meditationes de passione*’s manuscript tradition could be a result of the first scribe to copy the passion section as an extract also copying this attribution from his full-text exemplar; and that

⁶³ Fischer, “Bonaventure,” col. 1850.

⁶⁴ Fischer, “Bonaventure,” col. 1851.

⁶⁵ Ó Maonaigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe*, p. 328.

⁶⁶ Ó Maonaigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe*, p. 330.

There is no proof for the statement that the *MVC* was originally written in Italian.... Even if the earliest copies now in existence are Italian, and even if early Italian copies are more numerous than early Latin ones, we cannot therefore conclude that the Italian is the earlier version. The text could have been translated very shortly after the writing of the original and could have proved more popular in the vernacular than in its original dress.⁶⁷

Ó Maonaigh also invokes Livario Oliger's theory that the *Meditationes* came to be attributed to Bonaventure as a result of a mis-expansion of an abbreviation: perhaps the author of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* (or a later scribe) recorded that the work was "secundum Bernardum," an authority often quoted in the *Meditationes*, but this name was shortened to "B." by some scribes and then misunderstood by some others, resulting in several centuries of misattribution.⁶⁸

The work of Stallings-Taney, the foremost specialist on the *Meditationes vitae Christi* and editor of the only critical editions of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* and the *Meditationes de passione*, tends to support Ó Maonaigh's points. In an article complementing her edition of the former, Stallings-Taney describes herself as having been "both the beneficiary of, and one who paid a penalty for, Columban Fischer's lead in MVC research";⁶⁹ she repeats that the *Meditationes vitae Christi* is the work of a single author other than Bonaventure, presenting an impressive range of textual evidence that the *Meditationes de passione Christi* is integral to the *Meditationes vitae Christi*, and she

⁶⁷ Ó Maonaigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe*, pp. 330-31. Fischer, by contrast, argues in "Bonaventure," col. 1851, that the attribution to Bonaventure was made first in the earlier *Meditationes de passione Christi*, then taken to refer to the full *Meditationes vitae Christi* into which the *Meditationes de passione Christi* had eventually been incorporated.

⁶⁸ Ó Maonaigh, English Appendix, *Smaointe*, p. 329; Livario Oliger, "Le *Meditationes vitae Christi* del Pseudo-Bonaventura," *Studi francescani* 7 (1921), 143-83 (p. 167); 8 (1922), 18-47. While it is interesting in this context that Love's *Mirror* uses the abbreviation "B." for "Bonaventure," it is not clear whether or not Oliger's hypothesis is based on an examination of any of the Latin manuscripts in question. That Fischer does not refute this suggestion is probably an indication that he was not aware of it.

⁶⁹ Stallings-Taney, "*Opus Integrum*," p. 255.

also reasserts that the language of composition was Latin.⁷⁰ This last point is particularly relevant as Sarah McNamer has suggested that the original *Meditationes* was neither the *Meditationes de passione Christi* nor the 108-chapter long Latin *Meditationes vitae Christi* presented as the original version in Stallings-Taney's edition, but a forty-one chapter Italian version.⁷¹

McNamer's theory, which she has not yet fully set out, might seem to be nothing more than an unwillingness to let go of elements of Fischer's view, much as Fischer's seems an unwillingness to let go of the attribution to Bonaventure. However, whereas belief in Bonaventure's authorship of any part of the *Meditationes* has been shown to be untenable, the same cannot be said about the possibility of a shorter, Italian-language original text. Ó Maonaigh's arguments against an Italian original are somewhat strained, and the evidence that Stallings-Taney offers in support of her conviction that the long Latin version is the original is not conclusive. She asserts that there are "several passages in which the Italian text is clearly a garbled translation of the quite clear Latin text—not the other way around" and presents as further evidence of Latin composition several examples of the use of Latinized Italian words instead of existing Latin words.⁷² Given the *Meditationes*'s textual variety, however, one might ask which "Italian text" she has in mind and if it is possible that some Italian versions are original while others are poor translations from Latin, while the Italianate Latin of the long text could just as easily be the result of translation into Latin by an Italian with a limited Latin vocabulary as of composition in Latin by such a person. Stallings-Taney's statements seem to constitute an

⁷⁰ Stallings-Taney, "*Opus Integrum*," pp. 256-57 and 260-64.

⁷¹ Sarah McNamer, "Further Evidence for the Date of the Pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 235-61 (p. 257).

⁷² Stallings-Taney, "*Opus Integrum*," pp. 263-64.

indirect response to McNamer's statement that, unlike the idiosyncratic short Latin text as described by Fischer, "The 41-chapter Italian text is in fact a unified whole, consistent in texture and coherent in design," not a translation of an abridgement of the long Latin text but the version that "was written prior to the other versions of the *MVC*."⁷³

This possibly original, short Italian version is not to be taken for a translation of the Latin so-called short text—a term and a concept that McNamer has shown to be problematic. Stallings-Taney and McNamer agree that the long Latin *Meditationes* is the stable textual version of which the short Latin version described by Fischer is an abridgement and that Bonaventure wrote no part of any version of the *Meditationes*.⁷⁴ Stallings-Taney has shown that the original version of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*—whether long or short, Latin or Italian—included the passion sequence within a fuller account of Christ's life, while McNamer's new dating of the long Latin *Meditationes vitae Christi* to between *circa* 1336 and *circa* 1364 makes authorship by Bonaventure, who died in 1274, impossible.⁷⁵ However, whereas Stallings-Taney continues to be influenced by Fischer's neat categorization of the *Meditationes* into three clearly defined versions, McNamer argues that

Fischer's division of the Latin manuscripts into three distinct redactions, the *MPC*, the *kleine Text*, and the *grosse Text* ... does not accurately represent the textual situation: while the manuscripts of the *MPC* and of the *grosse Text* have enough uniformity and are substantial enough in number to constitute distinct versions, such is not the case with the other

⁷³ McNamer, "Further Evidence," p. 257.

⁷⁴ See McNamer, "Further Evidence," pp. 250 and 252-56 and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Meditaciones*, p. xii.

⁷⁵ McNamer, "Further Evidence," p. 250. That Bonaventure was not the author is not McNamer's contention, but her dating can be invoked as a tangible proof of this. The dates of composition of the various Latin abridgements and of McNamer's proposed Italian original and the date from which the *Meditationes de passione Christi* began to circulate independently of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* remain undetermined.

Latin manuscripts. There is no indication that they are anything other than varied extracts from the *grosse Text* ...⁷⁶

McNamer observes that Fischer based his description of the short text on a single fifteenth-century manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 3758, a particularly eccentric abridgement, and that there is an “extreme paucity of manuscripts of the *kleine Text* as defined by Fischer:” three, to be precise.⁷⁷ She continues, “There are several more Latin copies which appear from the catalogue descriptions to be versions of the *kleine Text*, but these in fact vary considerably in structure and content”—so much so that she concludes that “the *kleine Text* is not in fact an independent version in its own right. Further scrutiny of the manuscripts reveals that Fischer assumed a greater uniformity among the *MVC* manuscripts of intermediate length than is in fact substantiated by the evidence.”⁷⁸

Somewhat familiar with McNamer’s work but perhaps more so with Fischer’s, Stallings-Taney has continued to describe the various versions of the *Meditationes* in Fischer’s terms even as she acknowledges to some degree the greater textual variety of abridgements, unfortunately presenting a confused account of the manuscript tradition in the process. In the article complementing her critical edition, for example, she both refers to “the shorter text” that consists of “about forty” chapters and states that “These shorter version texts vary considerably in length as well as in chapter titles and chapter divisions.”⁷⁹ This contradiction is resolved in the introduction to the translation of Stallings-Taney’s critical edition, but even here the echo of Fischer’s categories could

⁷⁶ McNamer, “Further Evidence,” p. 256.

⁷⁷ McNamer, “Further Evidence,” pp. 251-53 and 255.

⁷⁸ McNamer, “Further Evidence,” pp. 256 and 251.

⁷⁹ Stallings-Taney, “*Opus Integrum*,” pp. 255-256 and 256 n. 19.

mislead readers not already familiar with the complexities of the *Meditationes*'s textual traditions: "The *MVC* enjoyed a rapid dispersion and the complete text was often abridged, depending on the interests of varied audiences. Apart from *a*, *b* and *c*," the manuscript groupings on which Stallings-Taney's edition is based and whose degree of completeness she does not state, "the remaining manuscripts vary in length, from what Fischer called a 'short text,' to just the chapters on the passion, to the complete text of 108 chapters."⁸⁰ Stallings-Taney's continued dependence on Fischer is understandable, given that Fischer's study is the foundation upon which all subsequent textual scholarship, including Stallings-Taney's own, is built: his categories are necessarily entrenched in the mind of anyone working in this field. Furthermore, Stallings-Taney's editorial work has caused her to focus on the textually stable *Meditationes de passione Christi* and the long *Meditationes vitae Christi* rather than on the slippery shorter versions, which, in their great variety, elude categorization. However, since Stallings-Taney's recent publications in connection with her critical edition of the long Latin text—the introductions to the edition and to its English translation and a supplementary article—will be many scholars' and students' introduction to the *Meditationes*, it is unfortunate that the treatment of the abbreviated Latin versions they will find is brief and somewhat misleading.

Furthermore, despite the circumstantial nature of the limited evidence, Stallings-Taney repeatedly refers to Iohannis de Caulibus as the author of the long Latin text of the *Meditationes* from which the various Latin abridgements derive. Advocates of Iohannis de Caulibus's authorship from Bonelli on have cited as evidence two fleeting references

⁸⁰ Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxv.

to him made by a contemporary Franciscan, Bartholomew of Pisa. In *De conformitate vitae beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Jesu Redemptoris nostri*, Bartholomew records, “Tractatum meditationis super evangelia fecit frater Iohannes de Caulibus de sancto Geminiano” [Brother Iohannes de Caulibus of San Gemignano composed a meditational tract on the gospels] and “Custodia Senensis habet ... Locum de sancto Geminiano, de quo exstitit oriundus frater Iohannes de Caulibus, magnus praedicator et devotus, qui meditationes super evangelia fecit pulchras” [The Subdivision of Sienna includes ... the Monastery of San Gemignano, whence came a brother born there, Iohannes de Caulibus, a great and devoted preacher, who composed beautiful meditations on the gospels].⁸¹

Acknowledging that Iohannis de Caulibus was probably not the sole Franciscan occupied at that time and in that general area with composing meditations on the gospels, Stallings-Taney cites the reference in the *Meditationes* to a Franciscan pilgrim’s account that the distance between Calvary and the gates of Jerusalem is the same as that between “locus noster” and the gates of San Gemignano to strengthen the claim—which had been summarily dismissed by Fischer in 1937 on the grounds that all alleged “preuves sont insuffisantes”—that Iohannis wrote this work.⁸² Fischer’s own views of the *Meditationes*’s authorship were poorly supported, as we have seen. The question of authorship, like so many others, remains more a matter of reasoned opinion than of solid evidence at this stage.

Thankfully, the *Mirror* poses fewer problems of the sort that have plagued the study of the *Meditationes*. However, it presents challenges of its own, as we shall see.

⁸¹ Quoted in Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Meditaciones*, p. x.

⁸² See Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Meditaciones*, p. x; *Meditaciones*, Chapter 77: “*Meditacio passionis ad terciam*,” p. 269; and Fischer, “Bonaventure,” col. 1851.

CHAPTER 2

LOVE'S *MIRROR*: CONSTRUCTING AN AUDIENCE**The Dissemination and Readership of the *Mirror***

Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* became one of the most popular Middle English works in late medieval England. Its 64 surviving manuscripts are surpassed by only the Wycliffite Bible's more than 200, the *Prick of Conscience*'s 123, and the *Canterbury Tales*'s 82, while its 9 pre-Reformation printed editions surpass the 5 of the *Canterbury Tales* (the Wycliffite Bible and the *Prick of Conscience* were not printed until modern times), firmly placing the *Mirror* among the most widely read of all Middle English books.¹ Carol M. Meale, author of an extremely thorough and insightful study of the *Mirror*'s fifteenth- and sixteenth-century readership, asserts that "Nicholas Love's translation and adaptation of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes Vitae Christi* ... has a strong claim to be considered the most popular of devotional treatises circulating in late-medieval England, a popularity which may be defined and deduced not simply numerically, on the basis of the number of surviving copies, but also sociologically, from the information which may be recovered concerning the nature of its audience."² Indeed, Meale's study provides striking evidence for the *Mirror*'s increasing popular appeal throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; initially the preserve of the nobility and the religious elite, within a generation of its

¹ Figures for manuscripts and printed editions are taken from Sargent, Introduction, *Reading Text*, p. ix, n.1. For a study of the early printed editions of the *Mirror*, see Lotte Hellinga, "Nicholas Love in Print," *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 143-62.

² Meale, "Early Ownership," p. 19.

composition the *Mirror* was copied for members of the gentry, secular clergy, and bourgeoisie—and one copy was even owned by an early sixteenth-century servant.

Moreover, the manuscript evidence suggests that the *Mirror* attracted readers with a wide range of literary and religious interests as well. Although the majority of the manuscripts of the *Mirror* have no other contents, twenty-one of the sixty-four surviving manuscripts do in fact contain extracts or complete copies of other works, and the combinations of texts in these manuscripts suggest the interests of these manuscripts' owners.³ Certain patterns of combinations of texts appear in several manuscripts, pointing to the latest fads in devotional reading, while the contents of a few manuscripts seem to signify the particular concerns of their owners: penance, the good death, homiletics, controversial theology, even the question of whether or not to marry.

The *Mirror* is grouped most frequently with various of Walter Hilton's works,⁴ followed by, in descending order, three separate English recensions of William Flete's *De Remediis contra temptationes*, saints' lives, and texts of Marian devotion. Among works which appear with the *Mirror* in two manuscripts are Adam Cartusianus (Adam of Dryburgh)'s *De Instructione anime*, the *Pore Caitif*, charters of Christ, and the *Revelations* of Birgitta of Sweden, while the *Revelations* of Elizabeth of Hungary, John Lydgate's *Kings of England*, and a number of other texts appear with the *Mirror* once each.

³ For descriptions of *Mirror* manuscripts, including lists of their other contents, see Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. lxxii-lxxxvi.

⁴ The *Mirror* appears twice with Hilton's *On the Mixed Life* and once with each of Book 1 of the *Scale of Perfection*, an extract from the *Prickying of Love*, the commentary on "Qui habitat" (Psalm 90), and the commentary on "Bonum est" (Psalm 91).

Some texts that appear with the *Mirror* give us a limited amount of information about their first owners. Hilton's *Epistle on Mixed Life* in Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 324 suggests a lay owner interested in imitating monastic life—the type of reader that Love might well have had in mind when he made his translation. By contrast, the owner of Pierpont Morgan Library MS 648 seems to have been interested in the current debate over Bible translation. This manuscript includes an English-language tract defending the translation of the Bible into English, but the presence of a Latin extract from Birgitta of Sweden's *Revelationes* alongside this tract and Love's *Mirror* makes it unlikely that the manuscript was owned by an outright Wycliffite, as non-Scriptural revelations were more likely to inspire Wycliffite contempt than interest. The Morgan manuscript was more likely owned by an orthodox believer with an interest in the religious debates of the day, though its diverse contents suggest a muddy middle ground between “orthodoxy” and “heresy” in fifteenth-century England. The seeming no-man's-land between these camps might actually have been populated with individuals who held a range of religious interests and views, some “orthodox” and others “heretical” by the definitions of the twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholarship that, taking its cue from medieval polemics, tends to distinguish these categories perhaps more sharply than it should. One fierce defender of orthodoxy, Reginald Pecock, bishop of St. Asaph and Chichester, seems nevertheless to have been involved in a scheme to make religious books available to Londoners without the interference of the ecclesiastical authorities and through a method of book distribution similar to one used by Lollards.⁵ Love and even

⁵ See Wendy Scase, “Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's ‘Common-Profit’ Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London,” *Medium Ævum* 61 (1992), 261-74.

Arundel further problematize the binary view of late medieval English Christianity: Love's translation from pseudo-Bonaventure won Arundel's warmest approbation for its anti-Lollard stance, yet the *Mirror* includes translations of biblical verses into English, and Bible translation was one of the characteristic Wycliffite practices that Arundel's Constitutions sought to stamp out.

In fact, the *Mirror* was so popular that it was even read by at least one Lollard—who was sufficiently resistant to the Treatise on the Sacrament's treatment of transubstantiation to seek to protect later readers from its influence. Salter observes that on folio 128r of Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.15.32 “the section heading ‘Nota miraculum de corpore Christi in sacramento alteris’” and most of the text until folio 129r “are scratched through, and a marginal note inserted: ‘Do not beleve thys foleshnes’.”⁶

However, there is an overwhelming range of evidence that Love's *Mirror* quickly found a large and receptive audience among the orthodox. Much of this evidence is contained in the surviving manuscripts themselves, in inscriptions of ownership and the crests and portraits of the aristocrats who commissioned them—perhaps, in some cases, as much to display their wealth as to practice the meditations contained in the *Mirror*, many of which extol the simple life shared by the Franciscan author and Carthusian translator but not by these prosperous lay people. The *Mirror*'s reactionary orthodoxy might also have contributed to its popularity among members of the ruling class, who, in the wake of the 1381 Rebellion and the Oldcastle uprising of 1414, were likely to associate Lollardy with insurrection. David Knowles has suggested that the sudden growth of the Carthusian order in England, which “had occurred in the very decades

⁶ Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, p. 14.

when the fiercest attacks had been made on the religious life ... by Wyclif and the Lollards” and which was brought about by the founding of charterhouses by royal or aristocratic patrons rather than by internal pressures, “was perhaps a reaction, however indirect, in the king and the great nobles to the anti-monastic propaganda of the time.”⁷ As a Carthusian production and a work approved by Archbishop Arundel for dissemination throughout the country “ad fidelium edificacionem, & hereticorum siue lollardorum confutacionem” [for the edification of the faithful and the confutation of heretics or Lollards],⁸ Love’s *Mirror* could be regarded as an emblem of both orthodoxy and prerogative. Not all owners of the *Mirror* recognized its Carthusian connection, however, or even distinguished this translation from its source or other works. Wills sometimes provide evidence of ownership of additional copies of the *Mirror*, since lost, but the similarity of the titles, many in Latin, by which Love’s and other translations of the *Meditationes* were known, when they were not called simply “Bonaventure,” often makes it difficult or impossible to determine whether Love’s translation, another translation, a version of the Latin, or a similar work is meant.⁹

Some certain knowledge of the *Mirror*’s readership can be gained by the direct indications of early ownership contained in one quarter of the surviving *Mirror* manuscripts. Of the forty-nine copies that remain complete, eight have marks of fifteenth-century ownership, a further seven of sixteenth-century ownership, and one of both. Between them, these sixteen manuscripts represent at least twenty-three early owners of Love’s *Mirror*, ranging from feuding aristocrats to a bibliophilic abbess, from a

⁷ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 2, *The End of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 134.

⁸ *Mirror*, “Memorandum,” p. 7.

⁹ See Meale, “Early Ownership,” pp. 30-34 for examples.

prominent courtier under Henry VIII and Mary Tudor to an obscure gentlewoman's servant. Meale focuses on its female owners and readers in particular. Examining numerous cases in detail, she observes that the *Mirror*'s earliest owners were the social and religious elite but that the work's readership dropped progressively lower on the social scale as the fifteenth century wore on;¹⁰ this shift in readership was likely aided by the spread of literacy throughout these centuries and the availability of cheap printed copies of the *Mirror* from 1484 on. A dramatic case in point is the early fifteenth-century copy Tokyo, Takamiya MS 8, whose first owner was Joan de Holand (née Stafford), widow of the Thomas de Holand, Earl of Kent, who co-founded Mount Grace Charterhouse. Joan gave the manuscript during her lifetime to Alice Belacyse, a Yorkshire gentlewoman, who, in turn, gave it to her servant Elizabeth.¹¹ Thus, the manuscript descended in only three generations of readers from a countess to a serving-woman, an occurrence that illustrates both the remarkable rise of lower class (and female) literacy and the class-transcending networks created by women's shared devotional reading.

Here, however, I shall focus on a few examples of the earliest, elite readers of the *Mirror*, outlining in greater detail than has been done so far their family connections, political and religious affiliations, and possible interests in the text. The *Mirror* was read in the first instance by the firmly orthodox, especially aristocrats who wished to imitate monastic reading in their own households. This is the practice later in the fifteenth

¹⁰ See Meale, "Early Ownership," pp. 27-28. See also Hellinga, "Love in Print."

¹¹ Meale, "Early Ownership," p. 35.

century of Cecily Neville, mother of Edward IV and Richard III.¹² For such readers, the book's social conservatism was likely an asset, while Love's self-conscious role as spiritual director furthered their own monastic role playing, allowing them, while remaining members of the secular elite, whose potentially comfortable lives were continually disrupted by feuds and rebellions and wars, to join in a standard devotional activity of the enclosed religious, to construct their daily lives in set patterns of movement between the earthly and the heavenly kingdom, and, thus, to ensure some access to the latter and some stability in the former.

This is likely the value that Joan de Holand found in her reading of the *Mirror*.¹³ Joan was the daughter of Hugh Stafford, earl of Stafford, who fought in Edward, the Black Prince's French campaigns of the 1360s and '70s. In 1385, Stafford and his eldest son, Ralph, also joined Richard II's abortive Scottish campaign. En route to Scotland, a brawl broke out at York between the Stafford esquires and those of John de Holand, the king's half-brother, and, in the ensuing quarrel, John de Holand killed Ralph Stafford. Holand was comparatively lightly disciplined for this offence and was soon restored to royal favour, being created earl of Huntingdon in 1388 and duke of Exeter in 1397.

¹² For discussions of Cecily Neville's devotional regime, see C. A. J. Armstrong, "The Piety of Cicely, Duchess of York: A Study in Late Medieval Culture," *For Hillaire Belloc: Essays in Honour of his 72nd Birthday*, ed. Douglas Woodruff (London: Sheed & Ward, 1942), pp. 73-94 and William Abel Pantin, "Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman," *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 398-422 (p. 412).

¹³ The biographical details given in this paragraph are drawn from Carole Rawcliffe, "Stafford, Hugh, second earl of Stafford (c. 1342-1386), magnate and soldier," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online* (Oxford University Press, 2004-2007) and George Edward Cokayne, "Hugh (de Stafford), Earl of Stafford, Lord Stafford and Lord Audley," *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom Extant, Extinct, or Dormant*, vol. 12, ed. Geoffrey H. White (London: St. Catherine Press, 1953), pp. 177-79.

Richard II organized a ceremony of formal reconciliation between Stafford and Holand in 1386, but the feud seems to have continued. In a final attempt to end the quarrel, Joan Stafford was married in 1392, at a cost of 4000 marks to her family, to Thomas de Holand, the nephew of her brother's murderer.

Joan's troubles did not end there. Her husband's career was particularly tumultuous, involving a sudden rise and an equally sudden fall.¹⁴ Thomas de Holand inherited the earldom of Kent from his father in 1397 and that same year was created duke of Surrey as a reward for helping rid his uncle, Richard II, of political enemies. In 1398 he was granted permission to found Mount Grace Charterhouse on a North Yorkshire manor owned by the local Ingleby family, who could not afford to endow the foundation; indeed, providing for Carthusian prayer in this way cost Holand £1000. Meanwhile, his secular affairs continued to prosper. In 1398 Holand was made both marshal of England for life and lieutenant of Ireland. He also profited from the banishment of Henry Bolingbroke, receiving on John of Gaunt's death in 1399 the custody of two Lancastrian manors that Bolingbroke would have inherited had he been in the country. Given Holand's strong support of King Richard and personal gain from Bolingbroke's loss, it is not surprising that his affairs took a dramatic turn upon Bolingbroke's return to England and usurpation of the crown later that year. Holand was

¹⁴ The biographical details given in this paragraph are drawn from George Edward Cokayne, "Thomas (de Holand), Earl of Kent, Lord Wake, Lord Woodstock and Lord Holand," *The Complete Peerage*, vol. 7, rev. Vicary Gibbs, ed. H. A. Doubleday and Lord Howard de Walden (London: St. Catherine Press, 1929), pp. 156-59; James L. Gillespie, "Holland [Holand], Thomas, sixth earl of Kent and duke of Surrey (c. 1374-1400), magnate and soldier," *Oxford DNB Online*; Glyn Coppack and Mick Aston, *Christ's Poor Men: The Carthusians in England* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing, 2002), p. 42; and Glyn Coppack, *Mount Grace Priory, Yorkshire* (London: English Heritage, 1996), p. 41.

imprisoned briefly and stripped of his dukedom. Soon afterwards, he joined in a conspiracy against the new king and his sons; upon the plot's failure, Holand fled to Cirencester with some of the other conspirators, where they were beheaded by an angry mob on 7 or 8 January 1400. His body was buried in Cirencester but his head mounted on London Bridge, and his widow, Joan, was hastily summoned to London to give an account to the king of her and her late husband's earthly goods. Although Henry IV allowed her to retain various manors, Joan spent the last thirty or more years of her life in seclusion in the Cistercian Abbey of Beaulieu in Hampshire, which was in the custody of her brother-in-law from 1405. In 1401, she was granted permission to have Thomas's head removed from London Bridge and in 1412 to re-inter his bones at Mount Grace.

It is not surprising that after such a tumultuous early life, Joan de Holand would retreat from the world of political intrigue and strife to the safety and predictability of a religious house. Furthermore, her bodily retreat was mirrored by the mental one of reading Love's translated meditations. An early fifteenth-century copy of the *Mirror* names its earliest owners in an inscription on folio 120v: "this book is given to Alice Belacyse, by the gift of Joan, Countess of Kent."¹⁵ This inscription reveals that Joan owned a copy of the *Mirror*, which is scarcely surprising. It also suggests that she participated in a network of sympathetic readers or, at the very least, shared her interest with a friend.¹⁶ Meale has shown from various surviving documents that Alice Belacyse was a pious gentlewoman who had connections with University College, Oxford and may

¹⁵ This modernized transcription is printed in Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, p. 13, n. 48. The manuscript is Tokyo, Professor Toshiyuki Takamiya MS 8.

¹⁶ On such circles of women readers, see, for example, Felicity Riddy, "'Women talking about the things of God': A Late Medieval Sub-Culture," *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500*, ed. Carol M. Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 104-27.

never have married.¹⁷ Likely the two women met in Yorkshire; Salter states that there was a Yorkshire Belacyse family,¹⁸ and from Thomas de Holand's co-founding of Mount Grace in that county and with a member of a local family it would seem that he had Yorkshire connections.¹⁹ Whether this copy of the *Mirror* was given to or commissioned by Joan is not known, but her subsequent role in disseminating it seems to indicate that she found it a source of solace.

Joan de Holand, as a lay woman living in and to a certain extent participating in the life of an abbey, is an example of the blurring of the line between lay and religious in late medieval English devotional culture. Love presents his lay readers with the opportunity to participate in the monastic exercise of meditation, but without mentioning its monastic context; instead, the largely original proem with which he opens the *Mirror* draws a sharp distinction between clergy and laity, contemplative and active, presumably in order to remind his lay readers of their spiritual inferiority to those with a religious education. He would certainly not have intended his male lay readers to absorb so much of the monastic milieu of his text as to forsake the active life altogether and join a religious community as its permanent guest.²⁰ The evidence of ownership suggests that,

¹⁷ Meale, "Early Ownership," pp. 35-36.

¹⁸ Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, p. 12.

¹⁹ Sources are divided as to whether the owner of the land on which Mount Grace was built was Thomas or John de Ingleby.

²⁰ Sargent observes that Love's treatment of the mixed life (i.e., semi-active and semi-contemplative) is more conservative than Hilton's: whereas Hilton "prescribes a form of 'mixed life' to active people—including some members of the laity—who find themselves drawn to the ideal of contemplation despite their status in the world," Love describes the mixed life as that practiced by bishops and prelates, who pursue both contemplation and the active exercise of virtue. See Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 281. I shall discuss Love's proem in detail in the following section of this chapter.

while there might have been many exceptions such as Joan, for most owners of Love's *Mirror* reading the text brought them as close to the cloister as they would get.

Another aristocratic owner of the *Mirror* in the early fifteenth century, but one who remained in the active life, was Margaret Beaufort (née Neville), the wife of Mount Grace's next patron, Thomas Beaufort, brother of Cardinal Henry Beaufort and half-brother of Henry IV. The arms of Neville and Beaufort appear on page 16 of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS e Musaeo 35, and the border decoration of the same page includes the initials "M." and "N."²¹ Thomas also likely owned a translation of the *Meditationes*—the French *Livre dore* of Jehan de Galopes dedicated to him and to his nephew, Henry V. That Margaret owned an English and her husband a French version of the same work may bear some relation to gendered language politics, but the couple would have shared essentially the same imaginative experience as they worked their way through the meditations. More significant for the present discussion are the politics that make the *Mirror* in particular suitable reading for Margaret Beaufort.

Margaret's grandfather, Robert Neville, was, after a short but distinguished military career, a highly active participant in the administration of law and order in Yorkshire from around 1370 to 1412.²² He helped to restore order in the county after the 1381 uprising, and he was the steward to two successive archbishops of York, the second of whom was Thomas Arundel. An associate of John of Gaunt, he was also a firm supporter of the Lancastrian cause, as were other members of the extended Neville

²¹ Meale, "Early Ownership," p. 23.

²² Biographical details are drawn from Peter McNiven, "Neville [de Neville] family (per. c. 1267-1426), gentry," *Oxford DNB Online* and Anthony Tuck, "Beaufort [married names Ferrers, Neville], Joan, countess of Westmorland (1379?-1440), magnate," *Oxford DNB Online*.

family. In 1396 Ralph Neville de Raby married Joan Beaufort, half-sister and intimate of the future Henry IV, and Margaret's own marriage to Joan's brother Thomas by 1404 further cemented the Neville's Lancastrian allegiance. The *Mirror's* reinforcement of social order, clearly valued by Margaret Beaufort's family, and its approval by Arundel, an associate of her grandfather, might have recommended the book to her. Furthermore, her husband was a major patron of the religious community led by its author as well as a key figure in the Lancastrian rule.

Thomas Beaufort's political prominence is well documented.²³ As one of John of Gaunt's illegitimate children, he was half-brother of Henry IV, who in 1412 created him earl of Dorset and admiral of England, Ireland, and Aquitaine for life. Beaufort later became one of Henry V's trusted commanders, most notably in France, where he distinguished himself in the capture of and subsequent defence of Harfleur, for which he was rewarded by his elevation to duke of Exeter in 1416. He was subsequently entrusted with Rouen and Paris. Beaufort's military career and closeness to the king made him one of the most powerful men on either side of the channel. He also appears to have been among the most visibly pious. In 1415 and 1421 Beaufort used his influence with his royal nephew to re-endow the struggling Mount Grace, and he added five monk-chaplains to the community. In return for his patronage, he was granted right of burial at Mount Grace. Beaufort's charitable deeds extended to the daily feeding of 313 poor

²³ Biographical details are drawn from George Edward Cockayne, "Thomas Beaufort," *Complete Peerage*, vol. 5, ed. and rev. Vicary Gibbs and H. A. Doubleday (London: St. Catherine Press, 1926), pp. 200-204; G. L. Harriss, "Beaufort, Thomas, duke of Exeter (1377?-1426), magnate and soldier," *Oxford DNB Online*; and Coppack, *Mount Grace*, p. 43.

during his lifetime, and he left large bequests to a wide array of individuals and institutions, including Carthusian charterhouses.

We have seen the *Mirror*'s early appeal for members of the highest secular authority, but it also circulated within the religious orders. Another of the earliest known copies—in fact, the first to be firmly datable—belonged to a member of the religious ruling class: Sibyl de Felton, abbess of the prestigious Benedictine Abbey of Barking in Essex from 1394 until her death in 1419.²⁴ A note on folio 4v of the Foyle MS of the *Mirror* states, “Iste liber constat domine Sibille de ffelton abbatisse de Berkyng.”²⁵ Sibyl is known to have personally owned three other books as well: a Latin *Ordinale* made at Barking and concerning its administration (Oxford, University College MS 169), *The Cleansing of Man's Soul* (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 923), and *Vies des saints Pères* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale MS français 1038).²⁶ She also would have had access to other books circulating in the abbey. Barking was an exceptionally literate community; Sibyl's collection shows that she herself was trilingual, and her *Ordinale* stipulates that a librarian is to distribute books among the nuns each year.²⁷ In fact, Barking's bookishness was a long-standing tradition, dating back to the twelfth century and looking back as far as the seventh in its collections of Latin saints' lives, among which biographies of the abbey's seventh-century foundress, Ethelburga, and charismatic abbesses, such as the eleventh-century Ælfgyva, were prominent.²⁸ Barking Abbey was,

²⁴ A. I. Doyle, “Books Connected with the Vere Family and Barking Abbey,” *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society* 25 (1958), 222-43 (pp. 239-40).

²⁵ Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, p. lxxviii.

²⁶ Doyle, “Barking,” pp. 239-41.

²⁷ Doyle, “Barking,” p. 240.

²⁸ See Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives and Women's Literary Culture: Virginité and its Authorizations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 196-97.

furthermore, a site of production as well as consumption of such works. In the late twelfth century, nuns of Barking composed Anglo-Norman lives of Edward the Confessor and Catherine of Alexandria,²⁹ and the mid-fourteenth-century abbess, Lady Katherine of Sutton, supervised the composition of a liturgical drama on the harrowing of hell, intended to stir up the zeal of the physically comfortable and spiritually apathetic community under her care.³⁰

As a nun and subsequent abbess of Barking, Sibyl de Felton must have been steeped in exemplary narratives, and her choice of *Vies des saints Pères* and Love's *Mirror* for her own and, through her, her community's, reading perpetuated the specialized literary tradition by which Barking identified itself and was known to the outside world. Furthermore, the *Mirror's* affective visualization of the events of Christ's life aligns it with the stirring physical representation of spirits—including Christ's—in the harrowing of hell drama.³¹ Felton ordered that the play be copied into the *Ordinale* mentioned above, which she gave to the convent in 1404,³² and she likely took some trouble obtaining other works in her collection. The *Cleansing*, an early fifteenth-century work on penitence, was, like Love's *Mirror*, a new addition to the growing corpus of Middle English devotional literature. A. I. Doyle has suggested that it was composed for Barking;³³ if so, that composition must have occurred while Felton was its abbess, making her the most likely patron. To have acquired the *Mirror* as soon as she did, Felton

²⁹ Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives*, pp. 32 and 172.

³⁰ See Ann Faulkner, "The Harrowing of Hell at Barking Abbey and in Modern Production," *The Iconography of Hell*, ed. Clifford Davidson and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992), pp. 141-57.

³¹ See Faulkner, "Harrowing," p. 153.

³² Faulkner, "Harrowing," p. 142.

³³ See Doyle, "Barking," p. 240.

or agents acting on her behalf—she likely had an extensive household, as Katherine de Sutton did before her³⁴—might have had to keep an eye on the book market. Finally, it is known that Felton purchased her copy of the *Vies des saints Pères* from the executors of Philippa de Coucy (abandoned wife of Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, and granddaughter of Edward III), who died in 1411;³⁵ the two women do not seem to have been connected except by their male relatives' participation in the wars of the Black Prince and Richard II in the second half of the fourteenth century,³⁶ in which most of the men of their rank were involved. Thus it would seem that Felton's purchase of de Coucy's book, no less than of the *Mirror*, was opportunistic.

Felton's collecting seems to have had a particular purpose. In the face of the increasing worldliness and lapsing fervour of the nuns at Barking, Felton might have sought out works that could help reform the community in an orthodox direction specifically associated with Barking's literary tradition. The penitential focus of the *Cleansing*, the *Mirror*'s affective meditations on Christ's exemplary simplicity of life, the harrowing's dramatic reminder of the soul's captivity unless freed by Christ, and the *Saints Pères*'s holy example, invoking too by its genre the example of Barking's holy women over the centuries, are all consistent with such a goal. Perhaps Felton was particularly zealous because she, like Joan de Holand, was a widow who had experienced the vicissitudes of worldly life before joining a religious community.³⁷

³⁴ See Faulkner, "Harrowing," pp. 141-42.

³⁵ Doyle, "Barking," p. 241 and Anthony Tuck, "Vere, Robert de, ninth earl of Oxford, marquess of Dublin, and duke of Ireland (1362-1392), courtier," *Oxford DNB Online*.

³⁶ See Tuck, "Vere" and Philip Morgan, "Felton, Sir Thomas (d. 1381), soldier and administrator," *Oxford DNB Online*.

³⁷ See Morgan, "Felton."

Finally, I would like to introduce a fifteenth-century male reader of Love's *Mirror*, Stephen Dodesham. A prolific scribe who made three copies of the *Mirror* over the course of a career that spanned several decades and two vocations, Dodesham played an important role in the *Mirror*'s dissemination.³⁸ His career as a scribe of primarily devotional compilations both before and after he joined the Carthusian order reveals continuities between the active and the contemplative life even amidst the somewhat chaotic conditions in which copies of the *Mirror* and other devotional works were made in the fifteenth century, while his original professional status likely gave him a different experience of Love's text.

Dodesham likely began his career as a professional scribe in the 1420s or '30s,³⁹ and he continued his scribal activities after joining the Carthusian order. He had become a choir-monk at Witham Charterhouse in Somerset by 1462,⁴⁰ but, quarrelling with the prior in 1469, was moved to Sheen,⁴¹ the Charterhouse founded in 1414 by Henry V on the bank of the Thames near the royal palace.⁴² Dodesham remained at Sheen until his death in 1482.⁴³ Notes in three of Dodesham's productions—one of them a copy of the *Mirror*—name him as scribe, and comparison with these certain samples of his

³⁸ The *Mirror* manuscripts copied by Dodesham are Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.15.16; Glasgow University, Hunterian Library MS 77; and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson A.387B.

³⁹ A. I. Doyle, 1967 Oxford Lyell lectures, quoted in John Ayto and Alexandra Barratt, Introduction, *Aelred of Rievaulx's De Institutione Inclusarum*, ed. John Ayto and Alexandra Barratt, EETS o.s. 287 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. xxx.

⁴⁰ Ayto and Barratt, Introduction, *Aelred*, p. xxx.

⁴¹ See E. Margaret Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930), p. 306.

⁴² Knowles, *Religious Orders*, pp. 133-34 and Coppack and Aston, *Christ's Poor Men*, p. 45.

⁴³ A. I. Doyle, "Stephen Dodesham of Witham and Sheen," *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, their Scribes and Readers: Essays Presented to M. B. Parkes*, ed. P. R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1997), pp. 94-115 (p. 97).

distinctive hand has enabled Doyle, M. B. Parkes, and A. S. G. Edwards to identify as his handiwork the writing of many other manuscripts, including two further copies of the *Mirror*.⁴⁴ Seventeen further complete codices and segments of four others have been ascribed to Dodesham, almost all of them of religious works, primarily compilations. A small number of Dodesham's productions are secular, however; the most noteworthy of these are three copies of John Lydgate's *Seige of Thebes*. These and one of his three copies of Love's *Mirror* are deluxe volumes that appear to have been decorated in London workshops; they give every indication—short of outright marks of ownership—that they were made for wealthy patrons with aristocratic literary taste.

The manuscript copies of the *Mirror* made by Dodesham reveal to some extent the circumstances of their production and, in this way, the means of the work's dissemination. Differences in dialect and presentation between Dodesham's copies of the *Mirror* suggest that he worked from at least two exemplars; he had, then, access to more than one exemplar of the *Mirror* in the course of his adult life, but not likely to more than one at any given time. Presumably he made his two commissioned copies—the lavishly illustrated Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.15.16, written in the metropolitan dialect, and the unadorned Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson A.387B, written in a midlands dialect—from different exemplars, possibly obtained from different sources (whether stationers or religious houses), before making the 1475 copy that he retained at

⁴⁴ See M. B. Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 6; A. S. G. Edwards, "Beinecke MS 661 and Early Fifteenth-Century English Market Production," *Beinecke Studies in Early Manuscripts*, supplement to *The Yale University Library Gazette* 66 (1991), 181-86; and Doyle, "Stephen Dodesham," pp. 94-115. Doyle's account of Dodesham's career is particularly detailed.

Sheen⁴⁵—a decorated copy that might derive from yet another exemplar, for its dialect is similar but not identical to that of Dodesham's Rawlinson copy, and, thus, seems to signal constrained usage of the exemplars' dialects.⁴⁶ Such circumstances, in which multiple copies of the *Mirror* were potentially but not always actually available for use as exemplars, suggest that the work was in steady but not especially organized circulation, that there was considerable interest in the text but that its dissemination was somewhat sporadic, carried out in both the secular and the monastic spheres through commissions and personal contacts rather than regularized through an official programme.⁴⁷

Dodesham's long career suggests a certain continuity between the two phases of his life: he left the "active" life of a commercial scribe for the "contemplative" life of a Carthusian scribe—an order known for its literary production—continuing to receive commissions for religious works, always his specialty, after his change of vocation.

Dodesham's scribal experience of Love's text differed from the reading experience of the owners discussed above. The *Mirror* is divided into daily readings of variable length, but Love, acknowledging the inconvenience of attempting to follow this reading schedule, also recommends that his work be read according to the events of the liturgical year, each reader selecting for him- or herself the passages most likely to bring comfort and stir devotion.⁴⁸ This activity would re-enact Cecilia's choice of meditations

⁴⁵ This is Glasgow University, Hunterian Library MS 77.

⁴⁶ See Jeremy J. Smith, "Dialect and Standardisation in the Waseda Manuscript of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 129-41 (pp. 136-37).

⁴⁷ On Dodesham's copying of the *Seige of Thebes* as exemplary of the conditions of late medieval book production, see Edwards, "Beinecke MS 661," pp. 187-89. See also Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall, eds., *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁴⁸ See *Mirror*, Chapter 63: "Of þe sendyng done & þe comyng of þe holy goste," p. 222.

on Christ's life, with which the *Meditationes* opens and which Love includes in his translation.⁴⁹ Meale has observed that only those who could afford not to work could afford the time needed to meditate.⁵⁰ Dodesham was not one of these. As a commissioned scribe, his primary concerns would have been accuracy and speed in copying, not intense and time-consuming engagement with content. However, whereas Love's other readers could choose how much or how little of his book to read, Dodesham's commissions ensured that he worked his way through the whole book, word by word, three times. Edwards remarks that the scribe could have been prompted to enter the religious life as a result of the works he had been copying.⁵¹ Dodesham would have been prepared for the solitary life of a Carthusian by his practice of an essentially solitary profession, and, in the event, his continued dedication to his scribal work seems to have made his entry into contemplative life less a retreat than an extension of his professional life in a new setting and with different remuneration in view; a further link between Dodesham's profession and subsequent vocation is provided by his commercial scribal activity, which would have had some of the same effects as monastic meditation in that both involve memory work. Even if Dodesham did not actively envision, while he was copying, the scenes invoked by Love's words, his act of writing out these words on the parchment would have simultaneously inscribed at least some of them in his memory, whence their imaginative potential could be released at a later date. The act of meditation need not be done before an open book. The author of the *Meditationes* meditated from the resources

⁴⁹ See *Mirror*, Proem, p. 11. Love's suggestion that readers choose which passages to read and meditate upon appears in the final chapter of his translation, balancing the Proem's translated injunction to readers to imitate Cecilia.

⁵⁰ Meale, "Early Ownership," p. 37.

⁵¹ Edwards, "Beinecke MS 661," p. 189.

of his own imaginative memory for many years before writing down selected meditations to aid his spiritual sister, who, it would seem from the way he addresses her, was only just beginning her religious education.

The *Mirror*, like the *Meditationes*, was a highly popular devotional text. Copied widely but not subject to tight, organized copying, Love's text first circulated among the secular and religious elite, working its way down the social scale as the fifteenth century progressed. Although there are very few specific traces of readerly activity in the manuscripts, such as personal glosses, a number of copies do indicate their ownership, and the owners' lives have striking parallels; Love's text appears to have offered lay people an opportunity to mentally retreat by participating in one foundational aspect of monastic culture without moving inside the cloister.

Love's Lay Audience: Some Problems

Like the author of his Latin source, Love considers his (primarily lay) readers as spiritual beginners in need of the assistance provided by devotional books such as his own. However, unlike pseudo-Bonaventure's, Love's conservative depiction of his audience has an agenda.

Preceding Love's translation of pseudo-Bonaventure's prologue is a "proheme" original to Love, in which he states that he has adapted the *Meditationes* in the process of translation in order to accommodate his text to its English lay audience: "þis drawyng oute of þe forseide boke of cristes lyfe [is] wryten in englysche with more putte to in certeyn partes & wiþdrawyng of diuerse auctoritis (and) maters as it semeth to þe wryter

hereof moste spedefull & edifyng to hem þat bene (of) symple vndirstondyng.”⁵² Love defines the laity as “symple creatures” or “symple soules” largely in terms of their inability to read Latin, contrasting them with the Latin-literate clergy: “with holi writte also bene wryten diuerse bokes & trettes of deuoute men not onelich to clerkes in latyne, but also in Englyshe to lewde men & women & hem þat bene of symple vndirstondyng.”⁵³ Love cites the “deuovte meditacions of cristes lyfe[,] more pleyne in certeyn partyes þan is expressed in the gospell of þe foure euangelistes[,]” that “þe deuoute man & worthy clerke *Bonauentre* wrot ... to A religiouse woman in latyne” as one such book, which he has chosen to translate into English because of its “fructuose matere ... steryng specialy to þe loue of Jesu ande also for þe pleyne sentence to comun vndirstondyng (s)emep ... souereynly edifyng to symple creatures þe whiche as childryn hauen nede to be fedde with mylke of ly3te doctryne & not with sadde mete of grete clargye & of (hye contemplacion).”⁵⁴

Love’s claim that the *Meditationes* (and, by implication, his translation) is in places “more pleyne” about Christ’s life than the gospels are echoes the claim made by the anonymous author of the general prologue to the Wycliffite Bible that the meaning of the Scriptures is “as open” or “openlier” in the English translation than in the Vulgate.⁵⁵ Both Love and the Wycliffite translator refer to their own productions as more explicit than their sources as a way of justifying their works. Whereas the Wycliffites’ overall

⁵² *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10. When quoting from the *Mirror*, I have placed in square brackets any material I have added in order to adjust Love’s syntax to mine; the words in parentheses are supplied by Sargent in his edition.

⁵³ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁵⁴ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁵⁵ See Anne Hudson, ed. “Prologue to Wycliffite Bible, chapter 15,” *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 38 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), pp. 67-72 (pp. 68-69).

contention is that the English Bible represents God's self-revelation to humanity, including the means of salvation, at least as accurately as Jerome's Vulgate—a claim that elevates the English language as capable of greater precision than Latin and English people as capable of discerning and clarifying the biblical revelation—Love de-emphasizes the Bible's role in conversion by elevating other accounts of Christ's life, and he stresses that the English laity are spiritual beginners. However, by his own act of translation and various references to other English works, Love does uphold the English language as a medium for spiritual instruction.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, he obviously felt that to make religious works available to an English audience in a responsible fashion required more than clear translation—despite the *Meditationes*'s accessible message and mode of expression (“pleyne sentence”), to be preserved in his translation, the content of the text needed some modification to adequately meet the needs of Love's lay readers.

The full extent of Love's modifications is not entirely clear. Love states that he has both added new material and omitted “diuerse auctoritis,” but, due to the great textual variety of his source, the nature and scope of Love's changes cannot be fully determined without consulting the particular version of the *Meditationes* that Love used. Salter, while acknowledging that “It is difficult to be certain of the exact nature of the text of the *Meditationes* used by Love,” compares Powell's edition of the *Mirror* with Peltier's of the *Meditationes*, discussing various “omissions” from and “additions” to Love's translation.⁵⁷ Sargent, tirelessly tracking in the endnotes of his critical edition the *Mirror*'s deviations from the Peltier edition of the *Meditationes*, has followed Salter's

⁵⁶ For an intriguing discussion of Love's partial adoption of Wycliffite attitudes and terminology, particularly of the “open,” see Ghosh, *Wycliffite Heresy*, Chapter 4: “Nicholas Love and the Lollards.”

⁵⁷ See Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, pp. 48-49, and 299-321; the quotation is from p. 300, n. 9.

working assumption that Love himself is responsible for all of the *Mirror*'s textual divergences from the Peltier *Meditationes*; this is despite Sargent's awareness of Fischer's distinction between a long and a short text of the *Meditationes*⁵⁸—which, as we have seen, is itself an oversimplification of the manuscript evidence. Most recently, Michelle Karnes has argued from a comparison of Stallings-Taney's edition of the *Meditationes* and Sargent's of the *Mirror* that whereas the *Meditationes* offers its readers the possibility of spiritually elevated contemplation, Love restricts his readers to the most basic of spiritual exercises;⁵⁹ like Sargent, Karnes appears to assume that Love must have translated from a text of the *Meditationes* that corresponded to the most complete edition available. However, this is unlikely to be the case. Much of the material that is absent from Love's translation is also commonly omitted in abridgements, making it extremely likely that he worked from an abridged text.⁶⁰ In the light of the significant textual variety found by McNamer among the abridged copies of the *Meditationes* she has examined, those working on Love ought either to be cautious in their treatment of the *Mirror*'s deviations from its source or to seek the very manuscript of the *Meditationes* that Love used. This manuscript may actually survive.

⁵⁸ See Sargent, "Bonaventura English," p. 149.

⁵⁹ Michelle Karnes, "Nicholas Love and Medieval Meditations on Christ," *Speculum* 82 (2007), 380-408.

⁶⁰ For a list of common omissions from abridgements, see Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxv. Both Peltier's and Stallings-Taney's editions are more complete than Love's source seems to have been, though they differ somewhat in content and style. Stallings-Taney's, consistent with her goal of providing the "original," most complete version, is a somewhat longer collation in Italianate Latin, whereas Peltier's edition is slightly abridged and uses classicized Latin. Its ultimate manuscript source is not known.

Salter notes that “A copy of the *Meditationes* which once belonged to Mount Grace is now in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Ripon.”⁶¹ However, neither she nor Sargent seems to have consulted this manuscript as Love’s possible source. If it could be established that the Ripon manuscript, Ripon Cathedral MS 6 (now permanently housed in the Leeds University Library), was that actually used by Love, the extent and nature of Love’s changes would be greatly clarified. The colophon of the *Meditationes* in Ripon 6 states that it was “Scripte in Freston circa Festum Annunciacionis beate Marie virginis,” but the recorded year is smudged.⁶² Neil Ker suggests that it originally read “1399” but that the “399” was erased and replaced with “4,” so that the whole should be understood as 1400.⁶³ Since the feast of the annunciation was generally considered the start of the new year in England at this time, the scribe likely changed his mind about how to date the period “around” this feast. In any case, this copy of the *Meditationes* predates Love’s translation.

There is no record of Nicholas Love before 1410, when he was promoted from rector to first prior of Mount Grace;⁶⁴ how long he was at the charterhouse before this date and when and where he began his translation are unknown. Nor is it clear exactly when the Ripon manuscript arrived at Mount Grace. Ker dates the inscription of ownership on folio 3r, “liber montis gracie,” to the fifteenth century but writes that the manuscript was copied at the cell in Frieston, Lincolnshire (the “Freston” of the

⁶¹ Salter, *Love’s Myrroure*, p. 301, n. 9.

⁶² This note appears on folio 121v.

⁶³ N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 211.

⁶⁴ Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. xxii and cxix, n. 50.

colophon) of the Benedictine Crowland Abbey, also in Lincolnshire⁶⁵—quite a distance from Mount Grace in North Yorkshire. While there is no apparent connection between Lincolnshire Benedictines and Yorkshire Carthusians, it is not impossible that Thomas de Holand, co-founder of Mount Grace in 1398 and domineering neighbour of Crowland, commissioned the manuscript for his new foundation in the north.⁶⁶

What we know about the early provenance of the manuscript, then, would seem to leave it an open question whether it could have been Love's source. It might have come to Mount Grace early enough to have been the very text that Love translated, or to have served as the basis for another Latin copy that he translated, or it might have come there later. A close textual comparison might yet allow us to determine which was the case.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, vol. 4, p. 211.

⁶⁶ Around 1391, the abbot and convent of Crowland petitioned Richard II and parliament a number of times, seeking protection from the officers and tenants of Thomas Holand, earl of Kent, at the manor of Deeping, who, they alleged, had so continually harrassed the abbey's tenants and servants and interrupted the agriculture and trade that supported the abbey that the monks were "on the point of disinheritance to the great danger of their house and to the souls of the king and his progenitors who founded their house." See the National Archives, "Petitioners: John de Ashby, Abbot of Croyland, and the Convent of Croyland," [c. 1391], Special Collections 8: Ancient Petitions, ref. no. SC 8/102/5054, available from <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue> (the source of this quotation) and National Archives, "Petitioners: Abbot and Convent of Croyland," [c. 1391], Special Collections 8: Ancient Petitions, ref. no. SC 8/103/5116, available from <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue>. There is no indication that their petitions were successful; rather, Thomas de Holand, who was Richard II's nephew, was granted in 1398 the lordship of Deeping that he had already been exercising. See Cokayne, "Thomas (de Holand)," *Complete Peerage*, vol. 7, pp. 157-58.

⁶⁷ In the coming months, I shall compare the text of Ripon 6 with Sargent's edition of the *Mirror* (which is based on an early fifteenth-century copy that belonged to Mount Grace) and with Stallings-Taney's edition of the unabridged *Meditationes* and shall investigate further when and why the manuscript moved from Frieston to Mount Grace.

Love's modifications of the *Meditationes* have been the subject of considerable scholarly attention,⁶⁸ but I would like to focus on the related issue of Love's depiction of the audience for whose sake he claims to be reshaping the text. Salter categorizes what she believes to be Love's changes as arising primarily from his "widened audience" and his "special polemical purpose."⁶⁹ This point has become a truism of Love scholarship, but it is not always recognized that Love's statements about his audience are problematic and that, rather than the transparent descriptions they appear to be, they are a carefully crafted part of Love's agenda to tighten the Church's control over the religious thought and experience of the laity.

Love expresses throughout his proem that his primarily intended audience is the unlearned English laity. It might at first appear, then, that Love is bringing the *Meditationes* to a broader and socially humbler readership than it had previous to his translation. However, we have seen that the *Meditationes* includes passages directed towards the laity and that through previous translations the work enjoyed a broad readership, consisting of monarchs and professionals, for example, as well as religious. In fact, it would seem that the *Mirror*'s readership was more limited than the readership of the *Meditationes* in the early years of the fifteenth century. The earliest owners of Love's *Mirror* were people like Joan de Holand, Margaret Beaufort, and Sibyl de Felton, members of the social and religious elite—hardly the common people Love describes in

⁶⁸ See Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, pp. 39-54 and 264-321; Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. xxx-lviii and Explanatory Notes, pp. 257-303; and Karnes, "Nicholas Love," pp. 394-402.

⁶⁹ Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, pp. 46 and 47. Salter ascribes other changes to a difference in artistic standards between pseudo-Bonaventure and Love; for her analyses of Love's prose style and translation methods, her greatest and most original contributions to Love scholarship, see *Love's Myrroure*, pp. 216-327.

his proem. It is hard to believe that Love would not be aware that members of his charterhouse's founding family, for example, would be among his first readers, but we must conclude that either his text took some time to reach the audience he had in mind or that his description of even his aristocratic lay readers as lowly was intentional.

A further problem with Love's discussion of his intended audience is that it excludes those in holy orders. Salter implies that Love's intended and actual audience were identical, comprised of "those in strict contemplative calling, like himself, the lay clergy, and the devout of secular estate."⁷⁰ While this point is borne out by passages within Love's translation⁷¹ and by the surviving evidence of the *Mirror*'s early ownership, the passage from Love's proem that Salter quotes to illustrate this point—and the proem as a whole, for that matter—actually limits the translation's intended readership to members of the laity who could read English but not Latin and whom Love pointedly, if conventionally, characterizes as "symple creatures," "lewde men & women & hem þat bene of symple vndirstondyng" as opposed to "clerkes" for whom works have been written "in latyne."⁷² Sargent also remarks that Love later "not only refers to his readers as 'common people and simple souls,' but implies, by contrasting them with 'ghostly . . . folk,' that he is writing specifically for the laity."⁷³ Secular clergy and enclosed religious, then, are implicitly excluded from Love's intended audience as he describes it; so too are any members of the laity who are able to read Latin—a possibility that Love does not admit. In fact, Love's description of his audience in the proem is

⁷⁰ Salter, *Love's Myrroure*, p. 46.

⁷¹ See below.

⁷² *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁷³ Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, p. xxxii.

unduly conservative, insisting on a rigorous division between clergy and lay education and, thereby, spiritual status, that simply no longer existed in his society.

Furthermore, despite assertions such as the above and a series of comments explaining what he has omitted or condensed so as to accommodate the short attention span of simple lay readers,⁷⁴ Love does seem to have intended a wide audience, including members of the religious and lay elite as well as “comune peple.”⁷⁵ For example, the long text of the *Meditationes* includes thirteen chapters specifically dedicated to a comparison of the active life and the contemplative life;⁷⁶ this tract was often omitted or abridged in the subsequent versions of the Latin text.⁷⁷ Love’s copy of the *Meditationes* must have preserved at least some of this material, for he summarizes it in the space of five pages.⁷⁸ Though this tract was drastically reduced by the time it reached Love’s readers, it is significant that Love did not altogether exclude the material directed towards contemplatives; in fact, it makes up the majority of his summary and includes specific advice for recluses, anchorites, and hermits. Sargent further notes that Love’s text includes “references that may indicate that his Carthusian confrères were also among his implied audience.”⁷⁹ For example, there is a comforting reminder of God’s presence explicitly addressed to “þou þat art solitarye & . . . etest alone in þi celle” “without mannus felashepe” as Carthusians did,⁸⁰ observing such strict seclusion that their meals

⁷⁴ See Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, pp. xxxii and xxxv-xxxvii.

⁷⁵ *Mirror*, Chapter 26: “Of þe fleying of oure lord Jesus when þe peple wold haue made him here kyng,” p. 107.

⁷⁶ These are chapters 46-58 in Stallings-Taney’s edition.

⁷⁷ See Taney, Miller, and Stallings-Taney, Introduction, *Life of Christ*, p. xxv.

⁷⁸ These are pp. 120-24 in Sargent’s edition.

⁷⁹ Sargent, Introduction, *Mirror*, p. xxxii.

⁸⁰ *Mirror*, chapter 15: “Of þe fastyng of oure lord Jesu & hees temptacions in Deserte,” p. 76. See also Sargent’s discussion, Introduction, *Mirror*, p. xlii.

were passed to them through an opening in the wall of each cell angled such that the lay brother leaving the food and the monk within would be unable to see each other. The *Mirror* also speaks to those living an indulgent rather than an ascetic lifestyle; Love preserves a passage from the original *Meditationes*, discussed in chapter 1 above, that is almost certainly addressed to courtiers or even royalty. It describes the manner of Mary's journey to visit her cousin Elizabeth after the annunciation, opposing its simplicity to the pomp of earthly royal progresses:

Now take hede how þat blessed lady qwene of heuen & of erþe goþ alone with hire spouse & þat not vp on hors bot on fote. She ledeþ not with hire many kny3tes & barones nor þe grete companye of boure maidens & damyseles, bot soþely þere goþ with hire a wele better companye, & þat is Pouert, Mekenes, & honest Shamefastnes, 3ei & þe plente of alle vertues, & þe best of alle þat is oure lorde god is with hire. She haþ a grete & wirchipful company, bot not of þe vanyte & the pompe of þe world.⁸¹

It is clear from such varied passages that Love's description of his intended readers as "symple creatures" is inaccurate. Such descriptions of lay readers are highly conventional, but Love's application of this terminology to educated gentry and aristocrats is conservative to the point of being misleading.

Love's proem contains his most concentrated discussion of his aims and audience. A close study of this piece reveals that the underlying goal determining both Love's stated aims and his patronizing description of his potential readers' capacities is that of dispersing the Wycliffite focus on the Bible as the pre-eminent bearer of the message—and, thus, the means—of salvation. Although Love opens with a (Latin) quotation from Scripture, he glosses it in such a way as to put his own translation of pseudo-Bonaventure on a level with the Bible:

⁸¹ *Mirror*, Chapter 4: "How oure lady went to Elizabeth & mekely grett hire," p. 30.

Quecumque scripta sunt ad nostram doctrinam scripta sunt vt per pacienciam & consolacionem scripturar(um) spem habeamus, ad Romanos xv^o capitulo.

Pese ben þe wordes of þe gret doctour & holy apostle *Powle* consideryng þat the gostly leuyng of all trewe crysten creatures in þis worlde stant specialy in hope of þe blysse & the lyfe þat is to come in another worlde.

Ande for also mich as tweyne þinges pryncipaly noryschen & strenkþen þis hope in man þat is pacience in herte & ensauple of vertues & gude liuyng of holy men writen in bokes[,] Ande souereynly þe wordes & þe dedis writen of oure lorde Jesu criste verrei god and man for þe tyme of his bodily liuyng here in erthe[,] þerfore to strenkeþ vs & confort vs in þis hope spekeþ þe Apostle þe wordes aforseid to this entent seying þat all thynges þat ben writen generaly in holi chirche ande specialy of oure lorde Jesu cryste þei bene wryten to oure lore that by pacience & confort of holi scriptures we haue hope that is to say of the Life & Blysse that is to come in another worlde.⁸²

For Love, the hope of heaven is based primarily not on faith but on the living of a moral life in imitation of the lives of holy men, most especially Jesus. Thus, any books that provide such examples are as spiritually helpful as the Bible itself. This is a highly selective presentation of the Bible's role in a Christian's spiritual development, one that, ignoring the Old Testament, much of the New, and the theological teachings and implications of both, focuses on the gospel narratives—which may be easily extracted from their biblical context—as containing all that one needs to know—or, more properly, do—to be saved.

While these general statements would seem to apply to all Christians (or potential Christians) equally, Love goes on to specify the type of people he has in mind: “Ande for þis hope & to þis entent with holi writte also bene wryten diuerse bokes & trettes of deuoute men not onelich to clerkes in latyne, but also in Englyshe to lewde men & women & hem þat bene of symple vdirstondyng. Amonge þe whiche beþ wryten deuoute

⁸² *Mirror*, Proem, p. 9. I have substituted commas for *puncti elevati*.

meditations of cristes lyfe,” including pseudo-Bonaventure’s and its translation by Love himself.⁸³ Such works, Love expounds, meet the needs of the laity in particular, for

to þe which symple soules as seynt *Bernerde* seye contemplacion of þe monhede of cryste is more likyng more spedefull & more sykere þan is hy3e contemplacion of þe godhed ande þerefore to hem is pryncipally to be sette in mynde þe ymage of crystes Incarnacion passion & Ressureccion so that a symple soule þat kan not þenke bot bodyes or bodily þinges mowe haue somewhat accordyng vnto is affeccion where wiþ he maye fede & stire his deuocion ...⁸⁴

Love characterizes the laity as both mentally and spiritually unsophisticated; incapable of conceptualizing the Trinity, they must focus their devotion on God the Son, whose bodily form they can picture in their minds.⁸⁵ In these mental images, they can see his physical sufferings and, stirred to pity, increase their love for him; they can also see his perfect living and attempt to imitate his virtues in their own daily actions.

Although Love clearly finds such meditation a worthwhile spiritual exercise, his presentation of it as suitable for the laity, those not capable of “hy3e contemplacion,” significantly lowers the status of Franciscan meditation on Christ’s life as it is presented by pseudo-Bonaventure. In his prologue, pseudo-Bonaventure associates meditation not only with the imitation of Christ’s virtues, but with an intense closeness, even identity with Jesus. The meditations he offers his readers are the necessary first steps by means of which even the “illiterate and simple” can progress to such elevated spiritual experiences and to the exercise of contemplation:

Ad [eius] uirtutes imitandas et adipiscendas ex frequenti meditatione cor accenditur et animatur. Deinde diuina illuminatur uirtute, ita quod et uirtutem induit et a ueris falsa discernit: adeo ut plures fuerint illiterati et

⁸³ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁸⁴ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁸⁵ For discussions of Love’s rigid separation of the divinity and the manhood of Christ, see Salter, *Love’s Myrroure*, pp. 163-64, 306, and 314-16.

simplices, qui magna et probanda Dei propterea cognouerunt. Vnde credis quod beatus Franciscus ad tantam uirtutum copiam et ad tantam luculentam intelligenciam Scripturarum ... nisi ex familiari conuersacione et meditatione Domini sui Iesu? Propterea sic ardentem afficiebatur ad ipsam, ut quasi sua similitudo fuerit. ... et tandem ipso compellente et perficiente Iesu per impressionem sacrorum stigmatum, fuit in eum totaliter transformatus. Vides ergo ad quam excelsum gradum meditacione uite Christi perducit. Sed et tanquam fundamentum efficax ad maiores contemplacionis sublimat gradus ... Nunc autem te in ipsas uite Christi meditaciones aliquantulum introducere cogitauimus.⁸⁶

[(The meditator's) heart is kindled and inspired to imitate and obtain his virtues through frequent meditation. Then it is illuminated by divine virtue in such a way that it both puts on virtue and distinguishes false things from true—to such a degree that there have been many illiterate and simple people who have for this reason come to know the great and commendable things of God. Whence do you believe that blessed Francis should have arrived at such an abundance of virtues and at such a brilliant understanding of the Scriptures ... if not from habitual converse with and meditation on his Lord Jesus? Moreover, he was so ardently moved towards it that his own life was made, as it were, its likeness. ... and, at last, compelled and perfected by Jesus himself through the seal of the holy stigmata, he was totally transformed into him. Therefore, you see to what an elevated level meditation on the life of Christ leads. But also, you see, as it were, an effective foundation rises to the greater levels of contemplation ... Now, moreover, I intend in some way to lead you into these same meditations on the life of Christ.]

Love does not translate this passage of the prologue—which, due to its Franciscan content, was likely absent from his abridged source copy—and, as we have seen, he presents meditation and contemplation as clearly divided activities, offering the Latin-illiterate and therefore simple English laity no hope of practising this more elevated spiritual discipline or of attaining the sort of holiness and intimacy with Christ exemplified by Francis of Assisi.⁸⁷ Love's presentation of meditation as a limited means of accessing the divine is in keeping with his objective to simultaneously present the laity

⁸⁶ *Meditaciones, Prologus*, p. 9.

⁸⁷ Cf. Karnes, "Medieval Meditations," pp. 384-87, 394-98.

with spiritually instructive reading material and remind them that the Church knows most and best.

If Love's condescending description of his lay readers' capacities inherently reinforces Church authority, it also inherently opposes the Wycliffites' promotion of the English-language Bible among the laity. Love's simultaneous limiting of the Bible's usefulness and extension of that limited function to meditations on Christ's life, as discussed above, is a direct reaction to the Wycliffites' teaching that contact with the Bible itself is necessary for salvation. The general prologue to the Wycliffite Bible translation states that Scripture "is" the "feip of cristene men,"⁸⁸ while an anonymous tract supporting Bible translation affirms that "alle þing þat man nedip, boþe bodily and gostly, is conteyned in þis blissed lawe, and specialy in þe gospel" and that "þe lawe of God writen and tau3t in Englisch may edifie þe comen pepel, as it doiþ clerkis in Latyn, siþen it is þe sustynance to soulis þat shulden be saued."⁸⁹ Similarly, a Wycliffite *determinatio* in the Oxford translation debate of the early fifteenth century rhetorically heaps up the many necessary things that can be learned from the Bible: "non solum tenemur scire quae sunt fugienda sed etiam quae timenda, quae credenda; quae sunt facienda, quae sunt speranda, et alia sacramenta (qualiacunque?), omnia quae necessaria sunt ad salutem. Igitur licet tibi habere in scriptis, et haec in vulgari tuo, quia nullam aliam linguam intelligis ..."⁹⁰ [Not only are we held (responsible) for knowing what

⁸⁸ "Prologue to Wycliffite Bible," p. 67.

⁸⁹ Hudson, ed., "Bible Translation," *Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 107-09 (pp. 108 and 107).

⁹⁰ Thomas Palmer, "*De translatione sacrae scripturae in linguam Anglicanum*," ed. Margaret Deanesly (with classicised spelling), *Lollard Bible*, pp. 418-37 (p. 419). The Dominican Palmer's *determinatio* against Bible translation opens with a summary of his opponent's arguments, of which this is one. Deanesley dates this debate to "before the year 1405" and states that the Wycliffite participant "must almost certainly have been

things to avoid, but also what to fear and what to trust; what to do, what to hope, and the different sacraments of whatever kind, all the things that are necessary for salvation. Therefore, it is permitted for you to have these things in writing, even in your common language, since you understand no other ...]

If the writings mentioned in the above statement were any other than the Bible, Love would agree. Love clearly did not object to the use of the English language for spiritual instruction; his own translation contributes to a tradition of devotional writings in Middle English, and he often explains his own silences on various topics by referring his readers to pre-existing English works;⁹¹ furthermore, Love's proem celebrates that these unnamed English books about Christ's life have extended the influence of his good example such that the English laity can join with the "men & women & euery Age & euery dignite of this worlde" that are "stirid to hope of euery lastyng lyfe."⁹² It is the unmediated presentation of the Bible to the (allegedly) uneducated that Love seems, from his procedure, to have found unnecessary and even dangerous. Following pseudo-Bonaventure, Love provides religious instruction primarily in the form of *exempla* for imitation rather than doctrines for study. Though he often quotes biblical verses in translation, he does so either to heighten the visual and emotional impact of his meditations or to preserve the pieces of liturgy embedded in the *Meditationes*. In neither case are they used to stimulate theological discussion, and, in the latter, they are

Peter Payne, whom contemporaries mention as the only daring Oxford Lollard at the date." See Deanesly, *Lollard Bible*, pp. 290-91.

⁹¹ Love's usual practice is to mention, without naming them, that there are other books in English that treat of various topics at greater length. The one exception is his recommendation of "þe tretees þat þe worþi clerk & holi lyuere Maister Walter Hilton ... wrote in english by grete grace & hye discrecion." See *Mirror*, "*De vita actiua & contemplatiua*," p. 124.

⁹² *Mirror*, Proem, pp. 9-10.

presented within the framework of Church authority. Love engages in theological debate only when he is refuting Wycliffite teachings on the sacraments, which he clearly felt compelled to address directly. For the Wycliffites placed much greater emphasis on the theological significance of the gospel events and on the importance of understanding Christ's teachings. For example, the tract referred to above also states, "For þis was þe cause þat Iesu bicam man and suffrid deed on þe tree, so þat bi keypyng of his lor þe peple my3te rise fro goostli deed and come to þe blisse þat neuere schal haue eende."⁹³ Here salvation is the result not of meditating upon and imitating Christ's virtues, but of understanding and following his teachings, many of which go beyond the moral in their explanations of the kingdom of heaven.

Love and the Wycliffites shared the goal of extending to the English laity the "hope ... of the Life & Blysse that is to come in anothere worlde"⁹⁴ through the provision of English-language writings. The nature of the writings they made available, however, differed considerably, and in accordance with their differing perceptions (and representations) of the capabilities of their readers as well as with their disagreement over the means of attaining salvation. The Wycliffites held that lay people could be saved as a result of reading the English-language New Testament, which is "opyn to vndirstonding of simple men, as to the poyntis that be moost nedeful to saluacioun;"⁹⁵ all those who "kepith mekenes and charite" can understand it with their natural intelligence guided by

⁹³ "Biblical Translation," p. 108.

⁹⁴ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 9.

⁹⁵ See the Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible, printed in full in *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books, in the Earliest English Versions Made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers*, vol. 1, ed. Rev. Josiah Forshall and Sir Frederic Madden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1850), pp. 1-60. The quotation is from p. 2.

the inspiring aid of the Holy Spirit,⁹⁶ rendering further mediation unnecessary. The “simple men” here, whose comprehension nevertheless hinges on moral living, are on a level with those successfully engaged in the orthopraxis of “hye contemplacion”;⁹⁷ both receive a form of direct revelation. Love’s account of his “symple creatures”⁹⁸ does not allow for such a jumping of the queue. The ascent to spiritual heights such as this requires years of concentrated spiritual training in first the world and then the cloister, and “lewde” lay people, who have by no means completed this formative education, “sholde not presume to clymbe vp to hye þinges of contemplacion.”⁹⁹ Although Love makes clear in his treatment of the contemplative life that those who dedicate themselves to contemplation without having first attained virtue through active living are in grave danger,¹⁰⁰ he responds to the Wycliffite elevation of the lay reader by reminding even his aristocratic lay readers that they are and will remain spiritually inferior to the religious and other clergy. His translated meditations provide a means for the laity to imitate Christ’s virtuous humility not only so that they might be saved but also so that they would humbly accept what the Church dictates without attempting to understand differently.

⁹⁶ *Holy Bible*, Prologue, p. 2. See also pp. 3, 29, 30, and 43.

⁹⁷ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁹⁸ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

⁹⁹ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10 and *Mirror*, “Of actife life and contemplatife life,” p. 122.

¹⁰⁰ *Mirror*, “Of actife life and contemplatife life,” pp. 121-22.

CHAPTER 3

**CHRIST, COMMUNITY, AND THE POWER OF THE IMAGE:
THE PASSION MEDITATIONS AND THE TREATISE ON THE SACRAMENT**

Christ's Humanity in the Passion

Despite Love's condescending attitude towards his lay readers in his proem and elsewhere, Love offers them in his translated meditations the opportunity for imaginative intimacy with Christ, who, in the incarnation and especially the passion, cast off the benefits of the godhead and was made as weak "as a nobere comune man of þe peple."¹ Though Love's readers can share neither his physical perfection nor his exquisite suffering—which the *Mirror* presents as linked, the beautiful tenderness of Christ's body increasing its susceptibility to pain²—they can from their own experience sympathize with his all-too-human unwillingness to die and can imaginatively join in the community of mourners at the foot of the cross, envisioning what they might have seen and feeling as they might have felt.

The primary purpose of the passion meditations is not to instruct readers—Love does not, for example, fully articulate a theology of salvation—but to provide them with the materials that will enable them to have imaginative experiences that increase their devotion. The passion meditations place less emphasis on imitating Christ's virtues than do those on the preceding events in Christ's life, in which he is a more active participant; once he has reaffirmed, in his prayer in Gethsemane, his submission to his Father's will that he die on the cross, his role is to suffer passively. The goal of the passion

¹ *Mirror*, Chapter 40: "Of þe passion of oure lorde Jesu, & first of his praiere & takyng at matyne tyme," p. 163.

² See the quotation below from *Mirror*, Chapter 40, pp. 161-62.

meditations, then, is to enable readers to increase their love for him by having compassion on his pains and sharing in the grief of his mother and disciples.

Although any account of the crucifixion must necessarily involve a certain emphasis on the physical, Love balances this with developing in his meditations the relational implications of the passion. The passion sequence does focus more on Christ's body than does the rest of the *Mirror*, a pattern that is instigated by a physical description that Love urges his readers to keep in mind as they meditate—presumably so they can contrast it with Christ's physical state on the cross. This is the first time that Jesus' personal appearance is detailed in the whole work:

pou shalt ymagine & inwardly þenk of him in his passione as of a faire
 3onge man of þe age of xxxiii 3ere, þat were þe fairest ... þat euer was or
 miht be in þis worlde. ... Also vnderstonde as clerkes seyne & reson
 techþ, þat in his bodily kynde of manne[,] he was of þe clannest
 complexione þat euer was manne or miht be. Wherefore he was þe more
 tendire in þe bodye. And so folowþ, þat þe peynes in þe bodie were þe
 more sore & bittere[,] & þe hardere to suffre.³

As dictated by the gospel narratives, Love's passion sequence goes on to describe this body's pains. Nevertheless, it rarely dwells on gruesome details, instead using the images it creates of Christ's physical sufferings as catalysts for meditations on the love between him and his heavenly Father and earthly mother and companions, thus adding a relational element to what might otherwise be mere description. Indeed, the *Mirror* as a whole depicts Christ as thoroughly knit into the fabric of human family and friendship, his relationships an important part of his humanity. As readers meditatively envision the events of the passion, they assume the role of those who were there, the lovers of Jesus who can do nothing to ease his pain but who are compelled to observe it, and they share

³ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, pp. 161-62.

in these characters' experience of shock, helplessness, and grief. In short, they become through the exercise of meditative reading members of that first Christian community, dissolving the chronological and geographical barriers that pertain outside the act of meditation. Furthermore, inasmuch as meditating on the life of Christ in this way was a common devotional practice in the late middle ages, readers of Love's text also became members of a Christian community defined by its shared imaginative experience.

Jesus' sweating of blood in Gethsemane is the first instance of his intense suffering. Although he is physically alone—his closest disciples, Peter, James, and John, are sleeping a stone's throw away and the others are further still—the *Mirror* presents him firmly within the circles of family and friends. In agony at the very thought of his approaching death, Jesus prays, as in the gospel accounts, “Goode fadere I beseke þe, þat þou do away fro me þis cuppe of sorowe, & bitter passion, þat is ordeynet to me to drinke. And elles be þi wille fulfillede.”⁴ In the expanded version of this prayer that Love translates from the *Meditationes*,⁵ Jesus restates his submission to his Father's will, and, in the same breath, expresses his loving concern for the people who have hitherto been in his charge and whom he will shortly leave without his protection: “Fadere rihtwise, it if so be þat þou hast ordeynet & wilt in alle manere þat I suffre þe deþ vpon þe crosse[,] þi wille be fulfillede. Bot I recomende to þe fadere my swete modere & my disciples, þe wech I haue kept in to þis tyme, all þe while I haue bene duellyng with hem.”⁶

Love's next sentence states, “And with þis prayere þat precious & holiest blode of his blessed bodie[,] brekyng out in manere of swote[,] droppede done in to þe erþe

⁴ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, p. 164. Cf. Matthew 26:39, Mark 14:35-36, and Luke 22:42. The episode does not occur in John's gospel.

⁵ See *Meditationes*, Chapter 75: “*Meditacio passionis in hora matutinali*,” pp. 257-59.

⁶ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, p. 165.

abundantly in þat grete agonye & herde bataile.”⁷ The placement of this event in the text suggests that this physical phenomenon is a result of Christ’s anxiety about the consequences that his approaching passion would have on his loved ones as well as on himself. This image also reaches out to the readers of Love’s text, calling for an emotional response from them. Love comments, “Sopely here is grete matire of sorowe & compassion, þat ouht to stire þe hardest herte þat is in þis worlde to haue inwarde compassion of þat grete & souereyn anguish þat oure lorde Jesus suffrede in þat tyme, & for oure sake.”⁸

Soon after, the Father sends the archangel Michael not only to strengthen Jesus, as in Luke’s account, but also to assure him that “þe fadere seip ... þat he sal kepe þour dere modere & þour disciples, at þour wille, & shale þiue hem safe aþeyne to þowe.”⁹ The conversation concludes with Jesus bidding Michael “to recomende him to þe fadere & alle the court of heuen.”¹⁰ The *Meditationes* and its translation rework the biblical accounts of Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane such that attention is constantly drawn to his social networks—family, friends, even the heavenly court of which he is normally a member—as an important part of his experience as a human being. Furthermore, they follow the gospel accounts in attaching to Jesus’ prayer the striking image of his sweating drops of blood, which, in the meditative texts, serves as a memorial marker of the prayer and all that is associated with it. In this way, the image could also function as a starting point from which readers of these texts could invent their own meditations at a later date.

⁷ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, p. 165.

⁸ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, p. 165.

⁹ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, p. 166.

¹⁰ *Mirror*, Chapter 40, p. 166.

The densely packed images of the crucifixion work in much the same way. Love follows pseudo-Bonaventure in narrating the crucifixion twice.¹¹ In the first version, Christ and those who hammer the nails through his hands mount ladders to the already upright cross. This would be perfectly satisfactory as the only account of the crucifixion, but Love closely follows his source by summarizing and then narrating in full an alternative version, in which Christ is nailed to the cross lying on the ground and suffers the jolt when, raised, it falls down into the mortise. Both accounts are carefully narrated so as to allow readers to envision clearly each stage of the complicated procedure as they are directed to do by Love's opening words: "Now take hede diligently to þe maner of crucifyng."¹² A great deal of attention is given to technicalities, particularly in the first account, which specifies, for example, that it took three men to nail Jesus to the cross (one for each of his hands and a third for his feet), the arrangement and relative heights of the ladders, and the order in which his arms were stretched out on the cross and his hands nailed to it.

From this matter-of-fact if visually demanding narration emerges one image more striking than the rest, and it initiates a meditation that again stresses Christ's relationships, both with his Father and with the fellow human beings he is about to save by his death. In the midst of the bustling activity of the many "cursede werke menne"¹³ who are carrying out the crucifixion, Jesus pauses. Having ascended the ladder,

he turnede his bakke to þe crosse, & ... hese fairest handes 3afe vp to hem þat crucifiede him. And þan lifting vp hees louely eyene to heuen seide to

¹¹ See *Meditaciones*, Chapter 78: "*Meditacio passionis in sexta et hora nona*," pp. 270-72 and *Mirror*, Chapter 43: "Of þe crucifyng of oure lorde Jesu atte þe sixte houre," pp. 176-77.

¹² *Mirror*, Chapter 43, p. 176.

¹³ *Mirror*, Chapter 43, p. 176.

þe fadere in þees maner wordes, Loo here I am my dere fadere as þou woldest þat I sholde lowe my self vnto the crosse, for þe sauacion of mankynde, & þat is pleisyng & acceptable to me, & for hem I offre my self[,] þe whch þou woldest sholde be my breþerne.¹⁴

The readers of Jesus' prayer are among those of whom he speaks, those who have been raised to spiritual brotherhood with him through his death even as he has been lowered to kinship with them in his taking on of human form and experience. This passage does not fully articulate a theology of salvation, but it does stir to devotion, using the metaphor of family to exploit the affective potential of the divine becoming human while also reminding readers that they are members of a community comprised of all believers from Jesus' time to their own.

The readers' meditative experience of the crucifixion is extended yet further by the re-narration and consequent re-envisioning of the scene. The inclusion of a second account of the "maner of crucifying"¹⁵ stresses the material's importance and meditational function. As the mental images called into being by the first narration are held in the memory and the scene is re-imagined according to the second account of the same event, the differences between the two tellings are immediately apparent. These differences are significant in that drawing attention to the fictionality of the text aids meditation; the alteration of specific details encourages on each reading a genuine emotional response, which transcends mental assent to the historicity of the basic events or focus upon specific (and contradictory) descriptive details, which are understood to be fictitious catalysts for devotion—what Love calls in his poem "devoute

¹⁴ *Mirror*, Chapter 43, p. 177.

¹⁵ *Mirror*, Chapter 43, p. 176.

ymaginacions.”¹⁶ In fact, neither account of the crucifixion presented by the *Meditationes* and the *Mirror* is to be found in the gospels, which do not specify the way in which the crucifixion took place. Love, like pseudo-Bonaventure, is more concerned with the function of the images he provides than with their adherence to Scripture. Translating from the prologue to the *Meditationes*, Love explains to his readers at the very beginning of his text that “we mowen to stiryng of deuotion ymagine & þenk diuerse wordes & dedes of [Christ] & oper, þat we fynde not writen, so þat it be not a3eyns þe byleue.”¹⁷ In the event, it is less important to believe that the crucifixion took place in a certain way than to imagine it in a way that stirs one’s devotion. A range of imagined representations of this event are possible, and the *Mirror* provides two of them as catalysts for further thoughts about Christ’s self-sacrifice.

Finally, Love provides images of Christ’s sufferings that allow readers to share in his loved ones’ grief and in this shared emotional experience become members of their close-knit community. For example, Love’s translated narration of Christ’s death balances an image of his suffering body with an account of the effect that this same sight has on his closest human companions:

oure lorde began to faile in siht in manere of diying menne, & wax alle pale now stekyng þe eyene & now opunyng, & bowde his hede now in to one side & now in to a noþer side, failyng alle þe strengthes, & alle þe vaynes þan voide....

Oo lord god in what state was þat tyme his modere soule, when she sawh him so peynfully faile, wepe & dye? Sopely I trowe þat for þe multitude of anguishes she was alle out of hir self & vnfelable made as half dede ...

What trowe we didene þen Maudleyn þe trewe louede disciplesse, what John his awne derlyng, & oper tweyne sistres of oure lady? Bot what miht

¹⁶ *Mirror*, Proem, p. 10.

¹⁷ *Mirror*, Proem, pp. 10-11.

þei do? Þei were alle fulle of sorowe & bitternes, & þerfore þei weptene sore without remedye.¹⁸

The narrative sequence allows readers to see for themselves Christ's ultimate human weakness as his body fails him and to feel for themselves the numb desolation of grief before they read of Mary and the others' seeing and feeling, which mirrors their own, if on a greater scale. Readers also share in the helplessness experienced by Jesus' intimates, who, though physically present at this event, can do nothing to relieve his suffering. Although readers' emotional experience is painful, it is also a privilege in that it is shared with those whom the *Mirror* depicts as the very closest to Jesus in his earthly life: his mother, Mary Magdalene, and John. By allowing readers to imaginatively relive their sorrow, the text invites them into this elite group, whose members are unified by the intensity of their love for and devotion to Jesus.

To summarize, Love's translated passion meditations use striking images of Christ's (primarily) physical sufferings to elicit from readers a compassionate response that will increase their devotion to him and that places them within Christian communities: both that of the first believers as they appear in Love's text and that of contemporary devotional culture. These images of Christ's agony do not, however, linger over physical details but rather lead readers on to meditations on the impact that his sufferings have on others, consistently portraying Christ's humanity primarily in terms of his loving relationships. Of course, in his emphasis on these relationships Love, to a large degree, is simply following pseudo-Bonaventure. Yet it is noteworthy that he does not shy away from these passages in his source, even though he is presenting the material in the vernacular and to a potentially wider readership. Indeed, the sensitive depiction of

¹⁸ *Mirror*, Chapter 44: "How oure lorde Jesus 3elde vp þe spirite at none," p. 180.

Christ's relationships, though emotionally heightened as befitting the events of the passion, might appeal especially to lay people, whose own lives are closely interwoven with those of their family members and friends.

Love's meditations provide his readers with a series of intense emotional experiences but not with intellectually challenging material. For a treatment of one of the key moments in salvation history, the *Mirror's* passion section provides very little theological content, never fully explaining the significance of Christ's death or the role that it, as opposed to virtuous living, plays in the salvation of an individual. While the pre-passion portion of the text provides innumerable models of moral behaviour and attitudes for its readers to imitate, whether doing so will be sufficient for their hope of heaven to be justified or not remains unclear.

Whether Love translated the *Meditationes* on his own initiative or was commissioned by Arundel as part of his campaign to suppress Lollardy, as Deanesly assumes,¹⁹ the *Mirror* proper stands opposed to the Wycliffites' emphasis on Bible reading as the means to attain the knowledge of how to be saved, for, as stated above, its salvation theology is not clear and, as a meditative life of Christ, it offers a version of his life that excludes intellectually challenging content while greatly elaborating with affective meditation what little remains of the gospel narratives. Sargent has written that "however successful *The Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* was in confuting Lollard demands for an English Bible, it did not in fact answer them."²⁰ Indeed, it answered them with its silence.

¹⁹ Deanesly, *Lollard Bible*, p. 321. See also p. 24 above.

²⁰ Sargent, "Bonaventura English," p. 154.

Seeing the Substance: Christ's Sacramental Body in the Treatise

The same cannot be said of the appended Treatise on the Sacrament, original to Love, with which the *Mirror* closes. As the title suggests, the subject of the Treatise is the eucharist; more specifically, the Treatise is a mixture of devotion, miracle narratives, and anti-Wycliffite polemic, all centred around the doctrine of transubstantiation, which was codified at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Due to the complexity of Wycliffe's theological writings on the eucharist, his opponents commonly thought that he and his followers rejected this orthodox teaching.²¹ Love, usually silent on theological and doctrinal questions, defends transubstantiation twice in the course of the *Mirror* in response to his perception of the Wycliffites' heretical eucharistic theology. On the first of these occasions, the institution of communion at the last supper, Love states the doctrine of transubstantiation as follows:

þe sacrament of þe autere dewly made by vertue of cristes wordes is verrey goddus body in forme of brede, & verrey blode in forme of wyne, & þouh þat forme of brede & wyne seme as to alle þe bodily wittes of man brede & wyne in his kynde as it was before[,] neuerles it is not so in soþenese, bot onely goddus flesh & blode in substance, so þat þe accidentes of brede & wyne wondurfully & myraclesly a3eynus mannus reson, & þe comune ordre of kynde bene þere in þat holi sacrament without hir kyndely subiecte, & verrey cristies body þat suffrede dep vpon þe crosse is þere in þat sacrament bodily vnder þe forme & liknes of brede, & his verrey blode vndur likenes of wyne substancially & holely, without any feynyng or deceit, & not onely in figure as þe fals heritike seip.²²

²¹ For some of Wycliffe's and his followers' formulations, see "Wyclif's Confessions on the Eucharist," *Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 17-18; "The Eucharist I," *Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 110-12; and "The Eucharist II," *Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 113-15.

²² *Mirror*, Chapter 39: "Of þat worþi sopere þat oure lorde Jesus made þe niht before his passion, & of þe noble circumstances þat befelle þerwiþ," pp. 153-54. Sargent notes that Love's formulation derives from Aquinas's *Summa theologica*. See *Mirror*, p. 287.

The eucharistic elements do not metaphorically represent Christ's body and blood, they become them. The priest's words of consecration in the mass—which are a ritual repetition of Christ's words, “this is my body” and “this is my blood”²³—miraculously transform the eucharistic elements into the actual and complete body and blood of Christ although the elements still retain all the physical qualities of bread and wine that they had before these words were spoken. Love's position, in other words, is thoroughly orthodox.

Love goes a little further, however, when he acknowledges that this doctrine is hard to understand—even impossible. Since the teaching is beyond the scope of “mannus reson,” “to seke curiously in ymaginacion of reson þe merueiles of þis worþi sacrament” is “grete foly & gostly perile.”²⁴ In fact, Love asserts, this quest for understanding is what led Wycliffe and many others after him so far astray that they became followers of Antichrist instead of Christ:

we haue seene in oure dayes, howe þe disciples of Anticrist þat bene clepede Lollardes, hauen made mich dissension & diuision in holy chirch, & putte many men in to errour of þis blessedde sacrament, by þe fals doctrine of hir maistere þe wech þorh his grete clergy & kunnyng of philosophye was deceyuede[,] in þat he 3af more credence to þe doctrine of Arestotele þat stant onely in naturele reson of man[,] þan he dide to þe doctrine of holy chirch & þe trewe doctours þerof touching þis precieuse sacrament.²⁵

Love depicts the Lollards as not simply in error but wicked: Wycliffe's intellectual pride in his scholasticism and his scornful rejection of the Church's truth have led to the spiritual anarchism of his followers, who have wrought havoc in the English Church.

Love concludes that since their teaching on the eucharist is in opposition to the Church's,

²³ Matthew 26:26 and 26:28.

²⁴ *Mirror*, Treatise, p. 229.

²⁵ *Mirror*, Treatise, p. 238.

Lollards cannot be genuinely devoted to Christ. Furthermore, they are cut off from the benefits enjoyed by those who have true faith in the sacrament:

þe fals lollardes ... hauen neiþer trewe drede nor parfite loue of oure lorde Jesus, & þerfore þei fele not þe gostly swetnesse of þis heuenly mete of his precious body, ne þe likyng mynde of hees merueiles shewede in þat blessedde sacrament.

Bot we þat þorh grace standen in trewe byleue as holi chirch haþ tauht vs (of) þis souereyn holiest sacrament[,] with gostly likyng of soule ... considere we how þat oure lorde Jesus of his vnspekable gudenes ... 3iueþ him self to vs euery day bodily in þat precious sacrament ...²⁶

Whereas the *Mirror*'s meditations construct Christian community around shared imaginative experience, the "we" *versus* "they" mentality of the *Treatise*'s treatment of the Wycliffites defines this community in terms of those it excludes. While the basis of exclusion is primarily doctrinal, it also builds on Love's opposition of intellectual inquiry to faith. Thus, Love does not attempt to convince his readers of the truth of transubstantiation with theological argument—such an approach would both align him with his enemies and encourage his readers to think in a way that could challenge Church authority and be hazardous to their own souls. Rather, he urges them to accept the doctrine on authority: "þus hauen holy doctours tauht, & holi chirch determinede."²⁷ However, in keeping with the meditational technique of his translation, Love provides them with affective, memorable images on which to hang their belief.

The central section of the *Treatise* is a compilation of miracle stories from authoritative sources, primarily the lives of Gregory the Great, Hugh of Avalon, and Edward the Confessor.²⁸ Two of the tales narrate the conversion of unbelievers—a

²⁶ *Mirror*, *Treatise*, pp. 239-40.

²⁷ *Mirror*, *Treatise*, p. 229.

²⁸ Love begins each tale with a statement of its source. See *Mirror*, *Treatise*, pp. 230, 232, 235, and 236.

scoffer and a hardened sinner, respectively—to faith in the doctrine of transubstantiation. In each story, the climax comes in the form of a shocking image of Christ’s physical presence in the eucharistic elements. In the first tale, derived from the life of Gregory the Great, a matron of Rome who regularly provided the bread used in the mass, one day “brest out in to a dissolute lawhtere” at the priest’s words “þe body of oure lorde Jesu criste.”²⁹ When Gregory, alarmed, asks her why she had laughed, she replies, “by cause þat þou clepedest goddus body þe brede þat I made wiþ myn handes.”³⁰ Gregory immediately begins praying for the woman, and, as he does so, “þe sacrament turnede in to þe likenes of a fynger in flesh & blode. Wherþorh the woman was fro hir misbyleue turnede in to þe trewe byleue.”³¹

Although Love’s sources were considered respectable and authoritative, and although similar narratives of a living eucharist were popular among preachers and common in medieval drama, Love’s account is theologically questionable.³² The miracle convinces the woman of Christ’s bodily presence in the sanctified bread, but it is not theologically sound evidence of the doctrine of transubstantiation as it involves a change of accidents as well as of substance. Even the physical characteristics of the bread disappear and are replaced by those of Christ’s dismembered digit, working contrary to the invisible miracle of transubstantiation. Less importantly, whereas the doctrine states that the whole of Christ’s body and blood are present in the elements, here we see only a small portion of that body. While the facts that Christ’s body is visible at all and in such a

²⁹ *Mirror*, Treatise, pp. 232-33.

³⁰ *Mirror*, Treatise, p. 233.

³¹ *Mirror*, Treatise, p. 233.

³² On the emotional power of these narratives and the cultural role of the eucharist in the late middle ages, see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

small quantity are theologically problematic, this image is a strikingly apt one: Christ's accusatory finger brings conviction just as the woman's own fingers instigated her initial disbelief. The image is clearly intended to reach out beyond the story's characters to its readers, initially shocking them as it does the Roman matron. Its ultimate impact on the readers, however, is not necessarily to convince them that Christ's bodily substance is present in the eucharist, which most of Love's readers would already believe, but to provide them with a graphic means of remembering this doctrine.

The second conversion narrative clarifies the relationship between the physical sight of the transformed eucharistic elements and the imaginative envisioning of the same, incorporating both a dramatic miracle story and a more sophisticated theological critique. In this story, an elderly priest recounts to the clerks of Saint Hugh that when he was young and hardened in sin he wondered one day as he celebrated mass if his own sinfulness might prevent the miracle of transubstantiation from taking place. He soon received confirmation to the contrary: "when it came to þe tyme of þe fraction[,] & as þe vse is I hade broken þe hooste in tweyn[,] anone fresh blode ranne out þerof, & þat part þat I helde in my hande was turnede in to flesh & alle ouere wete with þe rede blode."³³ The priest, "alle astonede & abashede, & welnere out of [his] witte," dropped the gobbets of flesh into the chalice, where the wine immediately "turnede opunly to mannus siht to blood," the contents of the chalice now "declaring expressely þe forme & þe soþenes of þat blessedde sacrament."³⁴ The priest concludes by stating that this experience changed his life: he ceased doubting, confessed his sin to the pope, did penance, and made satisfaction, while the transformed elements have remained as relics in his church. Saint

³³ *Mirror*, Treatise, pp. 233-34.

³⁴ *Mirror*, Treatise, p. 234.

Hugh's clerks are impressed with this story and hurry to tell it to him, thinking he may like to see the relics. Hugh's response, however, is a rebuke: "let him go see þo litel smale porciones þerof wip his bodily eye[,] þat seþ not alle þe hole with his innere gostly eye."³⁵ The ideal faith in transubstantiation, according to Hugh, is not founded upon the physical sight of the miracle, which is fragmentary and does not accurately represent the reality stated by the doctrine; rather, ideal faith can see the full image of Christ in the mind.

It would seem that Love himself does not make this distinction. He concludes these two accounts with the statement, "Þus oure lorde of his speciale grace by opune miracles & merueiles shewede in þis blessedde sacrament[,] draweþ sume folke out of hir misbyleue."³⁶ More interested in the end than in the means, Love is not concerned that the matron and the priest of the stories he presents see Christ's body in fragmentary forms that they find disturbing rather than comforting. Nor does he directly address the disjunction between such depictions of Christ and those he provides in his translated meditations. Whereas even the passion meditations, which place greater emphasis on Christ's physicality than do the meditations on the other events in his life, consistently show him as a full human being whose life is interwoven with those of his parents and friends, the Treatise does not grant him even a whole body, and the dismembered fragments of his body that do appear elicit not compassion and devotion but shock and fear, if also faith. The contrast between the depiction of Christ in the meditations and the depiction of him in the Treatise can be explained, however. Whereas the meditations are interested in Christ as a living human being who loved and was loved, the Treatise is

³⁵ *Mirror, Treatise*, pp. 234-35.

³⁶ *Mirror, Treatise*, p235.

interested in Christ's sacramental body, which is an object of fear to the unbelieving but of "comfort" to "hem þat bene in trewe byleue."³⁷ Love ultimately synthesizes Christ's earthly and his sacramental body, celebrating Christ's presence in the eucharist as a continuation of his physical life among (even within) his followers since the time of his ascension:

For what tyme he sholde stey vp in to heuene[,] he seide to hees apostles & hees foloweres in þees wordes, *Loo I am with 3owe alle þe daies in to þe worldes ende*, conforting him by þis benigne promise[,] þat he sholde duelle with hem not onely by þe gostly presence of his godhede[,] but also by þe bodily presence of his manhede, þat he 3iveþ to vs in þis forseide mete of his flesh & blode ...³⁸

Finally, building on the continuity afforded by Christ's eternal body, Love brings sacrament and meditation together in their shared imperative to remember the Lord's death until he comes. He does so by establishing Christ's body, the "gostly mete" that is present in the eucharistic bread, as a focal point for orthodox devotion, a unifying image that both recalls the whole of Jesus' earthly life and perpetuates meditation upon it even as the sacrament is about to be received. Love opens his *Treatise on the Sacrament* with an explanation of the memorial and community-constructing functions of the sacrament:

Þis mete is þat precieuse gostly mete of þe blessedde body of oure lorde Jesu in þe sacrament of þe awtere þat he of his souereyn mercy 3iueþ every day in forme of brede to alle þoo þat trewly dreden him as hir lorde god, by þe whiche drede, þei kepen hem out of dedely sinne, & mekely standen in þe stedefast byleue of holi chirch. And þis gostly mete he 3iueþ, & haþ made þerebye a speciale mynde ... of alle þe merueilous werkes & dedes of him in his blessedde life here in þis worlde, þe which is tretede in alle þis boke before writen....

Þis is þat hye & moste noble memoryale þat oweþ worþily to be prentede euer in oure mynde, & to be bisily kept in þe inwarde affeccion

³⁷ *Mirror, Treatise*, p. 230.

³⁸ *Mirror, Treatise*, pp. 226.

of þe herte in continuele mynde of him þat 3iueþ vs þis swete memoriale
& precious 3ift.³⁹

He closes it, “as for a fulle ende of alle his blessedde life before writen,” with a meditative prayer to the host, “þe which oweþ to be seide in presence of þat holy sacrament at þe messe with inwarde deuocion.”⁴⁰

This thesis offers a preliminary approach to the *Mirror* since much work remains to be done on Love and his main source, the Latin *Meditationes*. In particular, attention to Jehan Galopes’s French translation, which forms an important part of the politically charged literary milieu of Lancastrian England, would provide further material towards an understanding of the *Mirror*’s own role in the religious as well as the secular politics of the time. We have seen that although Love’s Middle English translation extends the *Meditationes* to a broad lay readership, manuscripts of the *Mirror* circulating ever more widely as the fifteenth century progressed, the work was early associated with figures in positions of power, ranging from Archbishop Arundel, the leader of the orthodox suppression of Lollardy, to Thomas Beaufort, an extender of Lancastrian military power abroad, to Sibyl de Felton, the abbess of a prosperous and somewhat worldly convent, who might have used the *Mirror* to stir up orthodox zeal among her nuns. Yet despite these connections, the intentional conservatism with which Love condescends to his lay readers, and even the aggressive orthodoxy of the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, Love’s work is more than a piece of Church propaganda, for, retaining the *Meditationes*’s emphasis on Christ’s human relationships, it invites its readers to an intimate and emotionally charged encounter with Jesus, the divine human being who is both the

³⁹ *Mirror*, *Treatise*, pp. 225-26.

⁴⁰ *Mirror*, *Treatise*, p. 240.

instigator and the object of their devotion. Finally, we must note the paradox that Love incorporates in the final section of his work material that is dramatically powerful but theologically problematic.

Love was a crucial figure in the politically charged use of English for religious instruction in Lancastrian England. In this study I have attempted to show some of the complexities and unresolved issues surrounding his role.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Editions of the *Meditationes* and the *Mirror*

- Peltier, A. C., ed., "*Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Opera Omnia Sancti Bonaventurae*, vol. 12 (Paris: Vives, 1868), pp. 509-630. [reprint of Vatican edition of 1596]
- Powell, L. F., ed., *The Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908).
- Hogg, James and Lawrence F. Powell, eds., *The Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*, 2 vols., *Analecta Cartusiana* 91 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1989). [reprint of Powell's 1908 edition]
- Sargent, Michael G., ed., *Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Critical Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686* (New York: Garland, 1992).
- _____, ed., *Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Reading Text: A Revised Critical Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2004).
- Stallings [Stallings-Taney], M. Jordan, ed., *Meditaciones de passione Christi, olim Sancto Bonaventurae attributae* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1965).
- Stallings-Taney, M., ed., *Iohannis de Caulibus: Meditationes vite Christi olim S. Bonaventuro [sic] attributae*, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis* 153 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997).
- Taney, Francis X., Sr, Anne Miller, and C. Mary Stallings-Taney, trans. and eds., *John of Caulibus: Meditations on the Life of Christ* (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1999).

Primary and Secondary Works

- Aers, David, *Sanctifying Signs: Making Christian Tradition in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004).
- Armstrong, C. A. J., "The Piety of Cicely, Duchess of York: A Study in Late Medieval Culture," *For Hillaire Belloc: Essays in Honour of his 72nd Birthday*, ed. Douglas Woodruff (London: Sheed & Ward, 1942), pp. 73-94.

- Ayto, John and Alexandra Barratt, Introduction, *Aelred of Rievaulx's De Institutione Inclusarum*, ed. John Ayto and Alexandra Barratt, EETS o.s. 287 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. xi-lv.
- Beckwith, Sarah, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London: Routledge, 1993).
- Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, 5th rev. edn., ed. Roger Gryson et al. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).
- Bonelli, Benedetto, "Meditationes vitae Christi ad quamdam monialem sanctae Clarae," *Prodromus ad opera omnia S. Bonaventurae* (Bassano, 1767), cols. 697-700, repr. A. C. Peltier, ed., *Opera Omnia Sancti Bonaventurae*, vol. 12 (Paris: Vives, 1868), pp. xli-xliv.
- Carruthers, Mary, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- Cokayne, George Edward, "Hugh (de Stafford), Earl of Stafford, Lord Stafford and Lord Audley," *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom Extant, Extinct, or Dormant*, vol. 12, ed. Geoffrey H. White (London: St. Catherine Press, 1953), pp. 177-79.
- _____, "Thomas Beaufort," *Complete Peerage*, vol. 5, ed. and rev. Vicary Gibbs and H. A. Doubleday (London: St. Catherine Press, 1926), pp. 200-204.
- _____, "Thomas (de Holand), Earl of Kent, Lord Wake, Lord Woodstock and Lord Holand," *Complete Peerage*, vol. 7, rev. Vicary Gibbs, ed. H. A. Doubleday and Lord Howard de Walden (London: St. Catherine Press, 1929), pp. 156-59.
- Coppack, Glyn and Mick Aston, *Christ's Poor Men: The Carthusians in England* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publications, 2002).
- Coppack, Glyn, *Mount Grace Priory, Yorkshire* (London: English Heritage, 1996). [guidebook]
- Deanesly, Margaret, "The Gospel Harmony of John de Caulibus, or S. Bonaventura," *Collectanea Franciscana*, vol. 2, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Manchester: British Society of Franciscan Studies, 1922), pp. 10-19.
- _____, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920).
- Doyle, A. I., "Books Connected with the Vere Family and Barking Abbey," *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society* 25 (1958), 222-43.

- _____, "Stephen Dodesham of Witham and Sheen," *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, their Scribes and Readers: Essays Presented to M. B. Parkes*, ed. P. R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1997), pp. 94-115.
- Edwards, A. S. G., "Beinecke MS 661 and Early Fifteenth-Century English Market Production," *Beinecke Studies in Early Manuscripts*, supplement to *The Yale University Library Gazette* 66 (1991), 181-86.
- Faulkner, Ann, "The Harrowing of Hell at Barking Abbey and in Modern Production," *The Iconography of Hell*, ed. Clifford Davidson and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992), pp. 141-57.
- Fischer, Columban, "Bonaventure (Apocryphes attribué à saint)," *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, vol. 1 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937), cols. 1843-56.
- _____, "Die *Meditationes vitae Christi*. Ihre handschriftliche Ueberlieferung und die Verfasserfrage," *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 25 (1932), 3-35, 175-209, 305-48, and 449-83.
- Forshall, Rev. Josiah and Sir Frederic Madden, eds., "Prologue," *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books, in the Earliest English Versions Made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1850), pp. 1-60.
- Gasca Queirazza, Giuliano, "Intorno ad alcuni codici delle *Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 55 (1962), 252-58; 56 (1963), 162-74; and 57 (1964), 538-51.
- Geith, Karl-Ernst, "Lateinische und deutschsprachige Leben Jesu-Texte: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung," *Jahrbuch der Oswald von Wolkenstein Gesellschaft* 12 (2000), 273-89.
- Gillespie, James L., "Holland [Holand], Thomas, sixth earl of Kent and duke of Surrey (c. 1374-1400), magnate and soldier," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online* (Oxford University Press, 2004-2007).
- Gillet, Louis, *Histoire artistique des Ordres mendiants: Essai sur l'art religieux du XIII^e au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1939).
- Ghosh, Kantik, *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Griffiths, Jeremy and Derek Pearsall, eds., *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

- Harriss, G. L., "Beaufort, Thomas, duke of Exeter (1377?-1426), magnate and soldier," *Oxford DNB Online*.
- Hellinga, Lotte, "Nicholas Love in Print," *Nicholas Love at Waseda: Proceedings of the International Conference, 20-22 July 1995*, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle, and Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 143-62.
- Hogg, James, "Mount Grace Charterhouse and Late Medieval English Spirituality," *Collectanea Cartusiana*, vol. 3, ed. James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 82.3 (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg, 1980), pp. 18-21.
- Hudson, Anne, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 38 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).
- Karnes, Michelle, "Nicholas Love and Medieval Meditations on Christ," *Speculum* 82 (2007), 380-408.
- Ker, N. R., *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).
- Knowles, David, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 2, *The End of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955).
- Meale, Carol M., "'oft siþis with grete deuotion I þought what I mi3t do pleysyng to god': The Early Ownership and Readership of Love's *Mirror*, with Special Reference to its Female Audience," *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 19-46.
- McNamer, Sarah, "Further Evidence for the Date of the Pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 235-61.
- _____, review of *Johannis de Caulibus: Meditationes Vite Christi*, ed. by M. Stallings-Taney, *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s. 50 (1999), 378-85.
- McNiven, Peter, "Neville [de Neville] family (per. c. 1267-1426), gentry," *Oxford DNB Online*.
- Morgan, Philip, "Felton, Sir Thomas (d. 1381), soldier and administrator," *Oxford DNB Online*.
- National Archives, "Petitioners: Abbot and Convent of Croyland," [c. 1391], Special Collections 8: Ancient Petitions, ref. no. SC 8/103/5116, available from <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue>.

- National Archives, "Petitioners: John de Ashby, Abbot of Croyland, and the Convent of Croyland," [c. 1391], Special Collections 8: Ancient Petitions, ref. no. SC 8/102/5054, available from <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue>.
- Oliger, Livario, "Le *Meditationes vitae Christi* del Pseudo-Bonaventura," *Studi francescani* 7 (1921), 143-83; 8 (1922), 18-47.
- Ó Maonaigh, Cainneach, English Appendix, *Smaointe Beatha Chríost i Innsint Ghaelge a chuir Tomás Gruamdha Ó Bruacháin (fl. c. 1450) ar an Meditationes vitae Christi*, ed. Cainneach Ó Maonaigh (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944), pp. 323-66.
- Pantin, William Abel, "Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman," *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 398-422.
- Parkes, M. B., *English Cursive Book Hands* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).
- Phillips, Dianne, "The *Meditations on the Life of Christ*: An Illuminated Fourteenth-Century Italian Manuscript at the University of Notre Dame," *The Text in the Community: Essays on Medieval Works, Manuscripts, Authors, and Readers*, ed. Jill Mann and Maura Nolan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), pp. 237-81.
- Rawcliffe, Carole, "Stafford, Hugh, second earl of Stafford (c. 1342-1386), magnate and soldier," *Oxford DNB Online*.
- Reakes, Jason, "The Middle English Prose Translation of the *Meditaciones de Passione Christi* and its Links with Manuscripts of Love's *Mirror*," *Notes and Queries* 27.3 (June 1980), 199-202.
- Riddy, Felicity, "'Women talking about the things of God': A Late Medieval Sub-Culture," *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500*, ed. Carol M. Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 104-27.
- Rubin, Miri, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- Ruh, Kurt, *Bonaventura deutsch: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Franziskaner-Mystik und -Scholastik*, Bibliotheca Germanica 7 (Bern: Francke, 1956).
- _____, "Meditationes vitae Christi," *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexicon*, vol. 6 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1985), cols. 282-90.

- Salter, Elizabeth, *Nicholas Love's "Myrrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ"*, ed. James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 10 (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg, 1974).
- Sargent, Michael G., "The Affiliations of the Waseda Manuscript of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 175-95.
- _____, "Bonaventura English: A Survey of the Middle English Prose Translations of Early Franciscan Literature," *Spätmittelalterliche Geistliche Literatur in der Nationalsprache*, vol. 2, ed. James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 106.2 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1984), pp. 145-76.
- Scase, Wendy, "Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's 'Common-Profit' Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London," *Medium Ævum* 61 (1992), 261-74.
- Simpson, James, *Reform and Cultural Revolution, The Oxford English Literary History*, vol. 2, 1350-1547 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- Smith, Jeremy J., "Dialect and Standardisation in the Waseda Manuscript of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 129-41.
- Stallings-Taney, C. Mary, "The Pseudo-Bonaventure *Meditaciones vite Christi: Opus Integrum*," *Franciscan Studies* 55 (1998), 253-80.
- Thompson, E. Margaret, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930).
- Tuck, Anthony, "Beaufort [married names Ferrers; Neville], Joan, countess of Westmorland (1379?-1440), magnate," *Oxford DNB Online*.
- _____, "Vere, Robert de, ninth earl of Oxford, marquess of Dublin, and duke of Ireland (1362-1392), courtier," *Oxford DNB Online*.
- Vaccari, Alberto, "Le *Meditazione della Vita di Cristo* in Volgare," *Scritti di erudizione e di filologia*, vol. 1, *Filologia biblica e patristica* (Rome: Edizioni Storia e Letteratura, 1952), pp. 341-78.
- Watson, Nicholas, "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409," *Speculum* 70 (1995), 822-64.
- Wilkins, David, ed., "*Constitutiones domini Thomae Arundel, Cantuariensis archiepiscopi ... contra haereticos*," *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, vol. 3 (London, 1737), pp. 314-19.

Wogan-Browne, Jocelyn, *Saints' Lives and Women's Literary Culture: Virginity and its Authorizations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Woolf, Rosemary, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968).

Zeeman [Salter], Elizabeth, "Continuity and Change in Middle English Versions of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*," *Medium Ævum* 26 (1957), 25-31.