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VOX, IMAGO, LITTERA: NICHOLAS LOVE'S "MIRROUR OF THE
BLESSED LIFE OF JESU CRISTE"

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List of Abbreviations

CPL ... *Clavis Patrum Latinorum*. ed. Eligius Dekkers, Steenbrugge, 1951.

CSEL ... *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. New York: Johnson
Reprint 1966-.

EETS ... Early English Text Society

EETS e.s. ... Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

EETS o.s. ... Early English Text Society. Original Series.

EETS s.s. ... Early English Text Society. Supplementary Series.

Mansi ... Johannes Dominicus Mansi. *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima
collectio*. Paris: H.Welter, 1901-1927.

PG ... *Patrologia Graeca Cursus Completus*. Ed. J.P. Migne, Paris, 1857-66.

PL ... *Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus*. Ed. J. P. Migne, Paris, 1841-64.

RS ... Rolls Series.

STC ... *A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland & Ireland,
And of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*.

List of Illustrations

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Introduction

I. The *Mirroure* and the Orthodox Reform: Aims

Between 1452 and 1457 an indulgence, that is an exemption of the pains of purgatory for forty days, was granted for those who read a single chapter of a book entitled *The Mirroure of the Blessed Life of Jesu Criste*,¹ as Christopher Braystones, a Carthusian of Beauvale, records.² Such promise of spiritual benefits had its results, as the *Mirroure* rapidly became a genuine bestseller in late medieval England. The immense popularity this particular book enjoyed is mirrored also by the fact that it survives in almost the same number of manuscripts as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* or *Piers Plowman*.³ In a period when the production of written religious material was supervised by severe ecclesiastical censorship,⁴ this text was propagated with an unusual vehemence. The book was the Middle English translation of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*,⁵ a highly influential work of devotion, attributed to Bonaventure, but written by the Franciscan Johannes Caulibus in the first part of the fourteenth century. The translation was done by a Carthusian monk, Nicholas Love, and was written for the laity to serve private devotion through meditation. The *Mirroure* contained the official approbation

¹The most recent edition of the text was made by Michael G. Sargent, ed., *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ. A Full Critical Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2005)

² Michael Sargent, "Bonaventura English: A Survey of the Middle English Prose Translations of Early Franciscan Literature," in *Spätmittelalterliche geistliche Literatur in der Nationalsprache, Analecta Cartusiana* 106 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1984), p. 150.

³ Only such works exceed it in the number of extant manuscripts as the *Wycliffite Bible* with more than 200, the *Prick of Conscience* with 12, and the *Canterbury Tales* with 82 manuscripts, See Sargent, *Mirroure*, Introduction, pp. 22-23.

⁴ 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 Fiona Somerset, *Clerical Discourse and Lay Audience. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature* 37 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

⁵ *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, ed. Balduinus Distelbrink, *Bonaventurae Scripta: authentica, dubia vel spuria critice recensita*, Subsidia scientifica Franciscalia 5 (Rome: Istituto storico cappuccini, 1975). The modern English translation of the work is provided by Isa Ragusa and Rosalie B. Green, eds., *Meditations on the Life of Christ, An Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Ital. 115*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961). For a more recent translation, see *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, translated by F. X. Taney, A. Miller, and C. M. Stallings-Taney. (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1999)

of Archbishop Arundel,⁶ appended to it in 1410, guaranteeing its appropriateness for the instruction of the faith and the refutation of Lollardy. The very rapid dissemination of the text was partly due to the popularity of its source text but also, in the same measure, to this approbation. The *Mirroure* was one main device of the official Church in the fight against the Lollard heresy.

Although the *Mirroure* was a text of great popularity it had been given very scarce critical attention for a surprisingly long time. Modern scholarship turned to the study of it due to the pioneering works of Elisabeth Salter, and after some sporadic attempts, Michael G. Sargeant's critical edition launched a renewed interest in the work. A conference dedicated to the *Mirroure* was held in Waseda in 1995. The proceedings of the conference have been edited by Michael G. Sargeant et al.,⁷ and due to the multiplicity of approaches very important results have been achieved, from codicological inquiries, through the study of manuscript illustrations up to questions of ownership and the influence of the text on other genres, such as drama. Further research was made on issues of style, translation techniques. Recently a new project has been launched by Queen's University, Belfast entitled *Geographies of Orthodoxy* which maps the *Mirroure* as well as its related texts, the other Middle English translations of the *Meditationes* as *The Privy of the Passion* and *Meditationes de Passione Christi*. The project aims at prompting and aiding research on these texts.⁸ A conference was held in 2010 to gather forces in the same field. Michael Sargeant provides a detailed description of scholarship done on the *Mirroure* in his critical edition,⁹ therefore I would only mention a few studies which are in direct relation with the main focus of my dissertation. My aim is to seek a new and more comprehensive understanding of how Nicholas Love built his strategies against Wyclif's ideas into his translation, how his work, both by its text and illuminations, exerted his influence against Lollardy, and how he responded to the new demand for devotional creativity of his lay readership, which he formulated also in great part in relation to his effort to combat the Lollard heresy.

Scholarly work concerning the Lollard activity and the response of the Church to it, investigating the doctrinal, literary and social implications has a long and extremely rich

⁶ Thomas Arundel (1353-1414), Archbishop of York from 1388, then Archbishop of Canterbury from 1399. See the work of Margaret Aston, *Thomas Arundel: a Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967)

⁷ *Nicholas Love at Waseda: Proceedings of the International Conference, 20-22 July 1995*, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle and Michael G. Sargeant. (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997)

⁸ *Geographies of Orthodoxy* <http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/>, last accessed 26 June, 2013.

⁹ Sargeant, *Mirroure*, Introduction, pp. 1-96.

history, and is labelled by such names of great purport as that of Anne Hudson, Margaret Aston, Nicholas Watson, Ian Johnson and others, names and history which render further elaboration on the topic unnecessary. However, a recent debate arose initiated by Nicholas Watson's groundbreaking article: "Censorship and Cultural Change"¹⁰ which not only defined the direction of research on Nicholas Love but also its influence was amplified so much as to determine how modern scholars thought for some decades of Arundel's *Constitutions* and its implications on the religious and intellectual production in the vernacular in England after 1409. Contrasting voices began to rise, however, and by the time of the Oxford conference named 'After Arundel' in 2008, which produced the volume with the same title, the number of those who thought that Arundel's inhibiting measures were by far less influential grew considerably.¹¹ The new concept of a failed censorship is combined with another term recently coined, that of the "orthodox reform," a term designating the new conception of the ways the Church reacted to the challenge of Lollardy. It means conjecturing, instead of strict and dully narrow-minded repression, more broadly planned, fruitfully applied attempts of reform as a reaction to the Lollard challenge. Although the term does appear verbatim only in some studies, it still signals a deep transformation of recent interpretative attitudes concerning the period after Arundel. As Nicholas Watson puts it himself:

*Although 'reform' was in the air, the term 'orthodox reform' was not in wide use at the conference on which this book is based. Catto gives the term's genealogy (in this volume, n. 2.). My extension of it to cover a wide range of issues from the period 1410-60 and later thus involves me in claiming that essays in this volume are promoting a term they do not use.*¹²

Another backbone of the recent discourse represents the considerations about the collocation "vernacular theology," which Ian Johnson offers to replace with the term "theological vernacular", thus inviting us to "imagine significantly more complexity and latitude in post-Arundelian textual behaviours than has generally been entertained hitherto."¹³

The extensions and ramifications of this challenging and fascinating new flourishing of ideas about how religious literature was produced in late-medieval England are ample and resist a faithful rendering within the limits of this introduction. My investigations about the

¹⁰ Nicholas Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change."

¹¹ *After Arundel. Religious Writing in Fifteenth Century England*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh. *Medieval Church Studies* 21. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011)

¹² *After Arundel*, p. 572.

¹³ Ian Johnson, "Vernacular Theology/Theological Vernacular: A Game of Two Halves?" in *After Arundel*. 73-88, p. 88.

Mirroure as written for the “hereticorum confutacionem” are entrenched into this discourse, trying to further elucidate how Nicholas Love’s work is an outstanding example of the strategies applied by the “orthodox reform” or, using Sargent’s terms: “We may see the movement that Arundel and Love led and exemplified as, in effect, a ‘Premature Counter-reformation.’”¹⁴ Also, my work attempts at producing a modified image of how Love related to his lay audience in allowing them access not only to theologizing vernacular but also to spiritual experience.

The history of criticism of the *Mirroure* concerning its anti-Wycliffism is not too extended, and has recently been criticized as a direction which diverts scholarly attention from the text as being primordially written to enhance meditation.¹⁵ The *Geographies of Orthodoxy* project seems to prefer another path, as its main aim is to focus on the devotional aspect of these texts. However, the intentional ideological filling of Love’s text and the very complex religious-cultural-political ramifications of the time of its composition definitely require further research in this field. So much so, that even Stephen Kelly defends the Project against the charge that it puts the question of Lollardy apart, saying that “the investment in reading Nicholas Love in terms of Lollardy and/or Wycliffism remains embedded in our field.”¹⁶ Michael Sargeant also voiced a favourable opinion about the necessity of continuing this research afresh in the *After Arundel* Conference Proceedings.¹⁷ The efforts to regard the *Mirroure* as a member of a continuum of meditational tradition are exemplified by the project *Geographies*, as well as by individual studies of Michelle Karnes.¹⁸ As the second area of the investigations of this dissertation is that of the *Mirroure* functioning as supplying meditational-contemplative material, my work also addresses issues, which are in the mainstream of the *Geographies* project. Furthermore, my analysis also seeks to reveal the interrelatedness of these two aspects: anti-Wycliffism and the promulgation of meditational devotion in new forms.

¹⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, p. 75.

¹⁵ Mainly by those supporting the project *Geographies of Orthodoxy*, whose main aim is to focus on the devotional aspect of these texts.

¹⁶ *Geographies of Orthodoxy*, Comment posted by Stephen Kelly, September 4, 2009. <http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/discuss/2009/04/24/hospitable-reading-and-clerical-reform-in-fifteenth-century-london/comment-page-1/#comment-141>, last accessed on 26 June 2013.

¹⁷ See Michael G. Sargent, “Censorship or Cultural Change? Reformation and Renaissance in the Spirituality of Late Medieval England”, in *After Arundel*, p. 55-72.

¹⁸ Michelle Karnes, “Nicholas Love and Medieval Meditations on Christ,” *Speculum* 82 (2007): 280-408., and Michelle Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011)

The recent discourse of the conference *After Arundel* seems to be revolving around the interpretations and re-interpretations of terms and definitions, and this has an important purport on any investigation ventured into the field of late-medieval religiosity and intellectual production in England, most characteristically on those which target the issue of orthodoxy-heretodoxy. Wycliffism is also redefined exactly by extending the borders of the concept of what a Lollard is, after all, how Lollards defined themselves, and how others defined them. The volume *Wycliffite Controversies*¹⁹ questions the definitions hitherto used and also tries to redefine the borders of orthodoxy and heterodoxy by pointing at the paradoxical thinking, writing, manuscript production and even behaviour of Wycliffites. Thus it forces a reinterpretation of our concepts of the identity and of the interactions between the camps of reformist-antireformist religiosity, hitherto named in a monolithic way.²⁰ As my study deals rather with the text of the *Mirroure* and to a lesser extent with Lollards reacting to the text (which would be a fascinating subject for further research) these categories are rather kept in mind than actually put to practice in the present dissertation, except for only some relevant cases.

Michael G. Sargent, in his recent edition of the *Mirroure*, provided a detailed analysis of the anti-Wycliffite stances present in the text. He did not claim to have presented a full list of these, and he concentrated mainly on inserted passages, which Love himself endowed with a note *contra Lollardos*, or on the lengthier inserted passages on the sacraments. However, from my research on the text I conclude that an important part of the programme was built in more indirectly as well in the text of the *Mirroure*, touching upon more aspects and points of critique exercised by Lollardy than previously considered. In Chapter 2 I argue to support this thesis by a textual analysis of the *Mirroure* considering several factors of the process of translation, that is, the compilation, the inclusions of original passages into the text with an Anti-Wycliffite message and source study. By doing so, I hope to add to the understanding of Love's originality as a translator in his concern to combat heresy.

I find it important and attuning with the characteristics of its time that the *Mirroure* should be regarded in its complexity as being a text not only written but also copied into a manuscript: as a product which exerted its influence on its readers also through its material

¹⁹ Mishtooni Boose and J. Patrick Hornbeck II, eds., *Wycliffite Controversies. Medieval Church Studies 23* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011)

²⁰ See for example: Kantik Ghosh, "Wycliffite 'Affiliations': Some Intellectual-Historical Perspectives" in *Wycliffite Controversies*, pp. 13-32; Anne Hudson, "'Who is my neighbour?' Some problems of Definition on the Borders of Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy," *Ibid.*, pp. 79-96; Robyn Malo, "Behaving Paradoxically? Wycliffites, Shrines, and Relics," *Ibid.*, pp. 193-210.

forms, by its visual appearance and its illustrations. Therefore I undertook a study to determine whether the illuminations of the *Mirroure* manuscripts could or did carry similar Anti-Wycliffite messages.

The influence of Lollard activity on the formation and changes of iconography has not been thoroughly investigated so far. The thorough study of Ann Eljenholm Nichols²¹ serves as a pioneering work. It relates the development of the seven-sacrament art in southern and eastern England as being influenced by the Lollard presence in the area. Although of very great interest, the work mainly deals with the genres of baptismal fonts, reliefs, wall-painting and glass painting, that is, the well-visible genres of art, easily accessible for the contemporary public. The sacramental iconography of illuminated manuscripts is not central to her interest and study. Kathleen L. Scott has shown in *Later Gothic Manuscripts* that Lollardy, mostly the Lollard ideas about images, had effects on the style of manuscript illuminations,²² but her studies did not indicate whether it had any influence on their iconography as well. Therefore I would also like to focus my attention on this aspect when analysing two extensively illuminated manuscripts of the *Mirroure*.

The two manuscripts, which contain a surprisingly large cycle of illuminations, are those of the National Library of Scotland MS Advocates 18.1.7, kept in Edinburgh, and the New York Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M 648. These manuscripts contain texts of great importance, and the illuminations, mainly those of the Advocates copy, are among the finest of late medieval English illuminations. Scott catalogued the Advocates copy in her comprehensive work *Later Gothic Manuscripts*,²³ and published in the volume a short study of the illuminated manuscripts containing the *Mirroure* text.²⁴ She provided a full list of all the illuminated or decorated copies of the *Mirroure*,²⁵ but a more systematic study of the two manuscripts fell beyond her intended scope. She stated that “a fuller record of the Advocates’

²¹ Ann Eljenholm Nichols, *Seeable Signs. The Iconography of the Seven Sacraments 1350-1544*. (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994).

²² “It is important to locate Lollard thought... both in London and among metropolitan populace as one element of the dramatic change in ornamentation of English books that occurred around 1400... St. Paul’s Cathedral, where the Lollards were posted, was... at the heart of the district in which books were made and decorated, and it is inconceivable that Lollard ideas concerning images and unnecessary vain crafts had not been received and discussed by members of the book trade.” Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390-1490*. (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1996), vol. 1, p. 44.

²³ Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390-1490*.

²⁴ Kathleen L. Scott, “The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts of Nicholas Love’s *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*,” in *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, pp. 61-86.

²⁵ According to her investigations, “of the fifty-six complete or originally complete *Mirror* manuscripts, at least twenty-eight have illuminated borderwork, two have miniatures, many others have flourishwork initials or partial borders, and not one was produced with decorative work in a non-English style.” In Scott, “The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts,” p. 62.

and Morgan manuscripts, comparing pictorial subjects, iconography, and chapter locations, would be useful.”²⁶ This work was done later by Michael Sargeant, who provided an analysis of the two pictorial cycles in a recent article but he did not elaborate on the aspect of Anti-Wycliffite stances.²⁷

I conduct my research on the implications of an Anti-Wycliffite campaign taking the text-image context as a coherent unit. By the comparative study of the two manuscripts in Chapter 3, I investigate the way the Anti-Wycliffite programme was encoded not only in the text but also in the illustrations of the text. In doing this I hope to contribute to the understanding of Lollardy, not only as affecting the style of image-production of guilds and illuminators,²⁸ but also as a factor influencing the illumination of manuscripts from an iconographical point of view, investigating the choice of pictorial cycle, pictorial content, iconographical symbolism. I also focus on how the illuminations in the two manuscripts form, each in turn, a special context to the text. I will almost exclusively rely on the iconographic tradition of the English manuscript illumination, as Scott demonstrates the scarcity of Continental influence in this period.²⁹ Due to the limits of this thesis, I shall not undertake a comparative study of the illustration tradition of the *Meditationes* manuscripts and the two *Mirroure* ones.³⁰ They would undoubtedly offer the possibility of further research.

²⁶ Kathleen L. Scott, “The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts,” p. 66.

²⁷ Michael Sargeant, “The Program of Illustration in National Library of Scotland, Advocates' Library MS 18.1.7 and Pierpont Morgan Library MS 648 of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*,” in *Tributes to Kathleen L. Scott: English Medieval Manuscripts: Readers, Makers and Illuminators*, ed. Marlene Villalobos Hennessy. (London: Harvey Miller, 2009), pp. 250-265.

²⁸ See Kathleen L. Scott, “The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts,” p. 66.

²⁹ See Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. 1, “Introduction,” 59-64. Although I am aware of the fact that no complete catalogue or database has been created yet, which would allow a study of late medieval English illuminations absolute reliability, the consultation of a fairly great corpus of images, provided by the Courteauld Institute of Art in London, as well as catalogues of Scott, J. J.G. Alexander and E. Temple, *Illuminated Manuscripts in Oxford College Libraries, The University Archives, and the Taylor Institution*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Alexander, *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*. (London: H. Miller, 1975-96); and of several manuscripts of the National Library of Scotland and that of Edinburgh University hopefully ensured a relative objectivity in considering the iconographic tradition of English manuscripts.

³⁰ It would also present great difficulties, as the list of the illustrated copies has not yet been finalised, as Isa Ragusa argues. She also provides the list of these thirteen manuscripts, those containing the most illustrations are MS Ital. 115 in Latin, translated and reproduced in her book, London, BL. Royal 20 B. I, ca. 1422, in French, which has 98; and Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 410, xiv-xv centuries, in Latin, which has 154. The other manuscripts are Como, Biblioteca Comunale, MS 45; xiv century, in Italian; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 162, xv century, in Latin; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawl. A 398, xv century, in Latin; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinton C 287, xv century, in Latin; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 921-922, xv century, in French; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 966, xv century, in French; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 978, xv century, in French; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 992, xv century, in French; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 12441, xv century, in French; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 17116, xv century, in French; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS ital. 115, xix century, in Italian. Thus the manuscripts greatly differ from each other, first of all in provenance, and then in the number of the scenes illuminated. They

Chapter 4 addresses questions of the dissemination of the text as well as those of manuscript ownership attesting to the influence the text and the illuminations could exert on their readership. By the modes of dissemination and the display of the illuminated manuscripts in this chapter speculation is made about their possible influence, reception, and about the composition of the readership Love was conjecturing for his work. I also treat here the issue of the composition of the audience, attempting interpretation on the basis of internal evidence of the *Mirroure* and considering external factors, as the religious practices and beliefs of the contemporary readership and several aspects of book production. I find it relevant to count with the versatility of religious ideas of the contemporary populace, therefore try to define Love's readership accordingly. The composition of certain manuscripts containing the *Mirroure* offers further hints for the research of this aspect. I investigate the miscellaneous manuscript collection of the Pierpont Library MS to analyse the hybridity of religious thought of the commissioners of the manuscript containing devotional material. I study more closely the motivating factors which had a role in creating the doctrinally intriguing coupling of the *Mirroure* text with Lollard material.

Along the lines of Kantik Ghosh's seminal study on Love's endeavours to fight Wycliffism using some of its own weapons turned against it,³¹ I formulate the hypothesis that Love tried to offer attainable spiritual experience and knowledge in an attempt to fill the needs of his readership avid of devotional interiorisation and personal involvement in practicing religion, thus, consciously or not, following in the footsteps of Wycliffites who successfully quenched this thirst. Therefore in Chapter 5 I address the issue of meditation versus contemplation examining the question: in what measure did Love offer the practice of meditation to his readers. Debating the position of Michelle Karnes who claims that he was restrictive, not allowing contemplation, I postulate that Love, although his primary aim was teaching and helping meditation, counted with the presence of members of his audience who aspired for more elevated spiritual experiences. Therefore he offered them several hints to direct them towards contemplation. Even in doing this he repeatedly revealed his deep concern to combat Wycliffite thought and formulated several of his directives and assistance to the access of contemplation in relation to it.

range from more than two hundred illustrations to only one or two pictures, and as Ragusa states, "as far as we can see there is no pictorial tradition relating the various examples." *The Meditations on the Life of Christ*, xxiii.

³¹ Kantik Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature* 45. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

I begin my investigations with a short summary of the context offered by other contemporary works on meditation-contemplation to position Love's degree of originality concerning the democratisation of spiritual knowledge: the transfer of texts hitherto preserved to clerics also to the laity. In the course of studying the hints Love offered his readers about how to reach contemplation, I treated several questions. The first was Love's altered instructions about meditation-contemplation, the motivations and the results of such alterations to establish whether by these Love intended to hinder or foster contemplation. The second question treated concerns his concept about the exegetical work such an imaginative meditation demanded from the readers. Taking into consideration Kantik Ghosh's important results in pointing to the relatedness of Love's exegetical conceptions with those of Wycliff,³² I embark on analysing the similarities and differences between these two, considering new factors as well, as the working of Grace in Love's system. I also highlight the indebtedness of the formation of Love's hermeneutical conceptions to his anxiety of heretic thought. The third question I treat is that of the audience Love addressed when creating the several strata of his work including advice on contemplation. Besides the hitherto well-known fact that Love expressly intended his work for the "simple souls," I deduce from the evidence of the text of the *Mirroure* that Love was conscious of a readership belonging to other strata as well. I also try to nuance and specify the characteristics of the lay readership Love had in mind. Furthermore, I conjecture that encompassing the clerical-lay binary (the boundaries of which were already loosened by Love) he focused also on another categorization: according to the spiritual affinity of his readers. He tailored his specified directions towards meditation and contemplation to the different spiritual exigencies of his audience. The fourth issue analysed is that of how Love introduced his instructions on contemplation. I study how he manoeuvred in different ways: by offering information and further reading about contemplation, and by suggesting, through the recounting of his own mystical-contemplative experience, that contemplation may be within reach. The fifth issue addressed is that of the restrictions Love imposed on the imaginative activity of his readers. This happened in basically two cases: where the Scripture does not provide details, or on issues where the contemplation of spiritual realities transcends natural reason, as in the case of the Trinity and of the Eucharist. In both instances I read Love's restrictions in the light of his endeavours of averting the dangers of falling into heresy. In the sixth subchapter I treat Love's Eucharistic expositions which are strengthened by recounting of his own contemplative experience. I highlight the significance

³² Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 147-173.

of an essential element of this discourse I detected: Love's unique invention of linking Eucharistic doctrine to mystical experience, exposed to refute in a more efficient way the Lollard tenets about the Eucharist. Finally I pursue an analysis of how Love formulated his anti-Wycliffite messages in relation to his theory of acceding mystical-contemplative experience in the *Treatise on the Sacrament*.

In the last section of my dissertation I use the context of some late medieval sermons written to instruct against the doctrines of the Wycliffites to highlight the originality of Love's strategies used for the same purpose. Preaching was a powerful tool in the hands of the Church to combat heresy. The similarities of audience, of the genres and the same instructional effort present a common background against which the similarities and differences of the strategies the authors of the selected sermons and those of Love can be projected. The investigation of the attitudes of the authors towards their audiences plays a crucial role in detecting the roots of the formation of the varying strategies. I apply the same criterion to reveal the causes of the difference in the popularity of the texts.

Thus I attempt to present Nicholas Love's *Mirroure* as an effective and well structured and formed masterpiece which confronted the manifold challenge of Lollardy in several ways. First, by the deliberate formation of his translation he created a second layer of Anti-Wycliffite allusions. Secondly, Love answered the new demands of his readership for spiritual enterprises, always with an eye on strengthening his audience in their orthodox beliefs, in ways which have so far not been revealed by scholarly work.

II. Sources: The Text of the *Mirroure* and the Two Illuminated Manuscripts

The *Meditationes Vitae Christi*³³ was attributed to Bonaventura, but in fact it was written by Johannes Caulibus, a Franciscan friar from Tuscany, for his sister, a Clarisse, around 1250. It became one of the most influential works in the Middle Ages, one which served as an aid for meditation on the narrative of the Gospels. It was translated into Middle English in parts repeatedly³⁴ until Love's full translation was made, entitled *The Mirroure of the Blessed Life of Jesu Criste*. Little is known about the life and other works of Nicholas Love: however, there is solid evidence that he was prior of the Carthusian monastery of

³³ See *Meditationes Vitae Christi*.

³⁴ See Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 15-22.

Mount Grace around 1415, up to his death, probably in late spring or early summer, 1423.³⁵ Sargent's recent research focuses on the political and economic aspects of his relation to Thomas Arundel, the Archbishop of York, in his work of making Mount Grace to flourish, and assuring its move from the "Ricardian" era into the "Lancastrian," but little evidence has been found yet.³⁶ One is Sargeant's conjecture that although the main aim of Love's presenting his work to Arundel for Approbation was to obtain his support for his campaign against Lollardy: "his doing so might also be seen as effecting a transfer of the allegiance and patronage of Mount Grace Charterhouse from the defunct Ricardian court to the Lancastrian."³⁷ Love was probably an ex-Benedictine, and Sargeant attributes his enthusiasm and sense of vocation to influence the religious landscape of his time to this fact:

*Arundel and Thomas Beaufort (who got the beautiful e Museo copy of the Mirror) became annual donors to Mount Grace and the Order in general. This means that he was the prior of Mount Grace at whose instigation Henry called his extraordinary reformist convocation of the English Benedictines in 1421. And, according to the Croyland chronicle, said prior of Mount Grace was a disgruntled ex-Benedictine. Maybe that's where he got his very non-Carthusian ides that he had a vocation outside his cell.*³⁸

Sargent has also investigated the secular and ecclesiastical politics around the foundation of Mount Grace Charterhouse,³⁹ but as these are not in direct relation to the aims of this dissertation, I would not elaborate further on these aspects.

The text of the translation following the original retells the narrative of the Gospels in a detailed way. It emphasises the importance of imagining the scenes described; thus, with the help of the practice of imagination, the reader was invited to an inner participation in the events of the life of Christ. The sequence of the narrative is structured according to the days of the week, and the days are segmented according to the order followed by the Breviary. It survives in 56 complete or originally complete manuscripts, four extracts and an additional composite version. In the great majority of manuscripts the text stands alone, in some it is

³⁵ For more details, see *ibid.*, pp. 23-37.

³⁶ See *Ibid.*, pp. 33-37.

³⁷ Sargent, "What do numbers mean? A Textual Critic's Observations on Some Patterns of Middle English Manuscript Transmission" in *Design and Distribution of Late Medieval Manuscripts in England*, ed. Margaret Conolly and Linne R. Mooney, (York: York Medieval Press, 2008), 205-244. p. 239.

³⁸ Michael Sargent's comment to Stephen Kelly and Ryan Perry's article "Hospitable Reading and Clerical Reform in Fifteenth Century London" in *Geographies of Orthodoxy*, April 24, 2009, <http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/discuss/2009/04/24/hospitable-reading-and-clerical-reform-in-fifteenth-century-london/comment-page-1/#comment-141>, Last accessed 30. 05. 2013.

³⁹ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 23-38.

copied together with other mainly devotional texts, as Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*, *Mixed Life*, *The Chastising of God's Children*, and with mystical material as the *Revelations* of Elisabeth of Hungary and parts of the *Revelations* of Brigitte of Sweden, etc.⁴⁰ Sargent in his *Introduction* provides a detailed description of the manuscripts of the *Mirroure*, presenting the entire corpus of manuscripts, their textual affiliations, layout, contents, up to the issue of ownership, (which will be treated later), therefore further elaboration on the issue is not necessary.⁴¹ Throughout the dissertation I use the text presented by Sargent in his last version of critical edition of the *Mirroure* which he made on the basis of the manuscripts Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686.⁴²

Although several manuscripts are illustrated with marginal decorations of varying sophistication and some are endowed with only decorated initials,⁴³ only two contain a long cycle of rich illuminations. These two manuscripts are not edited in either form, nor are the illuminations. The Morgan MS M 648⁴⁴ is a manuscript on vellum, written and illuminated in England around the middle of the fifteenth century, c.1440. It contains 144 folios (279 x 197 mm), written in two columns, each of 35 lines. An "Attende lector" note follows the table of contents, and the "Memorandum" of Archbishop Arundel is present at the end,⁴⁵ on fol. 141r. The *Treatise on the Sacrament*, written by Love, follows the translation of the text of the *Meditationes*, beginning on fol. 131r. The text is in Middle English, complete, written in mid-fifteenth century Bastard Secretary hand, in the South Central Midlands dialect. It is bound together with a Lollard tract on the necessity of the translation of the Bible, *A compendous olde treatyse in defense of the English translation of the Bible* (ff. 142r-143r),⁴⁶ and a short Latin extract from the *Revelations* of Brigitte of Sweden, Chapter VII (fol. 144). The binding dates from the eighteenth century. The original ownership is not known. It contains sixteen illuminations; thirteen are three-quarter-page and three are one-third-page, from a mid-fifteenth century London workshop. The marginal decorations are made by the same hand as those of the Advocates'. The quality of the illuminations is mediocre, according to the Pierpont Library Catalogue; the preponderant colours are pink and green.

⁴⁰ See *Ibid.*, pp. 96-153.

⁴¹ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 1-163.

⁴² Sargent, *Mirror*.

⁴³ See Kathleen L. Scott, "The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts," p. 63.

⁴⁴ For a description of the manuscript, see Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 98-99. The detailed description of the manuscript is in the *Descriptive Notes on the Manuscript in the Morgan Library Files*, not published. I obtained this material from the Pierpont Morgan Library.

⁴⁵ See Appendix A.

⁴⁶ See C. F. Bühler, "A Lollard Tract," in *Medium Aevum* 7 (1938): 3-13.

The National Library of Scotland Advocates MS 18.1.7⁴⁷ contains the same full text, in a southern dialect, and was also produced in the London area, by the mid-fifteenth century, probably before 1465. It contains 162 folios (323 x 224 mm). The text is written in double columns, in Anglicana, which becomes progressively more cursive. The “Attende lector” note follows again the table of contents. The *Treatise on the Sacrament* follows the translated text of the *Meditationes*, beginning on fol. 150r. The “Memorandum” is at the end, on fol. 160r. The manuscript was written and decorated for Edmund Grey, fourth Baron Grey of Ruthin, created Earl of Kent in 1465. The manuscript was probably made after his marriage to Katherine Percy, daughter of the Earl of Northumberland, about 1460, as the portraits of both husband and wife are depicted in the manuscript.⁴⁸ The seventeen full-page miniatures and the border decorations (full bar-frame borders and spray-work), are by the same artist as Lydgate’s *Troy Book*,⁴⁹ and are of a high quality. The colouring and the representation of the landscapes demonstrate a unique skill on the part of the illustrator. The two lavishly illuminated manuscripts of the *Mirroure* text are dignified examples of the flourishing late medieval book production and are definitely worthy of critical, or even amateur, attention.

⁴⁷ For a full description of the manuscript, see Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, pp. 273-275.

⁴⁸ These figures are depicted on fol. 12v, at the bottom of the Coronation of the Virgin scene. For the dating of the manuscript, see Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, p. 275.

⁴⁹ Manchester, John Rylands University MS. Eng. 1.

Chapter I. Backgrounds: Lay Devotion, Lollardy and the Response to it

I. 1. Lay Devotion and the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*

*I þe honoure wiþ al my miht
In fourme of Bred as i þe se,
Lord þat in þat ladi briht,
In Marie Mon bi-come for me.*⁵⁰

The poem above was written in the late fourteenth century in England as an expression of the pious affection with which a lay person looked at the elevated host at the moment of the consecration. It bears witness to the strong popular devotion which gained expression in works of vernacular piety. Through the increase of literacy and the gradual development of lay readership, including that of women, individuals had more and more access to spiritual literature in their own language. Mystical and devotional writings both enhanced and served as a channel for religious enthusiasm by strengthening personal affective piety.

A large amount of translations of meditative and mystical works coming from the Continent coexisted with such English mystical writings as the works of Walter Hilton, especially *The Ladder of Perfection*.⁵¹ Michael G. Sargent claims that by the beginning of the fifteenth century, mystical works were spreading even among the laity, at least among “prosperous businessmen.”⁵² One main work to promulgate affective piety through meditational works based on the life and passion of Christ, the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, was one of the most influential texts of piety to reach the laity.

The *Meditationes* became one of the most popular handbooks for meditation, with the widest circulation in England. 44 of the 113 extant manuscripts were kept in English libraries at this time.⁵³ It enhanced the appearance of several other similar works on the Continent; the

⁵⁰ *The Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript*, ed. C. Horstmann and F.J. Furnivall, EETS 98, 117 (London: 1892-1901), p. 25.

⁵¹ Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection*, ed. Thomas Bestul, TEAMS Middle English texts Series. (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Western Michigan University, Medieval Institute Publications, 2000)

⁵² Sarah Beckwith quotes Sargent in *Christ's Body. Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings*. (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 41.

⁵³ Michael G. Sargent, “Bonaventura English: a Survey of the Middle English Prose Translations of Early Franciscan Literature,” in *Spätmittelalterliche geistliche Literatur in der Nationalsprache, Analecta Cartusiana*

best known among these was the *Vita Christi* of Ludolph of Saxony,⁵⁴ an extended version of the *Meditationes*. This notwithstanding, none of these gained such a popularity in England as Nicholas Love's translation.

Meditation and the devotion propagated by it were not simply individual issues. The interest on the part of the laity in religious matters, the practices of private piety becoming an everyday practice, and the spread of vernacular literacy were among the main factors which created the background for the development of movements promulgating heterodox views about faith, such as the movement of the Lollards, appearing in the mid-fourteenth century.

I. 2. Lollardy

Lollardy was the only massive movement in England of heterodoxy before the Reformation. It started around 1370-1380, being influenced by the theological views of John Wyclif. From the London area it soon spread, mainly in the southern and eastern regions, and in some places it lasted until the Reformation. John Wyclif⁵⁵ (c. 1330-1384), Magister and Doctor of Theology at Oxford, until his repudiation in 1370, was the main figure of the Lollard movement, also called the Wycliffite one. The Lollard movement⁵⁶ in England derived from highly academic circles such as Oxford, but developed into a popular movement as well, through the wide circulation of Wyclif's ideas. As a consequence, in the early phase the movement lacked any unity of ideas, as several groups might confess doctrines ranging from a slight difference from orthodox teaching to extreme formulations, even in such

106 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg 1984), pp. 145-176, especially p. 148.

⁵⁴ Ludolphus de Saxonia, *Vita Iesu Christi, ex evangelio et approbata ab Ecclesie Catholica doctoribus collecta*, ed. L. M. Rigollot. (Paris: Palmé, 1870).

⁵⁵For his works, see *Wyclif's Latin Works*, ed. for the Wycliffite Society, 1882-1922, 35 vols. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966) (all subsequent references in footnotes will be to the reprints only); Anne Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), etc.

⁵⁶ See Anne Hudson, *A Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Margaret Aston, *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion*. (London: Hambledon Press, 1984); Robert Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England*. (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2006); Richard Rex, *The Lollards: Social History in Perspective*. (New York: Palgrave, 2002). See also Wessely István, "John Wycliffe, a reformáció előfutára," *Bár* III. évfolyam, 4. szám (1998): 23-41; etc.

essential tenets as the teaching on the Eucharist or the veneration of images.⁵⁷ Although deeply indebted to Wyclif's teachings, the Lollard phenomenon grew into a large, multi-faceted reality which deeply influenced the life of late medieval England on numerous levels, on the religious, cultural, social, and political one. Opinions differ, nevertheless, on the dimensions of the movement, whether it mainly affected the rural areas or was influential in the same measure on the urban societies; whether it can be called a movement in itself,⁵⁸ or in which measure it can be labelled as the "English heresy."⁵⁹ Recent studies also attempt to define the dividing lines between the different phases of the development of the Lollard influence, beginning with the early phase, marked by Wyclif's academic speculations which raised the curious attention of his fellows from Academia, through the activity of the first Wycliffites up to the second, third and consecutive generations of Wycliffites, all phases being characterised by differences.⁶⁰ Recent criticism also emphasises the importance of specifying who were, and are, denoted by the term itself of "lollard."⁶¹ However, the history and specificities of the Wycliffite movement has a long, well-developed and still vividly changing history, the presentation of which is rendered impossible due to the limitations of this dissertation. Therefore I would briefly mention only some of its characteristics, mainly of doctrinal nature, which are in direct relation with the issues analysed and interpreted in the present study. Also, in treating the doctrinal issues criticised by Wyclif which challenged the reaction of Nicholas Love to them I do not differentiate between first-hand doctrines deriving from Wyclif's own pen and later developments, firstly because this task is in numerous cases a very difficult, if not an impossible one, but mainly because even Nicholas Love did not make such differentiations either. The same reason is one factor which determines my usage of the terms Lollards and Wycliffites as synonyms in some instances. Andrew Cole directly warns of the misplaced usage of the term "lollard" by scholarship, demonstrating that even

⁵⁷ "Heresy proceedings and the relatively great amount of extant sermons, edited by Anne Hudson, testify on this variety of doctrines and also of the mass dissemination of Lollard ideas and the practice of the vulgarisation of theological thinking, which called for a serious counter-reaction on the part of the Church. Although the reaction of the orthodox circles focused most of all on the written material of Lollard authorities, namely those of John Wyclif, and although variations of the individual belief remained both among the learned and the unlearned, the Lollard doctrines gained a clearer and more systematic pattern mainly due to the questioning of the suspects on a series of articles of faith." J. A. F. Thompson, "Orthodox Religion and the Origins of Lollardy," *History: The Journal of the Historical Association* 74 (1989): 39-55, p. 50.

⁵⁸ See Judy Ann Ford, *Mirk's Festial Orthodoxy, Lollardy, and the Common People in Fourteenth-Century England*. (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006)

⁵⁹ See Anne Hudson, *Lollards and their Books*. (London: Hambledon Press, 1985)

⁶⁰ See Andrew Cole, *Heresy and Literacy in the Age of Chaucer*. *Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature* 71. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008)

⁶¹ *Ibid.*; see also Mishtooni Bose and J. Patrick Hornbeck II, *Wycliffite Controversies*.

contemporary texts contradict sometimes the semantic contents modern critics give the term.⁶² Mishtooni Bose and Patrick Hornbeck II also signal the crisis of nomenclature in the Introduction of their book *Wycliffite Controversies*, and the great variety of usage of the terms. They support their terminological choice saying that they employ:

for our own part the word Wycliffite to describe ideas and individuals which were indebted (consciously or otherwise) to the teachings of the putative heresiarch John Wyclif, and the word lollard to take in, more capaciously, the whole spectrum of individuals, practices, and beliefs which were seen as theologically suspect in late medieval England."⁶³

I opted for the same criteria to direct my choices of terms, complemented with another consideration. Nicholas Love does use the term "lollard", denoting the group of religious dissenters who had Wyclif as their "maister," as he formulates it in the *Treatise on the Sacrament*,⁶⁴ never mentioning Wyclif by name. Thus I also use the term "lollard" to denote the same notion Love had in mind when I quote him or paraphrase him, also in an attempt not to bring in more specified categorizations which the text analysed itself does not make. By the time of the composition of the *Mirroure Lollardy* became a complex phenomenon with various ideas, doctrinal interpretations which were regarded as a collective threat. Love in the *Mirroure* did not supply an exact and systematic presentation of his opponent's views as do other contemporaries of him, as Netter does in the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.⁶⁵ His duty and aim undertaken was not eradicating the heresy at its source, but rather the instruction of the believers in the correct teachings of the legitimate Church, thus lessening the influence of Lollardy.

The backbone of Wyclif's and his followers' teaching was the rejection of the authority exercised by the Church *qua* papacy, which was not susceptible to criticism on the part of the laity either in matters of faith or even in secular ones. A radical re-interpretation of the sacramental doctrine of the Church, of the role of the saints, and of the veneration of images followed, as did a completely new claim for the rights of the laity to take part in all domains of spiritual life, the practice of theology, teaching, and dispensation of the sacraments, which was to be allowed to lay women as well as men.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 72-77.

⁶³ Mishtooni Bose and J. Patrick Hornbeck II, *Wycliffite Controversies*, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 237.

⁶⁵ Thomas Netter, *Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Iohannis Wyclif cum Tritico*, ed. Walter Waddington Shirley. *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevii scriptores* 5. (London: Longman, Brown et al., 1858)

In 1395, in the Twelve Conclusions, which the Lollards affixed to the doors of Westminster Hall during a meeting of Parliament, the critique of ecclesiastical authority and of sacramental doctrine were already intermingled.⁶⁶ The idea that the clergy had no special sanctifying power over the sacraments very soon led to the critique of the exclusive power the Church possessed over society, and it resulted in the formulation of Wyclif's theory, which claimed that secular institutions should be granted more authority in secular matters.⁶⁷ Thus Wyclif attacked the papally sanctioned system of clerical power itself, through the attempt simply to reformulate the sacramental doctrine.

The interpretation and controversy over the sacramental doctrine were not simply symptoms of the growing discontent: in certain ways they were more metonymic and even root causes. Wyclif's reformulation of the doctrine and his dissatisfaction with clerical authority and hierarchy are linked: each one reinforced the other. The body of Christ signified the ecclesiastical body at the same time. By being the object of meditative and pious prayer, and being also the symbol of the unity of the community, especially in the Corpus Christi Processions, it fused the individual with the collective. Sarah Beckwith stresses the importance of the Body of Christ as having strong social reference. "Corpus Mysticum becomes the phrase which expresses the doctrine that the church is the organized body of Christian society united in the sacrament of altar."⁶⁸ It is natural, therefore, that Eucharistic devotion simultaneously became the catalyst for the conflict as well, on both levels: on that of private devotion and on the social one. The idea that the outburst of the Peasants' Revolt was consciously fixed exactly on the day of the Corpus Christi procession has gained currency.⁶⁹

Wyclif's ideas about hierarchy developed only gradually. Although his teaching was crystallised into a direct rejection of the way in which papal and clerical authority was seen as essentially different, and therefore not to be judged by the laity, his early writing⁷⁰ shows the influence of the traditional texts which the Church used for the exposition of its teaching about the celestial and ecclesiastical hierarchy, namely those of Dionysius the Pseudo-

⁶⁶ "the bisshopis ordinalis in the newe testament ben litil of record," (conclusion 2), "feynid miracle of the sacrament of bred inducith alle men but a few to ydolatrie, for thei wene that Godis bodi, that nevere schal out of hevne, be vertu of the prestis wordis shulde ben closid essenciali in a litil bred that thei schewe to the puple," (conclusion 4) "the feynid power of absolicium enhaunsith prestis pride"(conclusion 9), quoted from Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 24-29.

⁶⁷For a selection of the most important documents attesting Wycliffite views on these matters, see *ibid.*, *passim*.

⁶⁸ Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body*, p. 31.

⁶⁹ Margaret Aston, "Corpus Christi and Corpus Regni: Heresy and the Peasants' Revolt," *Past and Present* 143 (1994): 3-47.

⁷⁰ Wyclif, *Tractatus de Ecclesia*, ed. Dr. Iohann Loserth. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966)

Areopagite, which were known to Wyclif through the intermediary of Robert Grosseteste.⁷¹ Focusing on and developing the role of the angels in the celestial hierarchy, Wyclif finally formulates his opinion about the right of disobedience of the laity in the framework of the Dionysian system.⁷² He states that the pope and the cardinals have no claim to obedience except insofar as their commands conform with God's law, and so laymen should not be afraid to resist by reason of the pre-eminence of the hierarchy which (as they imagine) is unlawful for inferiors to judge.

These were more theoretical and purely doctrinal issues at stake than simply a protest against ecclesiastical authority and hierarchy, or a demand for recognition of a right to disobedience. In a period when the sacramental life of the common laity had recently become systematised and regular, Wyclif took pains to address the very nature and efficiency of the sacraments, querying how and why they worked. Although some of his reasoning is abstruse as well as erudite, he found much support outside purely theological circles. The rejection of the exclusive authority of the Church as dispenser of sacraments raised a heated doctrinal debate on the part of both theologians and common people.

Wyclif attacked the root of sacramental theology by denying the principle of efficient causality, deriving this negation directly from the idea that there is no essential sacramental difference between the consecrated members of the clergy and the laity. From the separation of the sacraments from the priestly ministry it followed that consecration took place without sacramental character (*sine sacramentis sive characteribus*).⁷³

Although the sacramental theory of Wyclif seemed to be irreconcilable with the doctrine of transubstantiation, it was still relatively moderate when compared to those of some of his disciples. The statement of Sir Lewis Clifford represents the formulation of the extreme position Wyclif's followers reached: "The seven sacraments are only dead signs, neither are

⁷¹ David Luscombe, "Wyclif and Hierarchy," in *From Ockham to Wyclif*, ed. Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks. *Studies in Church History: Subsidia 5* (Oxford: Published for the Ecclesiastical History Society by B. Blackwell, 1987), 233-244.

⁷² "Unde inter cetera opera caritatis foret hoc unum precipium, yerarchiam ecclesiasticam que debet esse superni ordines, si implicatione negotium secularium degeneret, reducere ad pristinam dignitatem. Nam sicut spiritus inferioris ordinis stantes in suis gradibus confirmati debent insurgere contra apostatas eciam superioris ordinis puniendo, ut patet de exercitu celesti pugnante contra Diabolum, sic in ecclesia militante virtuosii viri nuncupative inferioris ordinis debent insurgere contra degenerantes a lege et vita monarche Christi, nunc fraterne corripiendo, nunc acucius increpando et nunc si oportet puniendo." Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, ed. Dr. Iohann Loserth. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966), pp. 18-19.

⁷³ See Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 111.

they of any value in the form used by the church.”⁷⁴ Such ideas provoked a definite response from the Church.

I. 3. “Knees not bent before Baal:”⁷⁵ Lollard Image Theory

The critique of Wyclif concerning images was based on theoretical and exegetical arguments. He states that the practice of Christ in the New Testament leaves no room for any kind of visual representation: “Nepeles in Salomons temple weren ymagis made by comaundement of God þat weren figure of many trwþis þat ben now endid. But in þe la3we of grace Crist comaundis not to make siche ymagis, ny he 3af þerto ensaumple nouþer by hymself ny by hise apostelis.”⁷⁶

On these grounds he attacks the veneration of images in churches and sculptures, mostly in places of pilgrimage, but even images in the books are considered as horrible signs of vanity in the *Lanterne of Light*: “either in bell, lamp or light, either in a chalice, book or vestment.”⁷⁷

The traditional Gregorian view of images as books for the laity was considered in different ways by Lollards. Some Lollard texts agree with it; some question it, arguing that good preaching and instruction of the laity will make instruction through images superfluous. But some admit, as did Swinderby, that visual aid may enhance devotion: “to tho [those] men ben ymages goode to wham thai ben bot kalenders [reminders], and through the sight of hem thai knowen the better and worshipen ofte God and his saintes.”⁷⁸ Although Wyclif also admitted that a right use of images might be helpful for the illiterate,⁷⁹ he claimed that spiritual development will make the use of images superfluous.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ “Quod septem Sacramenta non sunt nisi signa mortua, nec valent in forma qua eis utitur Ecclesia,” Thomas Walsingham,” in *Thomae Walsingham, quondam monachi S. Albani, Historia Anglicanae, Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* 28 (London: Longman, Green, et al, 1863), p. 252.

⁷⁵ A Lollard letter described the Lollards as those “quorum genua non sunt curvata ante Baal.” Snappe’s *Formulary*, quoted by Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, p. 183.

⁷⁶ Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 83.

⁷⁷ Quoted from *Lanterne of Light*, 41, in Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, p. 150. See also *The Lanterne of Light*, in *Medieval English Political Writings*, ed. James M. Dean. (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1996)

⁷⁸ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, p. 304.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-43.

⁸⁰ As an anonymous treatise attest, from BL MS Additional 24202, ff. 26-28v: “And now men shulden be more gostly and take lesse hede to siche sensible signes, as dyden þe apostlis of Crist þat, by short tyme and rewlis of Goddis hestis and charite, ledden men to heuene wiþouten siche newe peyntyns schewid by manus craft, for oure lord God dwellis by grace in gode mennus soulis, and wiþoute comparesoun bettere þan all ymagis made of

The Wycliffites principal objection to images was his concern that they were dangerous as they led to erroneous beliefs and practices. They created a strong controversy using the opposition between the veneration of living images and that of dead images.⁸¹ The living poor are “Cristis quicke ymage,”⁸² who call for reverence and attention. They demonstrated an open anticlericalism by pointing to the problem of the priority the Church gave to dead images, as shown by the expenses spent on them. While such an opposition (in both senses) has its roots in a demand for the Church to show more charity and less pomp, it quickly became a criticism of the presence of expensive ornamentation *simpliciter*.

Wycliffites had an abhorrence of everything which was ornamented, and therefore, a hatred also of costly books. Sharp debates were fought on the legitimacy of the crucifix itself, and even the moderates allowed only for an unornamented one. In their view ornamented images drew people away from prayer and from their local church. To the argument that people are worshipping not the images but what they represent, namely God and the saints, Wycliffites answered that costly images are more revered than the simple ones, an obvious hypocrisy which suggests that images were indeed valued for their own sake.

Another main argument was that images led to errors as they cannot express refined theological views and truth and therefore led the common people into erroneous beliefs. Thus the Cross, covered with gold and silver, creates a false (because rather luxurious) image of Christ:

And siþ þes ymagis ben bokis of lewid men to sture dem on de mynde of Cristis passion, and techen by her peyntur, veyn glorie þat is hangid on hem [is] an opyn errour aʒenus Cristis gospel. þei ben worþi to be brent or exilid, as bokis shulden be 3if þei maden mencion and tauʒten þat Crist was naylid on þe crosse wiþ þus myche gold and siluer and precious cloþis, as a breeche of gold endentid Wiþ perry, and schoon of siluer and a crowne frettid ful of precious iewelis... And so of ymagis of pore apostlis of Crist, and oþer seyntis þat lyueden in pouert and gret penaunse, and dispiseden in worde and in dede þe foul pride and vaynte of þis karful lif, for þei ben peyntid as þoghe þei hadde

man in erþe, and better þan alle bodies of seyntis, be þe bones of hem neuer so gloriously shreynyd in gold,” Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 84.

⁸¹ “And 3it men erren in þis crucifixe mak yng, for þei peynten it wiþ greet cost, and hangen myche siluer and gold and precious cloþis and stonnes þeronne and aboute it, and suffren pore men, bouʒte wiþ Cristis precious blode, to be by hem nakyd, hungry, thursty and in strong preson oundun, þat shulden be holpyn by Cristis lawe wiþ þis ilke tresour þat is þus veynnely wastid on þes dede ymagis.” Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 86.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

lyued in welþe of þis world and lustus of þeire fleyshe as larghe as euere dide erdely man.⁸³

The Wycliffite's concern was that not only the representations of Christ but also those of the Trinity led the laity to serious theological errors, this time not in terms of supposed wealth, but in terms of excessive literalism and anthropomorphism: "For first men erren in making of ymagis whanne þei maken ymagis of þe Godhed, as of þe Trinite, peynting þe Fadir as an olde man, and þe Son as a 3ong man on a crosse, and þe Holy Gost comyng furþe of þe Fadur mowþe to þe Son as white dowfe."⁸⁴

The brief summary of all these views were formulated also in *The Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards*:

And þou þis forbodin ymagerie be a bok of errour to þe lewid puple, zet þe ymage usual of Trinite is most abhominable. Þis conclusion God openly schewith, commanding to don almesse dede to men þat ben nedy, for þei ben þe ymage of God in a more liknesse þan þe stok or þe ston, for God seyth not, Faciamus lignum ad ymaginem et similitudinem nostrum aut lapidem, but faciamus hominem, etc. For þe heye worshippe þat clerkis clepin latria longith to þe godhed alone, and þe lowere worshippe þat is clepid dulia longith to man and to aungel and to lowere creatures.⁸⁵

Margaret Aston argues that it was a common Lollard view, not very unlike that of Wyclif himself, that misleading images, just like misleading books, should be burnt.⁸⁶ Such views led to actual iconoclasm and the burning of images: the cases are related in detail by Aston.⁸⁷ The greatest problem, which actually led to this extreme response, was the Wycliffite criticism that images are adored in the practice of the Church. *Latria* – the reverence due to God alone – if paid to images, and Wycliffites maintained this was the case, becomes *idolatria*. Instead, *dulia* should be exercised towards creatures and created things.⁸⁸ While this is indeed orthodox doctrine, it was a cornerstone of Wycliffite criticism of the Church, maintaining that the Church itself was not following its tenets. One main sin practised by the Church was, according to Wyclif, the first sin against the First Commandment, that is, to

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards*, quoted by Anne Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 27.

⁸⁶ Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, p. 63.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 304. See also the formulation of idolatry of images: "Almy3ty God saue þi puple fro erryng in ymagis þat longe haþ durit in rude wittis of many, forgetyng þe meruelouse and precious werkis þat han ben done by þee, and by þi dere holy seyntis thorowe þi large graunt vnto hem, fully traystyng þat ymagis han done þe werkis of grace and not 3ee." Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 83.

worship images and the consecrated host: *Contra hoc mandatum faciunt multi stolidè adorantes ymagines ac ostiam consecratam*⁸⁹ To avoid this sin, mostly occurring among laymen, images had better be destroyed. Such views were seen as a direct provocation to and by the Church, and they called for a determined response.

I. 4. The Reaction of the Official Church

Facing and experiencing the massive spread of Wycliffite doctrines, the reaction of the Church was to start a systematic and manifold campaign against them. Beginning with the first condemnation of Wyclif in 1382, with the act of the Parliament *De heretico comburendo* in 1410, the ecclesiastical authorities instigated a long process requiring many steps, issuing of several decrees to the regulation and dissemination of orthodox instructional material through the edification of the laity and for the refutation of Wycliffite ideas. Works on religious instruction, mainly on the doctrines on hierarchy and sacraments, were translated from Latin, retranslated from earlier French versions or created.

These efforts were sustained by the work already begun and carried on, aiming at the instruction of the laity for a more conscious and personal spiritual life started by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.⁹⁰ The authority of the Church, as the only means of salvation, had there been re-stated with an unprecedented emphasis, together with the importance of the sacraments, the channel by which the salvific grace is dispensed. The idea of the strong and essential interrelation between the Church and the sacraments was clearly formulated: the sacramental *corpus mysticum* reinforces the *corpus ecclesiae mysticum*, which in turn is responsible for the constant regeneration and administration of the sacrament:

*There is one universal church of the faithful outside of which absolutely no one is saved, and in which Jesus Christ is himself at once both priest and sacrifice. His body and his blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar in the forms of the bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the body by divine power...And no one can perform this sacrament except a priest ritually ordained according to the authority of the keys of the church.*⁹¹

⁸⁹ Wyclif, *Sermones*, ed. Dr. Iohann Loserth. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966), p. 90.

⁹⁰ A main aim of the Council as announced by Pope Innocent III in 1215 was the suppression of heresy.

⁹¹ “Una vera est fidelium universalis ecclesia, extra quam nunnus omnino salvatus. In qua idem ipse sacerdos, et sacrificium Jesus Christus, cujus corpus et sanguis in sacramento altaris sub speciebus panis et vini veraciter

After the pioneering ninth Lambeth constitution of 1281 of John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury⁹² which was later expanded by William of Pagula and translated into English by John Mirk as *Instructions for Parish Priests*,⁹³ was followed by the *Lay Folk's Catechism*,⁹⁴ written in the diocese of York in 1357; all gained an enormous success as a manual for the laity. To answer the Wycliffite accusations of the official doctrine of the Church, a massive re-editing of the already present material began, but in the creation of new texts the Church had become extremely cautious by around 1400. The decrees of Archbishop Arundel's Lambeth Constitutions of 1409,⁹⁵ which made the censorship of published doctrinal material stricter, are responsible for this phenomenon, and as a result the few officially recognised works enjoyed a great and almost exclusive dissemination and popularity. The most important was Thomas Netter's *Doctrinale Fidei Catholicae Ecclesiae*,⁹⁶ a three-volume work designed to answer Wycliffite heresy. The second volume, *De Sacramentis* (completed before 1427), was entirely devoted to the sacraments. By 1439 he also had completed the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum magistri Johannis Wyclif cum Tritico*,⁹⁷ which, as it provides a systematic presentation of the Wycliffite heretical views, became the major source for Lollardy and the orthodox reaction to it for modern scholarship. In these works Netter reaffirms the official sacramental doctrine, that of transubstantiation, with special emphasis on the key points where the Wycliffite critique was exercised, namely on the persistence of the accidents of the bread and wine after consecration as regards the Eucharist, and on the necessity of a consecrated priest for the administration of the sacraments.⁹⁸ The works

continentur, transubstantiatis, pane in corpus, et vino in sanguinem, potestate Divina... Et hoc utique sacramentum nemo potest conficere, nisi sacerdos, qui fuerit rite ordinatus secundum claves ecclesiae." *Concilium Lateransae*, IV, chapter 1, Mansi, vol. 22, col. 982, quoted in Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body*, p. 31.

⁹² John Peckham, OFM (1225-1292) was Archbishop of Canterbury in the years 1279-1292, and the Provincial of Franciscans in England. On Peckham, see Janet Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain: 1000-1300*. Cambridge Medieval Textbooks. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), see also Decima Douie, "Archbishop Peckham's Sermons and Collations," in R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin and R. W. Southern, eds., *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 269-282.

⁹³ John Mirk, *Instructions for Parish Priests*, ed. Edward Peacock EETS o. s. 31. (London: Trübner, 1868)

⁹⁴ *Lay Folk's Catechism*, see note 39.

⁹⁵ Thomas Arundel's *Constitutions* are edited in *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, ed. David Wilkins, 4 vols. (London: 1737; repr. Brussels: 1964),

⁹⁶ Thomas Netter, *Defensor Fidei Catholicae*, 3 vols., (Venice, 1671, reprint Farnborough, 1967)

⁹⁷ Thomas Netter, *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.

⁹⁸ The official doctrine of transubstantiation was formulated with the Aristotelian terms of matter and form by Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae*, in *Opera Omnia: Iussu impensa Leonis XIII, PM Edita*, ed. P. Casamello. 15 vols. (Rome, 1882 ff.), vols. 2-12, III q. 75. a. 4. The sacrament of the Eucharist, being an archsacrament, could not be administered by a lay person, even *in extremis*. Robert Grosseteste's *Templum Dei* described the necessary prerequisites for a valid consecration: wheaten bread, incorrupt wine, pure water, well-pronounced words of consecration, a male priest and good intention in celebration. Grosseteste, *Templum Dei*, ed. J. Goering and F. A. C. Mantello. *Toronto Medieval Latin Texts* 14. (Toronto: PIMS, 1984), XVIII. I, 63.

survived in a great number of copies, and their importance may be attested also by the fact that the illustrated versions of the *De Sacramentis*, illuminated either at Oxford or London, became a model for the iconographic representation of the seven sacraments.

Parallel with the great amount of doctrinal and instructional material, the new flourishing of Eucharistic poems shows the renewed interest in the sacraments, with the impetus given by the vivid Lollard debates. The great corpus of these poems contains different genres, such as poems about the Eucharist, prayers written for the laity to serve private piety at the moment of the elevation of the Host, and finally poems about the Eucharistic Christ with the Virgin. The imagery and topoi of these suggest a reciprocal link with the sacramental iconography of this late period.⁹⁹

I. 5. The Official Response to the Lollard Theory of Images

Margaret Aston states that the amount of works, formulated both in Latin and in the vernacular, as a response of the Church to the Wycliffite attack on images was impressive.¹⁰⁰ Arundel's famous cry: "Were it a fair thing to come into a church and see therein no image?"¹⁰¹ exemplifies the consternation such views aroused in the common believer. A sharp counter-attack was given by the argument of a tract that, if images causing error should be burnt, then the Scriptures should be burnt as well, since they too produced heretics.¹⁰² The issue became a major theme of academic controversy, debates, producing a great number of manuscripts: in Oxford Robert Alington and Nicholas Radcliffe, and in Cambridge John Devreux and Walter Hilton, were the main protagonists.

A major defence was written in 1385-1395 by Walter Hilton entitled *On the Worship of Images*.¹⁰³ He argued against the main points of the Wycliffite critique. As opposed to

⁹⁹ See Michèle Theresa Priscandero, *Middle English Eucharistic Verse: Its Imagery, Symbolism and Typology*. PhD Dissertation, St. John's University. (New York: 1978)

¹⁰⁰ See Aston, *Lollards and Images*, 179-192. For further reading on the issue, see Sarah Stanbury, *The Visual Object of Desire in Late Medieval England*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); and Katherine Kerby-Foulton and Denise Despres, eds., *Iconography and the Professional Reader: The Politics of Book Production in the Douce Piers Plowman*. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1999)

¹⁰¹ *Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse*, p. 135.

¹⁰² London, BL MS Harley 31, folio 187r, cited by Aston in *Lollards and Images*, p. 180.

¹⁰³ London, BL MS Royal II. B.x, fols 178r-83r.

Wyclif's admission that images may serve for lay people, he broadened the significance of images, claiming that these are for "the lettered, the learned and the pious laymen"¹⁰⁴ as well.

Reginald Pecock¹⁰⁵ wrote his main work in English: the *Repressor of Overmuch Blaming of the Clergy*¹⁰⁶ in 1455. The latter became the main point of reference against the critique of images. His refutation was begun on scriptural grounds, asserting that Old Testament laws are not valid for Christians in this respect, and that veneration of images in the English Church is not idolatry. He uses Scriptural arguments in his apology for images and of sacraments as well, pointing to their essential unity: "Crist ordeyned in the newe lawe visible sacramentis to be take and vsid as seable rememoratijf signes of Christ, and of his passioun and deeth, and of his holi lijf, as it shal be proued in The book of sacramentis and in The bookis of baptism and of Eukarist."¹⁰⁷

The critique of the idolatry of images is answered as well. To support his claim that images play a very important part in enhancing devotion, Pecock quotes two authorities, interestingly for our approach, citing their books on the sacraments and on the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy:

*And if this be trewe, what schal weerne to do alle these same deedis bifore an ymage of God or of a seint, sithen the auter in alle these casis is not take but as an ymage of God or of a Seint? And so takit the Sent Ambrose in his Book of Mysteries and his Book of Sacramentis, and holi Dionyse, the disciple of Poul, in his Book of the Chirchis Ierarchie.*¹⁰⁸

The work was written with an excellent and rare psychological sense. Pecock argued that the education of reading alone was not enough; a human being needed "seeable rememorative signs" as well as "hearable rememorative signs" to "pluck him upward and for to hold him

¹⁰⁴ On Walter Hilton's exposition, see G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England. A Neglected Chapter in the History of English Letters and of the English People*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1966), pp. 135-148.

¹⁰⁵ Reginald Pecock, (1394-1461), was Bishop of Chichester, an influential author and promoter of orthodox knowledge to laity in the vernacular. See V. H. H. Green, *Bishop Reginald Pecock: A Study in Ecclesiastical History and Thought*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945), pp. 35-8; Jeremy Catto, "The King's Government and the Fall of Pecock, 1457-58," in Rowena E. Archer and Simon Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England. Essays Presented to Gerald Harriss*. (London: The Hambledon Press, 1995), pp. 206-7; Wendy Scase, "Reginald Pecock," in M. C. Seymour, ed., *Authors of the Middle Ages: English Writers of the Middle Ages*. Vol. 3: 7-11. (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), pp. 95-9; R. M. Ball, "The Opponents of Bishop Pecock," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997), pp. 230-33.

¹⁰⁶ Reginald Pecock, *Repressor of Overmuch Blaming of the Clergy*, ed. Churchill Babington. *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* 19 (New York, Kraus Reprint, 1966)

¹⁰⁷ Pecock, *Repressor*, p. 163.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

upward in good thoughts.”¹⁰⁹ Seeing was regarded as more effective than hearing, and reading imagery also had the advantage of speed, as opposed to the slow and painstaking process of reading. Finally, such “seeable signs” had the advantage of being accessible by all: “a3enward seable signes availen to Cristen men (whether thei ben lettrid or not lettrid) into manye greet availis of remembrauncing, into whiche not availen or not so sone ... that is to seie writings upon the same materes...”¹¹⁰

Pecock argued that images were important as they did not only serve for instruction, but nourished and deepened devotion, by “the inward imaginative deed,” that is, visualising internally the religious subjects, as an aid to meditation.¹¹¹ In the *Follower to the Donet*, he expounds the role and functioning of imagination, serving reason as well as religious experience, being “a treasury to the seid comon wit.”¹¹² Thomas Netter, in the main work of the refutation of Wycliffite ideas, his *Doctrinale*, grants images an unprecedented noble place, by, *horribile dictu*, identifying the Scriptures with an image: “Nam Scriptura quid est nisi pictura quaedam, et verbi mentis, vel vocis imago?”¹¹³

However, recent research concentrates on another facet of the issue, revealing that, while refuting Wycliffite views on images, the orthodox authors express “deep anxieties about what happens between the unlearned and their images.”¹¹⁴ By analysing three orthodox or apparently orthodox texts, *Dives and Pauper*, Lydgate’s translation of Deguileville’s *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* and Pecock’s *Repressor*, Simpson finds out that they express “guarded, suspicious acceptance”¹¹⁵ of the practice of the populace. They contain warnings caused by the credulous reception of images which, in spite of the correctness of a sophisticated theory, in some cases steps over the border of *latria* turning into *idolatria*. Furthermore, Shannon Gayk presents a detailed reading of how these and other orthodox texts, being sensitive to such dangers, tried to face it by intelligent pedagogy: “Fifteenth century attempts to reform the image were perhaps more subtle than those a century later, but

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 165.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 212.

¹¹¹ *Repressor*, pp. 164-5; pp. 268-72.

¹¹² Reginald Pecock, *Follower to the Donet*, ed. Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, EETS o. s. 164. (Oxford, 1924), p. 26.

¹¹³ Netter, *Doctrinale antiquitatum fidei catholicae Ecclesiae, ad vetera exemplaria recognitum & notis illustratum, Thomae Waldensis* (Venetiis: typis Antonii Bassanensii, 1757-1759), VI, 143 (iii. 926).

¹¹⁴ James Simpson, “Orthodoxy’s Image Trouble: Images in and after Arundel’s Constitutions,” in *After Arundel*, pp. 91-113, p. 102.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 103.

for precisely this reason they can offer us a model of reform committed to renewal of the past rather than its rejection, and to aesthetic education rather than iconoclasm.”¹¹⁶

By the turn of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries the high interest in theological matters and the private devotion of the laity had prepared the ground for the dissemination of the new Wycliffite ideas challenging the Church. The provocation resulted in serious measures to refute Lollardy. The Church issued decretals which regulated the theological views of the clergy and laity; it increased the amount and availability of instructional material and it formulated, in the vernacular, much more explicit and elaborated theological answers. However, these had to reach the common believers in a simultaneously attractive and institutionally verified and controlled way. A purposeful reworking of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, a work already of a great popularity among the laity,¹¹⁷ through a translation into the vernacular promised to fulfil the double aim: besides providing an aid to private meditation, it served the dissemination, in an enjoyable form, of the instructions of the Church and of the refutation of Wycliffite ideas. The way this message was encoded into the text of the translation will be analysed in the next chapter.

¹¹⁶ Shannon Gayk, *Image, Text and Religious Reform in Fifteenth Century England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 191.

¹¹⁷ The popularity of the *Meditationes* is attested by the great number of extant manuscripts, see Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 11.

Chapter II. Another Answer: *The Mirroure of the Blessed Life of Jesu Criste*

II. 1. The Translation: Theoretical Questions

Even before Archbishop Arundel's 1407/1409 constitution forbidding Bible translations, there was considerable debate in England over the legitimacy of the practice; after it the translation of any text had to pass severe censorship. That Love's *Mirroure* successfully did so is due to the mission with which it was endowed, both by the translator and by the authorising office. The form of the literal exposition of the life and works of Christ with commentaries, that is, the genre of the *Meditations*, was attacked by Wycliffite translators of the Bible. Therefore the translation and propagation of such a work served by itself as a conscious re-strengthening of the status of the genre, and at the same time, implied an intentional response. Moreover, Love created a systematic Anti-Wycliffite programme on various levels of the translation of the *Mirroure*.

The work of Nicholas Love was part of an already existing tradition of translations of religious literature, deeply entrenched in the theoretical academic tradition.¹¹⁸ The presence of a high level of literary skill is attested not only by the great amount of translations made but also by the use of highly academic terms to define the role and requirements of translations.¹¹⁹ Ian Johnson,¹²⁰ analysing the late medieval image of the translator, shows that different roles were attributed to them, thus defining their status as being of high complexity. They were regarded as, and required to be, preachers,¹²¹ commentators and compilers. He writes:

¹¹⁸ Ian Johnson, "Prologue and Practice: Middle English Lives of Christ," In *The Medieval Translator: The Theory and Practice of Translation in the Middle Ages*, ed. Roger Ellis. (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), p. 74. Johnson analyses the presence of highly academic *termini technici* in the *Proheme* of the *Mirroure*, already present in their vernacular form, and used in a slightly loosened way: "the Proheme to the *Mirroure* inter-relates and collocates prologue-paradigm categories ad hoc: 'matere' is not considered separately from "fruyte" or 'manere', and 'manere' is presented as being coeval with 'entent' attesting that this tradition had already been incorporated by Love."

¹¹⁹ On the theories of translation and literacy in the scholastic period, see A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*. (London: Scolar Press, 1984)

¹²⁰ Johnson, "Prologue."

¹²¹ Preaching and translating were seen as closely linked, as a passage from John Trevisa attests: "Then the gospel, and prophesy and the right faith of holy church must be told in English, and that is not done but by English translation, for such English preaching is very translation." Trevisa, *Dialogue between a Lord and a Clerk*. (New York: Kraus Reprint, 1971), 206-7. See also John of Genoa: "Translation is the exposition of

“Translation... elucidates the *sentencia*, that is, the deeper meaning, the teaching, the significance, the *profundior intelligentia* of the text, not just its surface meaning. The target language is the means of the exegetical opening up.”¹²² The same purpose is carried out also by the interpolation of commentary-materials of authorities.¹²³ The insertion of passages from *auctoritates* also guaranteed the doctrinal correctness of the work.

Several characteristics of the work of Nicholas Love bear witness to an important virtue of his as a translator: they show a similarly the high degree of consciousness of composition and compilation. By the interweaving of original passages into the text, mainly that of the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, he assumes the role of a *translator-auctor*. He also acts as a conscious compiler by rearranging his original material. He openly gives his justification for his major cuts and additions.¹²⁴ Even his style and skills as a translator fitted well this endeavour of “edifycacioun”, and also the requirements of a lay audience.¹²⁵ He had an affinity for a rendering of the text faithful to the requirements of the target vernacular language. His systematic choice of the more idiomatic, and therefore more understandable, expressions also betokens his primary concern for his public and the effect made on it.

As another proof of his conscious treatment of his material, Love signalled his major abbreviations and rearrangements of the text with an apparatus of marginal annotations, that is, with Latin notes inserted in the text. He also used notations: a capital N placed in the margin means words added by the translator or compiler, while B means the return to the original text of Bonaventura. He also signals passages taken from other authorities or his own rearrangements. By this method the text became easy to read. Even colours were used for this purpose – red for the Latin and black for the vernacular passages. Consequently, authority, tradition and emphasis are rendered present even visually.¹²⁶

meaning/teaching through another language” (“Translatio est expositio sententiae per aliam linguam”), *Catholicon* (Venice, 1483), cited by Johnson, “Prologue,” p. 71.

¹²² Johnson, “Prologue,” p. 71.

¹²³ “An awareness of the medieval exegetical tradition shows that the translators deliberately expounded the significance and the teaching of the text according to the priorities of their culture.” Johnson, “Prologue,” p. 71.

¹²⁴ “Wherfore at þe instance & þe prayer of some devoute soules to edification of suche men or women is þis drawinge oute of þe forseide boke of cristes lyfe wryten in englyshe with more putte in to certeyn partes & widrawinge of diurse auctoritis maters as it semeth to þe wryter hereof moste spedefull & edifyng to hem dat bene of symple vnderstandyng.” Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 1.

¹²⁵ See Elisabeth Salter, “Nicholas Love: a Fifteenth-Century Translator,” *Review of English Studies* 6 (1955): 113-27. The problem of word-choice, mainly of polysemous words, which call for not only a translation but also for an interpretation, sometimes by paraphrasing, is an issue which is more evident in other translators’ work, but not very present in Love.

¹²⁶ Roger Ellis, in his article “The Choices of the Translator in the Late Middle English Period,” *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England. Papers Read at Dartington Hall July 1982*, ed. Marion Glasscoe. (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1982), 18-46, observes that a similar method is used in Rolle’s *Psalter*, but here the

Love's translation can be paralleled to those of John Trevisa¹²⁷ on similar grounds. Fiona Somerset in her influential book entitled *Clerical Discourse and Lay Audience*¹²⁸ analyses the way Trevisa's preface to his translation of the *Polichronicon*,¹²⁹ the *Dialogue on Translation between a Lord and a Clerk*, expressed the new endeavour to share knowledge which was hitherto reserved for the clerical stratum, also with laity. One parallel with Love's *Mirroure* can be drawn by the fact that Trevisa also translated into English works that were already well known and accessible to clerics, and were at the very least accessible to the nobility.¹³⁰ Love's consciousness of the theories of translation and of the technical details of it may also be paired to Trevisa. Somerset stresses the broad knowledge of the aspects of transmission of texts and information through translation by Trevisa and that he built all this into his *Dialogue*:

*In addition to the practical, 'pastoral' knowledge about the capabilities of a wider potential audience that leads him to propose the Polychronicon translation, the Lord of Trevisa's Dialogue also relies for his credibility upon a broader base of what had traditionally been clerical 'informacion': he knows all about problems of communication between languages, and he reveals extensive familiarity with the history of translation as well as the academic controversies that have surrounded it (see esp. 291/100–292/109 and 292/128–46).*¹³¹

Another similarity with Love's work is the presence of marginal apparatus. The *Polychronicon*, just as Trevisa's other translation of Bartholomeus Anglicus's *De proprietatibus rerum* are signed, dated, and ascribed to Berkeley's initiative. Both works contain a number of annotations: the beginning of most is indicated by the word 'Trevisa.' Those in *De proprietatibus rerum* are purely explanatory in character, but the annotations in

translator does not mention the visual means of differentiation between the Latin original and the translation. *The Psalter by Richard Rolle de Hampole*, ed. H. R. Bramley. EETS o. s. 97. (Oxford: 1884)

¹²⁷ John Trevisa (1342–1402) was a Corish writer and translator. His main translations are the *Polichronicon* of Ranulph Higden, *De proprietatibus Rerum* of Bartholomeus Anglicus, etc. As he was fellow of Queen's College, Oxford from 1372–76 at the same time as John Wycliff and Nicholas of Hereford, Trevisa there are speculations that he may been one of the contributors to the Early Version of the Wycliffite Bible. On the life and work of John Trevisa, see David C. Fowler, *John Trevisa*. (Ashgate: Ashgate Publishing Group, 1993); David C. Fowler, *The Life and Times of John Trevisa, Medieval Scholar*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995); Ralph Hanna, "Sir Thomas Berkeley and his Patronage", *Speculum* 64 (1989): 878–916.

¹²⁸ Fiona Somerset, *Clerical Discourse and Lay Audience*, especially "The 'publyschyng' of 'informacion': John Trevisa, Sir Thomas Berkeley, and their project of 'Englysch translacion,'" pp. 62–103.

¹²⁹ *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis together with the English Translations of John Trevisa and of an Unknown Writer of the Fifteenth Century*, ed., C. Babington & J.R. Lumby. Rolls Series 41. 9 vols. (London, 1865–68)

¹³⁰ Somerset, *Clerical Discourse and Lay Audience*, p. 63.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

the *Polychronicon* correct and update Higden: “to disparaging his attitude to Aristotle, his skepticism about Arthurian legend, and his pro-monastic leanings and even, in a note tellingly unsigned, recommending that secular lords should remove the superfluous possessions of monks.”¹³² Thus Love formed part of, and was one main character of a new, burgeoning tradition of translations which aimed at making knowledge, both spiritual and secular, accessible to a wide lay audience.

II. 2. The *Compilatio*

The composition of works, that is, the *compilatio*, was, according to the translation tradition, one main duty of the translator, and it was done conscientiously. The translator of Suso’s *Horologium Sapientiae*¹³³, a Carthusian monk, although he was less audacious than Love, who shaped his material more freely, clearly states “I folow not þe processe of þat boke in ordere, but I take þe materes insyndre, as þei acordene to mye purpos.”¹³⁴

Love also organised his material deliberately. He re-ordered the material, suppressing some 30 chapters. It was an overall tendency of Love to readjust his material according to the needs of his lay audience, although sometimes he kept or even inserted passages aimed for clerics or monastics, as Sargent has shown.¹³⁵ He mainly reduced or cut passages with miracles, passages on the active and contemplative life, and very sophisticated doctrinal reasonings of different *auctoritates*. However, he inserted other passages from *auctoritates* as well, such as St. Augustine, St. Bernard and William of St. Thierry, to support the point he was trying to emphasise in the passages concerned.

Elisabeth Salter, A. I. Doyle and Michael G. Sargent,¹³⁶ studying the *Mirroure*, have provided a detailed analysis of the text from several aspects. Sargent also tried to map the anti-Wycliffite stances present in the translation. Although he gives a detailed list of the alterations Love made, either by re-ordering or suppressing chapters or expanding the text

¹³² Ibid., pp. 66-67.

¹³³ Pius Künzle, ed., *Heinrich Seuses Horologium Sapientiae. Erste Kritische Ausgabe unter Benützung der Vorarbeiten von Dominikus (P.) Planzer*. (Freiburg-Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 1977)

¹³⁴ *The Seven Poyntes of True Love and Euerlastyng Wisdom*, ed. C. Horstmann, from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 114. *Anglia* 10 (1888): 323-89, p. 325.

¹³⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 38-54.

¹³⁶ See the following: Elisabeth Salter, *Nicholas Love's 'Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ'*. *Analecta Cartusiana* 10. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1974); A. I. Doyle, “Reflections on Some Manuscripts of Nicholas Love’s *Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesus Christ*,” *Essays in Memory of Elisabeth Salter*, *Leeds Studies in English* 14 (1983): 82-93; Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 54-75.

with his additions, he did not interpret the possible aim of these re-orderings, this not being important for the aspects he investigated. However, taking into account the confessed purposefulness of such changes by contemporary translators and by Love himself, the necessity of a search for the organising principle behind the re-orderings may be well-grounded.

In my opinion, it seems that Love made some of his rearrangements with an eye to his aim to present the doctrine of the church in a more emphatic way. Roger Ellis has shown that translators used the technique of reorganising the passages when wanting to create a new focus.¹³⁷ He analysed the re-orderings of the *Horologium*; these show a striking similarity to the method Love used in the *Mirroure*.¹³⁸ Ellis emphasises the importance of such techniques, showing the conscious programme of the translator: “The translator assumes the status of author most clearly when he rearranges his material in this way, or, as happened in the *Speculum Devotorum*, translates only selected parts of it.”¹³⁹

Love used this method to highlight and to make manifest the inner relations between passages; he could thus emphasise the correlation by creating thematic groups. He uses the same method systematically throughout the whole work. He created a group containing all the miracles of resuscitation, reordering the scenes of the daughter of Jairus and of the young man of Nain into Chapter 34 about the raising of Lazarus. Similarly he reorganised Chapter 31, treating the scandalised Pharisees. In order to create a unified thematic group, he inserted a passage taken from Chapter 26 of the original, and added here a comment on the scandal provoked by the healings on the Sabbath, then he returned again to Chapter 31, rounding it up with an exhaustive commentary on the nature of scandals. It is true that another chapter, Chapter 28, also deals with the scandalised Pharisees, but this only means that Love did not create an *exclusive* thematic group, containing all such passages from the text, to the detriment of other chapters. However, his changes show an intentional re-arrangement.

Although it evidently would have fitted into the same thematic group of the scandalised Pharisees, Love did not reorder here the chapter about the plucking of the wheat. Instead, he inserted it into the other group, which might be called the sacramental one, although this latter group was situated even further in the original than the “scandal” group. Moreover, he could

¹³⁷ Ellis states that the translator of the *Horologium* reverses the order of two following chapters, to “develop strong links with material used earlier in the work,” and he also inserted material which was widely separated in the original. Ellis, “The Choices,” p. 24.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

organise this regrouping only by cutting out several chapters at each step, as none of the re-ordered chapters were situated next to each other in the original. The first two chapters, the conversion of Mary Magdalene and the following one, the scene with the Samaritan woman, have a sacramental bearing. Although the conversion of Mary Magdalene has no such connection with sacraments according to traditional exegesis, Love inserted a long passage on auricular confession here, the conversion of Mary serving as an introduction to it. The role of the passage is clearly marked: it has the *Contra lollardos* notation. The passage on the Samaritan woman¹⁴⁰ is the symbol and also the preparation of the idea of Christ being the arch-sacrament by the symbol of the living water. The symbol of the living water reaches its apogee in the scene of the Crucifixion, when blood and water come out of the pierced side of Christ. This moment marks the inauguration of the Church and the source of the sacraments according to Patristic and scholastic exegesis.¹⁴¹

The two following chapters contain scenes that serve as Eucharistic symbols: the plucking of the wheat and the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. The first bears a Eucharistic meaning by being the antitype of the Old Testament scene when David's soldiers have eaten the bread from the temple (I Samuel: 21, 6), a typology that is referred to by Christ himself,¹⁴² and by the Eucharistic symbolism of the wheat, which became a widely used symbol in the iconography of the late medieval period.¹⁴³ It is followed by the Multiplication scene, which was considered a major element in the main line of typological prefiguration of the Eucharist from the early Patristic writers onwards.¹⁴⁴ It is the *locus* where Christ delivers His first open teaching about His body and blood being real food and drink, and thus it serves as a preparation for Christ's main Eucharistic speech, delivered in the Last Supper scene. This choice and arrangement of the scenes underlines even more Love's attempt to strengthen the sacramental theme by regrouping all references and symbols in the same place.

¹⁴⁰ See John 4, 1-39.

¹⁴¹ On the symbolism of the living water, see for example Ambrosius, *De Spiritu Sancto*, CSEL 79 (1964), 3-4; 15-222; on the symbolism of the water and blood coming out of Christ's side after the piercing, see Ambrose, *Explanatio super Psalmos XII*, CPL 140, 40, 13.

¹⁴² Matthew 12: 1-8, Mark 2: 23-28, Luke 6: 1-4. On its typology and Eucharistic symbolism, see Ambrose, *Expositio Euangelii secundum Lucam*, 5, 31 (CPL 143) Ambrose, *De Virginibus* 3, 1 (PL 16, 23); on the sacramental symbols, see Ambrose, *De Sacramentis* (PL 16, cols 427-82), Thomas of Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 60-65; and Paschasius Radbertus *In Mattheum* (PL 120, 39, 53), etc. On the sacramental symbolism of New Testament scenes, see Henry de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale*. (Clamecy: Desclée de Brouwer, 1993), 106-123.

¹⁴³ See *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, ed. O. Schmitt and E. Gall. (Stuttgart: C. H. Heydenreich, 1937), 239-242.

¹⁴⁴ See Matthew. 14, 13-21, Mark 6, 31-44; Luke 9, 10-17; John 6, 1-15. It was interpreted as an Eucharistic symbol by Patristic writers: Ambrose, *De Virginibus* 3, 1 (PL 16, 23, 1 s), Prudentius, *Apotheosis* 706 ss (PL 59, 978-81), etc.

The two tables of contents
(Sacramental group in bold, Scandal-group in italics)

Latin *Meditationes* Table of Contents:

- Ch. 28. **Of the Conversion of Saint Mary Magdalene**
- Ch. 30. Of the girl who was resuscitated and Martha who was cured
- Ch 31. **Of the conversation of the Lord Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well**
- Ch 32. How the Lord was chased to the top of a hill to be thrown over
- Ch. 33. Of the Man with the withered hand healed by the Lord
- Ch. 34. **Of the multiplication of the bread**
- Ch. 35. Of the flight of the Lord when the multitudes wished to make him king
- Ch. 36. How the Lord Jesus prayed on the mount and descended to walk on the waters where Peter was submerged
- Ch. 37. Of the Canaanite woman
- Ch. 38. How some were scandalised by the words of the Lord
- Ch. 39. Of the retribution for relinquishing all
- Ch. 40. How the Lord sought to learn from the disciples what was said of him
- Ch. 41. Of the Transfiguration of the Lord on the Mount
- Ch. 42. *Of the casting out of the false buyers and sellers from the Temple*
- Ch. 43. *Of the sheep pool*
- Ch. 44. **How the disciples of the Lord took the ears of corn when they were hungry**
- Ch. 45. Of the ministry of Martha and Mary

Love's *Mirror* Table of Contents

- How þat Martha was heled of hir sekene by touching of þe hem of oure lordes cloþing. Capitulum 21m
- Of þe convesrion of Marie Maudleyn Capitulum 22m**
- Of þe spekyng of oure lorde Jesu wiyth þe woman Samaritane at þe þitte of watere Capitulum 23m**
- Howe þe disciples of Jesu plukked þe eres of corn & eten it for hungere on þe sabbote day. Capitulum 24m**
- Of þe fedying of þe grete peple with brede multiliede. Capitulum 25m.**
- Of þe feyng of oure lorde Jesu when þe peple walde haue made him hir kyng. Capitulum 26m
- Of þe praier of oure lorde Jesu in þe hille. Capitulum 27m.
- How þe pharisees & oþere token occasion of sclandre of þe wordes & þe dedes of Jesu. Capitulum 28m.
- Of þe speciale rewarde of oure lord Jesu behoten to alle þoo dat forsaken þe world for his loue. Capitulum 29m
- Of þe transfiguration of oure lord Jesu in þe hille. Capitulum 30m
- Of þe seke man heled at þe water in Jersusalem, clepede probatica piscina. Capitulum 31m.*
- How oure lorde Jesu cast oute of þe temple, þe biggeres 7 De sellers a 3eynus goddus lawe. Capitulum 32m.*

II. 3. The Passages of the Main Text

Sargent classifies the anti-Wycliffite stances of the text of the *Mirror* into three main categories: the obedience to ecclesiastical hierarchy and the related question of church offerings; auricular confession; the sacrament of the Eucharist. He relates mainly the passages which have the notation *contra Lollardos* by Love himself and the main, more lengthy interpolations. However, it seems to me that Love also inserted into the text several other passages which serve the same purpose, although less openly; a number of these have not been treated by previous works of scholarship,¹⁴⁵ presumably because these were not focusing

¹⁴⁵ See the works of Salter, Doyle and Sargent, referred to previously.

exclusively on the anti-Wycliffite programme. Nevertheless, detecting these parts could enrich the image of Love as a polemicist and as a talented writer as well.

I offer a list of the main additions of Love which carry an Anti-Wycliffite message on the basis of the work of Sargeant. Paralelly, I also present those which I detected and which were hitherto unobserved by scholarship.¹⁴⁶ The first passage in defence of hierarchy is in the chapter on the Annunciation.¹⁴⁷ Here Love makes a demarcation, indicating who belongs to the people of God. Love's main message is that obedience is due to the hierarchy even when its members are themselves corrupt. Love acts in a similar way when acknowledging the vices and weaknesses of the clergy as well as of contemplatives in other, later passages, like that on the plucking of the wheat.

The treatment of the hierarchy is several times referred to in relation to the Pharisees. He delivers the same message in a chapter created by him as a substitute for an apocryphal scene. The excision of the apocryphal passage is the proof of Love's heightened textual consciousness and a keener faithfulness to Scriptural authenticity. Although he is not consistent in carrying out this "purging" of the text from apocryphal material, a deliberate endeavour can be detected in his numerous cuttings as well as in his as he explanations to these when Love argues for the preeminence of the scriptural text. Kantik Ghosh has highlighted a complex web of Wycliffite influence on Love's work which pervades even the level of textual presentation, by the presence of an accurate, conscientiously built and applied system of signalling textual boundaries and source texts, which was a general characteristic of contemporary Wycliffite textual scholarship.¹⁴⁸ However, Love presented not a version of the Bible cleansed from all additional authoritative material, but aligned the existent tradition of meditative texts.

In the scene where Love writes about the discussion of Jesus with the Pharisees, he adds, with the marginal notation *contra Lollardos*, the following: "Neuerles þerwiphe bad þe peple, þat þei sholde kepe & fulfille alle hir techingis.' Bot þat þei shold not folowe hir werkes & yuel lyuyng."¹⁴⁹

Love answered to the Wycliffite criticism of the tithes given to the Church instead of being given to the poor by creating a direct parallel of the Lollard attitude with that of Judas: "Here mowe we forþermore note specially to oure purpose þat are of Judas parte þat

¹⁴⁶ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 54-74.

¹⁴⁷ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 28.

¹⁴⁸ Kantik Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 147-173.

¹⁴⁹ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 142.

reprehenden almesdede, offrynges & opere deuociones of þe peple done to holi chirch, haldyng alle siche 3iftes of deuocion bot foly, & seying þat it were more nedeful & bettur, to be 3iuen to pore men.”¹⁵⁰

Complementing Sargent’s observations noted above, I detected another group of references which are directed against the Wycliffite attitude of criticising the clergy as being the main authority in religious matters. Lollards therefore fall into the sin of pride. The lack of humility was one of the basic elements of the clerical criticism pointed to the Wycliffites.

Already in the Annunciation scene there is a significant interpolation by Love which functions as the preparation for the later expositions of the sacramental doctrine of the Church, put into the Last Supper scene and elaborated even more in the *Treatise*. This passage explains the mystery of the Trinity by using, quite unexpectedly, the terminology developed in the course of the sacramental debates of academic circles. Moreover, it applies a surprising approach: that of the incongruence between the sight with “the bodily eye” and the spiritual content, the same approach which will be used in the defence of the sacramental doctrine. The main message is finally not to trust “þi kindly reason” but “trowe soþfastly þat is soþ as holy chirch techeþ & go no ferþer.”¹⁵¹

Another passage with the notation *nota contra superbiam* is added by Love in the conclusion of the chapter about the baptism of Christ, another longer exposition on the meekness of Christ follows in the chapter about Christ’s temptation, and then in Chapter 16 a passage is again inserted against pride before the treatise on the *Pater Noster*. In chapter 19 about the centurion, of which Love translated only one paragraph, he concludes with the lesson of it “our pride is repropued.”¹⁵² The next, similarly short, chapter 20 condenses the story of the paralytic into one short paragraph to give way to the next about the praise of faith, and the baptism of children “before þe 3eres of discretion,” concluding with “And þis is opunly a3eynus sume heritikes þat holden þe contrarie opynion.”¹⁵³

Although there is no clear notice *Contra Lollardos* besides this surprising number of passages against pride, the fact that they are ordered in one condensed group, as well as the fact that their formulation clearly parallels the treatment of the same topic later on in the *Treatise*, may suggest that a conscious point is being made against Lollards. In the *Treatise* the “heretikes” are again openly reproached for being proud:

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 140.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 87.

*Anopere maner peple þat lakken þe drede of god.' bene heritykes, þe which in defaut of buxom drede to god & holy chirch presumptuously leuing vpon hir owne bodily wittes & kyndely reson [...] Which errour & heresy & alle oper of þis holiest sacrament wijout doute springen of gostly pride & presumpcion of kyndely witte, in defaut & lakke of loewly drede.*¹⁵⁴

There is even this, using a sarcastic tone: “bot þei leue not þat he doþe so, for als miche as hir kyndely reson telleþ hem þe contrarye.”¹⁵⁵

Finally Love closes the *Treatise* with a repetition of the condemnation of those clerics who trust their natural reason and Aristotle more than the teaching of the real presence and transubstantiation. He identifies these with Lollards, describing them as “disciples of Antichrist,” and he ends with an exhortation to humility¹⁵⁶ and resistance to temptations. Thus, Love created a whole network of allusions to the pride of the Lollards, which caused their erroneous behaviour and ideas, throughout the whole text of the *Mirroure*. This functions as a second, more indirect layer of Anti-Wycliffite hints, hitherto unnoticed by scholarship.

Another main group of anti-Wycliffite stances, which is listed by Sargent, concerns the sacraments. The Wycliffites attacked the sacramental teaching of the Church also by denying the necessity of a consecrated clergy to dispense them. One main issue was repentance, where the Wycliffites claimed the sufficiency of personal contrition. To refute such ideas, Love inserted a passage of 2,000 words on auricular confession into the chapter about the Conversion of Mary Magdalene, where he presents the doctrine of scholastic theology.

The majority of Love’s refutations concern the Eucharist. First, he rewrites the chapter on the Last Supper, where he adds a passage of around 2,500 words. He divides this into two parts: the first is about the foundation of the sacrament by Christ, and the second treats the beneficial effects this sacrament has on its receivers.

This inserted passage clearly testifies to concerns that were typical of sacramental debates between Wycliffites and the defenders of the official Church.¹⁵⁷ It focuses on the discrepancy between the actual sight of the bread and the wine and the reality that is under the

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 237; 238.

¹⁵⁷ See the detailed study of such expositions in Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi. The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

appearance of the accidents. This passage seems to directly refute one of the main tenets of Wyclif's Eucharistic teaching, the argument about sight:¹⁵⁸

*þerwip haldyng in hese handes þat self body in þat semede as to hir bodily sight, nouht elles bot brede, affermyng þus sobely, þis is my body þat shalle be 3iuen for 3ow, & also of þat þat in þe chalice semede onley verrey wyne. þis is my blode þat shal be shedde for þe remissione of 3our sinnes. And so þat self body þat þei seyen with hir bodily eye before hem, was sobely vndur þat forme brede, & þat self blode þat was alle hole in his body was þere in þe chalice in þe forme of wyne. Bot þan was not þat brede as it semede, & as it was before þe wordes of consecracion, nor wyne as it semede in self manere, bot onely þe liknes or þe forme of brede & wyne contynyng verrey cristes flesh & blode as it is seyde.*¹⁵⁹

He then continues with the difficulty which the Apostles had in understanding the nature of this sacrament. (Love elaborated on the problem of trusting one's natural reason more than the teaching of the Church later, in his *Treatise on the Sacrament*.) However, in this passage Love identifies Judas with the Lollards on the grounds of their unbelief. This identification is not noted by scholarship, although it appears in other anti-Wycliffite texts as well.¹⁶⁰ Love writes: "þe trewe apostles at þat tyme laften alle hir bodily reson & witte, restede onely in trewe beleue to hir lordes wordes as it is seide before, saue Judas þat was repropede for his falshede & misbeleue, & þefore he receyued þat blessed sacrament in to his dampnacion."¹⁶¹

As Sargent noted, Love offers a presentation of the Wycliffite views on the Eucharist, which is followed by the summary of the orthodox doctrine of the Eucharist, with the use of the specified terms as "subiecte", "accidens", "substance", and "substantially". Love emphasises the miraculous nature of the Transubstantiation exceeding human reason.¹⁶² Love deepens the idea of the miraculous nature of the sacrament by once again having recourse to examples of Eucharistic miracles, a method which had already had a long tradition in

¹⁵⁸ See Wyclif, *De Eucharistia Tractatus Maior. Accedit tractatus De Eucharistia et poenitentiae sive de confessione*, ed. Dr. Iohann Loserth. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966)

¹⁵⁹ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 151.

¹⁶⁰ See the identification of Wyclif with Judas in the confutation of Wyclif's ideas by the Franciscan Magister in Oxford, John Tissington: "Contra quam tanquam confessionem proditiosam Judae Scarioth, sic aliam confessionem catholicam exorsus est Magister Johannes Tyssington de sacro ordine Minorum," Netter, *Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Iohannis Wyclif cum Tritico*, ed. Walter Waddington Shirley. *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* 5 (London: Longman, Brown et al., 1858), p. 132.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 151.

religious literature.¹⁶³ First he provides a justification of miracles, then, embarks on the narration of a personal mystical experience of someone he knew personally. This passage is built on the suggestive power of the affective level, emphasising the “sweetness” of a personal experience tasting the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, according to the contemporary mystical tradition. Then he continues with the example of the popular miracles of Edward the Confessor and Gregory the Great, focusing on the role of sight, while nevertheless valuing the inner experience more than visions. He concludes this chapter by returning to the original narrative, but an even more developed exposition will follow in his *Treatise*.

However, there is another important sacramental passage added by Love, which is not commented on by scholarship. It creates a transition between these fairly distant passages by using another reference put into chapter 51, *How þat Maudeleyn & opere Maries comene to de Graue*, connecting the person of the Virgin Mary to the Eucharist. Mary, together with Mary Magdalene, is listening to the words of the Apostles on Holy Saturday, when Christ is still dead, and is comforted by hearing of the Eucharist:

*Namely when she & Maudeleyn herde of þe making of þe sacrament, & how he 3af hem in þe forme of brede his owne body to ete, & in þe forme of wyne his blode to drynke.’ Sopely I trow þat with souereyn merueile hir hertes meltede in to likyng sorow & sorouful likyng, brekyng oute in wepyng & shedyng swete teres.*¹⁶⁴

A certain number of passages may be worthy of attention (even if they are of minor importance), because they seem to serve the same purpose of refuting heretical ideas. Sargent notes that Love inserted two didactic additions, one of about 1,200 words about the Hail Mary, incorporated into the chapter about the Annunciation. It has the form of a short treatise on the merits and glory of Mary, following the genre of instructional literature of Marian piety, with the five joys of Mary and the five virtues connected to the five parts of the poem. Much in the same vein, he included a discussion of the *Pater Noster* in the Sermon on the Mount. Instead of an exposition of the prayer, Love defends particularly the claims of the authorised prayers of the Church as opposed to private prayer. Although Sargent does not identify these interpolations as polemical, the presence of an Anti-Wycliffite hint here seems

¹⁶³ An existing and shared stock of miracles was contained in the *exempla*, using the works of James of Vitry and Caesarius of Heisterbach, who dedicated one complete book of his *Dialogus Miraculorum* to the “Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood,” in England, the *Speculum Laicorum*, ed. J. Th. Welter, *Thesaurus Exemplorum fasc.* (Paris: A. Picard, 1914). On the Eucharistic miracles, see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 108-129.

¹⁶⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 190.

probable, considering the recurrent Wycliffite critique of the automatic recitation of prescribed prayers.¹⁶⁵

Another interesting passage which is not noted by Sargeant is to be found in the scene of the Last Supper, where Love inserted a note about Saint John the evangelist, portraying him more fully than the original text. Love emphasises one characteristic of him: that he dipped from the source of wisdom, that is, from Scriptures, which serve as a device against heretics: “Þis was a swete rest to John (...) he dronke of þat welle of euerlastyng wisdom, þe precious drinke of his holi gospel, with þe which aftur he confortet alle holi chirch & 3afe it as tryacle a3eynus þe venyme of diuerse heretikes.”¹⁶⁶ Thus Love identifies Scriptures as a weapon against heretics, and from his emotionally filled terms, as “venyme” suggest that he was also thinking on the most recent ones, that is, the Lollards.

Sargent notes that Love defends the portrayal of spiritual things in physical terms by inserting two passages about the debate of the four daughters of God and of the Archangel Gabriel, but did not interpret the scene further as carrying an Anti-Wycliffite hint. However, this defence of the spiritual being in “bodily form” strengthened the official doctrine of the real presence and also of the veneration of angels, in contrast to the Wycliffite rejection of these. The expansions of Love of other passages about angels betray an interest which will have its parallels in the iconography of the illuminations.

Finally, the meditation part is closed by a paragraph praising the Feast of Corpus Christi, thus creating the transition to the *Treatise* with these concluding words: “we shole speke sumwhat more to confort of hem þat treuly byleuen, & to confusion of alle fals lollardes & heritykes Amen.”¹⁶⁷ Taking it into consideration that around one third of the interpolations made by Love in the main text carry allusions to or refutation of Wycliffite doctrines or customs, the presence of an anti-Wycliffite programme in the main body of the text is evident. However, several passages have been newly decoded in this chapter as serving the same programme by more indirect allusions, relating more tenets set in opposition with Wycliffitedoctrine. These may shed a new light on the complexity of Love’s Anti-Wycliffite campaign, as well as on his expertise as a *translator-auctor*.

¹⁶⁵ A Lollard view about prayer was that “the Pater Noster and Ave were of no effect, and were positively harmful if said in deadly sin,” quoted from the *Lichfield Register of Hales* fol.169v, and “to multiply vocal prayers was worthless, and a prayer of good life was more effective than a repetitions of words,” quoted from Henry Knighton, *Chronicon*, by Hudson, in *Premature Reformation*, p. 311.

¹⁶⁶ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 147.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

II. 4. The *Treatise on the Sacrament*

(A shorte tretes of þe hiest and moste worþi sacrament of cristes blessedde body & þe merueilles þerof)

The treatise, written by Love and attached to the main body of the text of the *Meditationes* in almost all manuscripts of the *Mirroure*, begins with a systematic refutation of Wycliffite tenets. Then it continues with the help of Eucharistic miracles.¹⁶⁸ Finally, two prayers on the Eucharist close it. The first is a translation of the first verse of the hymn of Thomas Aquinas, *O Salutaris*, and the second is from Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae*. Thus, the structure of the *Treatise* keeps to the steps required by the process of meditation: after the doctrinal part, through the vivid narration of holy events (the miracles), it progresses to the formulation of a prayer as the device for the elevation of the soul to God, thus reaching the aim of meditation.

Sargent states that the first half of the *Treatise* is a meditation on the text of Psalm 110: 4-5 "He hath made a remembrance of his wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord: he hath given food to them that fear him." The elaboration of sacramental doctrine follows the steps of the meditation on the lines of the Psalm. The vocabulary of this first, doctrinal part is the highly scholarly terminology of Eucharistic debates and had been incorporated from Latin into the vernacular precisely because of Wycliffite vernacular texts.¹⁶⁹ Words such as "substaunce," "consecracioun", "accidente", "subiecte" and "sacramentale commemoracioun" are used in the exposition of the main sacramental teaching refuting one basic critique of Wycliffism, namely the continuous presence of Christ on Earth

¹⁶⁸ First the miracle of the consecration of the Eucharist is related. Then two visions of a shining child in the elevation are narrated. The first comes from a translation from Aelred of Rievaulx's *Life of Edward the Confessor*, the second from Adam of Eynsham's *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*. Another consequence of a miracle is the conversion of the unbelievers; Love thus recounts a miracle of St. Gregory the Great and one of St. Hugh of Lincoln: in both the host turns into flesh. Finally another type of miracle consists in being delivered from evil or suffering. A miracle is narrated here about a man being released from prison as a result of masses celebrated for him, and a final account tells the story of a seaman saved from drowning, also thanks to a mass presented for him.

¹⁶⁹ Both the Franciscan Magister John Tissington and the Augustinian Magister Thomas Winterton responded to the views of Wyclif on the Eucharist in Oxford using similar technical terms, for these and other replies, see A. Gwynn, *The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1940); for the Latin terms see also Netter, *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.

after the Ascension.¹⁷⁰ Love here openly presents the heretical views which are to be refuted.¹⁷¹

The second part of the *Treatise*, narrating the Eucharistic miracles, begins with an interesting exposition of the miracle of the Eucharist itself. In spite of the recognition of the translation of the *Horologium* as the source of the poem on the Eucharist by Elisabeth Salter,¹⁷² the first part of the *Treatise* has hitherto been thought to be the original composition of Nicholas Love. However, according to my observations the second part of the doctrinal reasoning of the *Treatise* bears striking similarities to the first part of the chapter of the *Horologium* on the reception of the Eucharist. This is the chapter which contains the poem Love adapted for the end of the *Treatise*. Considering the importance of the matter, that is, the fact that this part of the *Mirror* is the most openly written in order to refute the Eucharistic doctrine of the Wycliffites, the idea of using a completely original text of such a length lacking the reassuring power of other sources seems to be worth questioning. After a short presentation of Suso's text used by Love, I will argue for my hypothesis.

The poem concluding the treatise is taken from the *Horologium Sapientiae*, more exactly from the Middle English translation of it, known as *The Seven Poyntes of Trewe Love and Everlastynge Wisdome*.¹⁷³ There is documentary evidence confirming that the *Horologium* had reached England by about 1375,¹⁷⁴ and also that it was completed at Mount Grace Charterhouse, the monastery of Nicholas Love. Sargent¹⁷⁵ quotes the doubts of Doyle about the possibility of the *Seven Poyntes* being the source of Love's poem, based on the

¹⁷⁰ "Bot in þis gostly mete & sacramentale commemoracion of oure lorde Jesu'. He is verreyly & bodily present wiþ vs vnder an odere forme'. Bot soþely in his owne propre substance verrey // god & man. 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 to þe worlde's ende, confortyng hem by þis benigne promise'. þat he sholde duelle with hem not onely by þe gostly presence of his godhede.' Bot in þis forseide mete of his flesh & blode, in mynde of hees merueiles generally as it is seide, bot moste specially in mynde of þat blessedde passion." Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 224.

¹⁷¹ "Leue not þat holy doctours hauen taught, & holy chirch determinede of þis blessedde sacrament, bot falsly trowene & obstinately seyne þat it is brede in his kynde as it was before þe consecration, so þat þe substance of brede is not turnede in to þe substance of goddes body, bot duelleþ stille brede as it was before, bycause þat it semeþ so to alle hir bodily wittes." Ibid., p. 227.

¹⁷² Elisabeth Salter in "Two Middle English Versions of a Prayer to the Sacrament," *Archiv für Neuere Sprachen* 194 (1958), 113-21, and Sargent, in *Mirror* lxxv, adapt this view from G. Schleich, "Über die Entstehungszeit und den Verfasser der mittelenglischen Bearbeitung von Suso's *Horologium*," *Archiv* 57 (1930): 26-34.

¹⁷³ *The Seven Poyntes of Trewe Love and Everlastynge Wisdome*, ed. C. Horstmann, from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 114, *Anglia* 10 (1888): 323-389.

¹⁷⁴ Thomas Hoccleve translated in verse form the *Ars Moriendi* chapter from book II. On the documents and about the influence of Suso in England, see Roger Lovatt, "Henry Suso and the Medieval Mystical Tradition in England," in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Papers Read at Dartington Hall, July, 1987*, Exeter Symposium IV, ed. Marian Glasscoe. (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1987). The *Horologium* was known in England, parts of it were incorporated into several Middle English texts, like the *Chasitizing of God's Children*, and also the *Scale of Perfection* of Walter Hilton bears similarities with it.

¹⁷⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, pp. 70-74.

dating of the completion of the translation to 1419. However, Sargent argues that the colophon with the dating, saying “written finally in Mount Grace,” suggests that the translation extended to a longer period and that parts of the work, especially the most important ones, such as that on the Eucharist, were translated earlier, and therefore could have been a source for Love, working in the same monastery. His view is supported by the analysis of G. Schleich and Elisabeth Salter,¹⁷⁶ who agree upon the fact that Love was acquainted with the Latin text as well as the Middle English version. Therefore the question whether Love could have used the earlier parts of the same chapter of *The Seven Poyntes* and incorporated them into the exposition of the sacramental doctrine seems plausible.

A closer look at the structure of this part seems to confirm this idea. The main line of the argumentation follows that of the *Horologium*. Although there are sometimes obvious differences of phrasing from both the Latin and English texts, the analysis of Schleich and Salter on the style and method of translation of Love may answer the doubts caused by these alterations.¹⁷⁷ There are also different passages inserted between the common line of argumentation in both texts; therefore it is clear that Love did not make a close adaptation of the *Seven Poyntes* or a close translation of the Latin *Horologium*, apart from the closing poem. However, the similarity sequence of the common arguments is striking, all the more as this sequence is not required by any tradition.

The first common element of the argumentation is that of the miracle. Love comments upon the verses of Psalm 110, where one main element is that of the miracle: *Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum misericors, et miserator dominus escam dedit timentibus se.*¹⁷⁸ In the course of the treatise, Love elaborates upon several kinds of marvels or miracles, which he usually uses synonymously. He quotes the *merueile* of the Eucharist as the first type of miracle: “it is a fulle grete merueile þat by vertue of cristes wordes, brede is turnede in to

¹⁷⁶See G. Schleich, “Über die Entschtheungszeit,” and Salter, “Two Middle English Versions,” and “Nicholas Love: A Fifteenth Century Translator.”

¹⁷⁷ Schleich, analysing the method of adaptation-translation, had shown that Love treated his material more freely than the anonymous translator, expounding the majority of the terms and altering the composition itself in some places, see G. Schleich, “Über die Entschtheungszeit.” Salter states that Love often rephrases the same complex sentence by changing the order of the clauses, expands the sentence by substituting words by phrases or even clauses, even changing the tense if it fits better the requirements of the vernacular usage, changes the order of the sentences by interpolating commentary sentences, or may simplify, see Salter, “Two Middle English Versions” and Salter, “Nicholas Love: A Fifteenth Century Translator.” On the methods of translation used by Love in the *Mirroure*, see also Patrick F. O’Connell, “Love’s *Mirroure* and the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*,” in *Analecta Cartusiana* 82. 2. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1980), 3-44.

¹⁷⁸ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 225.

goddus body, & wyne in to his blode.”¹⁷⁹ To strengthen his readers’s belief in this, he uses the same argumentation the *Horologium* uses, that is, the God who brought forth the miracle of creation is able to perform the miracle of the Eucharist as well: “...we shole haue in mynde, þat he eip þe self miht of his worde made alle þe worlde of nought, & of þe ribbe of Adam made Eve flesh & blode & turnede þe wife of loth in to an ymage of salt, ... whi may he not also by þe self miht turne brede in to his body?”¹⁸⁰ In the *Horologium* the same argument can be found.¹⁸¹

The next paragraph contains the definition of the identity of Christ’s glorified body in Heaven and his body in the sacrament. The presentation of this idea is very similar to that in *The Seven Poyntes*, although Love reverses the order of the phrases putting the “sitteþ in heuen vpon þe fadre riht halfe” at the beginning:

*þe self body of oure lorde Jesu, þat sitteþ in heuen vpon þe fadre riht halfe, is verreyly & holely in alle þe places of the worlde where þis holy sacrament is tretede, soþely contynede in þat sacrament, in þe self flesh & blode þat was conceyuede of þe holy goste, & born of þe blessedde virgyne Marie, & henge vpon þe crosse for oure sauacion.*¹⁸²

Love’s text is expanded by the mention of the Holy Spirit, but this could be attributed to his general tendency to expand the description of important matters, mostly of Christ, with a phrase or two.

Then follows the idea that this is beyond the reach of human “reson”, just as in the *Horologium*. The next marvel consists in how the body of Christ can be contained wholly in a small host and that it is still fully present in every part after breaking. The first part of the paragraph is analogous with the *Horologium* and *The Seven Poyntes*.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 228.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ “Item, si possibile videtur, quod conditor orbis dixit et facta sunt universa ex nihilo, quare tam impossibilis videtur haec transmutatio?” *Horologium*, 550, and see also: “Also, if hit seme possibil þat þe maker of the worlde seyde and alle thinges were made of no3hte, why schulde hee not turne one thinge in to an opere þorow his priuey power?” *Seven Poyntes*, pp. 366-367.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 229. “Certissime et veraciter et absque omni dubitacione in hoc sacramento contineor, Deus et homo cum corpore et anima, carne et sanguine, sicut cum prodi ex utero matris et in cruce pependi ac sedeo ad dexteram Patris”. *Horologium*, p. 549. “In most certeynte and soþfastly and with-oute eny doute I am conteyned in þis sacramente god and man, with body and soule, flesche and blode, as I wente oute of my mother wombe 7 hanged on the crosse and sette on þe fader ri3hte hande.” *Seven Poyntes*, p. 366.

¹⁸³ “Valde namque mirabile videtur, si fas est dicere, qualiter corpus domini mei formosum cum suis debitis dimensionibus et omnimoda perfectione contineri possit sub formis minutis specierum sacramentalium”, *Horologium* 549, and “hit semith ful grete wonder how þat schappely body of my lorde with alle his membrys and mesures in alle-maner perfeccyone maye be conteyned vndur þat litil forme þat we seen of þe sacramente.” *The Seven Poyntes*, p. 366.

Then comes as an explanation an interesting image: that of the broken mirror. This image occurs most rarely in contemporary instructional literature and therefore may suggest a direct connection between the two texts. Although the explanation of the doctrine of the presence of Christ's body in every part of the host was of a great importance and therefore commented upon quite often in treatises as well as in shorter, instructional or devotional texts written in vernacular, the image of the mirror is never brought in to illustrate the doctrine.¹⁸⁴ There are only two exceptions. The presence of the motif is rendered even more significant because of Wyclif's own use of it.

Heather Phillips, in her article "John Wyclif and the Optics of the Eucharist,"¹⁸⁵ presents a surprising idea by showing that the Eucharistic teaching of Wyclif is fundamentally informed by his scholarly knowledge of optics. In his *De Logica*,¹⁸⁶ Wyclif states that vision is twofold: sensory and intellective, and he builds up his sacramental theory in his later works on the elaboration of these two aspects. This observation becomes especially interesting taking into account the fact that in other contemporary works, relating the sacraments from an orthodox point of view, the serial list of the sacraments is sometimes preceded by a treatise on the five outer and five inner senses, paralleling the sight with the imagination, as in the *Lay Folk's Catechism*.¹⁸⁷

Sacramental theology had already known the combination of optics and its terms with the explication of the Eucharist, using the image of the mirror. After William of Auxerre, Thomas Aquinas argued that Christ was present in every part of the broken host just as the same image is reflected as a whole in each piece of a broken mirror¹⁸⁸. Wyclif himself used the mirror as a constant metaphorical leitmotif in his thought, identifying the Scriptures as the mirror of eternal truth, then considering the Church and finally the Eucharist as a mirror.

¹⁸⁴ See for example some lines from Lydgate's Minor Poems, which merely expound the doctrine: "þat þis host is hole in ech partye", see *The minor poems of John Lydgate*, I, ed. H. N. MacCracken. EETS, e. s 107. (London, 1909), line 172, p.41. The image of the mirror is not used as an illustrative example.

¹⁸⁵ Heather Phillips, "John Wyclif and the Optics of the Eucharist," in *From Ockham to Wyclif*, ed. Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks. *Studies in Church History: Subsidia* 5 (Oxford: Published for the Ecclesiastical History Society by B. Blackwell, 1987), 245-258.

¹⁸⁶ Wyclif, *Tractatus De Logica*, ed. Michael Dziewiczki. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966)

¹⁸⁷ *Lay Folk's Catechism, or the English and Latin Versions of Archbishop Thoresby's Instruction for the People*, ed. T. F. Simmons and H. E. Nolloth. EETS 118 (London, 1901)

¹⁸⁸ William of Auxerre *Summa Aurea* IV (ed. Paris 1500) tract 7, fol. 259v, stated that all the pieces of a broken mirror contain the whole image; thus is Christ wholly present in each part of the broken host. Aquinas stated that Christ is present in each piece only when it is broken. *Summa Theologiae* III. q.76. a 3. Quoted from Phillips, "John Wyclif and the Optics of the Eucharist," pp. 251-252.

In his *De Eucharistia*¹⁸⁹ these considerations of visual matters led Wyclif to the conclusion that the Eucharist remained bread even after the consecration. Under the bread the body of Christ was hidden, invisible to the eye. The visible host, after consecration, is only bread. He uses the idea of the mirror to explain that Christ is present in the bread as just an image is present in the mirror, the subject of the Eucharistic accidents being the bread. He writes thus: “Just as the optical writers say a body is multiplied intentionally, and is truly present wherever its species acts, and has the power of acting there, so God can make his body to be sacramentally present at every point of the host, and act there spiritually.”¹⁹⁰

The other example of the use of the mirror image is that of an unknown Dominican friar. In the 1380s he also used the analogy of the mirror in his anti-Wycliffite tract *Pharetra sacramenti*,¹⁹¹ saying that the body of Christ could be present in a small host just as the whole image of a man was in a small mirror.¹⁹²

It is therefore not altogether surprising that also Love, in refuting Wyclif’s views about the Eucharist, uses the same motif. However, both in the *Horologium* text and in that of Love, the analogy is built up in a different way from Wyclif’s and also from the *Pharetra Sacramenti*. Both Suso and Love use the scholastic argument of William of Auxerre. Although there are dissimilarities in phrasing, the idea is the same. In Love’s text it appears as follows: “Hereto also is a maner of likenes þat we seene in kynde. Howe þe ymage of a mannus grete face, and of a grete body is seene in a litel Mirroure, & if it be broken & departede 3it in euery parte it semep alle þe hole Ymage, & not in partye after þe partes of þe glasse broken.”¹⁹³

The text of the *Seven Poyntes* uses the same argumentation: “In what maner a broken glasse maye receyue a parfite Image in euery broke parte þere-of.”¹⁹⁴ Notwithstanding the authority and the popularity of the two scholastic authors, that of William of Auxerre and of

¹⁸⁹ Wyclif, *De Eucharistia Tractatus Maior*.

¹⁹⁰ “si enim secundum perspectivum corpus multiplicatur intencionaliter vere presens, ubicunque species eius agitur, et habet ibi efficiam operandi, quod magisterium Deo facere corpus suum esse ad omnem punctum hostie sacramentaliter et effectus spirituales efficaciter operari.” In *De Benedicta Incarnatione*, ed. Edward Harris. (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1966), p. 191. The translation is that of Phillips, from “John Wyclif and the Optics of the Eucharist,” p. 251.

¹⁹¹ *Pharetra Sacramenti*, Cambridge University Library MS Ff. 6. 44, fols. 60r-104r.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, fols. 68r-69r.

¹⁹³ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 227.

¹⁹⁴ *Seven Poyntes*, p. 364. See also “...vel quoniam modo *Speculum* fractum in qualibet parte sui imaginem perfectam recipere possit, cum tamen haec sint inequalia et improportionata.” *Horologium*, pp. 549-550.

Aquinas, their image of the broken mirror is not used in doctrinal debates and treatises written in England, except for these two examples.¹⁹⁵

Finally Love repeats that many great miracles exceed human understanding, exhorts faith, and warns of the perils of seeking to understand this mystery by reason and the bodily senses. The same emphasis is laid upon the bodily senses or reason, both texts using “bodily wittys” and “reson.”¹⁹⁶ To conclude Love states that it is enough for the simple souls to believe in the faith prescribed by the Church.

An interesting section which is outside the *Treatise*, may also suggest that Love read the text of the *Horologium* and made use of it. In his exposition of the Eucharist in the passage which he inserted into the section on Holy Thursday, Love writes some lines about the suavity of the experience of tasting the Eucharist and having inner rejoicing in it, which are greatly praised by Michael Sargent for their expressive power and freshness. These lines seem to have their parallel in the *Horologium*, where the exposition of the doctrine of the Eucharist is followed by a lengthy praise of the merits, and most of all, of the sweetness of the reception of it in the soul. In both texts this part is important and written with special care and refined style. In spite of the fact that Love describes a personal experience here, the similarity of these passages in both texts is noteworthy.

Although the poem on the Eucharist is a closer translation of the original Latin text, this may be accounted for by the general tendency to make a more literal translation of poems and most of all of prayers. Even if the alterations of phrasing and the expansions in the first part of the *Treatise* could be accounted for by Love’s method of translation, I propose the idea that Love used paraphrasing rather than an adoption of some of the passages relating to the Eucharist of *The Seven Poyntes*. The very similar structure of ideas in both passages, the

¹⁹⁵ For the instructional material about the Eucharist, see Robert R. Raymo, *Works of Religious & Philosophical Instruction*, in Albert A. Hartung, ed. *A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* vol. 7 (New Haven, Connecticut: Connecticut Academy of Arts & Sciences, 1980); A. I. Doyle, *A Survey of the Origins and Circulation of Theological Writings in English in the 14th, 15th, and early 16th Centuries with Special Consideration to the Part of the Clergy therein*. Doctoral Dissertation no. 2301 (Cambridge University, 1953); Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, and Craig J. Frazer, *The Religious Instruction of the Laity in Late Medieval England with Particular Reference to the Eucharist*, Doctoral Dissertation (University of Oxford, 1995). For the Eucharistic poems, see Michèle Theresa Priscandero, *Middle English Eucharistic Verse: Its Imagery, Symbolism and Typology*. PhD Dissertation, St. John’s University, (New York, 1978) For the debates with Wyclif, see Thomas Netter, *Defensor Fidei Catholicae*, 3 vols., (Venice, 1671 repr. Farnborough, 1967) and the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.

¹⁹⁶ “whеч we mowe not comprehendе, by kyndly reson & our bodily wittes bot onely by trewe byleue, & þеrfore it is grete folly & gostly perile, to seke curiously in ymaginacion of reson þе merueiles of þis worþi sacrament.” Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 227. And “Also reson techit þat þere ben many thinges in her kynde þе whiche mow not be comprehendit by the sighte ne by opere bodily wittys.” *Seven Poyntes*, p. 367, see also “Item ratio dicta multa entia in rerum natura existere, quae nullo sensui subesse poterunt” in *Horologium*, p. 551.

closeness of rendition of details and the presence of the very rare analogy of the mirror seem to support the hypothesis. Thus, the *Treatise* would serve as another example of the early use and influence of the *Horologium*. Finally, it would also represent a rare case of having recourse to mystical writings deriving from the Continent to refute Wycliffite ideas. Using mystical writings as supportive authoritative texts by Love surely also meant perceiving and conforming himself to the affinities of his public, which favoured private devotion.

By translating the *Meditationes*, Nicholas Love met the requirements of being a preacher, compiler and author edifying his readers by the exposition of a doctrine. He succeeded in this by a conscious re-arrangement of the structure of the work and by the interpolation of direct Anti-Wycliffite texts as well as more indirect hints against Wycliffite tenets. The richness of these allusions betrays a deep concern to respond to a great variety of Wycliffite ideas. To attain this goal he even used mystical writings as sources, perceiving and conforming himself to the affinities of his public, which favoured private devotion. Consequently, Love's translation presents a definite change compared to the tradition of the *Meditationes* also due to its programme against Lollardy, and, without doubt, due to his outstanding skills of *compilor-translator-auctor*. The same change can be detected in the illustrative programme of the two *Mirroure* manuscripts. The way this message contra Lollardos affected their illumination will be analysed in the next chapter.

Chapter III. The Text and the Images

III. 1. The *Mirrou* and its Illuminations

Meditative devotion and images are strongly interconnected on various levels. The growing importance of visualisation in the formation of the new devotion was in great part due to the reception and appreciation (and presumably influence) of the programme installed in the text of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*.¹⁹⁷ The image is an aid to enhance imagination, either by an internal visualisation of the subject of the text or by using a concrete, depicted image as an aid to develop further inner visualisation and meditation. However, illuminations functioned on more levels even in works intended for private meditation. They could signal the divisions of the text, serving the *ordinatio* of the material, and also as “representations of the textual matter, they were a visual interpretation and an extension”¹⁹⁸ of the text. By fulfilling the second function they were apt to carry messages.¹⁹⁹ Facing the Lollard danger, the Church exerted its influence on the formation and production of manuscript illumination as well. Kathleen L. Scott writes thus:

*If the discussion of fifteenth-century English style was set against a background of a heretical and anti-clerical thinking, the pictorial content of later English books will have to be placed, I hope without too much perversity, against a background of two of the most conventional contemporary institutions of the period, the Church and the guild.*²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ See Henk W. van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300-1500*. (Princeton: Merrell Holberton, 1994). This tendency was later to grow into the great movement of Thomas Kempis' *Imitatio Christi*, and is also present in the mystical movement as a central element, in England in the works of Hilton, Rolle, Margery Kempe and Julian of Norwich.

¹⁹⁸ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, “Introduction,” p. 46. In her article “Design, Decoration and Illustration” Scott categorises the functions of the pictures as narrative, static and utilitarian, stating that these normally overlap.

¹⁹⁹ For the power of images in manipulating and carrying messages, see Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol. Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and Michael Camille, “Visual Signs of the Sacred Page: Books in the Bible Moralisée,” *Word and Image* 5 (1989): 111-30; finally David Freedberg, *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response*. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989)

²⁰⁰ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, p. 52.

The Church exercised this function by a control over the guidelines or regulations of the guild, mostly in the case of books with religious content, such as Missals, Pontificals and Psalters, and also by asserting its influence on the pictorial matter as commissioner of these manuscripts. Therefore, the doctrinal correctness of the illuminations of the *Mirroure* text is also very likely to have been guaranteed.²⁰¹

The only two illustrated manuscripts of the *Mirroure* which contain a cycle of images are the National Library of Scotland MS Advocates 18.1.7. and the MS M 648 in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. There are differences in the list of the illustrations in each of these manuscripts and in the iconographic programme itself. From a stylistic point of view it is clear that they do not belong to exactly the same tradition. Nevertheless, striking similarities are present and cannot be disregarded. By a comparative study of how the images relate to the text of the translation and to each other, questions referring to an influence from the Anti-Wycliffite endeavour may be clarified. The fact that most of the divergences from the iconographic tradition are in some relation to the programme of refutation of Lollardy may be significant, and that will be investigated here.

Although comparing the two manuscripts to the illustrative tradition of the previously existing *Meditationes* would be impossible in this thesis, a quick glance at their iconography seems to support the idea that the *Mirroure* manuscripts were planned to carry a special programme. The same characteristics, such as the stress on the Hierarchy and the Eucharist, and the insertion of such special themes as the Temptation and the Sermon on the Mount, cannot be found in any of the *Meditationes* manuscripts.

While comparing the two manuscripts, various factors should be taken into consideration, such as the choice of the elements contained in the pictorial cycles, the individual iconographical traits of the two manuscripts, and the difference in commissioning and ownership.

The ownership of the Morgan copy is an issue which scholarship has hitherto been unable to clarify. The only data about its production are that it was written by several scribes, illuminated in a London atelier, with the borders made by the Advocates master, and that it was completed probably before 1440.

²⁰¹ “If it were not that the Lollards eschewed imagery, we might also know of a prohibition concerning heretical illustrations! As it is, we are left to assume that surviving religious images in religious books were orthodox, even if such important subject as the Trinity might appear in different forms.” *Ibid.*, p. 52.

The Advocates manuscript was owned by Edmund Grey, Lord of Ruthin, and his wife, Catherine Percy, as noted earlier.²⁰² They were also the commissioners of the manuscript, and as the opening three illuminations show, they strongly assert their ownership. The first image (figure 1, folio 5v) represents the united coats of arms of the two families, the second, the Bonaventura image, (figure 2, folio 9r) contains again the two sets of coats of arms, now depicted separately, placed in the hands of angels standing on two towers of the building in which Bonaventura works. At the bottom of the third illumination (figure 3, fol. 12 v) the two commissioners are portrayed praying at *prie-dieux*, with their coat of arms and helmet held by an angel. Scott draws the conclusion that “the patrons chose to exert considerable influence on some, and possibly all, of the pictures in the Advocates manuscript, both concerning the selection of subject matter and the content of the scene.”²⁰³ She also states that they might have worked together with the artist or the designer of the book. The existence of an advisor may also be presumed, as this was customary in this later period in aristocratic circles.²⁰⁴ Such a long series of full-page miniatures was quite unusual.²⁰⁵ It was a method allowing for more flexibility, not so dependent on pre-planning by the scribe. The pictorial cycle of the Advocates was consciously formed.²⁰⁶

However, speculating about the manner and degree of their influence on the formation of the illustrations seems an impossible task. No evidence of other illuminated manuscripts being in the possession of the Grey family is left, nor are instructions of any kind, marginal or separate, about the illuminations. One master illuminator is responsible for all the full-page illuminations and the borders, and Alexander recognised that the same master painted Lydgate’s *Troy Book*²⁰⁷ as well as the borders of the Morgan copy. A comparative analysis of the two works is fruitful from the stylistic point of view,²⁰⁸ however, as the two works have very different contents and therefore a different iconography was required, it provides no

²⁰² See Introduction.

²⁰³ Scott, “Illuminations,” p. 64.

²⁰⁴ See J. J. G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and their Methods of Work*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 149.

²⁰⁵ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. 1. p. 38.

²⁰⁶ “It is clear, however, in some manuscripts that the inserted miniatures were planned and that insertion was a method of avoiding delay in production, i.e. in waiting for a quire to be written before the miniatures could be made...as is clear from their occurrence on a leaf conjoint with text or originally within the quire.” Ibid., p. 38

²⁰⁷ Manchester, John Rylands University MS Eng.1. He even postulates that the limner was called William Abell; see J. J. G. Alexander, “William Abell ‘lymnour’, and 15th-Century English Illumination,” in *Kunsthistorische Forschungen Otto Pächt zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, eds., Carlo Bertelli, Artur Rosenauer and Gerold Weber. (Salzburg: Residenz, 1972), 166-72. Scott rejects this idea.

²⁰⁸ As the *Troy Book* illuminations attest, the Advocates Master was a talented landscapist and inserted a few untraditional scenes into the pictorial cycle. The same characteristics can be found in the Advocates manuscript as well.

further clues for the identification of the influence of the master on the iconography of the Advocates manuscript versus the influence of the commissioners. Therefore it seems more fruitful to turn to the images themselves and to their relation to the text, as well as the iconographic tradition of the period.

On account of the differences between the two manuscripts, it would be difficult, and not fully justified, to argue for the hypothesis that a very close relation existed between the two illuminators. However, the similarities call for an interpretation. It seems very interesting that these similarities, despite a basic difference of style, iconographic tradition and of artistic quality, are mainly present in cases which can be connected to issues critical to Wycliffism. Therefore the assumption that a common programme derives from a common assent to the formation of certain elements of the illustrative cycle, relevant from the point of view of the refutation of Wycliffism, and of their iconography, may be justified.

One common element in both manuscripts is the choice of the passages to be illustrated which shows striking similarities. Naturally, some choices are determined by the significance of the passages they illustrate, such as the illustrations of the Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, Ascension, Pentecost and even Corpus Christi represent cardinal events of the Gospel and appear everywhere in illumination cycles of Gospel narratives.²⁰⁹ However, the choice of minor scenes for illustration was rather free. The equivalences between certain choices of these minor scenes in the two manuscripts are significant, as they are not motivated by factors such as an endeavour to create a symmetric pattern in the chapter headings or by any other factors determined by the layout of the text in the manuscripts. Furthermore, the distribution of the chapter headings which are illuminated shows a very dissipated image: some larger sections of the text are heavily illustrated whereas others are hardly at all.²¹⁰ Therefore the specificity of these choices of images scenes of minor importance attests to a conscious planning with a common ideological-iconographical strategy in the background in both manuscripts. The text, according to Arundel's approbation and of Love's explicit formulation in the *Proheme*, had the double function of serving meditation and of refuting Wycliffite ideas by giving instruction. It seems that the illuminations served the same double purpose.

In the attempt to refute Wycliffism by iconographic means, several phenomena seem to coexist. Ann Eljenholm Nichols²¹¹ has demonstrated that the seven-sacrament art was

²⁰⁹ See the illuminated manuscripts of the *Meditationes* as well as *Biblia Pauperum*. See Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*. I also have consulted the visual material of the Courtauld Institute in London.

²¹⁰ See Appendix C.

²¹¹ See Chapter I, Introduction.

especially developed as art intended for a wide lay public, mostly in areas associated with Lollard activity. However, the presence of several other phenomena in relation to the refutation of Wycliffism in the illustrations of the *Mirroure* manuscripts creates a more complex picture. These phenomena will be discussed in the course of the treatment of the illustrations, following the order of the narrative in the text. The images of the two manuscripts will be discussed in parallel, according to the order of the narrative and of their appearance.

A phenomenon existing in both manuscripts is the application of the method of convincing and reassuring the viewer about the legitimacy of the doctrine of the Church by displaying expressive images about the *Ecclesia Universalis*, about the Celestial and Ecclesiastical hierarchy. This intention is clearly present in the block of opening images in both manuscripts.

The Advocates copy is unique as it contains three opening images instead of the usual one or maximum two according to the iconographic tradition of late medieval manuscripts. The opening block of the Morgan copy has two. The first image in the Advocates is the **coat of arms** (fig.1, folio 5v) already mentioned, followed by that of Bonaventura, the supposed author. The Morgan copy has the **Bonaventura** image (fig.18, folio 2v) as the opening one, expanded into a two-thirds page size, thus becoming emphatic. Although the Advocates image is full-page, and therefore naturally bigger than the Morgan image, the latter was enlarged compared to the size of the other illuminations in the same manuscript, and thus appears to occupy a privileged place, while such a deviation from the normal practice of the manuscript is not present in the Advocates copy. The Advocates depicts an entire architectural complex, whereas the Morgan MS zooms on Bonaventure working in an interior space. In this image, in both manuscripts, the identity of the figure can be defined by the traditional image of the author placed at the beginning of the work, paralleling the Evangelist-portraits, at the same time acquiring a certain identification with these as an author of a narrative about the life of Christ. This aspect is especially emphasised in the Advocates copy (fig.2, folio 9r), where the figure of a prophet (impossible to identify definitively) stands on a pillar above the figure of Bonaventura. On both sides of Bonaventure friars in debate are represented; above them, on pillars, there are two angels, forming a rather unique iconography. The composition of the figures on two levels is reminiscent of the composition of typological scenes, the figure of the prophet symbolising the Old Testament and that of the writing author the New; at the same time the two angels and the prophet, parallel to the

cardinal (the ecclesiastical rank is clearly signalled by the red hat of the cardinal, put into prominence in both manuscripts), and the clerics create a kind of image of the Hierarchy, with the appropriate correspondences. The coats of arms included appear for the second time, and stress the intention of the owners to signal both their possession and their participation in the scene, in this case belonging to the Church. The same elements form the unity of the opening block, linking this picture to the next one, the Coronation of the Virgin.

The **Coronation of the Virgin scene** (Fig.3 folio 12 v) is represented together with a detailed and grandiose Celestial Hierarchy. As Scott puts it, “the Coronation page is unique,”²¹² and this is due to the fact that in the combination of the Coronation theme with that of the celestial hierarchy the latter is elaborated in an unprecedented way in English manuscript illumination. Its presence in the manuscript and its role are puzzling. Scott noted the difficulty of finding an answer. She thinks that this image “cannot be taken as an introduction to the text as a whole,”²¹³ and that the subject of this opening image does not fit the text of the first chapter. She suggests that it was selected because of the personal Marian devotion of the patrons:

*The literary placement of the opening text in heaven was certainly justification for the five registers of angelic and sacred figures, but it is not, on the surface, a satisfactory explanation for the presence of the Coronation of the Virgin. Although the Coronation scene was sometimes accompanied by heavenly ranks in miniatures in other manuscripts, the choice of a core pictorial subject on the basis of its surrounding environment seems somewhat far-fetched. It is worth therefore suggesting that this pictorial matter-Coronation and the angelic registers-may be nothing more than a type of subject favoured by patrons at this period ... and that the central scene was selected by the patrons because they preferred it, not because it had one-to-one correspondence with the text.*²¹⁴

In a footnote she rejects the idea of Michael G. Sargent that the Coronation scene might be inspired by the House of the Assumption of Mary at Mount Grace, founded by an ancestor of the owner of the Advocates manuscript, Lord Grey. However, the examination of the text of Love’s translation reveals another idea worthy of consideration. It complements Scott’s assumption that the scene of the Coronation of the Virgin condenses the illustration of two

²¹² Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, p. 274.

²¹³ Scott, “Illuminated Manuscripts of Love’s Mirror,” p. 64.

²¹⁴ Scott, “The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts,” p. 64.

important parts of the text: that of the *Proheme* and of the first description of the heavenly council. Thus it serves as an introduction to the whole work, being the apex among the three introductory images. In my opinion, the introductory block made of three images corresponds to the threefold textual introduction, that is, the *Proheme* by Love, the introduction of the original text, and finally the first chapter, the content of which serves as the introduction to the narration of the Incarnation and life of Christ. The three images fulfil the traditional roles of introduction: the first indicates ownership, the second authorship, while the third does indeed function as the emblem of the special Marian devotion of the family but at the same time unites the three textual introductions. Thus it also serves as the visual embodiment of the intention of the work: to impose visually the Creed in the legitimacy of the Church by the representation of the Celestial Hierarchy on the readers/viewers. In the same vein, Love's *Proheme* and the introduction of the original text, to which Love added important passages of his own, may have served a similar function: they may have suggested Love's appropriation of his translation by presenting the author's voice in an emphatic position.

The text of the *Proheme* contains elements which occur again in the following first chapter, itself an introduction to the body of the *Meditationes*. Already in the *Proheme* Love formulates the aim and the way the work should be read and interpreted, and he presents the Order of the Heaven as a mirror which, by the use of imagination, inspires devotion, quoting St. Gregory on the same principle of correspondence between the Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy:

Wherefore it is to vnderstonde at þe bygynyng as for pryncipal & general rewle of diuerse ymaginacions þat folowen after þis boke þat þe discryuyng or speches or dedis of god in heuen & angels or opere gostly substances bene only wryten in þis manere, & to þis entent þat is to saye as devoute ymaginacions & likenessis stryng symple soules to þe loue of god & desire of heuently þinges for as Seynt Gregory seip, // þerfore is þe kyngdome of heuene likenet to erþly þinges' þat by þo þinges þat bene visible & þat man kyndly knoweþ he be stirede & rauyshede to loue & desire gostly inuisible þinges, þat he kyndly knoweþ not.²¹⁵

Later on he indicates the content of the first chapter, underlining the importance of angels, and then in the chapter he repeats the same point: "Also to honour & wishipe þe

²¹⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 10.

blessede angels of heuen for hire gude wille to man & for his sauacion hauyng continuele bysinesse, & also to loue vertues & hate synne, þat broght man to gret wrecchedness.²¹⁶

In the exposition of the Trinity in the section on the Incarnation, Love inserts a very important passage where he gives lengthy advice on how the Trinity should be imagined by the unlearned. It is notable that he warns against the same mistakes for which Wyclif attacked the image-making practice of the Church.²¹⁷ Then Love gives a general command of how the unlearned should relate to matters of faith and also to images as representations of matters of faith:

For þou shalt vnderstand þat þis blessed Incarnacion was þe hie werke of al þe holy Trinite, þouh it so be þat al only person of þe son was incarnate & became man. Bot now beware here þat þou erre not in imaginacion of god & of þe holi Trinite, supposyng þat þees þre persones þe fadere þe son & þe holi gost bene as erþly men, þat þou seest with þi bodily eye, þe which ben þre diuerse substances, ech departed fro opere, so þat none of hem is oper.þerfore take here a generale doctrine in þis mater now for algate. What tyme þou herest or þenkest of þe trynite or of þe godhede or of gostly creatours as angeles & soules þe which þou maist not se in hire propre kynde with þi bodily eye, nor fele with þi bodily witte.’ Study not to fer in þat matere occupy not þi wit þerwiþ als þou wouldest vnderstande it, by kyndly reson, ... and þerfore when þou herest any þinge in byleue þat passeþ þi kyndly reson, trowe soþfastly þat it is soþ as holy chirch techeþ & go no ferþer.²¹⁸

Several factors support the idea that the representation of the Hierarchy had as much importance as the Coronation of Mary itself. Not only the choice itself of a Coronation image with a Celestial Hierarchy, but also the fact that it was represented in an unprecedented lavishness and complexity, with a special care to clearly indicate the identity of each section of it, by adding the inscription of the names to each group of angels, by the uniquely great size and fine elaboration of a Hierarchy-image,²¹⁹ serve to lay a special emphasis on the Hierarchy. Although such a combination was customary on the Continent and appears in two

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

²¹⁷ See Chapter II.

²¹⁸ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 23. The same argumentation about the invisibility of Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist is repeated by Love in the exposition on the Eucharist in the Chapter of the Last Supper and in the Treatise on the Sacrament.

²¹⁹ No other representation of a full Celestial Hierarchy which fills the whole space of an illumination is known in late medieval English illumination tradition.

other English manuscripts,²²⁰ neither of them provides an image where the angelic and ecclesiastic orders are so elaborated. A closer look at the iconographic representation of the scene confirms this view.²²¹ By her Coronation, the Virgin becomes the Queen of Angels, but also of the whole *Ecclesia*, of the Celestial Hierarchy as well as the Ecclesiastical one. Iconographically it is interesting that the whole Trinity crowns her, and also that the position of the figures, by depicting the Trinity one step higher than the Virgin, also shows that a correct representation of the hierarchy is secured. Moreover, this is the only image in the manuscript which has several marginal illustrations. The images of the patrons depicted at the bottom of the page in a pious position show their intention to participate in the event, as beneficiaries of the intercession of *Maria Mediatrix*²²² and also as members of the universal Church. The presence of grotesque figures in the marginal decoration²²³ may stress the authoritative and at the same time festive character of the main image.²²⁴

The image of an orthodox representation of the *Ecclesia Universalis* with the Virgin as Queen as an opening page would well fit the intention of the text, clearly formulated in the first page of the manuscript by Archbishop Arundel, and in the *Proheme* by Love, that of the instruction of faith and refutation of heretics. Another case supports such a supposition. Nigel

²²⁰ The Coronation scene appears in eleven manuscripts, but only in two is it combined with the hierarchy as well. In London BL Additional MS 29704-05, fol. 152v the coronation appears with hierarchy, angels singing and the *Gnadenstuhl*-Trinity. In London BL MS Harley 7026 fol.15 the Coronation only represents the Virgin with the Trinity, but on fol. 16r the Virgin enthroned in glory with all saints and prelates are depicted. A combined illustration of the Coronation by the Trinity with the Assumption, where the Virgin is with Orders of Angels, was depicted in a wall painting in Exeter Cathedral, but this dates from later, from the late fifteenth century.

²²¹ For a detailed study of the iconography of the representations of the Coronation scenes, see Nigel Morgan, "The Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity and Other Texts and Images of the Glorification of Mary in Fifteenth-Century England," in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. D. Williams. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1987), 223-241.

²²² On the function of the Virgin in Coronation scenes as *Maria Mediatrix*, see Morgan, "The Coronation," p. 227.

²²³ The Coat of Arms image has some such: a pitcher in a dish, a crowned man or animal in gold, Fig. 1, fol. 5v; in the Bonaventura image an angel is kneeling on a grassy mound, supporting arms as in fig. 2, fol. 9, but in the Coronation scene (fig. 3. fol. 12 v) there are the following: the kneeling patrons, an angel supporting arms and a helm, and the following grotesques: a man with club and shield, riding a snail, a man/beast with a crown, an animal (hare?); a bearded man in a woman's head-dress, riding backwards on a man/pig; a hound; a man riding a goose, holding an iron trivet; a leaping hare; a man/shell blowing a horn; rabbit, hunted by a man/animal with a bow and trident; a hare chased by two hounds.

²²⁴ Michael Camille observed that such marginal figures, of a somewhat ironic or even irreverent (in the carnivalesque sense) nature are placed exactly next to images which have a serious, most often religious content, and suggests that they thus served as a counterpoint to them, thus emphasising, in a negative way, the main image. See Michael Camille, *The Image on the Edge. The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), p. 130.

Morgan notes that in the *Carmelite Missal*,²²⁵ a similar picture of the Virgin, present as the Woman in the Sun represented with the Trinity, had a role in the Lollard controversy: “There is a clear reference to the Church. This could be a topical emphasis on orthodox doctrine, for at the time of the making of the Missal members of the Carmelite community in London, notably Peter Stokes, were actively defending the Church against the heresy of the Wycliffites.”²²⁶

The image of the Hierarchy may be the symbol of the Faith of the Church, and could directly oppose the main critique of the Church by the Wycliffites, that is, the attack on the Hierarchy.²²⁷ Such an image eloquently expresses and enforces the authority of the Church guaranteed by the Celestial Hierarchy itself, refuting thus the Wycliffite denial of the authority of ecclesiastical offices, and at the same time announcing visually the grandeur of the *Ecclesia*.

In the Morgan copy the corresponding image placed at the beginning of chapter one is the **Crucifix-Trinity**²²⁸ (fig.19, folio 5v) or the *Gnadenstuhl*-type. This image is openly a sacramental representation: the Godhead is holding the Son, Christ on the Cross, thus showing the acceptance of his sacrifice in the Mass.²²⁹ There are a great many representations of this in late medieval English illuminated books, according to the cataloguing of Scott, namely 27 pictures, which is a really considerable number. Nevertheless, none of them presents a picture full of angels.²³⁰ Here the most notable and individual feature is the emphatic size of the four angels and the Celestial host of bishops, virgins and kings and queens condensed in the background inside the mandorla; thus all the elements of the Celestial Hierarchy are present as well as the Eucharistic image of the *Gnadenstuhl*. Again, the image illustrates the text of the chapter only symbolically but at the same time may serve as a visual introduction or emblem mirroring the intention of the whole work.

²²⁵ London, BL Additional MS 29704, it is a missal made for the Carmelite friars of London, between 1393-1398, but some illuminations may have been made a few years later. See Morgan, “The Coronation of the Virgin,” p. 227.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

²²⁷ See Chapter II.

²²⁸ On the iconography of the Crucifix-Trinity, see N. J. Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts, II, 1250-1285*, Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles (London, H. Miller, 1988)

²²⁹ See Gertrude Schiller, *Ikographie der christlichen Kunst*. (Gütersloch: Güterslocher Verlagshaus, 1980-1990), Vol. 2, p. 104. The priest in the Mass offers the Holy Sacrifice through the angels, in the name of the Church.

²³⁰ The majority of the illuminations are quite simple: normally they only represent the Trinity; one of them is depicted in the upper part of a double image, while the lower part contains a baptism scene, thus forming a two-sacraments group. See London, BL Additional MS 29704-05.

The **Annunciation scene** (fig. 20, folio 10r) is present only in the Morgan manuscript. It is rather conventional, as is the **Nativity** (fig. 4, folio 27v; fig. 19, folio 5v) in the Advocates manuscript, which has an angel holding the appropriate inscription: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. The insertion of three great angels in the Nativity scene in the Morgan copy is special (fig. 21, folio 19 r), as Scott has also mentioned. There are no conversing angels in the text and these ones are not even helping the Virgin, which might have been a more common type.

The concern to avoid platforms of dispute about issues of faith challenged by Wycliffism, and thus to obviate any possible misunderstanding on the part of the unlearned, or indeed any unintentional aid given to clerics of a disposition sympathetic to Wycliffism, was present on many levels of the cultural and intellectual life. In parallel with the huge exhortational and instructional material and of the texts of debates against Wycliffite ideas, the official disposition is to avoid the exposition and commentary of certain topics most exposed to Wycliffite critique, in a public sermon, as that of the Eucharist.²³¹ The same concern lies behind the massive prohibition of the publication of texts containing, even in an indirect (that is, more literary) manner, theological issues. The need for caution finds its expression in the indirectness of the message to the public. The characteristic of the illustrative programme of the two *Mirroure* manuscripts may correspond to this phenomenon.

The presence of the representation of the Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy as a reinforcement of the doctrine of the Church is a tendency present in both manuscripts. The other tendency which seems to characterise both manuscripts is the presence of indirect Eucharistic allusions. These allusions are present in scenes which normally have no such implication in the iconographic representation. Naturally, they usually are doctrinally justified: Patristic literature presents enough parallels for such identifications.

The sacramental message could have been much more direct and emphasised if compared to such manuscripts as the Carthusian Miscellany.²³² The great difference lies in the fact that the manuscript made for monastic use is much more mystical than purely meditational. A monastic public used to mystical language and imagery was more able to decode and understand such illustrations, which directly mirrored a mystical experience or a tradition formed by such experiences, than was a lay audience, where the danger of a false

²³¹ See Arundel's *Constitutions*, related in the Chapter III.

²³² See *An Illustrated Yorkshire Carthusian Religious Miscellany British Library London Additional MS.37049. Analecta Cartusiana* vol. 3. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1981.) On folio 72v the five sacraments are represented linked with a line to the heart of the crucified Christ.

interpretation was much higher. Therefore a more conventional representation was preferred, where the Eucharistic allusions were more indirect.

However, the scene of the **Presentation in the Temple** (fig.22, folio 25r) in the Morgan manuscript (it does not appear in the Advocates one) is a very interesting one, which completely differs from the traditional representations of this episode. The image contains the figures required by the Biblical text itself: the Virgin is present with the Child, St. Joseph, and the High Priest Simeon, and another female figure is also depicted. However, the identification of the figures provides surprises. The female figure would be expected to represent Anna, the prophetess, but instead of being old, she appears as a young woman, wearing the traditional blue dress, holding the Child. The Virgin is holding a basket with the doves for the offering and a candle. The idea of people on pilgrimage arriving at the altar, bringing candles and other offerings comes to mind. But another aspect is even more primary. The High Priest Simeon is represented clearly as a Catholic priest, with a halo behind a cap, dressed in the liturgical mantle of a mass, his hands being covered by his alb and preparing to hold the Infant Jesus, who is standing on the altar. His covered hands, his stature, clearly represent a priest ready for the elevation of the Eucharistic Host. The figure of Christ confirms this decoding of the image. He is standing on the altar, right on the paten,²³³ next to the chalice, which indicates the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Christ is holding the Host, a scene not found in any other MS depiction, and this makes him function as The High Priest.

The illustration follows the text quite closely, elaborating and interpreting even further. The text likens the event to a procession, hence the correspondence with the candles and the pilgrimage-illusion in the image. It is a representation of the contemporary feast of the Presentation, “Afterwarde þei 3eden in maner of procession toward þe autere, with þe childe, þe which procession is represented þis day in alle holi chirch, with li3t born to goddus wirshipe.”²³⁴ It elaborates on the Infant Christ as offering: “Bot we shol fully trowe þat it was by angeles presented vp in to þe court of heuen, & of þere of þe fadre of heuen ful gladly accepede, so þat alle þe blessed cumpanye of heuen, þereþorh was reioycede & gladed.”²³⁵

²³³ The Child Jesus in the Paten came into iconography due to the growing popularity of Eucharistic miracles relating visions of the Child in the Host. See Schiller, *Ikonomie*, vol. 1. p. 694.

²³⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 48.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

The iconography goes one step further than the text, as it identifies Christ with the Host and with the High Priest offering Himself. This image simultaneously gives reverence to the Eucharist and to the priesthood, both attacked by Wycliffism.

The **Flight into Egypt** (figs.5, folio 36v; fig. 23, folio 27r) is conventional in the Advocates manuscript; the Morgan copy adds an angel to escort the Holy Family. The scene is rather conventional in both copies.

The **Baptism of Christ** (fig.6, folio 46v) is present only in the Advocates manuscript. The two helping angels are not mentioned in the text, and they are rather uncommon in the iconography as well.²³⁶ The Father appears again with the Holy Spirit, thus transforming the image into a kind of Trinity representation, which had sacramental reference. The presence of the Trinity is also emphasised in the text: “For in þis wordi werke alle þe holi trinyte was openly shewed in a singulare manere.”²³⁷ Although not uncommon in the iconographic tradition of this scene, the depiction of the Trinity may have had the effect of reinforcing the orthodox tradition of Trinitarian representations, which, after the critique of Wyclif on this very point,²³⁸ were endowed with even more relevance. The fact that a great number of angels appear again depicted below the Father, crammed into the small space allowed, may be attributed again to the tendency, mostly in the Advocates manuscript, to represent the Celestial Hierarchy wherever possible.

The following series of images is rather unique in the illumination tradition and one of them, the Plucking of the Wheat, which is not required by the *ordinatio* according to chapter beginnings, should be considered as being deliberately chosen and consequently seen as important. These are the Temptation, the Sermon on the Mount, the Plucking of the Wheat and the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes. They all seem to have a serious potential in serving as a refutation of Wycliffite ideas or presence.

The **Temptation** scene (fig.7, folio 49v; fig. 24, folio 38r) in both manuscripts contains all three moments of temptation. The temptation of Christ by the Devil to transform the rocks into bread functions also as a negative foreshadowing of later, real transformations which Christ willingly performed, such as the transformation of five loaves into many in the Multiplication scene to quell the hunger of the multitude, and the transformation of bread in the Eucharist. In the Advocates manuscript the inscription of the second temptation is “Non

²³⁶ Angels in this scene are depicted only in London, BL Additional MS 37049, in the *Carthusian Religious Miscellany*, fol. 26r.

²³⁷ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 67.

²³⁸ See the *Lollard Image Theory* in Chapter II.

temptabis dominum Deum tuum.” The third temptation is the seduction towards power and dominion over the world, which has to be rejected. The resonance of the preoccupation of Lollards with the claim of secular power and the debates over it may have been somewhere in the mental background of the contemporaries. The iconography in both manuscripts is traditional, does not contain any new motifs.

The next image in both manuscripts is the **Sermon on the Mount**. (fig.8, folio 57v; fig. 25, folio 46r) In the Advocates copy (fig.8, folio 57v) the Apostles are listening to Christ preaching, whereas in the Morgan manuscript (fig. 25, folio 46r) a great number of people are represented. In both images Christ is positioned much higher than his listeners, thus showing his authority. In the Advocates manuscript the image of Christ as the true Teacher of Faith can be identified if one looks at the figure of an Apostle, very likely that of Judas, depicted in the front row, so that he is very visible, as he turns to another Apostle, contradicting. His gesture, his finger pointed at the Apostle, his position, on the left of the group of the Apostles, which is the traditional place of the “bad figures,” and the depiction of his face, with a marked Jewish nose and an ugly expression, undoubtedly signals that he is a bad character, sowing dissemination and false opinions. The idea that a contemporary viewer, always ready to seek the known element in an image, might identify this figure not only with Jews but also - and perhaps more - with the known Lollard dissenters does not seem too audacious.

In the Morgan copy (fig.25, folio 46r) the composition is interesting. The figure of Christ, due to the static, majestic pose, is very similar to representations of Christ in Glory; the people around him are placed in two ascending rows, with gestures and pose of reverence, not only listening. The composition strongly evokes the image of Christ in Glory with heavenly hosts and saints around him, and the authority of Christ as the Teacher of Faith is marked and stressed. The combination of these two elements may indirectly underline the legitimacy of the apostolic Church receiving its teaching of faith from Christ.

Another important characteristic of this seemingly common underlying programme is the fact that the illuminations, exactly at these critical junctures, that is, around the Eucharist, are in an interesting, double relation to the text. In the case of the first illustration of the Eucharistic group, the Plucking scene, the appearance of an illustration emphasises even more the importance of the textual passage. The text, as has been shown in Chapter III, is highlighted by the intentional textual rearrangement made by Love himself, as it had been removed from its original place in the *Meditationes* and inserted at a very distant place from

the original location, in order to play the role of the initial scene of the Eucharistic thematic block.

The effort to avoid the exposition of the most hotly attacked and debated issues is most clearly present in the case of the illustrations concerning the Eucharist. Both manuscripts contain the image of the **Plucking of the Wheat** on the Sabbath, (figs. 9, folio 66v; 26, folio 54v). The inclusion of this illustration gains even more relevance by the fact that this type of image, that is, the depiction of this subject, as far as my investigations could ascertain, has no match anywhere else: it appears only in the two *Mirror* manuscripts.²³⁹ They are very similar iconographically and compositionally.²⁴⁰ In both copies the wheat is depicted with great care and realism, and is focused by its size and the detailed representation. When wheat is depicted like this, it usually refers to a Eucharistic parallel, or functions as a Eucharistic pre-figure or figure.²⁴¹ Thus the presence of this image underlines the intentional nature of the textual re-ordering of the passage by Love himself in order to form the thematic unit of the Eucharist.²⁴² Also the reproof of the Pharisees is significant, as they may be identified with those who followed the Scriptures but could not recognise the authority of Christ over the laws. Christ appears in the text as lord over the law: “And also his presence þat was lord and auctor of þe lawe 3af hem leue.”²⁴³ In the next scene in the biblical narrative the Pharisees are scandalised by the words of Christ asserting that His body is truly food. The connection between the two scenes, besides the Eucharistic reference, are those scandalised, first over the wheat, (a Eucharistic symbol), then over the bread as an illustration to the words of Christ about His body as the Bread of Life.

The next scene of the Eucharistic group in the text and correspondingly in the manuscripts is the **Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes scene**, (fig.27, folio 57r; fig. 10, folio 69v) itself very rare.²⁴⁴ A very strange phenomenon can be detected in this case, one

²³⁹ Interestingly, Scott also mentions this scene in her very short description of the illustrations of these copies, along with mentioning the unusual presence of two other images. Although she uses these two as a proof of the dissimilarity of the manuscripts, she not only categorises the images as rare ones (in my opinion, probably unique, but she even emphasises the similarity of the two. Scott, “Illumination,” p. 65.

²⁴⁰ There is a difference between the two manuscripts in the placement of the illustration on the page, however. In the Advocates manuscript, as always, the scene is depicted as a full-page miniature, whereas in the Morgan version it occupies only a relatively small space at the bottom of the page, being the smallest illustration of the series, and being inserted into the very body of the text, perhaps indicating that the artist was aware of the uniqueness of it.

²⁴¹ The wheat or corn signifies the Eucharist in the iconography; see Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, vol. 1. 81-82.

²⁴² See Chapter III.

²⁴³ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 96.

²⁴⁴ It appears only once, in the Sherborne Missal, Alnwick Castle, Duke of Northumberland, British Library Loan MS 82. fol. 110r.

which is present in both manuscripts and requires interpretation. The Multiplication scene is conflated with the Last Supper scene, serving as a supplement to it. The ambiguity, or rather, duplicity of meaning is clear. In the Morgan copy (fig.27, folio 57r) an Apostle holds the bread in his hands covered by his mantle. Covering the hands when holding or touching a sacred object was a liturgical prescription; therefore this gesture of the Apostle together with the blessing gesture of Christ makes the parallel between this image and the Last Supper, or at least endows the scene with a Eucharistic hint. The conflation of the two scenes is even more evident in the Advocates image²⁴⁵(fig. 10, folio 69v). The Multiplication scene here is similar to a Last Supper scene to the extent that even Scott, its expert cataloguer, twice described it as the Last Supper scene, once in the description of the Morgan manuscript, referring to the Advocates scene of Multiplication and once in the subject index, where she gave the reference of the illustration of the Multiplication scene under the Last Supper heading,²⁴⁶ considering it as a combined image. The composition, a big round table with people around it, the two fishes and the chalice-like cups on the table, Christ in the foreground in a leaning position, perhaps evoking the washing of the feet, are all reminiscent of Last Supper images.

Such a conflation was necessary, as there is no other Last Supper image in either of the manuscripts. Although it was not a scene required so strongly by the tradition of *Vitae Christi* and other Biblical narratives, such as for example the Crucifixion scene, it appears about five times in other manuscripts,²⁴⁷ and therefore had a certain iconographic convention. The absence of this image in particular is made even more striking as the text contains the long exposition of the Sacrament inserted by Love expressly at this point.²⁴⁸ Such a major incongruity between the text and the image is singular in these manuscripts.

In the attempt to find an interpretation for this phenomenon, only a hypothesis can be established. However, two arguments would support the assumption that it was deliberately left out as it too directly represented the scene *par excellence* of the great Eucharistic debate between Lollardy and the official Church. First, a relation may exist between this absence and the prohibition of discussion of the matter of the Eucharist in a public sermon by the Lambeth

²⁴⁵ It may be of interest that the figure of Christ is depicted here wearing a golden vestment, the symbol of glory.

²⁴⁶ See Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, Volume II, p. 410.

²⁴⁷ In a Missal from 1398 London, BL Additional MS 29704-05 fol. 68v, in the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 161, fol. 17; in the *Hours of the Virgin* London BL Additional MS 50001, fol. 7; in the *Privy of Passion*, Cambridge, Trinity College MS B. 10. 12, f.4; and in Dublin, Trinity College 161, containing Ludolphus of Saxony's *Vita Iesu Christi*, on fol. 111v on the border.

²⁴⁸ Another fact confirms the unusual character of this absence: the Last Supper scene is missing from the illustrative cycles of all the printed copies of the *Mirroure* as well, except for one! For the printed copies, see Chapter V.

Constitutions of Arundel. The purpose of the absence in both cases may mean the intention of avoiding false understandings of this matter of high complexity and importance. The second argument is given by the general tendency of the iconography of both manuscripts to incorporate Eucharistic allusions indirectly, that is, to present clearly Eucharistic images in scenes which traditionally would not require them, and therefore these would not be expected. Therefore the attribution of the lack of the Last Supper scene from both manuscripts to the influence of Lollardy may be worthy of consideration.

In both manuscripts, in the scene of the **Agony in the Garden** (fig. 11, folio 94r; fig.28, folio 92v), the representations of the cup are special, not because the host is appearing as well, as this was present in the English iconographic tradition, though not so often as on the Continent. In the Advocates manuscript (fig. 11, folio 94r) Christ appears with the Chalice and the Host, with an angel consoling and holding a cross in front of him. It seems that the image does not really follow the Biblical narrative, or the text, which is close to the narrative - according to both, the angel should tender the cup to Christ and not the cross. In the picture, the chalice and the Host placed on it are the exact reminders of the sacramental attributes of the Mass, and, together with the cross and the angel, form an almost liturgical corner. Iconographically, such a representation might evoke the Mass as the Perfect Sacrifice, in which the unique sacrifice of the Cross is represented.²⁴⁹ Another interesting feature of this image is that it is not really a full-page miniature. It is smaller, only three-quarter page. Its unusual size may be attributed to the fact that the remaining text from the previous chapter was too short to consecrate two full pages for it.²⁵⁰ The same scene in the Morgan manuscript is different (fig.28, folio 92v). Instead of an angel, God the Father is depicted holding the orb in one hand, and making a speaking gesture with the other. Between Him and the kneeling and praying figure of Christ, the same Chalice and Host can again be seen. Here the unusually great dimensions (one third of the size of the figure of Christ) of these Eucharistic symbols is unique. They are composed as a linking device between the two Persons of the Trinity. The oversized Chalice and Host create an allusion to the sacrifice of the Mass, which was the re-enactment of the sacrifice of the cross, the presumed theme of the discussion between the two Divine Persons. Thus the Eucharistic allusion is the focus of this image again.

²⁴⁹ Theologically, the idea of the Mass as the reactualising of the Sacrifice on the Cross was already formed and widely known, thus possibly influencing the change of the iconographic tradition from depicting only the cup to an ever-growing tendency to depict it with the Host, thus gaining another meaning, that is, that of the Chalice.

²⁵⁰ This presumption seems probable as no other image has two empty folios before it, the text on the verso of the previous folio is normally longer, it occupies at least three quarters of a column. The remaining text here would only have occupied six lines of a column.

The **Crucifixion scene** in the Morgan copy (fig.29, folio 102r) is rather conventional, but in the Advocates it is unusual (fig. 12, folio 118v). It is neatly elaborated, with a great number of figures, which are well characterised, with a special care for the details. The image follows the text, depicting Mary Magdalene at the foot of the Cross, and inserting such figures as Longinus, the Centurion, and even the soldier holding the sponge, which looks like a cloth, soaked with vinegar, up to Christ. Two other elements are interesting from our point of view. A cup of a great size is very visibly standing in the near foreground of the image. It may be identified as two things: the cup containing the vinegar, as the soldier is also depicted giving drink to Christ, or the Chalice containing the Blood of Christ, a not-unusual attribute in the iconography of the Crucifixion. In my opinion the object could have both meanings. The preference of the illuminator for conflating two meanings is present also in the case of the Multiplication-Last Supper scene. The presence of the soldier justifies the interpretation of it as the container of the vinegar, but in the iconographic tradition²⁵¹ of English manuscripts the soldier always has a bucket in his hand and never on the ground, at the foot of the Cross, which is the traditional place for the Chalice with the Blood of Christ. The red colour of the liquid also justifies the opinion that the cup was also intended to mean the Chalice containing the Blood. The other special feature is the presence of the whole Trinity again. The Father is depicted as sending the Holy Spirit, which sits on the Cross, and revealing Himself to Christ at the same time. The Head of Christ on the Cross, the Holy Spirit and the Father are composed so as to be the highest part of the image and a special emphasis is given to them as the frame of the whole picture has been altered to include the Father: a half-roundel is added. This alteration of the frame is unique in the manuscript, just as this representation of the Crucifix with the Trinity in a roundel is unique in the English tradition except for one case,²⁵² which has the same composition. As both manuscripts were made around the same period, it cannot be known which served as a model for the other, but even if the Oxford image was the source, the choice of the Trinity representation is very typical of the Advocates' manuscript.

The same manuscript contains the image of **Holy Saturday** (fig. 13, folio 126v), which is very rare; it is not included in the Morgan cycle either. Its presence may be due to following the text, and although Mary Magdalen is not represented, some details about the Virgin are

²⁵¹ See London, British Library, MS Add. 16968, fol. 21r and London, Westminster Abbey, Library of Dean of Chapter MS 37, fol. 157v. In this latter case both the bucket in the soldier's hand and the Chalice, kept by an angel are present.

²⁵² Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 227, fol.113v. Here the scene is very simple iconographically. No Trinity image is added, the only similarity with the Advocates MS consists in the fact that here as well, the frame is altered by a half-round which contains the upper end of the Cross.

present: “þan þei beyng so alle hem self to gedir.’ Our lady lokyng aboute þe house & myssyng hir louede sone Jesu’ with grete sorrow of herte compleynide hir & seide, Oo Jon, where is now my dere son, þat so hie speciale affeccion hade to þe?”²⁵³ On the image the Virgin is addressing St. Peter, not John, but she speaks.

In the **Resurrection** scene in the Advocates copy (fig.14, folio 129v) Christ appears to the Virgin, a text roll aiding the identification: *Salve sancta parens*. This is a rather rare type.²⁵⁴ The illustration closely follows the text, where Christ appears first to Mary. The details about the Virgin are in perfect correspondence with the text: “And with þat, she so praying & swete teres shedyng, lo sobely oure Lorde came & aperede to hir and in alle þer whittest clopes, with a glade & louely chere gretyng hir on sidehalf in þees wordes, Salve sancta parens.”²⁵⁵ In the Morgan copy the image is conventional (fig. 30, folio 119r).

The **Ascension** scene in the Advocates (fig.15, folio 140v) is special, as Christ appears in full figure in a mandorla, with two angels. The text describes the heavenly hosts who rejoice, with details, in a whole passage named *Ascensio festum angelorum*. However, the presence of the angels in the image may be only due to the extension of the scene required by the size of the illustration, as angels appear in the traditional iconography of the scene. The Morgan copy is traditional (fig.31, folio 123v).

The scene of **Pentecost** is present in both manuscripts, and the only point of interest is in the Morgan copy, where the Virgin has a crown on her head²⁵⁶ (fig.16, folio 146v; fig. 32, folio 129r).

The last image in both manuscripts, opening the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, is the **Corpus Christi procession**. (fig.17, folio 149v; fig. 33, folio 131r) The choice of such an image is not surprising, although the Mass of St. Gregory could have been an alternative, which would have fitted the text relating Eucharistic miracles as well. In the Advocates (fig.17, folio 149v) the complete procession is represented with people following the canopy of the Blessed Sacrament marching around a church. This type of representation does not appear elsewhere. By this composition the stress is laid on the representation of the whole act of the procession, with the participation of the faithful, in an act which unites the mystical

²⁵³ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 187.

²⁵⁴ The same type appears twice, but only as part of a series of scenes, in a very small format. See Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.10.12, fol. 42r, and London, BL, MS Harley 2987, fol. 33v.

²⁵⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 194.

²⁵⁶ This is unique in the English iconographic tradition; see Cambridge Trinity College, MS B.II.II. fol. 187r, Berkeley Castle, Gloucester, fol. 23v, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 253, fol. 111v and others.

body of Christ, that is, the *Ecclesia* with His Sacred Body, the Eucharist.²⁵⁷ Thus the presence of the *Ecclesia* is in the foreground again as so often in this manuscript.

In the Morgan manuscript (fig. 33, folio 131) an interesting iconographic solution is detectable: angels carry the canopy over the Host, and they wear liturgical vestments. Here an identification of angels with the members of the clergy, mostly with those of the lesser clergy, is very easy, being helped by the way the angels are depicted, and this identification may be significant. It also serves as a parallel image, as a counterpart of the Crucifix-Trinity image at the beginning of the series of illustrations, but such a supplementing with angels of figures well-known from the actual Eucharistic processions could not be completely neutral for the contemporary viewer. Processions were of an ever-growing, even crucial, importance, and they were built upon the interplay of the sacred event and the sacred sight it offered.²⁵⁸ Although angels are often assisting the Host in the iconographic tradition, they always have a special, angelic-like position or movement: either they fly, hover above the Host or adore it kneeling, but are never represented as taking the place and function of humans.²⁵⁹ The Morgan image represents them very realistically,²⁶⁰ stressing the identification with the clergy. However, this was made even more striking by the force of its evidence and nevertheless incongruity with normality. The conflation of the heavenly and earthly appears again; the celestial hierarchy is interchangeable with the ecclesiastical one, and thus the legitimacy of the latter is again indirectly reinforced.

III. 2. Concluding differences and similarities

As the analysis of the pictorial cycles demonstrates, the two manuscripts may be described as possessing individuality. The difference between them consists in the choice of the images, in the special iconography they use in relating the same topic and in their relation to the text.

²⁵⁷ Sarah Beckwith wrote about the importance of this collation of meanings in *Christ's Body*.

²⁵⁸ Miri Rubin in *Corpus Christi*, Caroline Walker Bynum in *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Beckwith in *Christ's Body* and others wrote about the manifold importance of the visuality of these processions, the devotional, cultural and social implications of it.

²⁵⁹ See Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, vol.2. pp. 692; 636.

²⁶⁰ It is interesting that they wear shoes, although this is against the tradition when angels are in liturgical vestments; for this tradition, see Christopher Woodforde, *The Norwich School of Glass-painting in the 15th Century*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1950)

The difference in the choice of the images is clear. Both contain separate images. The Advocates contains the Coat of Arms, the Coronation instead of the Crucifix-Trinity, the Baptism, and Holy Saturday images. The choices indicate the insertion of Trinitarian images and images referring to the Celestial Hierarchy or the Church. The Morgan copy includes the Crucifix-Trinity instead of the Coronation, the Annunciation, and the Presentation images. The two latter ones are both scenes from the Life of the Virgin.

The differences in the iconography show the same characteristics in the case of both manuscripts as the choice of images. These are the same in the representation of the special topics as well as in the depiction of the same scenes, and therefore are characteristic of the way these represent the same programme. Scott argues that “largely, however, the pictorial content in the two manuscripts is divergent,”²⁶¹ and she attributes this fact to the difference in size. Nevertheless, the illuminations of the two manuscripts also differ in their focus, although both use the same elements in their underlying programme.

Scott characterises the Morgan copy by saying that it is more conventional, as it focuses more on the core subject.²⁶² In my opinion, besides the presence of several conventional scenes, the manuscript has a special characteristic which clearly differentiates it from the Advocates copy. The main focus of the Morgan is on angels, the Eucharist, and the Virgin. It is true that it is the Advocates copy that has the Coronation of the Virgin as the opening image, and it therefore attests Marian devotion. The Virgin appears also in the Resurrection scene of the Advocates, but this is understandable, as here the text itself demands the depiction of her figure. However, this manuscript lacks the representation of the important scenes of the Life of the Virgin, which are present in the Morgan copy. Thus the Marian references are more consistently present in the Morgan copy.

Angels are inserted into the Nativity, the Flight, and Corpus Christi; they represent the presence of the heavenly realm here on earth.²⁶³ Their presence may attest the Guardian Angel devotion, widespread in England by this time.²⁶⁴ The Virgin receives special attention through the insertion of the Annunciation and Presentation images and the depiction of her figure with

²⁶¹ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, p. 274. The main difference according to Scott is that the Advocates master had more space to elaborate the topics such as the Coronation, Flight, Corpus Christi and Last Supper and Bonaventura.

²⁶² cf. the Nativity, Crucifixion, Pentecost.

²⁶³ Kathleen L. Scott states that the Advocates manuscript has the same typical features: it adds figures of angels at two scenes, to the Baptism scene and to the Ascension, but they are still more in prominence in the Morgan.

²⁶⁴ On the devotion of Guardian Angels, see Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, “The Cult of Angels in Late Fifteenth-Century England: An Hours of the Guardian Angel Presented to Queen Elizabeth Woodville,” in *Women and the Book. Assessing the Visual Evidence*, ed. Jane H. M. Taylor and Lesley Smith. (London: British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1996), 230-246.

a crown in the scene of Pentecost. The Eucharist comes into the foreground by the choice of the Crucifix-Trinity, which is the image of the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass, by the fine exposition of Christ as the Host and High Priest simultaneously, by the identification of the bread with the sacrament in the Multiplication scene and by the placement of the Chalice and Host in the Agony in the Garden image.

Advocates creates an original iconographic programme by the consistent combination of the Trinity and Hierarchy. This combination is most spectacular in the scene of the Coronation of the Virgin. In the Baptism scene a combination of the two is formed, as the Trinity is present with the angelic host below the Father and two angels helping Christ. The Crucifixion becomes primarily a Trinitarian image, but the angelic host is depicted in the background behind the Father. The Corpus Christi image lays the accent on the representation of the earthly Church, together with the Holy Saturday image, where the community of the first believers is together, in waiting.

The same tendencies are more clearly visible when differences of representing the same themes are contrasted. In the Bonaventura image Hierarchy is stressed in Advocates. In the case of the Sermon on the Mount the very concrete figure of the dissenter in the Advocates forms a contrast with the reminiscence of Saints in Glory in Morgan. The Crucifixion has a strong stress on the Trinity and the sacrament in Advocates, whereas it is neutral in Morgan, which, in turn, has a definite Marian reverence in the Pentecost image, with the Virgin crowned. The Corpus Christi image focuses on the interchangeability of the angelic and clerical spheres in Morgan versus the accent laid on the representation of the earthly *Ecclesia* of Advocates.

The differences between the text-image context are mainly present in the difference of placing, apart from the basic differences of interpretation, which are mirrored by the iconographic characteristics of the two manuscripts. In the Morgan copy two images of the series of rare types are diminished in size, as they are one third of the page instead of three quarters of a page: the Temptation and the Plucking of the Wheat. The latter is even placed differently from all the other instances: it is inserted into the body of the text; consequently, it does not function like the opening images dividing the chapters. It is placed at the bottom, as if added later, and this would even have been possible, as no place had to be secured for it in advance. This phenomenon may have two reasons: either that it was actually forgotten and added later, which would indicate that it was really intended to be put in, even on the margin, or it acquired this position due to the fact that it had no precedent in the iconography and the

illuminator was not really confident about reserving a more prominent place for it. In this case too, the actual insertion of it, in spite of the insecurity of the illuminator, suggests that it was considered to be important.

In the Advocates copy the placement of the Baptism scene is divergent from the general rule as the beginning of the chapter on Baptism begins only at the top of the second column of the facing page. Nevertheless, the preceding column narrates the life of John the Baptist, and therefore the common topic of the text did not make another arrangement necessary.

As regards the correspondence between the passages of the text and the illustrations of the respective scene it seems that the illuminations of the Advocates copy follow the text more closely and in more instances than Morgan. Although both the Crucifix-Trinity image and the Coronation of the Virgin are in perfect harmony with the very important passage inserted into the text by Love about the importance and nature of Trinitarian representations, and that the Presentation scene in the Morgan manuscript nicely illustrates the text of the scene evoking liturgy, four more images can be found in the Advocates copy which follow the text almost verbatim: the Baptism, the Holy Saturday, the Resurrection and the Ascension.

In spite of the differences which account for the individual character of the manuscripts, considerable common features link them. Of minor importance is the figure of Peter, which might also have had a role to play, if one considers the anti-papal position and struggle of the Wycliffites and of Wyclif himself.²⁶⁵ A constant tendency of highlighting his figure is present in both manuscripts. He can always be identified, either by his halo with a cross or his position next to Christ or the Virgin or by the characteristic features of his face, stereotypically round and with a very visible tonsure. Even his vestment indicates his role as a member of the clergy, as sometimes the mantel he wears has the form of a liturgical mantel of a monk, or a bishop or prelate.

What is not represented by either of the manuscripts may also be relevant. Very unlike the common usage of the *Speculum* and *Vitae* tradition, there are no Passion scenes,²⁶⁶ except for the Crucifixion. This exclusion serves the focusing on the included scenes, emphasising even more the importance of the choices of the illuminator to represent such unprecedented scenes as the Plucking of the Wheat scene and the Multiplication, forming the Eucharistic

²⁶⁵ See Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*.

²⁶⁶ It is interesting that the other copy of the *Mirroure*, which was intended to be illustrated with a great number of images, contains empty space for four illustrations of the Passion, that of Longinus, Descent from the Cross, the Entombment, and maybe an image of Mary lamenting was also planned. As this manuscript (Cambridge, University Library, MS Oo. Vii. 45.) predates the two others, it seems that another iconographic tradition was beginning to develop, represented by the two studied copies, which did no longer include the Passion scenes.

cycle. The absence of illustration of the miracles of Christ, also a very recurrent theme, is justified by the faithfulness to the text of the translation, which also heavily reduced them.

Finally, an underlying common programme influenced by the challenge of Wycliffism links the two copies of the *Mirroure* text. Apart from the fact that the cycle follows the meditative tradition in representing the most traditional scenes, the divergences both in the text and the images serve the same purpose. To Love's efforts to explain a correct interpretation of the representations of the Trinity, a series of orthodox Trinity images are joined. The expositions of humility and acceptance of the doctrine of the Church are paralleled by the rare Temptation and Sermon images. The purpose of the creation of the scandal-group and that of the Eucharistic sequence by Love is reinforced by the representation of the iconographically unique scene of the Plucking of the Wheat, and that of the very rare Multiplication. Even the perplexing incongruity between the text and the illustration of the Last Supper scene attests the same sensibility over the subject, expressed differently.

The individual character of the two manuscripts notwithstanding, the presence of a common programme is attested by the several indirect allusions to the Eucharist, the missing Last Supper scene, the Trinitarian representations, so abhorred by Wycliffites, the figure of Judas as a dissenter, and finally the stressing of the legitimacy of the Church and its teaching by the Teaching Christ and most of all by the Celestial Hierarchy, represented so often (which is unique), throughout both pictorial cycles, with the climax in the Coronation scene. The presence of all these motifs demonstrates that the illuminations are in perfect congruence with the aim of the text of the *Mirroure* and do reflect, through their methods, just as the dramatic piece of the N-Town cycle, the programme of strengthening the faith of the believer in the sacraments and also of the feeling of belonging to the legitimate Church.

Chapter IV. The Question of Readership and the Reception of *The Mirroure* Manuscripts

IV. 1. Dissemination and Ownership

The texts produced in monastic houses, such as Charterhouses, among them the *Mirroure*, rapidly reached the laity.²⁶⁷ The patterns of dissemination were amply investigated by Sargent.²⁶⁸ There are three basic forms of the text, and Sargent has demonstrated that the β represents the original text, whereas α is an authorial revision, and conjectures that these revisions were made after Archbishop Arundel's inspection. Group γ represents a group of scribal origin. The manuscripts demonstrate a great degree of centralisation, and Sargent even risks the term "planning," to explain the unusual textual uniformity of the manuscripts. Sargent notes a very interesting fact that such a great extent of standardisation, reaching even the level of *mise-en-page*,

*...would argue for a relatively high degree of authorial or editorial control over the production of copies, paralleling - perhaps intentionally - the care taken for the uniformity in the production of what Anne Hudson has termed the "official" group of Lollard texts. That is, in the dissemination of both of Lollard works and Love's orthodox response to them, the concern for doctrinal accuracy resulted in a far higher level of concern for uniformity in all aspects of the reproduction of copies than was usual.*²⁶⁹

The distribution of the text was broad also geographically. Notwithstanding, a strong process of standardization can be detected here as well. Dialectal analysis attests that various dialects were present, although they conformed to the Central Midlands Standard one, mainly the Oxfordshire-Northamptonshire region. Interestingly, in surprisingly few manuscripts can northern dialectal characteristics be detected, although this would be expected from a text

²⁶⁷ One example is documented, a monk from London Charterhouse received the following letter from another monk: "And the same preeste sent dyuers copies to certeyn of his Frenedes, of whom ther was a good husband man harde of the grete vertu and grace of the forsaid prayers he vsed it daily as deoutly as he coude." In M. B. Parkes, "Punctuation in Copies of Love's Mirror," in *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, 47-61, p. 58.

²⁶⁸ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 86-96, and the detailed Editorial subchapter, pp. 96-153, see also Sargent, "What do numbers mean?" pp. 205-244.

²⁶⁹ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, p. 64.

composed in Mount Grace. The earliest manuscript, BL Additional MS 19901 can be placed in eastern Nottinghamshire or north-eastern Leistershire based on dialectal evidence, and only one γ manuscript was copied by John Morrton of York, the MS Bodley 131 in the dialect of West Riding.²⁷⁰ The majority of the manuscripts were copied elsewhere, in the Midlands area and several of them in London, as the investigations of Katleen L. Scott about the identification and date of the decorators and the decottrations of the manuscripts attests.²⁷¹ Professor Toshiyuki Takamiya MS 8 was one of the earliest β manuscripts, illuminated in London around 1410, was apparently a presentation copy. It contains an autograph note in the hand of Joan Holland, the widow of Thomas Holland, the duke of Surrey the founder of Mount Grace. Three manuscripts²⁷² were copied by Stephen Dodesham, the scribe of Sheen Charterhouse, and is known to have produced seventeen other manuscripts containing devotional texts and three of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* a well.

The pattern of production in time is as follows: seven manuscripts of the complete text were copied in the beginning of the fifteenth century, another eleven (including fragments of manuscripts originally complete), were produced before the end of the first quarter-century, twenty-seven by the end of the half-century, five in the latter half of the fifteenth century, and four at the end of the century. Two fragments of originally complete texts were copied in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, another three in the second half.²⁷³

In the majority of the manuscripts the *Mirror* stands alone, but twenty-one of the sixty-four surviving manuscripts do in fact contain extracts or complete copies of other works.²⁷⁴ The *Mirror* is copied together mainly with Walter Hilton's works, twice with Hilton's *On the Mixed Life* and with Book I of the *Scale of Perfection*, an extract from the *Prickyng of Love*, the commentary on Qui habitat" (Psalm 90), and the commentary on "Bonum est" (Psalm 91). The English recensions of William Flete's *De Remediis contra temptaciones*, saints' lives, and texts of Marian devotion follow. In two manuscripts we find Adam Cartusiensis (Adam of Dryburgh)'s *De Instructione anime*, the *Pore Caitif*, charters of Christ, and the *Revelations* of

²⁷⁰ Sargent, "What do Numbers Mean?" p. 238.

²⁷¹ Kathleen L. Scott, "The Illustration and Decoration," pp. 61-86. Moreover, two manuscripts were copied by scribes who worked on manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales* and *Confessio Amantis*, the Advocates MS and the Tokyo, Waseda University MS NE 3691 were copied by the same scribe as the Pentworth MS of the *Canterbury Tales* and Cambridge, Pembroke Colledge MS 307 of the *Confessio Amantis*, and five more MSS.

²⁷² Two α manuscripts : Glasgow, Hunterian Library MS 77 and Bodleian MS Rawlinson A. 387B and one γ manuscript Cambridge, Trinity Colledge MS B. 15. 16

²⁷³ Sargent, "What do Numbers Mean?" p. 240-241.

²⁷⁴ See Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 75-96.

Birgitta of Sweden. The *Revelations* of Elizabeth of Hungary, John Lydgate's *Kings of England*, and a some other texts appear with the *Mirror* in single manuscripts each.

The ownership of the work has been given a serious study by Carol M. Meale.²⁷⁵ She offers a detailed list of the owners of the *Mirror* who could be identified, from the monastic milieu, through the owners belonging to the nobility, here supported by Felicity Maxwell's study,²⁷⁶ up to the ownership among the urban populace, including the mercantile stratum. One example for monastic ownership is Cambridge University Library MS 6578, which was in the possession of the Carthusian house where Love himself worked. Other examples for ownership of the *Mirror* attest the popularity of the work among the aristocracy. The Tokyo, Takamiya MS 8 was owned by Joan, Countess of Kent, widow of Thomas de Holland, founder of Mount Grace in February 1397-1398 as noted earlier; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS e Museo 35 has the arms of Neville and Beaufort, which shows the ownership by Joan, Countess of Westmoreland (died in 1440); Cambridge, University Library Additional MS 6686 also has a space left for arms on the borders, which attests its aristocratic ownership; Tokyo, Waseda University Library MS NE 3691 is also considered by scholarship as having been produced for members of the nobility. (The same illuminator is responsible for the border decorations of this manuscript and those of Edinburgh National Library Advocates 18.1.7.) Glasgow, University Library, MS Gen. 1130, bears the arms of Robert, Lord Wiloughby of Eresby. From the urban, mainly London dissemination several examples could be identified. In 1498 a London merchant wrote to his brother-in-law, a cleric, about his book of parchment written with gold letters called *Speculum Vitae Christi*. Bodleian Library MS Bodley 131 from the middle of the fifteenth century seems to have some connection to the stationer John Morton. London, British Library Additional MS 30031 from the mid-fifteenth century contains evidence of secondary use by the gentry: the signatures of the Guilford family of Kent can be found on several folios. Manchester, John Rylands University Library MS Eng. 98 belonged to Robert, a member of the Willesden family of burghers, in the early sixteenth century. Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 535, bears the inscription: "elysabethe Scheffelde," most probably noting a woman of the urban classes. Mercantile ownership may be exemplified by Cambridge, Corpus Christi MS 142 which bears the *ex*

²⁷⁵ Carol M. Meale, "'oft sidis with grete deuotion I dought what I mi3t do pleyssyng god': The Early Ownership of Love's *Mirror*, with Special Reference to its Female Audience," in Oguro, Beadle and Sargent, eds., *Nicholas Love at Waseda*," 19-46. See also Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 86-96.

²⁷⁶ Felicity Maxwell, *Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Llife of Jesus Christ: Continuity and Cultural Change*, MA thesis. (Ottawa, Canada: 2008)

libris “William Bodley & Elizabeth the hys wyffe,” of a family of grocers.²⁷⁷ Consequently, it may be proven that the *Mirroure* manuscripts reached also the upper strata of urban society. Comparing the patterns of dissemination of the *Mirroure* with that of the *Canterbury Tales*, Gower and *Trevisa*, Sargent argues that “the *Mirroure* ought to be considered just as canonical for the mid fifteenth century reader, that is, that the *Confessio*, the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Mirror* would form the nucleus of an early Lancastrian ‘canon’ of English Literature. This canon was not stable, (...) Love continued to be canonical author until the eve of Reformation.”²⁷⁸

Thus, Love’s *Mirroure* was the product of a conscious programme of providing a carefully written devotional text destined to a large audience, and considering the outcome, the exceptionally great number of extant manuscripts as well as their wide dissemination this programme was successfully carried out.

IV. 2. How Books Were Used

The evidence of literacy among lay readers, including women, demonstrates that the extant vernacular texts were not only owned, but also read, mostly those containing texts of devotion.²⁷⁹ The existence of a female readership for the *Mirroure* would mean that the text reached as far as a medieval devotional work could. Meale thinks that the Marian devotion which Love also emphasises in the work could be of particular interest for women. She even provides textual evidence for the message for females in the text, quoting the care of Love himself to write for the *symple soules*, among them women. The changes of female owners of the *Mirroure* copies also shed light on what Meale calls “the corporate piety of women,”²⁸⁰ sharing and circulating devotional works among them. The manuscripts used for private devotion were circulated, and there is even evidence of the way these were used in everyday life. The account of the daily schedule of Cecily Neville testifies that devotional readings were read aloud at dinner, including the *Mirroure*.²⁸¹ Even Margery Kempe, one of the most

²⁷⁷ See Meale, “Oft sybis,” see also Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 75-96.

²⁷⁸ Sargent, “What do Numbers Mean?” p. 242.

²⁷⁹ On the evidence of the literacy of the laity and their reading practices in late medieval England, see M. B. Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts and Readers*. (London: Hambledon Press, 1991)

²⁸⁰ Meale, ““oft sybis,”” p. 34.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

important mystics in this period, who was illiterate and belonged to the lower gentry, may have had access to the text, which was probably read aloud to her.²⁸²

To trace the actual reception of the text and of the illustrations would be a very difficult task, because of lack of evidence. The same is true for the illustrations,²⁸³ although *Dives and Pauper* offers a testimony about the interest lay people had in interpreting images. Dives, a rich layman, asks Pauper, a learned mendicant, how to read images which “been ordeynyd to been a tokene and a book to þe lewyd peple, þat þey moun redyn in ymagerye and peynure that clerkys redyn in boke, as the lawe seyzt...”²⁸⁴ This text may refer to both wall paintings and manuscript illuminations.

Whereas no evidence remained about the ownership of the Morgan copy, there is some evidence for the Advocates manuscript. The Grey family, who commissioned and owned the Advocates copy, undoubtedly belonged to wealthy households. R. I. Jack writes that “Lord Edmund seems to have played no great role in politics or court circles, and he remained a country gentleman to a greater degree than most of his peers.”²⁸⁵ He still had a great number of people in his household, such as counsellors and retainers.²⁸⁶ His success in making his estates flourish and the royal benefits he obtained²⁸⁷ permitted him to direct a lively social life on his estates, inviting friends and guests.²⁸⁸ This Lancastrian nobility, partly from Kent, was presumably familiar with Wycliffite ideas still circulating in some areas.²⁸⁹ Manuscripts were

²⁸² Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. Sanford Meech and Hope Emily Allen, EETS 212 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), 18-20. For commentary, see Ralph Hanna, “Some Norfolk Women and their Books, ca. 1390-1440,” in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall Mc Cash. (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 288-315, p. 314; and Sarah Beckwith, *Christ’s Body*, p. 81.

²⁸³ However, a very interesting study by Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, “Visual Literacy and the Iconography of Social Dissent,” in *The Politics of Book Production in the Douce Piers Plowman*, ed. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Denise Despres *Medieval Cultures* vol. 15 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 42-68, relates about the social polemic implanted into the illustrations of the Douce manuscript of the *Piers Plowman*. It attests both of the practice of encoding ideological messages into manuscript illuminations, and also of the ability of the readers to decode these. The message of the *Mirroure* manuscripts is contrary to that of the Douce, which presents the image of a church and society in chaos, whereas the *Mirroure* ones have the mission of suggesting the opposite.

²⁸⁴ *Dives and Pauper*, ed. Priscilla Heath Barnum, EETS 275 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 82-83.

²⁸⁵ R. I. Jack, *The Grey of Ruthin Valor: The Valor of the English Lands of Edmund Grey, Earl of Kent, drawn up from the Ministers’ Accounts of 1467-8*. (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1965) pp. 37; 42; 45; 51. Unfortunately, I have found no evidence about Lord Grey’s possible connection to the Lollards.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²⁸⁷ He was among the royal favourites who received licences to export wool, see Jack, *The Grey of Ruthin Valor*, p. 50.

²⁸⁸ On the customs of visits and friendship, see Philippa Maddern, ““Best Trusted Friends””: Concepts and Practices of Friendship among 15th century Norfolk Gentry,” in *England in the Fifteenth Century. Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Nicholas Rogers, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 4 (Stanford: Paul Watkins 1994). 100-117.

²⁸⁹ For the presence of Lollardy in the south in this late period, see Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, and J. A. F. Thompson, *The Later Lollards*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1965)

usually attainable only for a narrower reading public, the wealthier households and their families, but the the lavishly illustrated ones were put on lecterns for everyone to see:

*Private books, in a modern sense, would have been those owned by a single person or small household, and illustrated books in these circumstances would not as a rule have been seen by more than household visitors. ... Illustrated books were undoubtedly seen on reading-stands by visitors to the household, greater or lesser, and thus not, as it were, a closed book.*²⁹⁰

Therefore, it seems very likely that the Advocates manuscript, placed itself with all likeliness on a lectern to attest the patron's richness and devotion, was seen by a larger number of people. The number of people circulating in this aristocratic family could be relatively high; therefore the influence of the images has to be considered in this light.

Still, the price of manuscript illumination remained very elevated, even if as a general tendency, more and more copies of the *Mirroure* were produced with reduced decoration, and parallel to it the buying capacity of the public grew, so that the less well-off strata could afford to acquire manuscripts.²⁹¹ However, a considerably wider public could gain access to illustrated versions of the *Mirroure* only by its appearance in print.

IV. 3. Love in Print

Love's work achieved such a great popularity that it appears in many printed editions,²⁹² its considerable afterlife attesting the lasting influence it had on its public. The influence of printed versions was, evidently, considerably stronger than that of the manuscripts, as these, due to the much reduced price and the greater number of copies were more within the reach of the lower urban populace.

The first, early period of printing the *Mirroure* lasted until 1530.²⁹³ These editions were made by Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde and Pinson. All the woodcuts appearing in the prints are

²⁹⁰ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. 1. p. 31.

²⁹¹ "It may well be that some codices, especially those which were lavish in their decoration, descended the social scale in terms of their ownership as time went on, and this phenomenon observed in relation to copies of other vernacular texts, could be one explanation for the lack of material evidence which would substantiate the claims of middle-class readers to be regarded as initiators in the process of manuscript production." Carol M. Meale, "'oft sibis,'" p. 27.

²⁹² For an analysis of the printed versions of the *Mirror*, see Lotte Hellinga, "Nicholas Love in Print," in *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, 143-162.

²⁹³ For a cataloguing of the printed versions, see *A Short Title of Books Printed in England, Scotland & Ireland, And of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*, ed. W.A. Jackson, F.J. Fergus, completed by Katherine

closely interrelated; they belong to the same two great lines of tradition. This means that the same samples were used in several printed versions; they were even borrowed. Wynkyn de Worde borrowed eight of the woodcuts Caxton used, all included in his edition of the *Speculum* of 1494, Pynson borrowed only one, depicting a cardinal (presumably Bonaventura) presenting a book to a woman.

Nevertheless, compared to the illumination tradition, they are, already by the characteristics of their genre, very different from the illustrative programme present in the manuscripts. Due to the very small size of the woodcuts, compared to the manuscript illuminations, not much room was left for the creation of an elaborate picture. The cuts were not coloured, and the illustrative list was also considerably different: one printed version contains far more illustrations than the manuscripts, the former 24 as opposed to the 17 illuminations of the Advocates MS. This fact is evidently also due to the far less expense a woodcut demanded. An interesting feature can be noticed, however, namely the lack of the Last Supper scene from all of the prints, except for two in the folio version of Wynkyn de Worde and in the Douai version, suggesting a certain continuity of the iconographic tradition of the manuscripts. Therefore the illustrations of the prints cannot really be considered as testifying to the same continuous iconographic tradition as do the manuscripts.

The influence of the work was lasting, and the Anti-Wycliffite programme implanted in it was an important factor which ensured this longevity. In 1532, in the first period of the massive spread of the Reformation, Thomas More cites Love's *Mirroure*, advising the uneducated laity that instead of spending a lot of time trying to learn how to argue against heretics, they should

... occupye them selfe besyde theyr other busynesse in prayour, good medytacyon, and redynge of suche englysshe bookes as moste may norrysshe and encrease deuocyon. Of

Pantzer. (London: 1978-86). It will be referred to as "STC". For a more detailed analysis of the woodcuts of the printed *Mirroure* versions, see Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts 1480-1535*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973). Nine early prints have been catalogued so far, two by Caxton, CX 1 STC 3259 from 1484, CX2 STC 3260 from 1489, five by Wynkyn de Worde, WW1, STC 3261, from 1494 which is chronologically followed by two editions by Pynson, the Py1 STC 3262 published in the same year 1494, and the Py2 STC 3263, from 1506 then follows WW2 STC 3263 also from 1506, WW3 STC 3264, from 1517, WW4 STC 3266 from 1525, and finally WW5 STC 3267 from 1530. The editions fall into two categories. The prints by Caxton, Wynkyn and Pynson are very similar: all contain a series of 24 woodcuts. The two editions printed in Douai and Saint Omer, from the early years of the seventeenth century, are even smaller than the others and consequently the woodcuts are even simpler.

*whyche kynde is Bonaventure of the lyfe of Cryste, Gerson of the folowyng of Cryste, and the deoute contemplatyue booke of Scala perfectionis with suche other lyke.*²⁹⁴

From this evidence we may assume that owners were readers and viewers also of the *Mirroure*, and therefore the message of the work, mostly due to the text, but also to the illuminations, reached a varied and numerous public, continuing to exert its influence until the Reformation.

IV. 4. Another Audience: The “Hard to Define” and “Lollards”

Love’s own verbal precisions as well as the history of the manuscript ownership of the *Mirroure* attests that the work was destined for and reached a wide range of orthodox believers, with the intention of strengthening their faith and serving as apologetic material for the confutation of the Wycliffites. Examining the *Mirroure* the assumption seems probable that the text was not only destined to orthodox readers, keen on learning and practising meditation as taught by monastic initiators, and eager to be fortified in their correct beliefs, but was intended also for individuals who were in the ‘no man’s land’ in between orthodoxy and heresy. Thus again we stumble upon the problems of the terminology of “orthodox”, and “Lollard,” together with that of correctly defining an audience which, in the light of the most recent research, contradicts the hitherto monolithicized conceptions of “orthodox” and “heterodox”. Hudson’s term of the “grey area” was also disqualified as it inherently solidifies the reprehended duality of “orthodox” and “Lollard,” postulating the polarization in the white and black extremes. In an the extremely insightful comment to an article of Stephen Kelly and Ryan Perry, edited on the website of the Geographies of Orthodoxy project, Fiona Somerset²⁹⁵ elaborated on lingering misinterpretations which all versions of actually existing terms applied for this category imply. She writes:

Why not just call the field of crucial indefinition ‘the grey area,’ certainly a very useful term? One reason that again there’s an issue with writership/readership, as well as

²⁹⁴ Sargent, *Mirroure*, Introduction, 95-96, quotes Thomas More, *Confutation of Tyndale’s Answer*, in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, ed. Louis A. Schuster et al., vol. 8. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 37.

²⁹⁵ See Geographies of Orthodoxy, Comment posted by Fiona Somerset, on 4 September, 2009. <http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/discuss/2009/04/24/hospitable-reading-and-clerical-reform-in-fifteenth-century-london/comment-page-1/#comment-140>, last accessed on 25 June 2013.

book production in between: these are different kinds of crucial undefinedness and we need to at least attempt to distinguish them carefully case by case. Another is that to label things grey is in some ways to perpetuate the governing heuristic value of binaries on either side (grey is black and white mixed, and there is more to it than that.) ... Oddly enough my use of 'mainstream' is very much how Duffy defines 'orthodoxy' ...and how Rob Lutton uses 'orthodoxy' in some very fine work he is doing, ... using a variety of legal records to explore the regionally and situationally variable texture of relationships between parts of local religious community, some lollard, some not, some hard to define."²⁹⁶

Inspired by her reflections, I decided on using the term "hard to define," which she clearly did not intend as a label for the afore-mentioned category of religious readers. However, I chose to promote it and use it as the term designing the same notion which Hudson labels as the 'grey area'. The cluster 'hard to define' most fittingly describes how I and recent scholarship approach this category of readers. At least, it is not yet loaded with too much ideological content which would lead to being too restrictive in either sense.

The majority of scholars of the text of the *Mirroure* have no expressed views formulated on the issue of the religious belongings of Love's intended audience, although they may consider the same standpoint, except for Kantik Ghosh, who may have indirectly implied a similar position by his investigations of the influence Lollardy exercised on the creation of the *Mirroure*.²⁹⁷ Ghosh's study focuses on the presence of common terminology of Wycliffites and Nicholas Love, as in the case of 'openness' of the text, of their similar use of 'reson', etc. and on the presence of other issues which attest to the fact that Love kept an eye on the Lollard readership. However, Ghosh mainly asserts that Love was influenced by the results of Wycliffite intellectualism and textual scholarship, as well as their attitude towards biblical hermeneutics and interpretation, and does not elaborate on the details of the orthodoxy of Love's readership. Therefore making some interpretative attempts about what this audience might have looked like and about how a contemporary author, being committed to their instruction on doctrinal issues of delicacy, might have expected them to be, can prove of some use. Recent scholarly attention focuses on the religious multiplicity or hybridity of the late-medieval readership of devotional texts and has already yielded significant results. However, there is still ample room for further research in this field. In trying to imagine a picture of the

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 147-173.

readership Love had in mind I will briefly sketch some ideas considering different aspects of this issue.

Some basic facts of the everyday reality the late-medieval English persons practicing their religion renders the assumption likely that the religious “audience” was almost always of a hybrid nature, composed of the orthodox, of the “hard to define” and even of committed Wycliffites. The practice of the Wycliffites to go to Church notwithstanding their convictions is also proven by Anne Hudson,²⁹⁸ just as the practices of celebrating the Eucharist themselves, performed even by women.²⁹⁹ Such a mixed audience was facing the preachers of Sunday sermons, as John Mirk, or the deliverers of sermons in universities, mainly in Oxford. The investigations on the spectators of drama also attest to the same mixed audience. Thus, those who had the charge and responsibility of instructing the believers had to acknowledge and accommodate to the presence of such hybridity, and there are no grounds to presume that Love was an exception.

Another element of the picture is the presence of the cases of recantations, which, as that of the physician John Barton, who even wrote a work entitled ‘Confutatio Lollardorum,’³⁰⁰ may have given rise to orthodox hopes that the case is not altogether lost even for those who fell prey to error and heresy. A great number of judicial cases are recorded when a considerable majority of suspects (even charged with repeated relapses into heresy, as the case of Nicholas Hereford) were dismissed.³⁰¹ The reason for this intriguing practice may be a stubborn and deep hope and optimism that such people would really be re-instated into the Church, as well as a sound politics that by blurring the numbers of those in and those out, the significance and measure of the spread of heresy could be lessened in the sight of the believers, thus reducing contemporary impressions about the efficacy of the enemy. The supposition seems not altogether daring that the same hope and endeavour could animate and motivate Nicholas Love in creating his work and his ecclesiastical compatriots as Archbishop Chichele, who treated with equity the most obstinate relapsarians.

The text of the *Mirroure* also provides some external evidence of Love’s endeavour to address a hybrid audience. Love’s hint to his own mystical experience in the scene of the Last Supper also reveals something of his conception of his readers. The fact that he refers to such

²⁹⁸ Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 137.

²⁹⁹ See Margaret Aston, “Lollard Women Priests?” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31 (1980): 441-461; and Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, p. 137.

³⁰⁰ See *Ibid.*, p. 132.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133.

personal experience of great spiritual height for his admittedly lay readers is an eloquent proof of the degree of sophistication he expected from them, but also had the aim of convincing his readers of the truthfulness of the doctrine of the Church about transubstantiation, by the inclusion of a more directly shared, thus closer *exemplum*, that is, a story of Eucharistic miracle. Different types of miracles were destined for different publics in the tradition of preaching about the Eucharistic doctrine: one type was definitely destined to convince the pagans, heretics or non-believers of the true nature of the Eucharist. Love used all types of these *exempla*, also those which were traditionally intended for those who did not believe in the Eucharist. He inserted these very presumably primarily with the intention of convincing eventual heretic readers, and secondarily to equip the believers with material for apologetic activity, in case they needed. Second, the way Love weaves a texture of doctrinal theology and miracle telling in one unit in the Last Supper scene and in the *Treatise* springs from a similar attempt to expose the right doctrine about the Eucharist by enhancing the religious experience of recognition, awe, in both his orthodox, hesitant, and eventually Lollard readers. The form and content of the *Treatise*, the specialised vocabulary, as well as an explicit and long formulation of the Eucharistic doctrine attest to the fact that Love was writing for readers who were at least familiar with, if not directly instructed, on issues of sophisticated Eucharistic theology using a vocabulary formed in the vernacular by the Wycliffites themselves. In this the *Treatise* also resembles other polemical writings which were intended for a direct facing with Lollards, as those of Pecock.

The extant manuscripts of the *Mirroure* present further arguments for a mixed readership.³⁰² Next to the text of the *Mirroure*, a Lollard tract on translating the Bible is included into the Pierpont Morgan MS 648, the one which contains one series of illuminations, together with excerpts of the *Revelations* of Brigitte of Sweden in Latin. The great number of miscellaneous manuscripts containing such texts of composite origin attests to the presence of a larger layer of such readership and presumably was also known to contemporary authors writing for them.

³⁰²Felicity Maxwell writes: "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." Maxwell, p. 41.

Felicity Maxwell also quotes the case of the Pierpont Library Manuscript.³⁰³ She also interprets it as proof that among the readers of the work there could have been such who were neither committed orthodox nor fully heterodox:

*The presence of a Latin extract from Birgitta of Sweden's Revelaciones alongside this tract and Love's Mirror makes it unlikely that the manuscript was owned by an outright Wyclifite, as non-Scriptural revelations were more likely to inspire Wyclifite 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.*³⁰⁴

Ian Johnson also comments upon the possible interpretations of the odd coupling of the *Mirroure* with the Lollard tract. He calls the attention to Ryan Perry's observation that the two tracts, the Brigittine and the Lollard were collated first, being bound originally ahead of the *Mirroure*, thus the Lollard text was consciously matched with mystical material. Johnson sketches two possible interpretations:

*The collocation of these texts in this codex might mean that someone of non-heterodox theological tastes could be in favour of Bible translation but could also be attracted by the albeit-circumscribed scripturalism of the Mirroure. Or could it mean that a reader with some sympathy for a heresy of the vernacular might also find spiritual fruit in meditative tradition outside scriptura sola?*³⁰⁵

Stephen Kelly and Ryan Perry's influential article on a devotional miscellany³⁰⁶ containing orthodox meditational material together with clearly Wycliffite texts and with others which, although being of orthodox origin bear the signs of later Wycliffite

³⁰³ Felicity Maxwell, *Nicholas Love's Mirror*.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

³⁰⁵ Ian Johnson, "Vernacular Theology/theological Vernacular" p. 87. Sargent also comments upon this phenomenon: "...many people, while listening to both, were willing to make up their own minds. It was not only the great and powerful among the orthodox who owned copies of the Wycliffite Bible versions, but many others—including a large number of people (or local churches or chapels whose copies were apparently formatted for para-liturgical use." Sargent, "Censorship or Cultural Change?" pp. 71-72.

³⁰⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 789.

amendments, treats the same set of questions.³⁰⁷ They argue that such cases of miscellaneous manuscripts reveal what they term as “devotional cosmopolitanism”, that is: “a radical openness to the suggestions of antithetical theologies which produces among readers a form of ‘hospitable reading’ in which difference is tolerated, re-thought, adapted and appropriated in the interests of re-imagining Christian community in England.”³⁰⁸ Although I fear that an overall application of this term would in its turn also impoverish our perception of a complex reality which withstands being labeled by one term, I find their insights inspiring. I would however question their optimism that such a radical openness was a dominating feature of the religious readers and I would rather recommend a one-by-one case study which would test with more accuracy what the actual commissioner or scribe thought. The agglomeration of such detailed individual research would yield a more faithful image of the extremely complex realities of late-medieval readership.

Although little is yet known about the books of orthodox origin favoured by Wycliffites, or how Wycliffites related to the genre of meditative literature, the example of manuscript B, (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 789) contains, among others, a section of *Meditations de Passione Domini*, another Middle English translation of the *Meditationes*. The evidence of a Lollard or sympathising hand attests that some of the reformists found interest in meditational material. However, we have at least one instance when actually a fervent Lollard had in hand a manuscript of the *Mirroure*, as Salter noticed it (and is also quoted by Felicity Maxwell).³⁰⁹ 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,..'"³¹⁰ In this case, at least, Love's expertise and eloquence have failed.

The manuscript studied by Kelly and Perry seems to support their coinage of “devotional cosmopolitanism,” in the case of the Pierpont Morgan manuscript, however, I sense a somewhat limited openness, or rather do not feel that the claim applying the same coinage would be supported by the composition of the miscellany. The Pierpont Morgan MS 648, in my view, may suggest a commissioner in the “no man’s land”, but it could also be an example of the permeability of orthodox-heterodox texts. The “hard to define” reader may

³⁰⁷ Stephen Kelly and Ryan Perry, “Devotional Cosmopolitanism in Fifteenth-Century England,” in *After Arundel*, pp. 363-380.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

³⁰⁹ Maxwell, *Nicholas Love's Mirror*, p. 42.

³¹⁰ Salter, *Nicholas Love's Myrroure*, p. 14.

have been someone who has already adopted some heterodox views consciously but it could also be a believer who was simply interested in issues which rendered all late-medieval devotees enthusiastic, independently of their orthodoxy, and who, without knowing, read texts deriving from contrasting sources: both orthodox and Lollard.

Similar examples are also known where tracts on Biblical translations occur in the orthodox environment. Anne Hudson quotes a small manuscript which contains twelve tracts about the translation of the Bible found in CUL Ii. 6. 26, ff. 41v-46. It dates from the fifteenth century, is less carefully written than the Wycliffite Bible manuscripts or the standard sermon cycle. Anne Hudson writes: "Some of the twelve tracts are either found separately elsewhere, often in different and sometimes orthodox contexts or are extant in a different guise. The text of nr.7 shares most of its material with the commentary usually known as Pater Noster II. printed by Arnold iii. 98-110."³¹¹ In the practice of composing a manuscript of different texts, related issues often called for a connection of such material, maybe written originally for other purposes, but which found themselves in a company where the grouping had a new, different principle. Such a unifying principle seems to connect the three texts in the case of the Pierpont Morgan MS, the reader, compiler or commissioner of the manuscript had an interest in the accessibility of religious knowledge and experience, as he collected a meditational work, which taught the accessibility of meditation through scriptural narratives, then a tract which propagated the accessibility of the Scriptures by the theories of translation and finally another one which enabled the accessibility of mystical experience. The tract may have found its place next to the *Mirroure* as its source was probably not known. The arguments about biblical translation are promulgated in such a way that they do not clearly betray their Lollard origin, thus the text may have not been considered as dangerous.

The treatise as entitled in the first edition, *A compendious olde treatyse shewynge howe that we ought to haue ye Scripture in Englysshe*,³¹² is anonymous. It was most presumably composed post 1400 and ante 1414, most probably not after 1407, as Bühler argues that there is no mentioning of Arundel's Constitutions in it, although it could be expected. The dating is effectuated due to a report on Arundel: "þe bishop of Caunturbiri, Thomas Arundel þat nowe is"³¹³ Some critics see similarities between its ideas and those of John Trevisa in his "Dialogue between a Lord and a Clerk upon Translation," the preface to the

³¹¹ Hudson, ed., *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 189-90.

³¹² C. F. Bühler, "A Lollard Tract," *Medium Ævum* 7 (1938), 167-83.

³¹³ Bühler, "A Lollard Tract," p. 80.

Polychronicon.³¹⁴ The tract is known rather as paralleling the Prologues³¹⁵ to the Wycliffite Bibles.³¹⁶ Hudson detected the similarity between the arguments of the tract with those present in the Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible.³¹⁷ However, the matter was more complicated, as the same arguments in favour of biblical translations could be used by both parties: orthodox and heterodox. Hudson writes about some texts of Richard Ullerston, an orthodox author, to be found in in the Latin MS Vienna 4133: "It is clear that arguments devised by orthodox writers at a time when biblical translation was not yet a decided issue could continue to be used by Lollards later."³¹⁸ Thus, although recent scholarship considers the tract as being evidently of Lollard origin, it was not necessarily immediately identified by contemporaries as such.

The author of the Lollard tract cites, just as the Prologues to the Wycliffite Bible, Jerome, using the argument that understanding the Scriptures will strengthen faith, and also cites precedent for Scripture in English, including Bede the Venerable, King Alfred, and Richard Rolle. What is more, he brings several examples of biblical translations which are not known to scholarship: "Also a man in London, his name was Wyring, hadde a Bible in Englishe of norþern speche, whiche was seen of many men and it semep̄ too houndred 3eer olde."³¹⁹ Later Thomas More writes about having seen several Bibles in English translation in

³¹⁴ *Anticlerical Poems and Documents: Introduction* Ed. James M. Dean. *Medieval English Political Writings*. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1996, Notes to the Preface.

³¹⁵ ³¹⁵ *The Prologue*, printed from Forshall and Madden's edition of the later version and which dates from 1395-96. Laurence Muir has written of the General Prologue: "The connection of the Wycliffite versions with the Lollard movement is little apparent in the Biblical text, but rather in the General Prologue, appearing in some of the manuscripts. This Prologue constitutes an introduction to the books of the Old Testament, and it includes statements of the Lollard views about the translating and reading of Scripture. In addition it includes an enlightened set of principles for translating, principles it exemplified and justified by the revisions themselves." Laurence Muir, "IV. Translations and Paraphrases of the Bible, and Commentaries." in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*. Vol. 2. Gen. ed. J. Burke Severs. (New Haven: The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1970), 381-409, pp. 534-52. See especially "Wycliffite Versions," pp. 402-03; 547-50.

³¹⁶ Josiah Forshall and Frederic Madden, eds. *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*. 4 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1850). (Reprint in New York: AMS Press, 1982). The translators of the Wycliffite Bible are anonymous, however, criticism conveys that Wycliff's Oxford disciples and colleagues may have had a part in translating it, as Nicholas Hereford, William Middleworth, John Purvey, and perhaps even John Trevisa. It exists in an earlier and a later version. The first version was completed about 1390; the later, more idiomatic version was completed about 1395.

³¹⁷ Edited partly in Hudson, ed., *Selections*, The CUL Mm2, 15, ff. 289-290v. has been used for the base text, collated with eight other surviving manuscripts.

³¹⁸ Hudson, ed., *Selections*, p. 190.

³¹⁹ Bühler, "A Lollard Tract," p. 174.

an undoubtedly orthodox environment, assuming that these were catholic translations.³²⁰ Thus, the concept of an English Bible was not automatically linked to heresy.

Another example brought by the author may have misled even more easily the contemporary reader about the orthodoxy of the text. It tells the story of a Flemish translator of the Bible, whose work was submitted to the pope for examination, and was approved, thus silencing the enemies of translation:

*It was herde of a worþi man almaine þat summe tyme a Flemynge, his name was James Merland, translatid al þe Bible in-to Flemyche, for wiche deed he was somoned be-fore þe Pope of grete enmyte & þe boke was taken to examynacion & truly aproued; it was deliuered to hym agene in conf(u)cioun to his enmyes.*³²¹

This example seems to betray an effort to legitimate the practice of translation going so far as appealing to the authority of the papal see, an instance which, by Lollard standards, was by no means capable of such legitimating, it would rather act in contrary. The pope, being considered as the Antichrist by Wyclif himself, was expected to be rather the corruptor than the legitimator of a biblical text.

Therefore the tract may also have been read as an orthodox or quasi-orthodox writing about transposing spiritual, clerical knowledge into the vernacular to be accessible by the ‘symple folkes’, as was Love’s *Mirroure* considered. The boundaries between the Holy Scriptures and additional, interpretative or devotional material deriving from the same clerical, academic milieu as a source of authentication were not regarded as clear-cut. Moreover, Wycliffite Bibles themselves were also in surprisingly great numbers in orthodox possession of unquestionable fidelity to the Church.³²² Interesting, even intriguing cases are known which unsettle our logic of how contemporary censure and identification of text as regards their orthodoxy might have functioned in practice. Dove quotes the example of one Wycliffite Bible, the John Rylands Library Eng. 77, being legitimized for orthodox possession by two main inquisitors, Eborall and Ive, the former being active in sending Pecock for examination and recantation.³²³ They even owed heterodox material, Ive possessed Wyclif’s

³²⁰Mary Dove, *The First English Bible. The Text and Context of the Wycliffite Versions*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) pp. 38-41.

³²¹Bühler, “A Lollard Tract,” pp. 173-174.

³²²See Dove, *The First English Bible*, pp. 53-54.

³²³Ibid., pp. 47-50.

De Mandatis Divinis, and Eborall owned a part of the New Testament in English and *The Pore Caitiff*, a text with included Lollard material.³²⁴

Dove in her book specifies³²⁵ that the translators of the Wycliffite Bibles themselves were not confessing the claim of the *sola scriptura* to the extent of throwing all other authority out: the extensive quotes of Jerome, Augustine and others testify that they accepted the mediation of theologians dealing with scriptural exegesis, which Ghosh terms as Tradition I.³²⁶ Thus even the *Preface* to the Wycliffite Bible could pass the scrutiny of fierce and trained ecclesiastical examiners, explains Dove.³²⁷ It is conceivable, then, that the *Tract* on translation could have been interpreted as innocent as well.

Lastly, the Lollard tract on the necessity of the translation of the Bible in the miscellaneous Pierpont Morgan manuscript of the *Mirroure* contains a passage of special interest, due to the irony it entails by oncoming events: Arundel himself is quoted to illustrate the importance of reading the Scriptures in the mother tongue. He is reported to have praised Queen Anne during her burial to have owned and read the Bible in English.³²⁸

*Also þe bischope of Caunturbiri, Thomas Arundel þat nowe is, seide a sermon in Westminster þer as weren many hundred puple at þe biring of queen anne, of wos soule God haue mercy, & in his comendynges of hir, he side: it was more joie of hir þan of any woman þat euere he knewe ffor, not-wipstanding þat she was an alien borne, sche hadde on Englishe al þa foure Gospeleris wip þe doctoris vpon hem. And he seide sche hadde sent hem vn-to him, and he seide þei weren goode and trewe and commended hir in þat sche was so grete a lady & also an alien, & wolde so lowliche studiee in so virtuous bokis.*³²⁹

Arundel is cited as a figure of authority who validates the reading of the Scripture in English. However, perhaps even in the course of that very year the same Arundel had issued his Constitutions, stating that:

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 50, quotes Ralph Hanna, "English Biblical Texts before Lollardy and their Fate," in Fiona Somerset et al, eds., *Lollards and their Influence in Late Medieval England*. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 141-53, p. 150.

³²⁵ Dove, *The First English Bible*, pp. 31-36

³²⁶ Ghosh even speaks of Wyclif himself being trapped by his endeavor to keep the *sola scriptura* and the evident need of elucidating the passages uncoverable by the application of a literal reading. Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 22-66.

³²⁷ Dove, *The First English Bible*, pp. 47-50.

³²⁸ This was referred to by Dove as well and it is known that the Queen, herself of Czech origin, indeed possessed Bibles in Czech, German and Latin. See Dove, *The First English Bible*, p. 69.

³²⁹ Bühler, "A Lollard Tract," p. 178.

*No man, hereafter, by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English or any other tongue, by way of a book, libel, or treatise; and that no man read any such book, libel, or treatise, now lately set forth in the time of John Wickliff, or since, or hereafter to be set forth, in part or in whole, privily or apertly [openly], upon pain of greater excommunication, until the said translation be allowed by the ordinary of the place, or, if the case so require, by the council provincial. He that shall do contrary to this, shall likewise be punished as a favourer of error and heresy.*³³⁰

Even more intriguing is that the scribe who copied the Lollard tract wrote an “Amen” below Arundel’s memorandum, attached to the text of the *Mirroure*, thus endorsing Arundel’s aim of “hereticorum sive lollardorum confutacionem.”³³¹

However, Bibles and other texts continued to be translated, copied, circulated, owned and read, with a surprising vehemence, so that recent scholarship tends to use the notion of abortive Constitutions³³² to denote Arundel’s restrictions. One proof of the failure of the Archbishop’s decrees is the Pierpont Morgan manuscript itself, where Love’s *Mirroure* is copied, scrupulously provided with Arundel’s approbation, right next to the Lollard tract, intended to strengthen the *Mirroure*’s message about rendering theological, scriptural material accessible for laity in the vernacular. Love’s audience proves to be not only in the intention of the work, but in reality a mixed one, composed of the orthodox, the “hard to define” and of Lollards. It is definitely such an audience which Love had rightly deemed as needing instruction about what belonged to the doctrine of the legitimate Church and what not, to create order in an impenetrable labyrinth of ideas stuffed into contemporary heads. The multiplicity of thoughts, ideas and views was growing unstoppably, Love made an attempt of canalizing according to his conceptual plans.

³³⁰ Arundel’s *Constitutions* are printed in English translation in *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed. Stephen Reed Cattley, vol. 3 (London: Seeley, 1837), 242-48. p. 245. The Latin text can be found in *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, 3:314-19.

³³¹ Ian Johnson, “Vernacular theology/Theological Vernacular”, pp. 86-87.

³³² See several articles, reaching to almost an unanimous concensus, in the volume *After Arundel*.

Chapter V. The *Mirroure*: Some Directions Towards Contemplation

V. 1. The Context of Meditation versus Contemplation

It is a well-known and obvious fact that Nicholas Love translated the *Meditationes* as a means to provide his readers with material for private meditational devotion. However, scholarly attention is varying, sliding from the scrutiny of this aspect to that of the Anti-Wycliffite campaign undertaken by Love,³³³ and back again to the study of its functioning as a manual for meditation. This challenging flow of opinions, which has been continuing until most recently brings to the foreground issues which tackle essential questions about the genesis, intentions and interpretations of the *Mirroure*, and more broadly, of similar late medieval devotional texts.

The idea that the *Mirroure* was intended for meditation has been forwarded with new vehemence and insights by Michelle Karnes, first in an article, then in a brilliant book about the philosophical foundations of the medieval concept of imagination.³³⁴ Her main thesis is that Love, by translating the *Meditationes*, created a new, much more restrictive work in that it consciously distances his readers from any advancement from meditation towards the practicing of high contemplation, unlike its Latin original. My interpretation is a somewhat modified one. Although it seems true that these texts, also that of Love do differentiate between the 'professional' contemplatives who are favoured with access to high contemplation and between the laity who are mainly offered the lower meditation, I find some fine tuning would be necessary. Although Love himself formulates his endeavour of restriction several times in his text, one should not take his pronouncements always at face value. His text, in my interpretation, yields a more complex picture both of his endeavours and of its outcome, which will be the subject of the present chapter.

This issue, although somewhat indirectly, is related to and cannot be detached from the fact that the *Mirroure* was written in the context of Wycliffism, although it embraces more

³³³Exemplified mainly by Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction; and Kantik Ghosh in *The Wycliffite Heresy*.

³³⁴Michelle Karnes, "Nicholas Love," and Michelle Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition*.

directly such problematics as the intended audience and the intention of the text itself. In examining questions such as the *Mirroure* functioning or not-or if yes, to what extent, as a substitute to the Wycliffite Bible, an idea mostly promoted by Anne Hudson and Kantik Ghosh,³³⁵ and countered by Karnes,³³⁶ more facets of the issue come to the focus of attention. An investigation of these ramifications promises further light on how the questions of the extent of empowering lay readers for meditation versus contemplation are intrinsically related to the context of Wycliffism, and to the text of the *Mirroure* being shaped in this context.

Another recent approach of Christopher Bradley provides a new angle in considering Love's text as having been written with the primary aim of helping the readers "to an encounter with religious feeling via gospel narratives and meditations."³³⁷ Although he also acknowledges the complex historical, political and social background of the genesis of the text, he emphasises that "Underneath political, ecclesiastical, institutional, and doctrinal pressures is the beating heart of pastoral theology and personal spiritual instruction."³³⁸

The conception of Love's text as characterized mainly by the presence of all these, that is, pastoral theology, spiritual instruction but mainly the endeavour to enhance religious experience seems to me quite efficacious in interpreting the *Mirroure*, mainly the questions drafted above. It helps a broader reading of such intriguing passages as well as Love's doctrinal expositions, mainly on the sacrament of the Eucharist, where the fusion of these two aspects is realised by Love, that is, doctrine is supported and retold in the form of religious experiences, more or less distant, as miracles narrated and as mystical experiences shared.

Bradley's other statement, that it is meaningful to consider Love's work as being embedded in an ongoing tradition of meditational works is another pivot on which this

³³⁵ "Implicitly the entire text of the *Myrroure* stands in opposition to Wycliffite attitudes and doctrines (...) because the method of this particular treatise is contrary to Lollard insistence upon the difference between scripture, on the one hand, and other teaching however pious, on the other." Anne Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, p. 439. See also Kantik Ghosh, "Nicholas Love," in *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards. (Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2004), 53-66, p. 56.

³³⁶ Karnes, *Imagination, meditation and Cognition*.

³³⁷ Christopher Bradley, "Censorship and Cultural Continuity." *In After Arundel*, 115-132, p. 130. He explains further the difference of the theoreticizing view and that counting with the weight of spiritual experience in these texts: "This proposed focus explains my insistent use of the term 'devotional' to describe 'vernacular theological' texts. (...) Doctrines matter, but that they actually affect an individual's religious experience is the *sine qua non* of devotion. A vernacular theology emphasis may fail to capture this crucial aspect of these texts (although it brings others to the fore.)" *Ibid.*, p. 130.

³³⁸ Bradley, "Censorship and Cultural Continuity," p. 129. He also states: "Love himself provides compelling explanations of his goals and composition process, explanations that focus on responsive, pastoral motivations more than cynical, politically driven repression." *Ibid.*, p. 121.

chapter will be built. The contextualising of the *Mirroure* with the help of other contemporary works of contemplation yields an important device to reveal the extent of Love's originality and also his place on the traditionalist-modernist scale as regards questions of allowing lay access to spiritual knowledge and experience. Bradley even reformulates the weight of authority Love resorted to in fighting Wycliffism. Thus the critic challenges a hitherto monolithic scholarly consensus, as he formulates:

*This continuity emerges directly from the theory of tradition evident in many devotional works, including the Mirror, a conception founded less on authority—'this can be trusted'--- than on experience ----- 'this has worked and will work for you'- (For similar reasons, the fruits rather than the roots of Wycliffism are often as not the central objects of orthodox criticism of the heresy --- it led, so defenders of orthodoxy said, to arrogance and decadence.)*³³⁹

The other aspect of Love's multiple-layered text, its reaction to Lollardy cannot be detached from the interpretation of his work written for meditation. Love's endeavours to help his readers attain religious experience could reach a second goal as well: they could function also as a substitute to the attractive promise of Wycliffites to secure spiritual independence in reaching religious experience through a direct reading of the Scripture, guaranteed by the direct action of the Holy Spirit.³⁴⁰ Love's allowance of his lay readers to diverse phases of meditation gains relevance also from this perspective. Love has been accused by Karnes of alienating his readers from a direct access to the Scriptures, by providing his pre-ruminated *Meditations* instead. However, by offering the *Mirroure* as a manual initiating into the techniques of imaginative meditation Love filled another need of his orthodox readers, to procure space and possibility for an individual quest for religious experience and knowledge, where a direct communication will be established with the divine. (The *Mirroure* thus offered a new type of exegesis, which was built on a same divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which Wyclif claimed and promised to his followers.) By meditating upon scenes and letting imagination enter and transform a scriptural text, even if it is an already mediated and somewhat modified one, the goal is the same: offering the possibility to divine Grace to create

³³⁹ Bradley, "Censorship and Cultural Continuity," p. 129. Thus Bradley supposes that the Anti-Wycliffite campaign used more experience than theoretical considerations, and that the main criticism was provoked mainly not by the early phase but the later developments of the Lollard movement, an idea which finds some support even in the *Mirroure* itself, mainly in the expositions on the sacrament of the Eucharist, see later in this chapter.

³⁴⁰ See *Preface* to the Wycliffite Bible.

affective devotion and spiritual knowledge. Another question which arises here is that of restrictions. Love's prohibitions are also relevant from the same point of view, that is, for their relatedness to Wycliffism.

Bradley finally raises another important methodological question about the rectitude of our interpretation of medieval spiritual texts without seriously taking into consideration their religious nature and content. Phenomena such as religious experience are outside the scope of our modern scholarly methodology. Although he admits such initiatives by Caroline Walker Bynum, Louise Fradenburg, Carolyn Dinshaw, Barbara Newman and David Aers, he states that many open questions remain:

*The responsiveness of the Mirror and of similar texts to the actual needs and position of its readers deserves special attention because a dominant characteristic of late medieval English devotion is a Church struggling to make room for precisely the same categories of affective response, of 'religious experience', for which our modern histories have not found yet a place.*³⁴¹

The question is then basically about how to approach religious experience written in medieval texts, mainly in the *Mirroure*. This methodological problem echoes the one I sense in Karnes's approach to the *Mirroure* and its related devotional texts: the somewhat anachronistic scholarly claims for lay empowering in connection with contemplation-mysticism. My analysis of the contemporary medieval conceptions of accessing spiritual knowledge via contemplation will attempt to temper such anachronisms by offering a more moderate tone in approaching texts generated in *mentalités* pervaded by the hierarchic mode of thinking which postulated the transcendental, divine determination, so radically different from modern conceptions about the world.

This chapter will first investigate some models of meditation-contemplation to form an image on the living tradition Love formed part of. The old model will be exemplified by the *Tract on Contemplation* of the *Meditationes*, the new ones by Richard Rolle, mainly with his *Incendium Amoris*, then *The Cloud*, finally Walter Hilton, with the *Scale of Perfection* and the *Mixed Life*, all standing in relation, more or less directly, with the *Mirroure*. The scrutiny will focus on similarities and differences with Love's conception about meditation-contemplation, mainly in the issues of the active and contemplative status; of grace, that is the calling, then of attaining high contemplation; and of lay empowering.

³⁴¹ Bradley, "Censorship and Cultural Continuity," p. 130.

Then we will proceed with the response given to Karnes's views on Love's restrictions. The discussion of how Love conceived and presented meditation-contemplation to his readers will be based on a detailed presentation of the main constitutive elements of the main body of the text of the *Mirroure*. Finally, the argumentation will be rounded up and closed by a close reading of the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, which served as Love's main mouthpiece on his tenets and textual endeavours.

The history of the development of different models of meditation-contemplation in the Latin Church describes their transformations from the monastic ruminative model into the late-medieval ones where the techniques of meditation and contemplation will be separated. It is a long and rich tradition beginning with the classical monastic Bernardian models, quoted with predilection by Love, through Richard of Saint Victor,³⁴² who influenced Bonaventura, the *Cloud* author, Walter Hilton and others.³⁴³

In spite of the differences resulting from a long evolving tradition of defining and specializing the two terms, the basic definition of meditation and contemplation remained unchanged. Briefly, meditation is the process through which the reader tries to understand more profoundly the scriptural text he reads as he, with the help of imagination, attempts to reconstruct in details the biblical passage. This intellectual and imaginative work is joined to, and results in an emotional participation in the scenes meditated upon, which, in turn, creates the intensification of affective piety, the growth of love towards God. Contemplation is a next step which, by the working of the free divine grace, transposes the reader into a new state of spiritual understanding of divine realities, where cognition functions in a modified way. The reader is surprised by a new perception of transcendental truth, in which the senses and the intellect grasp the reality in an unusual way, being "raptured" to a new union with God. This contemplative state is always described as one of intense joy, awe and unutterable happiness.

Richard of Saint Victor's main works that is the *Benjamin Minor*, or *The Twelve Patriarchs*, and *Benjamin Major*, or *De gratia contemplationis*, also known as *The Mystical Arc*, constitute an influential tradition of theorizing meditation-contemplation. He defined briefly meditation as opposed to contemplation, as "the eager exertion of the mind which

³⁴² On Richard of Saint Victor, see e.g. Steven Chase, *Contemplation and Compassion. The Victorine Tradition*. (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 2003)

³⁴³ The Latin texts of most of Richard's works are found in *Richardus a Sancto Victore Opera Omnia*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne. Patrologia Latina 196. (Paris: 1855) (The Latin text is quoted from Aris). Translation of main works into English: Richard of St. Victor, *The Twelve Patriarchs. The Mystical Arc. Book Three of the Trinity*. Translated and introduced by G. A. Zinn. (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1979)

affectionately tries to investigate something,³⁴⁴, drawing a far-reaching perspective: “Look, through which stages of advancement the human mind is elevated. Through perfect meditation it is raised into contemplation, through contemplation into admiration/astonishment, through admiration/astonishment into the alienation of the mind.”³⁴⁵

Richard of Saint Victor’s elaborated theory, in which he systematically described the various stages of acceding to spiritual knowledge and contemplative experience with an acute psychological sense, was deeply determining the following developments. Guigo II, however, transformed the Ricardian model by including prayer in the traditional stages on the way to contemplation, defining it as the decisive step from where one could accede to the summit. In his *Scala Claustralium*³⁴⁶ he writes: “God does not wait until it (the soul) has finished speaking, but interrupts the flow of its prayer in mid-course and hastens to present himself and come to meet the yearning soul, bathed with the dew of heavenly sweetness.”³⁴⁷ A long tradition thus existed, one which operated with such key-terms that Love uses, especially when describing the contemplative encounter in his exposition about the Eucharist.

Karl Baier, in an online article entitled “Meditation and Contemplation in High to Late Medieval Europe”³⁴⁸ summing up a brief history of the contemplative tradition relates how the next phase occurred when the link between the reading of the Bible and meditation lost its importance: “One of the reasons for the relative downfall of the old tradition of reading as the essential discipline of the spiritual life was the combination of more rigorous canons of

³⁴⁴ Benjamin maior I, 4: “Meditatio vero est studiosa mentis intentio circa aliquid investigandum diligenter insistens [...] Marc Aeilco Aris, *Contemplatio. Philosophische Studien zum Traktat Benjamin Maior des Richard von St. Viktor. Mit einer verbesserten Edition des Textes.* (Frankfurt/Main: Josef Knecht 1996), 9, pp. 28-30.

³⁴⁵ Benjamin maior V, 12: (Ecce quibus promotionum gradibus sublevatur animus humanus. Meditatione profecto assurgitur in contemplationem, contemplatione in admirationem, admiratione in mentis alienationem.” Aris, 137, 19-21

³⁴⁶ For a critical edition of the text see Guigo II, *Epistola de vita contemplativa (Scala claustralium)*, in E. Colledge and J. Walsh, eds. *Guigues II le Chartreux: Lettre sur la vie contemplative (L'Échelle des moines). Douze méditations, Introduction et texte critique, Traduction française par un chartreux.* Maurice Laporte, Sources Chrétiennes 163. (Paris: 1970), 82-123. For the translation of Guigo’s text see Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, *The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations* (New York: Doubleday-Image, 1978), and Simon Tugwell, *Ways of Imperfection. An Exploration of Christian Spirituality.* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984). See also Dariuz Dolatowski, Die Methode des inneren Gebetes im Werk “Scala Claustralium sive tractatus de modo orandi“ des Guigo II. des Karthäusers,” in J. Hogg, ed., *The Mystical Tradition and the Carthusians*, vol. 2 *Analecta Cartusiana* 55/2 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1995), 144-167.

³⁴⁷ Guigo II.: Dominus autem [...] non expectat donec sermonem finierit, sed medium orationis cursum interrumpens, festinus se ingerit et animae desideranti festinus occurrit coelestis rore dulcedinis perfusus.” Aris, 96, 159-164. The English translation is from Simon Tugwell, *Ways of Imperfection*, p. 96.

³⁴⁸ Karl Baier, “Meditation and Contemplation in High to Late Medieval Europe,” in Eli Franco and Dagmar Eigner, eds. *Yogic perception, meditation and altered states of consciousness.* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 325-349.

exegesis with a more frankly speculative notion of *meditatio*.³⁴⁹ He continues: “Also the rise of imaginative techniques (...) had the effect that the Bible was often replaced by manuals for meditation like the *Vita Christi* which transformed the biblical narratives into a sequence of scenes more suitable for visualization and surrounded by commentaries which were easier to digest than the original text.”³⁵⁰

Thus, it was not Love’s own invention to deny his lay readers the access to the Bible itself, by forcing the meditations as intermediary means on them, but he stood within a long-standing tradition. Baier continues by explaining how meditation and contemplation, which formerly meant one unity of spiritual exercise, became more and more autonomous, described in separate manuals which taught the ‘techniques’ of two differentiated spiritual practices. He writes:

*As already mentioned, the tie between meditation and contemplation was loosened. The new meditation techniques tended to become self-sufficient rituals without any space for contemplative prayer. In Ludolf’s Vita Christi the basic unit of practice consists of three parts: lectio, meditatio (sometimes completed by conformatio) and oratio in the form of a concluding prayer. He has no distinct concept of contemplation and uses considerare, contemplari, meditari and attendere as equivalent expressions.*³⁵¹

Thus, it was a living and in Love’s time, recent, tradition which excluded the techniques of contemplation from books written about meditation; again not Love’s purposeful invention- a tendency which helps nuancing our interpretations of Love’s *Mirroure* in this respect.

A new phase of development is exemplified in late medieval England mainly by the works of the Cloud-author and Hilton. In an attempt to draw a more refined, complex picture of how Love relates to the meditation-contemplation duality, complementing that of Karnes, it is helpful to see Love’s work in the broader context of contemporary mysticism. This would help to situate Love’s work in the hierarchy of exclusivity or democratization as regards the inclusion of laity into the high clerical culture of late-medieval spirituality.

An important element, which, without being exposed to persistent scrutiny, may lead to misinterpretations, is that of the correct categorization and definition of the notions of the various stages of the active and contemplative life. In different systems these acquire quite

³⁴⁹ Baier quotes Tugwell, *Ways of Imperfection*, p. 107.

³⁵⁰ Baier, “Meditation and Contemplation,” p. 335.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 342.

different contents, and the semantic change occurs without the change of terminology, thus creating ambiguity and ample room for misreading. A main tendency seems to be detectable, however. In the earlier works on contemplation, which were almost exclusively created for monastics, the categories of the active life in great part meant the works of mercy, of charity carried out *inside* the monastery, thus signalling the earlier phase, mainly that of novices, of the monastic 'career'. In later works, those written in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, these categories of the *vita activa* sporadically began to refer to actual seculars, leading a life in the world, *outside* the monastic walls. The different models constructed by manuals on meditation and contemplation structured on these variations of categories create a complex tradition *in* which and *against* which Love's *Mirroure* stands. The evaluation of these *ins* and *agains* yields a more complex view on his originality.

The second element to be discussed is the multivalent concept of grace. The semantic richness of this notion betrays its crucial role in the conception of the spiritual process of accedeing to transcendental knowledge and realities. Grace is a manifold concept in spirituality, with a vast and well developed theorizing in scholastic theology. In manuals for contemplation some of its aspects gained emphasis, but these carry a heavy weight. Three of these aspects are relevant for the investigation of the present essay, namely the "grace of calling", that is, of the free divine choice of the person to a definite lifestyle (in this case, to contemplation). Second, the "grace of devotion" which enables the lower stages of piety. Third, the "grace of gaze," the grace bestowed to elevate the chosen person to the act of contemplation itself, and the graces given in the course of it. These aspects of grace contain several subcategories each, and their various representatives with various meanings are thus determining factors: from defining who can, by a divine call of free grace, even begin to aspire to undertake such spiritual exercises up to the birth of the actual contemplative experiences.

Another set of categories which have relevance in positioning the work of Love is that of the notions describing these actual contemplative and mystical encounters. The similarities and differences in the specific terminology shed a clear light on the variations, but also on an ultimate unity of the concepts about these experiences.

Out of the nature of contemplation arises the question of knowledge. Being again a notion of extreme complexity, the present enquiries will focus only on its relation to heresy. This aspect is amply formulated both in the *Cloud*, in Hilton's works, and in that of Love,

offering interesting insights into how the concern of defending orthodoxy reshaped theories of spiritual cognition.

V. 1. 1. Richard Rolle

Rolle³⁵² was among the first in England to propagate a new model of contemplation which could be practiced outside the monastic walls. His writings enjoyed great popularity, mainly in the fifteenth century, and his oeuvre, especially his *Incendium Amoris*,³⁵³ *Melos Amoris*³⁵⁴ and *Ego Dormio*³⁵⁵ among others, deserves to be taken into consideration as they contain contemplative material, and also due to his strong influence on Carthusians, who were the first to copy and disseminate his writings.

Rolle's oeuvre is considerable also as regards its quantity. He wrote the majority of his works in Latin, and only one quarter of texts was composed in the vernacular. He wrote in a surprisingly great variety of genres: instructional, pastoral material, books of ascetic guidance, commentaries of the Psalter and other biblical books, handbooks of parish priests, finally material on contemplation which represents only a small part of his writings. These works were intended to a clerical audience, mainly to nuns or female recluses. Rolle embodies the elitist model concerning contemplation in that he excludes laity from any possibility of reaching contemplation, reserving it only to monastics.

Rolle in the *Incendium amoris* he offers a detailed account on the contemplative life and the stages and nature of contemplation. Rolle presents a new, affective model of reaching contemplation. As Denis Renevey formulated: "Of the "five Middle English Mystics," Rolle is perhaps the one who insists more on touching the affection in order to trigger contemplative

³⁵² Richard Rolle of Hampole, (1290/1300– late September 1349) was a religious writer, Bible translator, and hermit. He was among the first English mystical writers. For his works, see Nicholas Watson, *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Denis Renevey, *Language, Self and Love: Hermeneutics in the Writings of Richard Rolle and the Commentaries on the Song of Songs*. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001); Claire Elisabeth McIlroy, *The English Prose Treatises of Richard Rolle*. (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004). For recent texts, see *Richard Rolle: Uncollected Prose and Verse with Related Northern Texts*, ed. by Ralph Hanna, EETS o. s. 329 (2007)

³⁵³ Richard Rolle, *The Incendium Amoris of Richard Rolle of Hampole*, ed. Margaret Deanesley. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1915). See also Richard Rolle, *Incendium Amoris*, trans. Richard Misyn, ed. Ralph Harvey. *The Fire of Love and the Mending of Life or The Rule of Living of Richard Rolle*. EETS o. s. 106.

³⁵⁴ *Melos Amoris*, ed. E.J.F. Arnould. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957)

³⁵⁵ *Richard Rolle: Prose and Verse*, ed S. J. Ogilvie-Thomson, Early English Text Society 293 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 26-33.

feeling.”³⁵⁶ In his concept his personal mystical experience has a crucial role as Rolle presents it as quasi a model of contemplation. His key concepts, *fervor*, *dulcor*, *canor* also divide into three equal parts the structure of the *Incendium Amoris*. First he treats *fervor*, which was accompanied by the physically felt sensation of heat, which Rolle names as the fire of love (hence the title of the work), accompanied by the feeling of sweetness, *dulcor*:

*I was more greatly amazed than I can tell when for the first time I truly felt my heart growing hot, and blazing in a real not an imaginary way, as if with a palpable flame. I was truly astonished by the way burning burst out in my soul, and also by the unusual sense of comfort. Because of my lack of experience of this fullness, I had to pat my chest a lot just in case the heat was the result of some outside agency. And when I knew that it boiled up only from within, and that this kindling of love was not caused by the flesh nor by concupiscence - from which I learned that it was a gift of the Maker - I melted joyfully into an emotion of greater love; and chiefly because of the influx of the sweetest of delights and of inner sweetnesses, which with that same spiritual ignition bedewed my soul to the very marrow. For before that heat was poured in upon me, consolatory and flowing with sweetness in all devotion, I really did not believe that such a burning could happen to anyone in our present exile; for it inflames my soul just as if an elemental fire were burning there - yet not in the way people say that some 'burn' in the love of Christ, because they see them given over to the service of God, with diligence and with contempt for the world. But just as if a finger placed in a flame would be enveloped by a palpable heat, so the soul, inflamed with love in the way I spoke of, feels a quite genuine burning, at different times less or more intense - sometimes less according to what the frailty of the flesh allows. For who in thi mortal body could long tolerate the continual existence of that fire in the highest degree which the present life allows?*³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶ Denis Renevey, “1215-1349: Texts,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Mysticism*, ed. by Samuel Famous and Vincent Gillespie. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 91-112.

³⁵⁷ Rolle, *Incendium Amoris*, (145.1-147. 32). Admirabar [amplius] quam enuncio quando siquidem sentivi cor meum primitus incalescere, et vere non imaginarie, quasi sensibile igne estuare. Eram equidem attonitus quemadmodum eruperat ardor in animo, et de insolito solacio; propter inexperienciam huius abundancie, sepius pectus meum si forte esset fervor ex aliqua exteriori causa [palpavi], Cumque cognovissem quod ex interiori solummodo efferbuisset et non esset a carne illud incendium amoris et concupiscencia, [in quo compertus sum] quod donum esset Conditoris, letabundus liquefactus sum in affectum amplioris dileccionis, et precipue propter influenciam delectacionis suavissime et suavitatis interne que cum ipso caumate spirituali mentem meam medullitus irroravit. Prius enim quam infunderetur in me calor ille consolatorius et in omne devocione dulcifluus, non putavi penitus talem ardorem aliquibus evenire in hoc exilio; nam ita inflammat animam meam ac si ignis elementaris ibi arderet. Nequaquam, ut quidam aiunt, aliquos in amore Christi 'ardentes' quia vident illos cum diligencia et contemptu mundi ad divina servicia mancipatos. Sed sicut si digitus in igne poneretur

The experience of “canor” follows, of the heavenly song, which is a term unique to Rolle. The experience of a heavenly music becomes a prerequisite in Rolle’s system, and he equates this with the angelic song performed in heaven. He emphasised the transcendental inspiration of such a song, which is neither attained nor understood by outsiders:

And so here my soul learned daring, so that I unveiled a very little my music, which was burning up from the fire of love and in which I rejoice before Jesus and sound forth utterances of the sweetest harmony. After that they opposed me even more determinedly. My opponents did not esteem me and so tried to make me conform to their pattern. But I could not desert the grace of Christ, or agree with foolish people who did not at all understand me within. So I let them talk and did what had to be done according to the state into which God was translating me. For which reason, giving thanks, I will proclaim the glory of Christ, so that they will no longer rave about other things of this kind nor rashly presume to judge sitters <contemplatives>.³⁵⁸

Rolle’s concept of reaching contemplation is elitist as he reserves it to the *electi*, a key term of his system, in opposition to the *reprobi*. Only those who accede to the highest phase of sanctity can aspire to real contemplation. As Watson writes:

*Rolle is urging them to follow the example of the elect by ascending as near to God as they can in this life; he is demanding that readers take not merely adequate but radical virtue - holiness - as their standard. His work is an exposition of the *vita contemplativa*, an original essay in the tradition of Richard of St Victor's Benjamin books or Bonaventure's *De Triplici Via*.³⁵⁹*

Solitary life, that is, heremitism is described as superior to any other form of religious life and Rolle’s idiosyncrasy also consists in his method of offering his own person as a model for the *electi* who reached the degree of sanctity required for attaining the highest state of

fervorem indueret sensibilem, sic animus amare quemadmodum predixi succensus, ardorem sentit veracissimum, aliquando minorem intensiorem vel maiorem, aliquando minorem prout carnis fragilitas permittit. Quis enim in corpore mortali estum ilium (in suo summo gradu prout hec vita patitur) continue existentem dm tolleraret? (All English translations are by Nicholas Watson, in Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 114.)

³⁵⁸ Rolle, *Incendium*, 233. 6-234.13. Hinc ergo invenit animus meus audaciam ut aliquantulum aperirem musicam meam que accensit ex incendio amoris, et in qua iubilo coram Ihesum [*sic*], et pneumata resono suavissimi concentus. Porro eciam prestancius astiterunt adversum me . . . Hoc arguentes me non opinabantur, ideoque ad suam formam reducere conati sunt. Sed non potui gratiam Christi deserere, et stultis hominibus, qui me interius omnino non cognoverunt, consentire. Sustinui ergo eos loqui, et feci quod faciendum erat secundum statum in quern me Dominus transferebat. Proinde propalabo gloriam Christi regracians, ut non amplius in aliis huiusmodi sic insaniant, nee assideos [*sic*] deinceps temere iudicare presumant.” (English translation by Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 136.)

³⁵⁹ Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 126.

contemplation. Rolle even formulates the audacious claim that the *electi* arrive to a state of such perfection that they do not commit sins any more:

*But I judge that there is one grade of perfect love that whoever attains it will afterwards never lose it. It is one thing to be able to lose a thing, it is another always to hold to that which one does not want to lay aside, even if it were possible. But the perfect abstain, so far as it is in them, from everything which could either destroy or even impede their perfection. Of their own freewill they are filled with divine grace, by which they are earnestly incited to good loving, speaking and doing, and are restrained from evil of heart, word and deed.*³⁶⁰

Rolle describes the state of contemplation as quasi permanent which, in opposition to other models of contemplation, does not leave the soul after the experience of the mystical union, but preserves a continuous unity with Christ:

*But for the person who has ascended the path of contemplation through rejoicing and through the ardour of love, carnal desires now lie as it were dead. For the death of evil desires happens to one who surrenders himself to contemplation, whose inner being is now changed into another glory and another form. Now he lives not in himself, but Christ lives in him, so that he melts in love for him and languishes within, almost fails because of the sweetness, can hardly live for love. This is the soul who says, 'Tell my beloved that I am sick for love, I want to die, I long to be dissolved, I burn to pass over. Ah, I die for love! Come down, Lord! Come, my beloved, and ease my sickness! Ah, I love, I sing, I glow, I burn within! Have pity on a wretch, by commanding me to be brought before you!*³⁶¹

Rolle states that the summit of spiritual life is the heremitic one, which creates the possibility of reaching the highest state of contemplation. The signs of this state are the *fervor*,

³⁶⁰ Rolle, *Incendium*, 202.6-35. "Estimo tamen quod unus est gradus perfecti amoris, quem quicumque attigerit, ilium deinceps numquam perdit. Aliud est enim posse perdere, aliud semper tenere quod non vult amittere etiam si possit. Abstinere vero se perfecti quantum in se est ab omni re qua eorum perfectio vel posset destrui vel etiam impediri. Cum libertate arbitrii divina gracia sunt repleti, qua assidue excitantur ad bonum amandum, loquendum, et agendum, et a malo cordis, oris, et operis retrahuntur." (English translation by Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 133-34.)

³⁶¹ Rolle, *Incendium*, 175. 32-176.15. "amoris iam quasi extincte iacent carnales concupiscencie. Mors enim malarum affectionum ad ipsum pertinet qui contemplacioni vacat, cuius interior homo in aliam gloriam aliamque formam iam mutatur. *Vivit ipse iam non ipse, vivit autem in se Christus* [Galatians 2.20], unde in ipsius amore liquefit et in seipso languescit, pene deficit pro dulcedine, vix subsistit pro amore. Ipsius anima est que dicit, *'Nunciate dilecto quia amore langueo* [Song of Songs 5.8], mori desidero, dissolvi cupio, transire inardesco. En morior amore! Descende Domine! Veni, mi dilecte, et leva me languore! En amo, cano, estuo, intra me ferveo! Miserere miseri, iubendo me coram te presentari!" (English translation by Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 128.)

dulcor, canor, which he himself experienced, and these are the ultimate expression of Christianity: “summa perfeccio christiane religionis.”³⁶² The contemplative experience means a succession of events: first comes the opening of the intellect to behold heavenly realities, then the sensation of the “sweet heat,” finally the performance of a heavenly song:

*...first he sees the supernal citizens with his intellectual eye, as though heaven had been opened, then he feels a very sweet heat, like fire burning, next he is imbued with wonderful sweetness, and finally he glories in joyful song. This then is perfect love, Which nobody knows hut he who receives it; and he who receives it never lays it aside. Sweetly he lives; confidently he will die.*³⁶³

Rolle describes this state as that of the ultimate joy, and offered by free Divine grace:

*Meanwhile wonder seized me that I should be raised to such joy while I was an exile, and because God had given me gifts I did not know how to seek; nor did I think that even the holiest had received such a thing in this life. For which reason, I judge that nobody is given this for merit, but is granted it by grace when Christ wishes.*³⁶⁴

Rolle’s influence on Love may be deduced when scrutinizing the evolution of the specifically Rolleian terms of mystical ecstasy: *fervor, dulcor, calor*, grace and mystical experience, sweetness and the tactile fire of love which are felt. These are echoed by Love, endorsing the description of his own mystical experience. Hilton is much more exclusive of such affectional-tangible mysticism, is sceptical and rejective mainly of the physical phenomena, as already well-known by scholarship,³⁶⁵ but it is him, whom Love will choose as a model to recommend to his readers.

³⁶² Rolle, *Incendium*, 185.16-17.

³⁶³ Rolle, *Incendium*, 202.1-35. “primo quasi aperto celo supernos cives oculo intellectuali conspicit, et postea calorem suavissimum, quasi ignem ardentem sentit. Deinde mira suavitate imbuitur, et deinceps in canore iubilo gloriatur. Hec est ergo perfecta caritas, *Quam nemo novit nisi qui accipit* [Revelation 2.17], et qui accipit nunquam amittit, dulciter vivit, secure morietur. (English translation by Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 134.)

³⁶⁴ Rolle, *Incendium*, 190. 4-10. “Interea mirum me arripuit, eo quod assumptus essem ad tantam iocunditatem dum exul essem et quia dederat mihi Deus dona que petere nescivi nee putavi tale quid nee eiam sanctissimum in hac vita accepisse. Proinde arbitror hoc nulli datum mentis sed gratis cum voluerit Christus.” English translation by Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 132.)

³⁶⁵ See Clark’s Introduction, in *Walter Hilton's Latin Writings*. Ed. J. P. H. Clark and C. Taylor. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1987) p. 163, for a discussion and reference to Rolle's *Incendium amoris*.

V. 1. 2. *The Cloud of Unknowing*

*The Cloud*³⁶⁶ was, too, popularized to a large extent by the Carthusians, and embodied a trend of negative mysticism which successfully countered the other models. As it is a text which was written to a former lay person, trying to initiate its reader into the technique of meditation-contemplation, it serves as an important element to contextualise Love's *Mirroure*. Significant similarities may be detected between the *Cloud* author and Walter Hilton's *Mixed Life*³⁶⁷ as regards our concerns. Both are manuals for contemplation, for laypersons, but not for the laity in general. Both treatises are addressed to a definite layperson. The *Cloud* author meticulously and seriously warns of the incorrect use of the book and of the 'speciall praierie', as he calls the type of meditation-contemplation he exposes in his *Treatise*. Both treatises emphasise and postulate two essential prerequisites. First, a special calling is needed for a lay person to initiate contemplation. Second, the actual state of contemplation cannot be reached by human means, neither by effort nor by technique, it is always the gift of God, bestowed by pure grace, to whoever God chooses, and whenever he chooses, by 'gratia gratis data'.³⁶⁸

Several differences distinguish these works, though, the main one being that the *Cloud* uses the method and theory of contemplation based on the theory of Pseudo-Dionysius, that is the *via negativa*, which postulates the necessity of the abandonment of all mental imagery and all mental, spiritual or physical activity when trying to reach the phase of contemplation, (as these are considered to be hindrances). One has to lose oneself in the "cloud of unknowing" as in a state of total rest and passivity before the grace of God could reach the person and confer the state of contemplation. Therefore a deep mistrust of any imaginative technique characterizes the *Cloud*, with a rejection of any effort to reach contemplation via meditation.

³⁶⁶ The full title of the text is *A Book of Contemplacyon, the whiche is clepyd the Clowde of Unknowyng, in the whiche a Soule is onyd with God. The Cloud of Unknowing*, Ed. Patrick J. Gallacher, TEAMS. Middle English Text Series. (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997) For the online publication of it, see <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/cloufrm.htm>, Last accessed 25 June 2013. Introductions and interpretations: William Johnston, *The Mysticism of 'The Cloud of Unknowing.'* (New York, Harper & Row, 1967). See also R. W. Englert, Scattering and Oneing, eds. *A Study of Conflict of the 'Cloud of Unknowing,'* *Analecta Cartusiana* 105. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1983); J. P. H. Clark, *The Cloud of Unknowing. An Introduction*. Vol. 1: "An Introduction." *Analecta Cartusiana* 119/4. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1995), Vol. 2: "Notes on 'The Cloud of Unknowing,'" *Analecta Cartusiana* 119/5. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1996)

³⁶⁷ Barry Windeatt, ed., *English Mystics of the Middle Ages*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

³⁶⁸ On medieval theology of grace, see *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire*. Tome VI. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979)

In the *Cloud* the different states of life, that is the active and contemplative, are both repeatedly treated, exposed and explained, by way of allegorizing as well as by a very practical description of their various states. The main allegory here is the traditional duo of Mary and Martha taken from the Gospel, Mary's role being the superior.

The author describes the various stages of the active and contemplative ways of life, offering a simple model constructed of three stages, first expounding the first two:

For as it is seide before, the first party stondest in good and onest bodily werkes of mercy and charité, and this is the first degree of activ liif, as it is seyde before. the secound partye of thees two lyves ligeth in good goostly meditacions of a mans owne wrechidnes, the Passion of Criste, and the joyes of heven. the first partye is good, and this partye is betir, for this is the secound degree of active liif and the first of contemplatiyve liif. In this partye is contemplative liif and actyve liif couplid togeders in goostly sibreden and maad sistres, at the ensample of Martha and Marye.³⁶⁹

He continues by treating the third phase:

The third partye of thees two lyves hangeth in this derk cloude of unknowing, with many a privé love put to God by Himself. The first partye is good, the secoude is betir, bot the thrid is alther beste.Bot the thyrd party that Mary chees, chese who bi grace is clepid to chese; or yif I sothelier schal seye, whoso is chosen therto of God, lat him listely lene therto.³⁷⁰

And now comes his clearcut distinction between what state an active can come to and a contemplative may reach; that is, he states distinctly that no active person may reach the state of high contemplation, which exceeds meditation, only in the very exceptional case when God chooses so by pure grace: "Thus highe may an actyve come to contemplacion, and no higher; bot yif it be ful seeldom and by a specyal grace. Thus lowe may a contemplatiif com towardes actyve liif, and no lower; bot yif it be ful seeldom and in grete nede."³⁷¹ A later passage enlightens this conception even further: he expressly excludes actives from contemplation and even warns them in an admonitory tone:

And therefore lat the voice of oure Lorde crie on these actyves, as yif he seide thus now for unto hem, as He did then for Marye to Matha: "Martha, Martha!" "Actyves, actyves! make yow as besi as ye kan in the first partye and in the secound, now in the

³⁶⁹ *Cloud*, Chapter Twenty-one.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

*tone and now in the tother, and, yif you list right wel and fele yow disposid, in bothe two boldely. And medel yow not of contemplatiyves. Ye wote not what them eyleth. Lat hem sit in here rest and in here pley, with the thrid and the best partye of Mary.*³⁷²

However, even those contemplatives who aspire to high contemplation are fully dependent on the working of grace, which is bestowed as a free gift according to divine choice. In the *Book of Privy Counselling*,³⁷³ the continuation of the *Cloud* by the same author and written to the same addressee, we read: “[...] a man kyndely desireth for to kunne; bot certes he may not *taast of goostly felyng in God bot only by grace*, have he never so moche kunnyng of clergie ne of kynde.”³⁷⁴ This is a famous passage of the *Book* as it testifies to the animosity of the author towards the members of medieval academia, alluding to the masters of divinity, that is, high theologians. They, if lacking divinely inspired wisdom, are also excluded from those who may aspire to receive the free gift of high contemplation. Although the *Cloud* announces the *via negativa* as the only salutary way to attain contemplation, the act itself, the exstasy is described in surprisingly concrete and sensual terms: “taste”, “goostly feeling.” Contemplation is a state of ecstasy, of being ‘raptured’ in and by God: “so highe ravishid in contemplacion and love of the Godheed.”³⁷⁵

Contemplation may be chosen as a goal by a secular person, too, however, in this case, the active way of life has to be abandoned in favour of a contemplative one. An entire chapter is devoted to strenghten this point by the *Cloud* author and the issue is repeatedly brought forward. In Chapter 18 we read: “the whiche man or womman (wether that be) feleth him sterid thorow grace and bi counsel to forsake alle outward besines, and for to sette hym fully for to lyve contemplatyve liif after their kunnyng and their conscience, their counseyl acordyng...”³⁷⁶

Finally, The *Cloud* author warns against pride. Those fallen into this sin do not follow right counseling, and thus causes dangers of hysteria, hypocrisy or even heresy:

And where thei schuld have becomen Gopes servauntes and His contemplatives, bicause that thei wolde not reule hem bi trewe goostly counseyle thei have becomen the devels

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ “The Book of Privy Counselling,” in Barry Windeatt, ed., *English Mystics of the Middle Ages*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 78-105, p. 105.

³⁷⁴ *The Book of Privy Counselling*, p. 105.

³⁷⁵ *Cloud*, Chapter Seventeen.

³⁷⁶ *Cloud*, Chapter Eighteen.

*servauntes and his contemplatyves, and tornen outhur to ypocrites or to heretykes, or fallen into frenesies and many other mescheves,.. in sclaudre of Holy Chirche.*³⁷⁷

V. 1. 3. Walter Hilton

Hilton wrote his *Scale of Perfection*³⁷⁸ and *Treatise written to a devout man (On Mixed Life)*,³⁷⁹ or, as its full title runs: *Here bigynneth the book that is cleped 'Medeled Liyf, whiche is drawn oute bitwene actif liyf and liyf contemlatif* as treateses about meditation-contemplation. His work, besides its great popularity in all learned or semi-learned circles of fourteenth and fifteenth century England,³⁸⁰ is specially connected to Love's *Mirroure*, as internal evidence attests. Therefore a thorough examination of the conceptual framework in which Hilton builds his theory of meditation-contemplation promises important results. However, as his works, mostly Book II of the *Scale* treat the issue constructing an extremely complex and well elaborated system, we will proceed in only shortly examining the relevant key-terms.

V. 1. 3. 1. *The categories of the active, contemplative, and mixed lives*

In Chapter I of *Mixed Life*, Hilton describes his model of the categories of active and contemplative life beginning in very similar terms as the author of the *Cloud*. Hilton also identifies the spiritual state of the active laity with that of novices leading a monastic, contemplative life, just as the *Cloud* author and other contemporaries do.

Bodili wirchynghe longeth principali to wordli men or women, the whiche han leufulli wordeli goodes and wilfulli usen wordeli bisynesses. Also it longeth to alle yonge, bigynnyng men, whiche comen newe oute of wordli synnes to the service of God; for to make hem able to goosteli wirkynghe and for to breke doun the unbuxumnesse of the body bi reson and bi such bodili werchynghe that it myght be souple and redi and not moche contrarious to the spirit [in] goosteli wirchinge*³⁸¹

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 59.

³⁷⁹ Walter Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, in Barry Windeatt, ed., *English Mystics*, pp. 108-130.

³⁸⁰ See Michael Sargent, 'The Transmission by the Carthusians of some Late Medieval Spiritual Writings', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27 (1976): 225-40; see also Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 81-86.

³⁸¹ Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, p. 110.

In his treatise, Walter Hilton presents, instead of the traditional duality of the active-contemplative lives, a triad: the active, the contemplative and the mixed ways of life. He carefully describes all three. In Chapter II a vivid description of the active life can be found, it is not a very praising description either. Love's terms denoting laity cannot be qualified as more degrading at all, Hilton writes in much worse terms:

*Actif liyf aloone longeth to wordeli men and women whiche aren lewed in knowyng of goostli occupacioun, for thei feelen no savour in devocioun bi fervour of love as othere men doon, ne thei can no skile of it. And yit, nevertheles, thei have drede of God and of the peynes of helle. Therefore thei fleen synne, and thei have desire for to plesse God and for to come to hevене, and thei have a good wille to her even-Cristene. Unto these men it is needful and spedful to usen the werkes of actif liyf as bisili as thei mai in heelp of hemself and of hire even-Cristene, for thei can not ellis doon.*³⁸² (italics mine)

Love, on the other hand, does not require any longer temporary detachment from worldly activities, as he counsels that his readers may choose to read one or two passages of the *Mirroure* at one time, as it befits them better.

He states that the third, the mixed life belongs to two categories of people: first to such ecclesiastics who carry responsibilities in the government of the Church, prelates, bishops and the like, secondly, it belongs to such persons, now from among the laity, who lead an active life, but who are of a considerable wealth, (through governing other people, either being the master or the head of the family), and so can devote some time to the contemplative way of life as well. However, Hilton names another absolute prerequisite for such a mixed way of life, which he treats as such also for leading of contemplative life even in the case of monastics. This is a *must* which also bears a great significance in our interpretation of these texts:

*Also it longeth generally [to/ sum temporal men, the whiche have sovereynte with moche avere of wordli goodis and haven also, as it were, lordschipe overe othere men for to governe and sustene hem - as a fadir hath over his children, a maister over his servautes, and a lord overe his tenantes - the whiche men han also receyved of oure Lord yiftes of grace and of devocioun, and in partie savoure of goostli occupacioun. Unto these men also longeth medeled lif that is bothe actif and contemplatif.*³⁸³ (Italics mine).

³⁸²Ibid., p. 113.

³⁸³Ibid., p. 114.

V. 1. 3. 2. *Grace and calling*

As noted above, grace is a term of such a multivalency which resists a short mapping of all its semantic and doctrinal significations. *Call* and *grace* are always attached in describing the beginnings of a choice of lifestyle in Hilton's texts. The grace of calling is needed for the active, the mixed and the contemplative lives.³⁸⁴ Therefore also leading a mixed life presupposes a special call of grace: "And also withal *that thou hast receyved grace - of the merci of oure Lord* - for to knowe thiself and goosteli desire and savour of his love, I hope that this lif that is medeled is the beste and acordeth moste to thee for to traveile inne."³⁸⁵

Hilton very clearly identifies the new desire of his addressee with a call coming from God, this being the element which justifies the seeking of contemplation in itself.³⁸⁶ Without it such an endeavour would be erroneous, against 'charitee', just as in the case when such a call is neglected.³⁸⁷

Grace is needed not only for the first step, that is for being singled out to a certain way of life by divine choice, but also for the realisation of this life and the spiritual exercises pertaining to it. Hilton emphasises the importance of a *gratis* transcendental help in the case of meditation as well, being the essence of meditation, in the lack of which one should stop the process: "more to the love of him. This thought is good and spedeful, nameli *whan it cometh freeli of Gopis yifte*, with devocioun and fervour of the spirit: elles a man mai not lightli have savour ne devocioun in it"³⁸⁸ (italics mine)

³⁸⁴ "And whanne he is weel traveled with Lia, and nerhande oovercomen, thanne oure Lord yeveth him Rachel (*that is grace of devocioun and reste in conscience*) and thanne hath he bothe Rachel and Lia. So schalt thou doo aftir the ensample of Jacob: take these two lyves, actif and contemplatif, *sithen God hath sent the bothe* and use hem bothe, that toon with that tothir." Windeatt, p. 114. Grace is needed for changing to the contemplative life as well: Some lines later again: "And aftir this *bi grace of God* thi name schal be chaungid as Jacobis name was and turned into Israel (that is verri contemplatif)..." Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, p. 119.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 116.

³⁸⁶ "Also, yif thou woldest leven uttirli goostli occupacion - nameli now aftir the *grace that God hath yeven unto thee* - and sette the hooli to the bisynesse of the world, to fulfillynge of werkes of actif liyf, as fulli as anothir man that nevere feeled devocioun, thou levest the ordre of charite. For thi staat asketh for to doo bothe, eche of hem in dyvers tyme. Thou schalt meede the werkes of actif liyf with goostli werkes of lif contemplatif, and thanne doost thou weel." Ibid., p. 114.

³⁸⁷ Hilton repeats the same idea somewhat later: "Whoso hath more reward to werkes of actif liyf and to bisynesse of the world, that for the love of his even-Cristene he leeveth goostly occupacion uttirli aftir that *God disposeth hym therto*, he fulfilleth not fully charite." Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 125. Hilton continues with naming more precisely other components of meditation, that is the meditation on the Passion as well: "Forthi, me thenketh, unto thee it is good for to have in mynde his manheede sumtyme. And yif devocioun come withal, and savour, kepe it and folowe it for a tyme. But leve of sone, and hange not to longe therupon. Also, yif devocioun come not with mynde of the passioun, stryve not ne prese not to moche theraftir, and take esili that wolen come and goo forth to sum othir thought." Ibid.

He never misses to add that the absolute prerequisite for reaching contemplation is equally free divine grace, stating that even members of the clergy, whether they be bishops or monastics leading contemplative life, need a special grace to contemplation.³⁸⁹

Hilton further differentiates between “comune grace” and “special grace”, the second one is however, reserved to the ‘perfect ones’: ”But I seie that sicke affeccions aren of God, maad bi the mene of a soule aftir the general grace that He gyveth to alle Hise chosen soulis; not of special grace maad goostli bi touchinge of His gracious presence, as He werketh in His perfite loveris, as I have bifore seid....³⁹⁰ The soul may even see and feel Christ by the working of the grace of the ‘gaze’:

And soothli that is the most thyng that Jhesu loveth in a soule, that it myght be maad goostli and godli in sight and in love, like to Hym in grace, to that that He is bi kynde; for that schal be the ende of alle loveris. Than mait thou be siker that what tyme thou feelest thi soule stired bi grace, speciali in that manere as it is bifore seid, bi openynge of the goostli iye, that thou seest and feelest Jhesu. Hoolde Him faste whiles thou maiste, and kepe thee in grace, and late Him not lightli fro thee.³⁹¹

V. 1. 3. 3. Different stages of contemplation

The goal to be reached even for a lay person is formulated in terms which denote real contemplation by Hilton. The “goostely feelyng of God” obviously and clearly pertains to contemplation, as opposed to the lower stage of meditation which comprises only bodily feelings and sensations, together with imagination. Love was well acquainted with this terminology of Hilton, as he verbatim and repeatedly quotes his works in the *Mirroure*, recommending the reading of these to his readers. This has its consequences on the formation of Love’s concepts about the capacities of his own lay readers to reach the same or similar stages of contemplation.

Hilton has an optimistic view of the spiritual capacities of some exceptional lay persons. He mentions a process of growing towards perfection, possible also for them. Moreover, he (just as later Love), uses the all-inclusive, partaking first person plural in describing such process of maturation:

³⁸⁹He refers to the bishops and prelates: ” ...yaf hem hooli to contemplacioun- as moche grace of contemplacioun as thei hadden , ...” Ibid., p. 115.

³⁹⁰ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 68.

³⁹¹Ibid., p. 248.

*Ne though we feele goostli thinges and grete fervour of the love of God, so moche that we sette at nought alle erthli thinges, and us thenketh that we wolde forsake for Gopis love alle the joies and alle the welth of this world, yit aren we not as tite able and redi for to seke and biholde goostli thinges that aren aboven us, until oure soule be maad sotil and til hit be maad saad and stablid in vertues bi processe of tyme and encresynge of grace. For as Seynt Gregor seith, 'No man sodeynli is maad sovereyne in grace, but fro litil he bigynneth, and bi processe wexeth, until he come to the moste.' And so graunt us to do, the Fadir and Sone and the Holi Goost. Amen.*³⁹²

However, Hilton sets a prerequisite for this maturing: leaving the world, permanently or temporarily, and devoting the person wholly to the exercise of contemplation.

Hilton describes the spiritual preoccupation he intends to teach to his protégé in terms describing both mediation and contemplation: "Anothir tyme yeve hem hooli to devocion and to contemplacion in praieres and in meditacioun."³⁹³ Devotion is a term comprising both meditation and contemplation, it is not always differentiated. He permits even his lay disciple the desire to accede to the contemplation of the Divinity, but warns again of seeking forcefully to get insight into such matters, as man is unable to attain such goals by himself, only with the help of grace:

*It is ynowgh to thee and to me for to have a desire and a longynge to oure Lord. And yif he wole, of his free grace, over this desire, sende us of his goostli light, and openen oure goostli ighen for to se and knowe more of him than we have had tofore bi comone travaile, thanke we him therof. And yif he wole not, for we aren not meke enough, or ellis, ... thanne schal we mekeli knowe oure owen wretcchidnesse.*³⁹⁴ (italics mine)

Thus, Hilton expressedly accords the possibility of contemplation also to actives, but only to the very few chosen ones, who, as he explains in his treatise on the *Mixed Life*, are positioned on the upper end of society, thus having the possibility to devote considerable time to spiritual occupations. He also asks for a temporary cancellation of wordly activities to attain contemplation. He also restricts the capacity of feeling the *inwarde swetnesse of love*

³⁹²Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, p. 130.

³⁹³ Ibid., p. 114.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 129. Moreover, Hilton even warns of aspiring too high: "And therefore the wise man seith in anothir place thus: *Altiora te ne quaesieris et fortiora te ne scrutatus fueris.*²⁵ That is to seie: 'High thinges that aren above thi myght, wit and thi resoun, seke not; and grettere thynges that aren aboven thi myght, ransake not.' Bi these wordes the wise man forbedeth not uttirli for to seke and ransake goostli and heveneli thinges. But he forbedeth us that as longe as we aren fleschli and boistous, not clensid from veyn love of the world, that we take not upon us bi oure owen traveile ne bi oure owen wit for to ransake or feele goosteli thinges."³⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 130.

only to those who attain a certain, - and as it seems, quite a high- degree of sanctity.³⁹⁵ Love will mention no such restrictions. For him devout meditation on the Passion or beholding of the consecrated Host may suffice.

V. 1. 3. 4. Reaching Contemplation: Spiritual Understanding and Sweetness

After the definitions of the active and contemplative lives, Hilton distinguishes three degrees of contemplation. The first is in knowledge of God through reason and learning only; the second is knowing God in the affections, that is emotions; the third, and highest stage attainable on earth, lies in knowing God in both cognition and affection. This state is reached only when the soul is cleansed of all sins and reformed to the image of Jesus. Hilton neatly describes the different stages which lead from meditation, characterised by the usage of the imagination, to high contemplation. He also uses the same scriptural simile of the little children who are fed with milk (namely with the lower meditation) until they are capable of being nourished by the harder bread (that is, contemplation). In Hilton's system there are two kinds of knowledge and two kinds of affection: a carnal, exterior one, created by the activity of imagination, and a spiritual understanding and affection brought forth by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

*For ther is two maner of knowynge of God. On is had principali in imaginacion, and litil in undirstondynge. This knowynge is in chosen soulis bigynnyng and profityng in grace, that knowen God and loven Hym al manli not goostli, with manli affeccions and with bodili liknesse, as I have bifore seid. This knowynge is good, and it is likned to mylk bi the whiche thei aren tendirli norischid as children, til thei ben able for to come to the fadris boord and taken of his hande hool breed. And that othir knowynge is principaly felt in undirstondynge, whanne it is comforted and illumyned bi the Hooli Goost, and litil in imagynacion.*³⁹⁶

Although Hilton does not name Rolle, he undoubtedly refers to him when criticising the external, bodily felt sensations of heat, melody and sweetness, the three main concepts of the Rolleian mystical encounter. Hilton clearly states that the external signs do not belong to the

³⁹⁵“Hilton explains that some persons are reformed only in faith but not in feeling; the highest state, which corresponds to the limits of human perfection, is to be reformed in both faith and feeling. This state is reached only after a lengthy and often arduous process of spiritual growth, is limited to those leading a contemplative life, and is attained by very few.” Thomas Bestul, *The Scale of Perfection*, Introduction, p. 23.

³⁹⁶ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 212.

true contemplation, but to a phase preceding it. Real contemplation is reached when the understanding is illuminated by the presence and working of the Holy Spirit. Hilton also emphasises that the working of imagination belongs to a preceding phase and has to stop its activity when the next stage is attained:

*Upon the same wise it mai be seide of othir manere feelynges that aren like to bodili thynges, as heeryng of delitable songe, or feelynge of comfortable heete in the bodi, or seynge of light, or swettenesse of bodili savour. These aren not goosteli feelynges, for goostli feelynges aren felt in the myghtis of the soule, principali in undirstondynge and in love and lital in imaginacioun; but these feelynges aren in imaginacion, and therefore thei aren not goostli feelynges, but whan thei are best and moste trewe yit aren thei but outward tokenes of inli grace that is felt in the myghttis of the soule.*³⁹⁷ (italics mine)

Hilton proceeds with the example of Pentecost and explains that the presence of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost had its outward signs as well, but the real changes were effectuated in the inner domains of the souls. He describes these effects as a contemplative experience, mentioning both prerequisites: the reformed spiritual understanding and spiritual affection:

*He was unseabli felt in the myghtis of hire soulis, for He lightned here resoun and kyndelide here affeccoun thorough His blisside presence so cleerli and so brennandeli, that thei hapen sodeynli the goostli knowynge of soothfastenesse and the perfeccion of love, as oure Lord bihighte hem, seyynge thus: Spiritus sanctus docebit vos omnem veritatem (John 16:13). The Holi Goost schal teche you al soothfastnesse.*³⁹⁸ (italics mine)

Hilton also describes contemplative rapture, when the soul is taken “above kynde,” and is transformed to be capable of perfect love:

*Special grace felt thorough the unseable presence of Jhesu, that maketh a soule a perfite lovere, lasteth not ilike hool in the highnesse of feelynge, but chaungeabli cometh and gooth, as I have seide. Thus oure Lord seith: Spiritus ubi vult spirat; et vocem eius audis, sed nescis unde veniat, aut quo vadat (John 3:8).*³⁹⁹

³⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 209. See also: “And for that is it as I have seid bifore, that many soulis bigynnyng and profityng han gret fervour and mykil suettenesse in devocion, and as it semeth brenne al in love, and yit han thei not perfight love, ne goosteli knowynge of God. For wite thou wel, feele a soule nevere so mykil fervour, so mykil that him thenketh the bodi mai not bere it, or though he melte al into wepyng, as longe as his thenkyng and his biholdynge of God is al in imaginacion and not in undirstondynge, he come not yit to perfight love ne to contemplacion.”³⁹⁷ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 206. (italics mine) See also *Walter Hilton's Latin Writings*, p. 163.

³⁹⁸ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 209.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 244: “But gostli feelynges, siche as I speke of now, yif thei comen in the manere as I have seid bifore, we schulen ai desiren that aren sleyng al wordli love, openynge of the goostli iye, purite of spirite, pees in

Hilton emphasises that the vision is not a picture formed in the imagination of Christ in majesty, it is not physical or material, but it is spiritual only. He also stresses the unseeable presence of Christ in the soul as being the apogee of the contemplative encounter, just as Love will do in his narrative.

V. 1. 3. 5. Reason, Exegesis and Heresy

In all theories of contemplation reason and transcending it plays a crucial role, the summit of contemplation itself is defined as the transformation of the working of the natural intellect, both by the adherents of the *via negativa* or *positiva*. A new, transcendental spiritual knowledge is considered to be instilled in the course of real contemplation, a process, which is most clearly and meticulously described by Hilton himself in his *Scale*. The idea that knowledge about divine realities and spiritual truth may be obtained directly, through divine inspiration, getting around or leaving out the mediation of the Holy Church seems a genuinely courageous one in the context of the late-medieval controversies touching this aspect. Late medieval mystical writers had to- and indeed did find formulations which guaranteed the security and orthodoxy of such imminently acquired spiritual knowledge so that this issue came successfully to terms with the official censure of the Church. The proliferation of manuals about the *Discretio Spirituum*, as that of Jean Gerson and others,⁴⁰⁰ attests to this fact. However, the main question as formulated by Hilton, and later by Love, is how one actually relates to such knowledge, how one qualifies its trustworthiness, and which place one grants it in the sphere and hierarchy of the spiritual-dogmatic sets of truth.

Hilton formulates his theory that only the meek, those who submit themselves to the authority and teaching of the Church, will be granted free access to acquiring spiritual knowledge and even a correct exegesis:

conscience, and alle othere bifore seid. We schullen coveiten to feele ai the liyfli inspiracioun of grace maad bi the goostli presence of Jhesu in oure soule, yif that we myghten; and for to have Him ai in oure sight with reverence, and ai feelen the swettnesse of His love bi a wondirful homlinesse of His presence. This schulde be oure liyf and oure feelynge in grace, aftir the mesure of His gifte in whom al grace is, to somme more and to some lasse; for His presence is feelid in diverse manere wise as He vouchith saaf.”

⁴⁰⁰ See Jean Gerson, *De probatione spirituum*, in *Oeuvres complètes de Jean Gerson*, ed. Palémon Glorieux. vol. 7. (Paris: Desclée, 1960- 73). See the translation by Paschal Boland, *The Concept of Discretio Spirituum in John Gerson 's De Probatione Spirituum and De Distinctione Verarum Visionum a Falsis*. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1959)

*And that manere is first for to see Jhesu in Hooli Writte; for Jhesu, that is al sothfastnesse, is hid and helid therinne, wounden in a soft sendeel undir faire wordis, that he mai not be knowen ne feelid but of a clene herte. For whi, sothfastnes wole not schewe itself to enemys, but to freendes that loven it and desiren it with a clene meke herte. For sothfastnesse and mekenesse aren ful trewe sustris, ...*⁴⁰¹

By contrast, proud heretics are excluded from both reaching the reformation of spiritual feeling, a key notion of Hilton to denote reaching the high contemplative state, with all its attributes, that is feeling spiritual sweetness, acquiring the illumination by the divine knowledge of transcendental truth; and a correct scriptural hermeneutics. Hilton's conceptions bear striking similarities with that of Love, the analysis of which will be carried out in the following subchapter.

⁴⁰¹ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 250.

V. 2. The Main Text of the *Mirroure*

Nicholas Love's *Mirroure* was composed as part of an existing rich tradition of manuals written to instruct upon and help meditation and contemplation. Nonetheless, by Love's explicit claim that he wrote his work primarily for an active, lay audience, the *Mirroure* becomes a new initiative. This characteristic of the text attracted critical attention which resulted in different interpretations. Michelle Karnes, in her book on the philosophical foundations of medieval imagination,⁴⁰² devoted a subchapter entitled "Love's revisionary translation" to Nicholas Love's *Mirroure*. Here she supplies a thorough analysis of the changes Love made to the original Latin *Meditationes* in order to limit the capacity of his lay readers to reach any higher than affective meditation. Although her main idea that Love indeed limited himself to the presentation of the technique of meditation seems to be correct, the arguments Karnes uses to prove that these transformations deprive the original text from its very sophisticated goals to instruct how to reach high contemplation do not seem convincing enough. My investigations through a close reading of the text of the *Mirroure* yielded different results, in the light of which I propose a more differentiated, nuanced approach to Love's supposed restrictions as regards the question of contemplation. In this subchapter I will attempt to present my interpretation of Karnes's arguments with an exposition of my theory on how Love tackled this issue.

In my reading of the text the question of the intended readership is a more complex one than that assumed by other critics of the text. Although Love himself makes explicit statements about his intentions to translate the work for a lay readership, the 'symple soules' as he terms them, and although he repeatedly informs the readers about many of his alterations which he effectuated in order to fit the text of the *Meditationes* to the needs of this lay audience, he also addresses clerical readers as well in his text, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, by references to monastic customs, or translating in great amount such passages which were directed to a definitely clerical or monastic audience in the source text. However, except for a very few cases, he does not differentiate between the various members of his audience, signalling whom he addresses by excluding the other party. The text, which he creates, either by translating or by original composition, is to be read by all, without any

⁴⁰² Karnes, "Nicholas Love."

selection or segregation. Instead of operating only with the binary of clerical and lay, Love seems to have in mind another categorization of his audience as well: a categorization according to their intellectual, furthermore, spiritual affinity. He seems to operate by supposing also a stratum which, either lay or cleric, is susceptible of the more advanced spiritual depths he offers besides the traditional meditational aid.

Secondly, I would assert that, although teaching and fostering meditation is the primary aim of Love, he did not exclude his audience from all possibility of reaching and experiencing contemplative phases. Thirdly, I read the passages which Karnes interprets as distancing the readers from the scene to be meditated upon not as intended so by Love, but written with some alterations with a care to instruct the meditator with more precision on how to practice the technique of meditating in that actual scene. Fourthly, the claim that the *Meditationes* allows more imaginative freedom should be reformulated with consideration of the context of Wycliffism, an important factor deeply influencing the text of the translation. I will attempt to present my argumentation in a reversed order, first offering my interpretation of minor issues, later proceeding to the major ones.

V. 2. 1. The Question of Distancing

The main objection of Karnes against Love's method of translation to be treated is that he, modifying the original text distances his readers from the scenes to be meditated upon. A precise charge refers to such passages where in the original scene the meditator was invited to witness the scene directly. The addition of certain clusters by Love, in Karnes's views, alienates the readers from the liveliness of the scenes. Karnes claims that this kind of reformulation "decreases the intensity and extent of desire."⁴⁰³ She explains: "Love's divergence from his source in this matter indicates the lesser power that imagination has for him: in the *Mirror*, imagination creates distance from rather than proximity to the imagined scenes."⁴⁰⁴ Another argument of hers is that Love omitted references to touching from the text of *Meditationes*. Karnes accuses further Love's attitude as distancing not only his readers from the scenes, but distancing even himself from his readers and the meditations he recommends.

⁴⁰³ Karnes, "Nicholas Love," p. 402.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

In my view a fine-tuning of such assertions would be more appropriate: although it is true that in some cases Love does not present the scenes in the same detail as the *Meditationes* does, in the majority of cases there are no important differences. The texts quoted by Karnes are meant to illustrate that in the *Meditationes* the author calls for a direct identification with the imagined scenes, whereas Love in the *Mirror* alienates his audience by adding the clusters 'by inwarde imaginacion' or, 'by devout ymaginacion', etc. to it. Although such additions may indeed interfere with a simpler way of formulation and thus they may cause a slight alteration to the reader's inner process of reception as opposed to that formulated in the *Meditationes*, in my reading these clusters were not intended by Love to serve primarily this purpose. They were added rather as a means of precision, which resulted from a more developed, specialised form of exposition of the meditative techniques by the time of Love. Similar contemporary texts also testify to the fact that the conceptual set and vocabulary describing the techniques of meditation in such manuals had become more sophisticated by this time than those in the time of the creation of the *Meditationes*, that is, some hundred years earlier.⁴⁰⁵ They also signal the difference between the complexity and precision of the personal style and intention of the two authors, of Johannes Caulibus, the author of the *Meditationes*, and Love.

There are passages where in the original scene the meditator was invited to witness the scene directly. Love's translated passages all contain added clusters to the original Latin text: "Jesus then walked between the two sisters"⁴⁰⁶ is contrasted with Love's variant: "we mowe se by devout ymaginacion how oure lord Jesus gob before bytwix bo tweyn sistres."⁴⁰⁷ In my interpretation, these alterations are marks of Love's consistent endeavour for more precision in his describing the methodology of the technique of meditation.⁴⁰⁸

The mentioning of the "inner eye" and similar technical terms were present in other treatises about meditation-contemplation, amplifying the vocabulary and set of notions to rend

⁴⁰⁵ See Baier, "Meditation and Contemplation."

⁴⁰⁶ *Meditationes* 66, CCCM 153:230: "Vadit ergo Dominus Iesus medius inter duas sorores"; trans. Taney et al., p. 216.

⁴⁰⁷ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 133.

⁴⁰⁸ An eloquent example follows: *Meditationes*: "The Lord Jesus opened the gates of Paradise which up to that time had been closed to humanity, and entered in triumph and joy, with all that happy and magnificent multitude." translated by Taney et al., p. 323. *Meditationes* 105, CCCM 153:342: "Dominus autem Iesus cum uniuersa ilia felici et magnifica multitudine aperiens ianuas Paradisi usque tune humano generi clausas, intrauit triumphaliter et gaudenter"; Whereas Love's version is as follows: "Nowe go we up by devout contemplacion to oure lorde Jesu beholdyng in ymaginacion of hevenly þinges by likenes of erþely þinges, howe he with alle lat forseide worþi & blisfulle multitude of holi soules, oponyng heven 3ates þat were before þat tyme sperede a3eynyns mankynde (...) seide, Faþer I þonke þe." Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 216., quoted by Karnes, "Nicholas Love," p. 397.

more precision to the technique. Hilton also develops a complex theory of how meditation works and uses the notion of the “inner eye” which enables the sensing and observation of spiritual realities. In one passage he evokes the figure of the Virgin Mary as the saint *par excellence*, and Hilton uses the term of the ‘goostley ighe’ a notion that Love uses in his precise instructions how to meditate upon a specific text: “...for to see bi goosteli ighe the habundance of grace in hire hooli soule whan sche was heere lyvyngē.”⁴⁰⁹ Thus, I would rather conclude that these added clusters serve, in Love’s text as in other contemporary ones, precision rather than distancing, a precision which deletes the ambiguity of the original and decides for one specific way of seeing: seeing inwardly.

Another type of example may also be brought up. Where the *Meditationes* advises about regarding Christ, “at this point regard him lovingly for a long while (Hic igitur eum diligenter considera per longam moram),”⁴¹⁰ the *Mirror* has, “Take now here gude hede by inwarde meditacion of alle hees peynes.”⁴¹¹ Although there is a difference between the two texts, I consider it to be minor, and does not mean that Love would have attempted to distance his readers from the sight of Christ on the Cross. The reference to the Passion is rather attributable to the fact that by Love’s time the cult of the meditations on the Passion itself gained a rich recent tradition, as manuals, tracts, and *Hours* on the Passion abound in these times, and Love recurs to this tradition of devotion here, expecting that it will find resonance with his readers’ expectations and sensibility trained by these kin-texts.

Touching, according to my reading, is as present in the *Mirroure* as it is in the *Meditationes*. Here we have “You too go with them: help carry the boy and observe carefully each and every thing said and done because they are sacred actions,”⁴¹² as opposed to Love’s text: “Now lat vs go with hem by devout contemplacion, & help we bere þat blessed birþen þe child Jesus in oure soule by deuocion.”⁴¹³ I sense the essence is present as regards touching, as Love also agrees in encouraging his readers to touch Jesus, in the course of imagination.

An argument for Love’s method of encouraging direct participation of his readers in the meditated scenes just as the *Meditationes* does would be the presence of a great number of passages in the *Mirroure* which Love translated verbatim, without alterations, from the source

⁴⁰⁹ Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, p. 126.

⁴¹⁰ *Meditationes* 47, CCCM 153:165; trans. Taney et al. p. 247

⁴¹¹ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 171.

⁴¹² *Meditationes* 11, CCCM 153:45 “Vade et tu cum eis: adiua portare puerum et conspice attente singula que dicuntur et fiunt, que deuotissima sunt”; trans. Taney et al., p. 39.

⁴¹³ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 48.

text, which instruct the readers to meditate by rendering themselves present in the scenes to be meditated upon. These pervade the whole text of the *Mirroure* from the *Proheme* to the end. First, already in his *Proheme*, Love translates the passage of initiation into meditation from the *Meditationes*, in some parts complementing it with short explanations, but leaving the core of the methodology intact, translating it completely, without tempering it, without any arrangements for ‘distancing’. The passage instructs the meditator to be present in his soul, and use the ‘bodily wittes’, the senses, partaking in the imagined scenes and actions of the characters. (Here the *Meditationes* itself makes some precisions):

*Wherefore þou þat coueyest to fele treuly þe fruyt of þis boke. þou most with all þi þought & alle þin entent, in þat manere make þe in þi soule present to þoo þinges þat bene here written seyð or done of oure lord Jesu, & þat bisily, Iikyngly & abydyngly, as þei þou herdest hem with þi bodily eres, or sey þaim wiþ þin eyen þon puttyng away for þe tyme, & leuyng alle oþer occupacions & bisynesses.*⁴¹⁴

Love then translates a passage of the *Meditationes* which states that the martyrs could endure the pains of torments as a result of meditating on the Passion of Christ while being tortured, because meditation helped them to a spiritual exchange of bodies between them and Christ: “hire hertes bene more properly in cristes body by deuote meditacion of his blessed lif þan in hir owne bodies.”⁴¹⁵ This is a powerful example which Love brings in by translation to encourage participation in the process and scenes of meditation, showing how efficacious such a participatory meditation can be. He also translates another section, now about the Incarnation, (a passage describing the heavenly scene where God sends the angel Gabriel on his mission), emphasising the presence of the meditator: “imagine of gostly þinge as it were bodily & þenk in þi herte as þou were present in þe si3t of þat blessed Lord.”⁴¹⁶ Or later, the same happens with a part describing the birth of Christ: “And so ymagine we & set we oure mynde & our þouht as we were present in þe place where þis was done at Betlehem.”⁴¹⁷ The list could be continued.⁴¹⁸ Thus, Love also encourages and gives instructions for the same participatory imagination as the *Meditationes* does. Again, Love translated a passage from the

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., p. 13-14.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., p. 44. Or another passage: “Now take we here gude enent as we were present in alle þat is here spoken of for þis is a fulle deuout matire & profitable to vs.” Ibid., p. 59, etc.

⁴¹⁸ Moreover, in p. 57 Love translated the passage to stress the interaction with the characters in their actions as if the meditator were present: “Wherefore we devoutly wirshipping & honouryng him take we oure leue at him at þis tyme, & go we forþ with oure Lord Jesu & his modere, in þe forseide wey.” Love’s translation is realised in such a way that it suggestively brings the reader inside the scene and makes him/her a real character in it, joining Jesus and his mother in leaving John the Baptist in the true Bonaventuran way.

Meditationes, without alterations, encouraging the reader to speak to Jesus, the main protagonist of the scene: "Wherefore we takyng gude entent by inwarde compassion of him in his jurneye, speke we to him devoutly in hert þenkyng in þis manere."⁴¹⁹

A further example demonstrates that Love writes with a rhetoric which encourages personal involvement in the process of meditation while writing. After the long narrative text of the *Mirroure*, which was hitherto alternated only by the addresses to the readers, Love abruptly changes of character. The author now addresses directly the protagonists of the scene described, that is, the Pharisees, thus drawing with himself his readers into the very scene to be meditated upon: "A fooles & foly consele, (haþ not of zou þe wisman wryten), þat þere is no wisdam nor consele azeynus god?"⁴²⁰ The emotionally charged speech of reprehension continues for some lines.

The *Meditationes* provides as many details in his instruction as Love, therefore he directs the meditation to the same extent as him. There is a difference, however, in the use of the address used in the Latin source text and that of the *Mirroure*,⁴²¹ by changing the address from the second-person imperative ("You too go with them") to the first-person plural ("lat us here go.") The choice of the person of the address causes in the *Meditationes* a commanding tone, whereas in the *Mirroure* it creates a participatory one. Love used in a great number of cases the second person plural when writing instructions for the meditations or encouraging his readers to imagining the scene to follow, but by this device, (being by the way a gesture highly original to him in the context of late medieval English devotional translations and manuals of meditation-contemplation),⁴²² he indicates rather an endeavour to create the impression of a common participation in the process of meditation with his readers.

This interpretation is supported by further instances. The first is when Love writes about his hopes that his readers might experience spiritual benefits in the course of meditation, asking humbly for their prayer for him. Although this was a traditional closing formula, a sort of *captatio benevolentiae*, Love succeeds in using a personal tone: "And amongis oþere who so rediþ or heriþ þis boke felyng any gostly swetnes or grace þereþorth, pray he for charite

⁴¹⁹Ibid., p. 65. Love even adds a comment later: "by deoute ymaginacion as Dou were bodily present (...) comfort oure lady & þat felawshipe praying hem to etc." Sargent, *Mirroure*, p. 190.

⁴²⁰Sargent, *Mirroure*, p. 134.

⁴²¹Karnes critiques the usage of the first person plural instead of the second-person singular command, stating, that: Further, by changing the address from the second-person command ("You too go with them") to the first-person plural ("lat us here go"), Love replaces the *Meditationes*' union between the meditator and the biblical scene with one between himself as author and the meditator. The meditator of the *Meditationes* has the freedom to engage directly with the Bible, whereas Love, attaching himself to the meditator, permits an engagement that is decidedly more textual and remote. Karnes, "Nicholas Love," p. 396.

⁴²²See the texts quoted as context for Love in the previous subchapter, etc.

specialy for þe auctor, & þe drawere oute þerof, as it is written here in English, to þe profite of simple & deuoute soules as it was seide before.”⁴²³

Furthermore, Love hints to the benefit of such meditations by recounting a mystical experience of a certain person made in the course of meditating on the Passion, recounted in the chapter of the Last Supper, by which he most presumably means himself. Through the close similarity of this formulation with that of the Pauline model,⁴²⁴ his contemporary audience would have deciphered the *incognito* in the same way, identifying the author, and enjoying a first-hand account of the fruits of the same meditations they were about to practice. Another instance is indicative of the same participatory politeness, now in the case of a restriction. Due to the complexity of the issue, the details of this case will later be discussed when the context will be better highlighted.

A further reason for the changes from first person singular to first person plural by Love is simply stylistic unity. For example, Love changes to the second person plural: ”if we take here gude hede,”⁴²⁵ just as in the opening sentence of the next paragraph, clearly out of a concern for stylistically unifying the whole passage. In the *Meditationes* the corresponding section contains a passage with first person singular, followed by another one using second person plural, then swiching again to the second person singular in the respective opening instructional sentences. No other reasons, neither of content nor of anything else explain this variation of usage of the *Meditationes*, most likely a purely random accidene. Thus Love, by his deliberate changes of addressing created the stylistic unification of the text as well as a more direct, participatory tone towards his audience.

V.2.2. The Relation of the *Mirrou* to Scripture and Exegesis

Love also repeatedly adds the cluster “as we resonably mowe suppose” to the described passages. A complex motivation may fuel this choice, deriving from the intricate context of the genesis of the work. The cluster “reasonably suppose” betrays an accentuated cautiousness, which is accounted for by the confluence of two determining factors. The first is the impact of the changes in the creation of meditative treatises as a late development of the

⁴²³ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 14.

⁴²⁴ See 2 Corinthians 12, 2.

⁴²⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 75.

period, as mentioned above. The second is the more potent one, that is, the influence of Wycliffite conceptions of scriptural authority and of the theories of exegesis.

The authenticity of the Scriptures and the correct treatment of scriptural material is important for Love. This can be deduced from various passages where he openly warns against the inclusion of non-scriptural apocryphal material into the *Meditationes*, as noted in Chapter II. Furthermore, due to Wycliffism, a more acute awareness of the importance of doctrinal correctness can be detected in Love's text, but now as a reaction and an attempt at countering the threat induced by the theological positions of Wycliffism. Whereas the *Meditationes* writes: "Scripture does not tell us about that. We can, however, order up this triumphant luncheon *as we please*,"⁴²⁶ in Love's *Mirroure* we find: "Here of spekeþ not holi writ, wherfore we mowe here ymagine by reson & ordeyne þis worþi fest *as us likeþ*, not by error affermyng bot devoutly ymaginyng & supposyng, & þat aftur þe comune kynde of þe manhode."⁴²⁷ (italics mine) Love translates, however, the same crucial expression 'as we please' himself, giving the same instruction to his readers. The difference is in the exactitude of the instructions given, which betray his anxiety for doctrinal correctness. The working of this anxiety will be exemplified further by passages analysed later on.

Scholarship produced a variety of interpretations of Love's endeavour to be faithful to the text of the Scriptures. Hudson⁴²⁸, Ghosh⁴²⁹, Watson⁴³⁰ and Aers⁴³¹ share the view that the *Mirroure* served as a substitute to the Wycliffite Bible. Karnes asserts that Love wants to remove the Bible altogether: "Love, however, was intent on removing the Bible, whether Latin or vernacular, from the meditator's view, not on replacing it in some other form."⁴³²

However, on several occasions Love explains his excision of certain passages on the grounds that these were written in more detail in the text of the Gospel, therefore need not

⁴²⁶ *Meditationes* 17, CCCM 153:89: "De hoc enim scriptura non loquitur. Possumus autem hoc uictoriosum prandium sicut uolumus ordinare."

⁴²⁷ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 75.

⁴²⁸ "Implicitly the entire text of the Myrroure stands in opposition to Wycliffite attitudes and doctrines" because "the method of this particular treatise is contrary to Lollard insistence upon the difference between scripture, on the one hand, and other teaching however pious, on the other." Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, pp. 437-40.

⁴²⁹ Ghosh examines the way the *Mirroure* "wages . . . on Lollard approaches to the scriptural text." Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, p. 148.

⁴³⁰ The *Mirror* "was written to counteract the Wycliffite Bible." Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change," p. 855.

⁴³¹ "Love's response was to offer his own book as a more salutary alternative for the laity." David Aers, *Sanctifying Signs: Making Christian Tradition in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004). Aers's discussion of the *Mirror* is on pp. 12-28 and 165-73. p. 13.

⁴³² Later, she continues: "Although establishing his text's fidelity and subordination to the Bible, he insists that the practice of meditating on the Gospels must occur at a distance from the Bible." Karnes, "Nicholas Love," p. 384.

further elaboration in the *Mirroure*. Thus Love sends his readers to read the Bible repeatedly. Taking into account that such passages are quite numerous and, what is more, inserted into passages of importance, such as the Magnificat, the Benedictus, etc.,⁴³³ this issue deserves more attention.

Bradley interprets this question in an opposite way than Karnes,⁴³⁴ and even assumes that the knowledge of the biblical stories presupposed by Love for his readers might have come from reading the Wycliffite Bible. This seems a plausible assumption taking into account the immense popularity of these translations attested by the number of surviving manuscripts. Bradley writes:

*Love demonstrably relies on prior knowledge of biblical stories. Narratives are often oblique and compressed, and he assumes that his audience has foundational knowledge even of relatively obscure stories, whether that knowledge was gained from books such as the Wycliffite Bible or from public teaching. Rather than writing so thoroughly as to render such external sources of knowledge obsolete, Love merely draws out a suitable meditation from known narratives.*⁴³⁵

Bradley's suppositions seem worthy of attention. He is silent on the fact that no other contemporary devotional source could be called upon as capable of assuring such confident knowledge of the Gospel narratives within reach of the laity. The majority of devotional texts, whether these be instructional, mystical or written for meditation, contained these narratives of "relatively obscure stories" only partially. Preaching did not offer much possibility for biblical instruction either, although it assured the transmission of certain biblical passages, (even in the vernacular,) and although several times the sermon delivered contained an explanation as well as a narration of the Gospel episode, this latter was not frequent. The choice of an exhortational text, an explanation of the meaning of the liturgical feast, of moral exhortations or doctrinal expositions, often replaced a simple and round narration of the Gospel passage quoted in the *thema*. Drama was, however, a genre that may have effected a more consistent knowledge of the Gospel narratives. Nonetheless, the fact that Love counted on a preexistent knowledge of biblical scenes, which were undoubtedly of minor importance

⁴³³ See Sargent, *Mirror*: "as it is conteyned in þe gospel", p. 32; "and so forþ as it is conteyned in þe gopell" p. 33; "as þe processe of þe gospel telleþ more plenerly" p. 117; "more fully and plenyously" p. 119; "as we redene in þe gospel" p. 140; and "as þe gospel telleþ in processe" p. 208, etc.

⁴³⁴ Karnes writes: "It is, of course, unlikely that a member of Love's intended lay audience, the simple soul steered in carnal thinking, would have access to the Bible or that Love would expect him so." Karnes, "Nicholas Love," p. 407.

⁴³⁵ Bradley, "Censorship and Cultural Continuation," p. 125.

and not likely to have been exposed in dramatic or other form for the laity, makes it likely that Love could have had the Wycliffite Bible translations, or other biblical sources, e. g. vernacular translations in mind, as vehicles of transmission. To possess Bibles in the vernacular was not unusual in late medieval England. Dove alludes to the great popularity of Bibles in French amidst the aristocracy,⁴³⁶ and to the existence of some contemporary records of other biblical sources available in the vernacular, as mentioned above in Chapter IV. Therefore the assumption seems not all too daring that Love did address lay persons in his numerous passages sending his readers to continue the reading of the scriptural passage itself, which is more detailed or comprehensible, or that he expected previous knowledge of scriptural material even from his lay readers.

Consequently, he could not want to distance his readers from the Bible, as Karnes claims, and the opinion that Love endeavoured to provide a substitute for the *Wycliffite Bible* by the *Mirror* should be reformulated with more nuancing.⁴³⁷ Love did not explicitly make such a claim, although he was quite and repeatedly clear on his other intentions with his text, both referring to the devotional and the polemical aspects. He undeniably wrote a manual, a guide for contemplation which had ample traditions by the *Meditationes* itself, and by the numerous partial translations of it or other derivatives, meditations on the Passion,⁴³⁸ and the numerous representatives of loosely related genres. Even the *Book to a Mother* forms part of the same family of genre: it is a rewritten Gospel narrative amply extended by spiritual advice, instructions, etc. Love aligned this rich tradition of texts, all using the Biblical narratives as their vertebrae, but his undertaking was a more exigent one: supplying a quasi-complete material for Gospel meditation. However, his ample excisions, which he outspokenly explained in the course of his translation, attest to the fact that he was aware of not furnishing the complete narrative of the New Testament, but a narrative based on the scriptural text, which, through the characteristics of the genre of gospel meditations, meant a distanced, modified narrative. The genre itself called for a freedom of the reader to consent with the imaginative amplifications of this narrative, and Love fell in line with these

⁴³⁶ Mary Dove, *The First English Bible*, pp. 83-85.

⁴³⁷ Others also reject the idea of the *Mirror* as a substitute, as Ryan Perry and Stephen Kelly, working for the project *Geographies of Orthodoxy* claim: "Our interest in the project has been to challenge the cliché that Carthusian Prior Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* stands as ideological opponent to the Wycliffite Bible." see "Hospitable Reading."

⁴³⁸ See the *The Northern Passion: Introduction*, Edited by George Shuffelton. Originally Published in *Codex Ashmole 61: A Compilation of Popular Middle English Verse*. (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 2008); *Meditation on the Passion*, in Cambridge, Magdalene College MS Pepys 2125; *The Privy of the Passion*, in *Yorkshire Writers*, ed. by Carl Horstmann. (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1895-96), vol. I, 198-218; etc.

requirements. He himself encouraged his readers to take an active role in furthering this imaginative amplification of the canonised narrative of the Gospels, complemented by numerous inclusions of other authoritative theological commentaries. This form of mediated scriptural narrative was not alien to his readers. The vernacular Bibles, as the Bibles in French, were not entire translations made with the same scrupulousness for textual authenticity as the Wycliffite Bibles were made. They contained several passages of commentaries included sporadically, but in great amounts, into the scriptural text. Therefore the models of Scriptures owned by the laity was a different one than we might suppose: they were not far from that offered by the *Mirroure*.

This question evokes the other aspect of the issue of meditating-contemplating on texts deriving from biblical narratives: its relatedness with the problems of exegesis. Providing reading material transposed from the Gospel and encouraging a largely unlimited imaginative work on it by the laity, calls for a redefinition of the questions about an exegesis transformed from controlled, clerical and corporate nature into a personal one exercised individually by seculars. In this point too, Love's ambiguous relation to Wycliffite attitudes comes to the foreground.⁴³⁹ Ghosh's main arguments are that Love adapted more of the terminology Wycliff used in expounding his exegetical theory, mainly that of 'open' and 'reasonable' which Love uses in senses different from those given to them by Wycliff, and fashions them to serve his own orthodox theory. The second main point Ghosh makes is that Love embedded the authoritative interpretation of the scriptural passages in the text of the *Mirror* by the inclusion of the interpretative passages of the different authorities. Nevertheless, recent research shows that even Wycliffite texts were not exempt from recurring to the authoritative voice of the authors of the former exegetical tradition.⁴⁴⁰ Another key concept is the direct action of the Holy Spirit as empowering the laity for an interpretation of the scriptural text, through which "devoute imaginacion" and contemplation become a way of scriptural exegesis. Ghosh presents the Wycliffite theory of the Holy Spirit as a direct agent who enables exegesis for the common pure souls. He also acknowledges that Love also endows his readers with "hermeneutic authority":

His work, while placing itself firmly in the camp of orthodoxy, also shows an uneasy attempt at coming to terms with the theoretical Lollard location of authoritative

⁴³⁹ See Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, as related above. See also Ghosh, "Nicholas Love," in *A Companion to Middle English Prose*. Ed. A- S. G. Edwards. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 53-66. pp. 58-61.

⁴⁴⁰ See Mary Dove, *The First English Bible*, pp. 68-82.

meaning in the ‘literal’ sense of the exact words of scripture understood according to the intention of the Holy Spirit. This duality in Love – emphasising the hermeneutic authority of the Church, and of the devout reader operating within the Church, while acknowledging the textual authority of scripture – finds [...] a parallel in the presentation of the text in most of the extant manuscripts.⁴⁴¹

Ghosh, however, does not elaborate on one aspect of how Love postulated the personal exegesis of his readers, namely on the role of grace. Grace, with Love (and with the other mystical writers of his time) means here a very similar personal inspiration of the Holy Spirit, uniting Wyclif and Love in postulating the same hermeneutic principle. With Love, however, not only the purified naked scriptural text is acceptable but also a mediated one, which may enhance the exegetical activity in the form of imagination.

Grace was a concept with manifold meanings but it always denoted transcendental divine activity and in most cases it was identified with the working of the Holy Spirit in the theological tradition. Its various representatives with various meanings all are determining factors also in the *Mirroure*. First it defined who can, by a divine call of free grace, even begin to aspire to undertake such spiritual exercises, then it helped the exercise of imaginative interpretation, or expounded of the scriptural text to be meditated upon, finally it assured the genesis of actual contemplative experiences. In this respect Love’s work represents the same tradition as that exemplified by Rolle, the *Cloud* author and Hilton.

A special grace is needed for the imaginative process, as this implies exegesis: “principally beholding his blessed face, if þou kynne ymagine it, þat semeþ to me, most harde of alle oþere, bot as I trowe it is most lyking, to him þat haþ grace þerof.”⁴⁴² (italics mine) Love wrote a lengthy passage of his own, the exposition of the *Pater Noster*, in which he treats his conceptions of how the contribution of the Holy Spirit reveals the ‘obscure’ spiritual meanings of the prayer *par excellence*, the prayer with absolute scriptural authority: “For as we mowe wel suppose as to þe first, þat is þe fruyt therof, not only þei vndurstonde it after þe lettur, bot also þerwiþ þei hadden þorh his grace þe gostly vndurstandyng of ech peticion þerof.”⁴⁴³ Love uses Wycliffite terms of exegesis, as “after the lettur.”⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴¹ Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, p. 158.

⁴⁴² Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 78 .

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁴⁴⁴ Ghosh demonstrated the existence of such Wycliffite notions in Love’s text in his chapter on Nicholas love in *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 147-173.

Love brings in an important contribution, an original concept of his by stating that the sign of veracity of a correct hermeneutics is the sensual feeling of sweetness: "And alle comprehendet in so short words." Not only the Apostles, but "And so hauen *alle* þei þat þorh grace felene þe gostly fruite & þe swete tast þerof."⁴⁴⁵ (italics mine)

Some lines later Love connects again spiritual understanding with grace in attaining contemplative states:

*hæþ an inwarde desire to þe gostly vndurstongyng þerof,... he shale þorh grace by processe of tyme finde so miche comfort þerinne, þat þere is none opere praiere so sauory & so effectuele... And so shale he fynde in his soule whan god wole 3ife his grace with gret likyng diuerse vndurstonding þerof most pertynent to his desire & þat opere þan is writen in þe comune exposicion þerof, or perantere þan he can telle!*⁴⁴⁶

Consequently, feeling the sweetness is a guarantee and sign of right understanding, of correct exegesis. Later in the *Treatise* the same idea is elaborated more fully. The same notion reappears in the scene of Transfiguration. Here Love explicitly alludes to reaching higher stages of contemplation. The scene of the Transfiguration is a suitable *locus* for acceding to contemplation for the chosen ones, as it exhibits the person of Christ in his transfiguration from his humanity into the manifestation of his divine glory. The reader has the possibility to follow the narrative of the text and, through a partaking imaginative activity, guided by the interaction of divine Grace, explore and participate in a deep-or-high spiritual understanding of the hidden meanings of the text, that is, the secrets of Christ's divine essence. A correct exegesis of the meditated scriptural text, through an additional grace of the contributing Divine Person, is secured by an understanding of spiritual realities in a transcendental state, a state "above kynde", where the cognitive faculties work also in modified ways, cognition happens through the senses, as the classical contemplative theories describe:

*This is the processe of the gospell in the whiche whoso hæþ grace of gostly vnderstondyng and swetnesse may see many good notabilitees stirenge to lowynge and despisyng of man hym self and to feruent deuocioun and loue of god and specially he that hath felynge abouen kynde zeuen by special grace may taste and haue myche goostly comforte: that he graunte vs parte of / Jesu crifte. Amen.*⁴⁴⁷ (italics mine)

⁴⁴⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 85.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

The last line evidences Love's supposition that all (himself and all his readers) may have part in such contemplative experience they may all reach the apogee of divinely inspired personal exegesis.

Later, in his narration of his own personal experience in the passage about the Last Supper, Love presents a real effervescence of different versions of "grace", "his hize grace", "his speciale zifte of grace", almost always coupled with feeling, as in: "he þat feleþ þat gracious zifte of grace"⁴⁴⁸ when describing the state of mystical contemplation. Here grace always designates the infusion of the Holy Spirit who reveals hidden mysteries of the sacrament of Eucharist, that is, the divine presence of Christ, by the creation of a bodily sensation of this presence.

Ghosh treated the ambiguity of Wyclif's position concerning exegesis.⁴⁴⁹ He states that Wyclif is trapped in his claim that all should have direct access to interpretation of the whole text of the Scriptures, as the text of the Bible is "open", and the correctness of exegesis is validated by the direct action of the Holy Spirit, who inspires each individual reader. On the other hand, the obvious instances when the Scriptures contain passages of obscure meaning, which cannot be solved (acknowledged as such by Wyclif himself), seems to undermine the first claim that all can correctly interpret the whole Scripture. In Love's system this trap is avoided by the limitation of the personal exegesis, and it is at this point where he crucially differs from Wyclif. Love sets limits to the interpretative freedom of the laity motivated primordially by two factors: the first was an acute sense for preserving the veracity and 'reasonable' character of the scriptural texts. The second factor was a fear of error in special cases when an interpretative speculation fails, transgressing into domains where human reason cannot guide the exegesis, even if aided by grace. In these cases a special divine revelatory agency is needed, granted to a corporate interpretative authority, to assure a correct hermeneutical interpretation. Love is conscious that "holy writte may be expounet & understonde in diuerse maneres,"⁴⁵⁰ but in passages of high doctrinal delicacy, such as that of the Trinity and Eucharist, he stops the imaginative freedom and strictly sends his readers to accepting the doctrine built on the interpretation authenticated by the Church: "And þerfore when þou herest any sich þinge in byleue þat passeþ þi kyndly reson, trowe soþfastly þat it is soþ as holy chirch techet and go no ferþer."⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 154.

⁴⁴⁹ Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 22-66.

⁴⁵⁰ Sargent, *Mirroure*, p. 11.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., p. 23.

Love differs from the Wycliffite conception of the accessibility of scriptural meaning in another point as well. In his *Proheme* he expounds his view (which is the traditional orthodox one), about the unexhaustable infiniteness of the meanings of the Scripture, in contrast with the Wycliffite 'open', 'literal meaning'. He even justifies the title he gave to his work using this argument. The term *Mirroure* is destined to emphasise the imperfect nature of any endeavour to retell the events and truth of the Gospel: "may wordily clepede þe blessed life of Jesu Christ, þe which also because it may not be fully discriuede as þe life of oper seyntes, bot in a maner of liknes as þe ymage of mans face is shewed in þe mirroure."⁴⁵² Love also alludes to the inexhaustible richness and mysterious character of the Scriptures, which is its source text, but at the same time he suggests the limitedness of it, confirmed by his words some lines earlier: "Also seynt Jon seiþ þat alle þo þinges þat Jesus dide, bene not written in þe Gospelle."⁴⁵³ This is a hermeneutical characterization, in contrast with the Wycliffite one, which postulates that the text of the Bible is in itself sufficient and contains all knowledge needed for salvation. Love supports thus his recommendation of undertaking personal exegetical activity by alluding to the insufficiency of Scripture but also to the necessity of another hermeneutical authority, that of the Church.

To conclude, Love shifted the "seeing" of the *Meditationes* to a "reasonable supposing" as he was more conscious of the exegetical nature of all imaginary activity on a scriptural text, even if a mediated one. Therefore in his formulations he was more precise, in order to assure a relative correctness of such an exegetical activity. Notwithstanding his concerns born of a heightened consciousness and anxiety for scriptural authenticity, Love encourages his lay readers to an imaginative personal interpretation of biblical narratives and thus he gives proof of his audacity. This courage allies him with the Wycliffites who also vociferate for a personal reading and interpretation of the Bible by the laity. The other common factor between Love and Wyclif here is that they both count on the same agent to guarantee the correctness of such an exegesis: the direct inspirational work of the Holy Spirit, which Love usually (and traditionally) denotes as the work of grace.

Decisive differences emerge, though: whereas Wyclif is positive about the infinite possibilities of such personal exegesis (or did not dissolve his recognition of the problem of "obscure meanings"), Love sets limits to the practice of lay hermeneutics. One limit is that imposed in cases of doctrinal issues of great importance which cannot be interpreted by

⁴⁵² Ibid., p. 12.

⁴⁵³ Ibid., p. 10.

“natural reason,” such as the Trinity or the Eucharist, where the guaranteeing factor has to be the doctrinal authority of the Church, being corporeally inspired by the Holy Spirit, and thus ensures correct exegesis. The other limiting factor is, paradoxically, the coexisting inexhaustible infiniteness and the limitedness of the Scriptures themselves, rendering each attempt of interpretation reduced, partial and limited, being either individual or institutionalised, while we are “bodily lyving on erthe.”

V. 2. 4. Audience

The question of the identity of these readers merits some attention. Although Love emphasises several times that he writes for the “simple soules,” and he admits, even ‘boasts,’ that he fashioned his source text in the course of translation to meet the capacities and interests of his lay readers, this attempt is not one which was carried out consistently and exclusively in the case of offering access to meditation-contemplation. I find that Love had several kinds of audiences in mind. Besides principally focusing on his lay readership, (the commissioners of this oeuvre,) which counts itself as a novelty, he was aware of the fact that his text will reach other strata of society as well; that is clerics and monastics, male and female. He may have had first-hand experience about the dissemination of manuscripts.⁴⁵⁴ Textual evidence itself leads to concluding that Love even planned the *Mirroure* for clerics as well, an idea that has not been promulgated in an emphasised way by scholars. Although Sargent himself notes several allusions directed to Love’s own fellow Carthusians, he does not explicitly postulate a double readership. Karnes does. Her assumptions of a mixed readership seem supported by the text of the *Mirroure*. However, I find that her brief statement that Love wrote all hints to contemplation “over the head of his named audience to the clerics beyond,”⁴⁵⁵ is not evidenced by the *Mirroure*. A detailed textual analysis does not support such a conjecture, rather the opposite. On numerous occasions Love explicitly accentuates that the passage is meant for all, including cases which are relevant to the issue of contemplation, which will be analysed later. A general characteristic of the *Mirroure* is that what is written is written for all. Lay persons thus have access to material, counsels written for monastics, even

⁴⁵⁴ Sargent’s research testifies to this, see Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction, pp. 75-96, where he brings evidence about how works written for laity, such as Hilton’s *Mixed Life* ended in monastic libraries, some of the Carthusians. Some ownership cases when the *Mirroure* manuscripts were in monastic strenghten the point.

⁴⁵⁵ Karnes, “Nicholas Love,” p. 407.

in the few cases when Love signals that the passage to follow is meant rather for a special group. In the passage of Jesus' temptation in the desert⁴⁵⁶ Love translates from the *Meditationes* counsels for monasteries on how to preserve more solitude, thus letting his lay readers as well glimpse behind the curtains of monastic life. Another example is more telling: "þou cristien manne, bot speciali þou preeste."⁴⁵⁷ Both are named, next to each other, with no exclusion: laics may witness the exhortation meant for priests.

Another argument is that Love was writing for a Latinate lay readership, which he does not differentiate much from the unlearned or relatively learned clergy. His numerous recommendations of further reading material attest to it, first by the fact that Love specifies that such material can be found both in English and Latin. Love repeatedly refers to the reading capacities and bookish habits of his readers, presuming that they will find and read about this matter in other books: "neuerles for it is written in so many oþere places as i hope sufficiently, & also for þe gret processe þat followed after we leuen þis matere at þis tyme"⁴⁵⁸ and at other places mentioning books "both in Latyne and Englishe."⁴⁵⁹ Secondly, when he recommends the works of Hilton on contemplation, that is, the *Mixed Life*, and presumably even the *Scale*, he definitely refers to the lay audience. His other addition which he uses repeatedly also hints to this: "who rediþ or heriþ."⁴⁶⁰ The cluster does not denote either active or contemplative, "lewed" or learned, but it may refer to a *lectio* in monastic circumstances, in the *refectorium*, as well as to the parlour of a manor house. It occurs consequently throughout the whole text of the *Mirroure*.

Differentiating between the intention of the writer as regards his audience and the afterlife of the work would help in assessing the originality of Love's undertaking. The context of the tradition offers another image of Love's alleged conservatism: although aligned with the range of other contemporary works on meditation-contemplation, when taking into consideration the details of composition, the intended audiences, and finally what the text actually reveals, he appears rather revolutionary.

Nicholas Watson quotes the example of Rolle in relating the issue of assuring access of the laity to spiritual material:

⁴⁵⁶ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 72.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82. See also p. 10., etc.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

It is because of this translation of interior spirituality to the province of the laity that Rolle's "writings contain at least the potential for a wholesale democratizing of the spiritual life, rendering him "radical." By transferring interior spirituality from the desert to the wider audience of the late Middle Ages, Rolle thus collapsed the devotional, perhaps even social, distance between the hermit and the lay believer. ⁴⁶¹

The difference between the *Mirroure* and the *Rolle-Cloud-Hilton* series lies also in their intended audiences. Rolle, just as the *Cloud* author or Hilton, who serve as the context for Love, did not intend their work for laics. In quite an elitist way they wrote for select individuals, who, although initially active, all planned to leave the active life either for a mixed one or to embrace contemplative hermitism. The afterlife of the texts turned out differently, though, as all works reached the layers of lay audience. In the case of all these texts the 'democratization' really happened.

Love designed his text for a hybrid audience but focused on the lay part of it. This means that Love did not write his work as the exclusivists, but primarily for the common readers, as he proclaims it in his *Proheme*, which also attests that he was aware of the uniqueness of his endeavour. It is true that Love did not write about contemplation, as the others did, but the others did not create their writing for the laity. In contrast, Love honoured his lay readers at least with passages which point towards the advancement to contemplation in a conscious way. Thus Love did actually more for the democratisation of spiritual knowledge than his precursors.

The example of the *Book to a Mother* would be intriguing, though, which seems to exceed Love's endeavour as it is a text written for a layperson (the priest author's own mother), and contains a passage which elevates the lay person even above the clergy:

There is here nothing like the Book to a Mother's advice that the "mother" study Christ's life internally and emulate it lovingly in order that she might, the author tells her, "better konne Holi Writ þan ony maister of divinite pat loveþ not God so wel as þou," adding, "who loveþ best God, can best Holi Writ" and "who þat lovip him best is best

⁴⁶¹ Nicholas Watson, "The Middle English Mystics," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 539-65, at pp. 550 and 549. See his fuller treatment of this topic in "Visions of Inclusion: Universal Salvation and Vernacular Theology in Pre Reformation England," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 27 (1997): 145-87. Fiona Somerset makes a parallel argument about vernacular polemic: "the presentation of polemic argument in English carries with it by virtue of its possible influence on even the lowest of the laity the potential for a redistribution of secular power" *Clerical Discourse and Lay Audience in Late Medieval England*, p. 5.

clerk. " Love's meditator, confined to this-worldly meditation, makes no such progress."⁴⁶²

Such a formulation is a daring one indeed, and finds parallels in Rolle, *The Cloud* and the *Book of Privy Counselling*. These defame the pride of the highly lettered clergy and contrast it with the unlettered, who nevertheless lead a more perfect life and thus embody the principles of the Gospel better by reaching a more perfect charity. There is no explicit mention of the laity when asserting the primacy of true spiritual knowledge attained by personal experience over speculative theological knowledge.⁴⁶³ However, by Love's time the massive appearance of Wycliffism made such formulations extremely dangerous. The identification of such a life with a better knowledge of the Scripture had a very strong Wycliffite taste, and therefore was out of question for Love. The *Book to a Mother* was composed earlier, when the issue of Wycliffism was not yet in the focus, therefore it could be much bolder in its formulations of the claims to spiritual empowering of the laity. Scholars of *The Book* all agree on this fact when studying the question of the orthodoxy of the *Book*. They state that the work is orthodox, although it contains minor passages which betray positions held by the Wycliffites. However, the presence of these passages attests to the fact that the *Book* was created in a time when such issues were not suspicious yet, but formed part of the debates of Academia, without any ecclesiastical condemnation. In the same vein, the passage quoted above could be formulated as no anxiety was attached to such formulations in the time of the composition of *The Book*.

V. 2. 5. Access to Contemplation

It is true that Love did not formulate the aim of his translation of the *Mirroure* in the same way as the *Meditationes* does. The latter states that the ultimate aim of the practice of meditation is accessing further stages, that is, contemplation. Although the *Meditationes* does not offer a teaching about how to reach this phase (except in a tract attached to it about Contemplation), it does refer to this perspective several times. The *Mirroure*, in contrast, does not formulate such a goal explicitly, but systematically it reveals that there is more to follow after meditation for those who are not carnal and do not content themselves with persisting

⁴⁶² Karnes, "Nicholas Love," p. 388.

⁴⁶³ See e. g. Rolle, *Incendium Amoris*, Capitulum 5, pp. 157-160; *The Cloud*, Chapter Eight, 534-7; *The Book of Privy Counselling*, p. 105.

only in carnal thoughts and aims. When making the differentiation between the ‘carnal’ and the more ‘spiritual’ readers, love cuts across the boundaries of the clerical-lay opposition, he creates another categorization, according to the spiritual maturity of his readers, let them be lay or cleric. Also, Love emphasises the materiality of the thinking of the “simple soules,” and that meditating upon Christ’s humanity befits them better than the contemplation of his divinity. Nonetheless, he strongly modifies his statement later on by adding passages where contemplation is forwarded. Thus, in the course of his text, he does not limit himself to presenting only an exclusivist model of meditation from which all traces of acceding higher contemplation are excluded. As these occasions are quite frequent and occur on various levels of the construction of his text, it seems more probable that they are the fruit of a conscious intention rather than simple lapses of memory.

Love does not intend to exclude actives from high contemplation definitively, although he does not expect such endeavours from the part of the majority of his readers. He fashions his text for this majority, the “commune”, who will stay content with meditation, the success and accessibility of which he can guarantee. However, he does not exclude that some of his readers may aspire higher, and, which is also a crucial element of the game, these are the ones who are called by divine choice to more. For them, he constructs a web of helping accessories which may offer assistance to acceding to contemplative experiences. These accessories are of various nature, and permeate the text of the *Mirroure* from beginning to end. Love applies basically three main strategies: firstly by offering hints, data and further reading about contemplation; secondly by alluding to the possibility of high contemplation, by recounting such experiences. Thirdly, in some passages Love even suggests that all should and could aspire for mystical experiences, and he closes his *Mirroure* by a prayer for the fulfillment of such desires.

Love follows the first strategy in numerous ways. Besides offering texts for the meditation on the manhood of Christ, he also brings forth the access to His divinity by various means. Firstly, Love translated various passages relating to contemplation from the original text of the *Meditationes*. Secondly, he also keeps (that is, translates) passages about issues of high meditation, such as the description of the heavenly court, encouraging the reader to imagine even the divine figure of God the Father, of the angels, etc., which was, according to the classical monastic tradition, the prerogative of contemplation, exceeding the subjects pertaining to meditation. Thirdly, Love repeatedly inserted passages about contemplation by other authors, mainly from Bernard of Clairveaux, of William of Saint Thierry and others,

which, (although most often briefly) provide a description of the basic elements of contemplation. Fourthly, Love recommended further reading on contemplation, when explaining his excision of the *Tract on Contemplation* of the *Meditationes*, quoting the works of Walter Hilton, which were the most recent texts available in English about this issue and which offered a relation of the topic suited to the special state and needs of a lay readership.

Love's own words from his *Proheme*, who quoting William of St. Thierry's *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei*, seem to suggest that he is terming his readers as being only capable of carnal thoughts:

*contemplacion of þe monhede of cryste is more liking, more spedefull, & more sykere þan is hy3e contemplacion of þe godhed, ande þerfore to hem is pryncipally to be sette in mynde be ymage of crystes Incarnacion, passion & Resurreccion so that a symple soule þat kan not þenke bot bodyes or bodily þinges mowe have somewhat accordyng unto is affecion where wit he maye fede & stire his devocion.*⁴⁶⁴

In this he follows a well-established tradition. Jacques de Vitry wrote that “teaching ignorant people and educating peasants, to whom should more often be offered things comparable to bodily and tangible things and the sort of things they know through experience. For they are more moved by external examples than by authorities or wise sayings.”⁴⁶⁵ This important passage of Love's *Proheme* is often quoted to illustrate that Love supposed only the capacity of material thinking of his readers. However, two important elements are usually not observed. First, Love uses the comparative form to describe the capacity of his readers to meditate on the humanity of Christ: “more lyking, more spedeful, more sikere,” which is not suggesting complete exclusion of other possibilities as would be the choice of other adjectives as e.g. “only” or “most.” The comparative form “more” leaves room for other options as well, for an eventual capacity of contemplating the divinity. Furthermore, the citation is usually not quoted to the end. The concluding lines of the paragraph change the outcome altogether. Love explains that in his book the scenes describing heavenly realities will be done according to the Gregorian principles: “þerfore is þe kyngdome of heuene likenet to erþly þinges. þat by þo þinges þat bene visible & þat man kindly knoweþ he be stirede & rauyshede to loue & desire

⁴⁶⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 10.

⁴⁶⁵ Jacques de Vitry, *Exempla*, ed. Thomas Frederick Crane (London, 1890), introduction, p. xli: “ad edificationem rudium et agrestium eruditionem, quibus quasi corporalia et palpabilia et talia que per experientiam norunt frequentius sunt proponenda. Magis enim moventur exterioribus exemplis quam auctoritatibus vel profundis sententiis”; trans. Nicolette Zeeman, *Piers Plowman and the Medieval Discourse of Desire, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature* 59 (Cambridge, Eng, 2006), p. 181, quoted from Karnes, “Nicholas Love,” p. 394.

gostly inuisible þinges, þat he kindly knoweþ not.”⁴⁶⁶ This implies that the meditation on the heavenly scenes depicted similarly to the earthly realities will lead to contemplative experiences: the choice of words as “ravished” and “spiritually desire” pertain to the vocabulary describing contemplation. Thus Love, although admitting that the ‘symple soules’ tend to be more attuned to material thoughts and thus to the practice of meditation, he leaves the possibility, and even refers to, of acceding to contemplation.

Hilton expounds the theory that the humanity and divinity of Christ are united, therefore it is possible to reach the one through beholding the other:

*For in the persone of Jhesu aren two kyndes, that is, God and man, fulli ooned togidere. Bi the vertu of this blissid oonyng, which mai not be seid ne conceived bi mannes wit, the soule of Jhesu receyved the fulheed of wisdom and love and al goodnesse. As the apostel seith: Plenitudo divinitatis inhabitavit in [ipso] corporaliter. That is: the Godhede was ooned fulli to the manhede in the soule of Jhesu, and so bi the soule dwellide in the bodi. The mynde of the manhede of oure Lord upon this wise — that is, for to bihoolden the vertues and the overpassinge grace of the soule of Jhesu — schulde be comfortable to a mannys soule.*⁴⁶⁷

Love had the same perception of the two natures, human and divine, united implicitly, and he often treats the two together. It is true that Love does not focus on the divinity as pointedly as the *Meditationes* does, but he repeatedly implies it by offering occasions for meditation on the divinity of Christ. He is not completely restrictive, and thus a more nuanced picture emerges here again from his text.

The *Meditationes* author wrote and Love translated several passages which emphasise the dual nature of Christ, both his manhood and divinity, and thus encourages the reader to meditate on both: ”no3t only gostly in soule of his godhed, as illumynet a tauht of him, bot also in his bodily sist.”⁴⁶⁸ After the passage of the Last Supper, Love translates about faith: “In feiþ also he enformede hem & stabled hem more perfiteley in byleue of his godhede.”⁴⁶⁹ In the scene of the Ascension, Love writes about how seeing the earthly implies seeing the divine: “hevenly thinges by likeness of erþerly thinges.”⁴⁷⁰ Love also counts on the working of grace which can reach everyone and which elevates the soul to unknown states of spiritual

⁴⁶⁶ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 10.

⁴⁶⁷ Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, p. 126.

⁴⁶⁸ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 45.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

advancement, as exemplified in the scene of the Ascension: "Whoso haþ grace inwardly to beþenke & diligently to discusse alle þe processe of þis blessed and worþi sermon, skilfully he sal be stired in to þe brennyng loue of Jesu & likynglye reste in the swetnes of his blessed doctrine."⁴⁷¹

Love also discusses issues which pertain to contemplation according to the classical theories of contemplation. Such is the meditation on divine realities of the Heaven, of the transcendental creatures as angels and finally of the Divine Persons in their heavenly glorious essence which were considered to be issues where meditation could transcend into the higher phase of contemplation. Referring to the scene of the Heavenly Court, the discussion between God the Father and Gabriel⁴⁷² Sargent remarks that the description of the Father's face is shorter, the details are not translated by Love. This could have other reasons as well, not only the restriction of "contemplative issues". The same concern seems to operate here as later in the description of the Trinity, where limitation appears to be motivated by fear of heresy. In spite of all this, Love verbatim identifies the reading of the chapter on the Council in Heaven with contemplation: "onlich as a manere of parable & deuote ymaginacion styryng men to love god (...) And þus mykel & in þis maner may be seide & þought by *deuoute contemplacion* of þat was done aboue in heuen byfore þe Incarnacion of jesu, now go we done to erþe"⁴⁷³ (*italics mine*). It is also of some interest that this scene of the Heavenly Court is one which was included in a great part with a close textual faithfulness into the text of the first N-Town Play, following the appearance of the figure named *Contemplatio*, a figure unique in the English Mystery cycles. The indebtedness of the creation of this scene and of *Contemplacio* to Love's text is attested by several scholars.⁴⁷⁴ Presenting a heavenly scene in itself was recurrent in other plays as well as in other genres of religious literature. Nevertheless, the congruence of Love's usage of the term "contemplacio" in relation to this scene of the Heavenly Court, (which in this form, with the debate of the four daughters of

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., p. 156.

⁴⁷² Ibid., p. 22.

⁴⁷³ Ibid., p. 19.

⁴⁷⁴ See Alan J. Fletcher, "The 'Contemplacio' Prologue to the N-Town Play of the Parliament of Heaven." *Notes and Queries* 27 (1980), 111–1 and Richard Beadle, "Deuote ymaginacioun and the Dramatic Sense in Love's *Mirrou* and the N-Town Plays," in *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, 1-18, pp. 13-15. For the influence of Love's *Mirrou* on the creation of the N-Town Cycle, see Marian Davis, *Nicholas Love and the N-Town Cycle*, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. (Auburn, Alabama, 1979); Douglas Sugano, *The N-Town Plays*, Introduction, <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/sdntintro.htm>, last accessed 25 June 2013; and Stephen Spector, ed. *The N-Town Play: Cotton MS Vespasian D.8*. 2 vols. EETS S. S. 11–12. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). See also *The Mary Play from the N. Town Manuscript*, ed. Peter Meredith. (London: Longman, 1987)

God was unique to the *Mirroure* and thus served as an identifying factor for the source-study of the drama) and the creation of a distinct, unprecedented figure of Contemplacio by the author of the N-Town text suggests an identification of the scene with this high form of spiritual activity by Love and also by the contemporaries.

Love translated the passage of Bernard from the *Meditationes* about grace, how it transforms essentially the mind and the soul, premises of what happens in contemplation. If he did not intend this for his audience, or to leave the possibility, why did he translate such a passage? Love writes, paraphrasing Bernard: "bryngyng with hym so grete & so hye 3iftes of grace, þat it semeþ to þe soule, þat he faileþ in hire self, & lese mynde."⁴⁷⁵ The description fits classical expositions of ecstatic rapture exactly, where the soul and the mind are both transformed, taken out of the natural realm. Later a very similar phrasing is repeated in the scene of the mystical experience and of the Pentecost. Bernard writes about prayer and ascetism, but Love informs his audience about these details, considering his readership as being worthy and susceptible of such expositions, thus preparing them for later descriptions of contemplative experiences.

In other passages Love openly encourages the aspiration to contemplation. He translates from the *Meditationes* a passage about contemplation, *expressis verbis* stating that whoever aspires to reach contemplation should exercise prayer. In the passage on the Pater Noster, in the chapter of Jesus's prayer on the hill, we read: "Also if þou wolt come to heuenly contemplacion & fele gostly swetenes þat is felt of fewe chosen souls, & knowe þe grete graciose 3iftes of oure Lord god, þat mowen be felt bot not spoken, be a man of praiere."

He continues in the same vein, offering teaching on contemplation, even emphasising that simple souls and unlettered persons may accede to contemplation by prayer and even to greater gifts of grace:

*For by the exercise of praiere specialy a man comeþ to contemplacioun & þe felyng of heuenly þinges. Here mowe we see of hou grete gostly myzt & vertue is deuout preiere. And to confirmacion hereof of al þo þinges þat bene seide before, þat holy writte and doctours seynges fully preuene. Forþermore we haue a special profse in þat we seen euery day by experience diuerse persones simple & vnlettrede, by þe vertue of praiere gete & haue alle þo þinges that ben seid before, & many mo gretter 3iftes of grace.*⁴⁷⁶ (italics mine)

⁴⁷⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 19.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

Furthermore, Love translates from the *Meditationes* a passage introducing the Passion where it is written that meditating on the Passion brings one to real contemplation, to a new state of grace: "to a neue state of soule," "þat he never supposede before,"⁴⁷⁷ and which new state seems to be more than mere meditation, as it offers a sensation in advance of the heavenly joys, which does pertain only to the realm of contemplation:

*Of þe which he shuld fele a neue compassion & a neue loue, & haue neue gostly confortes, þorh þe which he shold perceyue him self turned as it were in to a neue astate of sole, in þe which astate þoo foreside gostly felynges, shold seme to him as a nerneste & partie of þe blisse & ioy to come.*⁴⁷⁸

Closing the meditations on the Passion Love adds a passage of importance, again a recounting of the possible mystical contemplation:

*Sopely þis siht of oure lord Jesu hangyng so on þe crosse by deuoute ymaginacion of þe soule, is so lyuyng to sume creatours þei felen sumtyme, so grete lykyng not onely in soule bot also in þe body þat þei kunne not telle & þat noman may knowe, bot onely he þat by experience feleþ it!*⁴⁷⁹

Love does not elaborate whether the quoted persons are secular or cleric, but writes about high contemplation, equating it with feeling spiritual sweetness, according to the Rolleian model, extending it also to the "simple soules."

To the scene about the Transfiguration, Love added another important text in which he refers to the "chosen souls." The scene itself is of significance, as it is the scene when Christ revealed his divine glory and essence, an issue of classical high contemplation rather than of meditation. Love explicitly refers to the possibility that to some chosen souls God may grant special spiritual understanding and the experience of a spiritual sweetness and comfort:

*Dis is þe processe of þe gospel, in þe which whoso haþ grace of gostly vndirstanding & sweetness may se many notabylytes (...) & to feruent deuocion & loue of god, & speciali he þat haþ felyng aboute kynde ziuen by speciale grace may tast & haue miche gostly confort, þat he graunt us part of Jesus Crist, Amen.*⁴⁸⁰ (italics mine)

Love applies here the same terminology of contemplation he uses some pages later in his mystical experience, as well as the classical Hiltonian terms exposed in the *Scale* denoting the prerequisites of contemplation: "gostly understandyng," feeling the "gostly swetenes and

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 160.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 179.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 116.

comfort.”⁴⁸¹ Love does not differentiate here either between secular or monastic, is all inclusive as the usage of the first person plural in his prayer testifies. Personal exegesis, interpretation of divine realities, and acquiring wisdom are all linked to sweetness, tasting and feeling. These all depend on the free distribution of divine grace which enables even the simple ones as well as the more educated to accede to spiritual heights, if they are worthy.

V. 2. 6. Restrictions: The Incarnation-Trinity Issue

An important restriction of Love on unlimited imagination appears in three cases. The first restriction is present in passages where the Scripture does not provide details, the two other cases are imposed on issues where the contemplation of spiritual realities transcends natural reason, as in the case of the Trinity and of the Eucharist. To the encouragement to meditation on the passage of how Christ fasted in the desert, Love adds an important warning: "Here of spekeþ not holi writ, wherfore we mowe here ymagine by reson & ordeyne þis worldli fest as us likeþ, *not by error affermyng bot devoutly ymaginyng & supposyng*, & þat aftur þe comune kynde of þe manhode."⁴⁸² (italics mine) This quotation attests to Love's anxiety over scriptural authenticity.⁴⁸³ The quoted passage contains the expression 'not by error affermyng', which signals a restriction Love will repeat in a more emphatic way in a subsequent passage on the Incarnation, when the nature of the Trinity is evoked. Love deploys his main restriction here:

Bot now beware here þat þou erre not in imaginacion of god and þe holi Trinite, supposyng þat þees þre persones þe fadere þe son and þe holi gost bene as þre erþly men, þat þou seest with þi bodily eye, þe whech ben þre diuerse substances, ech departed fro opere, so þat none of hem is oper. [...] Bot zit maiþ þou not vndirstande by mannes reson ne conceyue with þi bodily wit, and þerfore take here a generale doctrine in þis mater now for algate. What tyme þou herest or þenkest of þe trinyte or of þe godhede or of gostly creatours as angeles and soules þe wheche þou maist not se in hire propre kynde with þi bodily eye, nor fele with þi bodily witte, study not to fer in þat

⁴⁸¹ See the exposition of Hilton's theory earlier, in subchapter V. 1. 3. 2. Hilton also uses the term "special grace" to denote the same concept: "But I mene of special grace felt bi inspiracioun of the Hooli Goost, in manere as it is bifore seid. The comone grace, that is charité, lasteth hool whatsoever a man doo, as longe as his wille and his entente is trewe to God,..." Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 245.

⁴⁸² Sargent, *Mirroure*, p. 74.

⁴⁸³ To which Kantik Ghosh alluded, too, see *The Wycliffite Heresy*, pp. 147-173.

*matere occupy not þi wit þerwiþ als þou woldest vndurstande it, by kyndly reson, for it wil not be while we be in þis buystes body lyuyng here in erþe. And þerfore when þou herest any sich þinge in byleue þat passeþ þi kyndly reson, trowe soþfastly þat it is soþ as holy chirch techeþ and go no ferþer.*⁴⁸⁴

The passage is famous for its harshness, and is often quoted to highlight different aspects, most often that of Love's practice of exegesis.⁴⁸⁵ Karnes mentions briefly that Love's restrictions here may have been in connection with a fear of Wycliffism :

*Love's contrast recalls that of Archbishop Arundel whose Constitutions of 1407/9 protect devotional activities such as pilgrimage and the honoring of images by opposing them to the heretical and insubordinate declarations of Oxford theologians. Although the intimacy of Love's relationship with Arundel and his indebtedness to him have likely been overstated, the two nevertheless share a common impulse to praise devotional exercises as they condemn heretical theologizing.*⁴⁸⁶

Nevertheless, she does not elaborate on this aspect further and instead keeps emphasising that Love's endeavours were intended for restricting the imaginative freedom of his readers to hinder them access to contemplation: "Love takes the fun out of the exercise, restricting the meditator's ability to imagine a celestial feast by warning against too confident and ambitious a creation."⁴⁸⁷

In my interpretation Love's restriction here is to a great extent motivated by his fears of falling into heresy, that is, by his Anti-Wycliffite cares and campaign. He limits the working of imaginative meditation here indeed, but this is to a great extent attributable to the fact that he was aware of the doctrinal delicacy of the subject of the passage, which would also explain why he formulated his limitation exactly at this point. The Incarnation-Trinity section is the only restrictive passage except for the case mentioned before, trying to assure Scriptural authenticity (echoing Wycliffite concerns), which is later paralleled and reinforced with vehemence in Love's expositions of orthodox Eucharistic doctrine against Wycliffite tenets.

Although neither the issue of the Incarnation nor that of the Trinity were directly criticised by Wyclif, and thus did not count as "delicate matters", Love had a good presentiment as later exactly the doctrine of the Trinity became a *locus par excellence* which

⁴⁸⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 23.

⁴⁸⁵ See Kantik Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, and Kar th Tam s, "Altum Sapere": *The Risks of the Authority and Responsibility of Knowledge in Late Medieval English "Extramural" Literary Texts*, Doctoral Dissertation, 2008, <http://doktori.btk.elte.hu/lit/karath/diss.pdf>, Last accessed 25 June 2013. pp. 155-159.

⁴⁸⁶ Karnes, "Nicholas Love," pp. 398-399.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

was exposed to the laity in a real theological complexity.⁴⁸⁸ It became an issue of vernacular theologizing in hagiographical material written for the laity, as being relatively neutral in the Wycliffite polemic.

The interrelatedness of Trinitarian theology with problems of imagination and representation of unseen transcendental realities is present in other texts as well. Walter Hilton in a short treatise entitled *On the Worship of Images*⁴⁸⁹ answers Wyclif's attack on Trinitarian representations by admitting with regret the same phenomenon of modelling divine realities on human ones as an error of the simple devout: "They judge of divine things from the analogy of corporeal things, imagining, for example, that God in his own nature has the body of a man like their own, thinking that the three persons in the Trinity are separate beings like three men."⁴⁹⁰ In the *Scale of Perfection* he reformulates his views to some extent and writes positively about how one reaches to the divine through the beholding of the creation, of the corporeal realities:

For the knowynge riseth aboven al this in a cleene soule, and that is to bihoolden the blissed kynde of Jhesu. First of His glorious manheede, hou it is worthili highed above angelis kynde; and than aftir of His blissed Godheede, for bi knowyng of creatures is knowen the creatour. And thanne bigynneth the soule for to perceyven a litil of the privetees of the blissid Trinité.⁴⁹¹ (italics mine)

He sets a condition, too, that of remaining in charity, in sanctity. Thus, according to Hilton it is possible to behold the mystery of the Trinity to a certain extent, but he hastens to fold it all into the securing mantel of the doctrine of the Church, emphasising the importance of orthodoxy against possible errors:

It mai weel inowgh, for light of grace gooth bifore sche schal not erren as longe as sche hooldeth hire with the light. Thanne is it opened soothfastli to the iye of the soule the oonheed in substaunce and distinccioun of persones in the blissed Trinité, as it may be seen here, and moche othir soothfastnesse of the blissid Trinité pertynent to this matier, the whiche is openli de-clared and schewed bi writyng of holy doctouris of Hooli Chirche. And wite thou weel that the same and the self soothfastnesse of the blisside Trinité that thise hooli doctours, enspired thourgh grace, writen in her bookes

⁴⁸⁸ See Karen A. Winstead, "Hagiography after Arundel: Expounding the Trinity" in *After Arundel*, pp. 487-502.

⁴⁸⁹ London, BL MS Royal II. B.x, fols 178r-83r.

⁴⁹⁰ See Gerald Robert Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, 135-148. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), p. 130, translation made by Owst.

⁴⁹¹ Hilton, *The Scale*, p. 259.

*in strengthynge of oure trouthe, a clene soule mai seen and knowen thourgh the self light of grace. I wole not expresse to moche of this matier here, for it nedeth not.*⁴⁹²

Trinitarian theology was an issue which was used as a test of orthodoxy in many cases. John Mirk also included his warnings of the Lollard heresy in his sermons for the Sunday of the Trinity.⁴⁹³ This day, because of alluding to the ancient Christological heresies, was secured to allusions to heretics, as the homiletic tradition of many centuries attests.

Interestingly, even Rolle writes in Capitulum 6 of the *Incendium Amoris* an exposition on the Trinity in relation to heretics, as the subtitle shows: *Concerning heretics and faith in the Trinity*⁴⁹⁴. The theme surprises the reader by its somewhat forced inclusion. The passage does not appear in the short version of the text, only in the later long version. Nicholas Watson interprets this inclusion as an act of self-defence: Rolle tried to assure his readers of his orthodoxy.⁴⁹⁵ He writes: “Incendium Amoris, caps. 5-7, one of a very few formal doctrinal expositions in his works, is exceptional in putting his Trinitarian orthodoxy ostentatiously on show.”⁴⁹⁶ Watson continues by emphasising Rolle’s attitude of withdrawal from the delicate issue: “...his main point is that the Trinity is a mystery on which it is unwise to ponder: ‘Let us not examine too closely things we cannot understand in this life’ (163.28-29: ‘Non nimis investigemus ea que in via comprehendere non possumus.’)”⁴⁹⁷

As Wycliffite thought was not a hot issue yet, the motivating factor was presumably a fear of quests for earlier heresies preceding the cases of Wycliffism. Katherine Kerby-Foulton’s book testifies the presence of an alertness of different other forms of heresies before and besides Lollardy.⁴⁹⁸ Different versions of the Joachite heresy, which gained considerable ground also in England, were directly connected to the interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity.⁴⁹⁹

It may be the case that Love’s warnings also echo some of these earlier preoccupations with other forms of heresy. Nevertheless, there is another element which explains why Love inserted his warnings of theological speculation here, in this passage. One of Love’s main motivations could be the anxiety of heresy. The text of the passage of the Incarnation is

⁴⁹² Ibid., p. 260.

⁴⁹³ John Mirk, *Festial*, pp. 163-67.

⁴⁹⁴ Rolle, *Incendium*, Cap. 6. “*De causa hereticorum et fide Trinitatis.*” pp. 160-161.

⁴⁹⁵ Watson, *Richard Rolle*, p. 54.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion: Censorship and Tolerance of Revelatory Writing in Late Medieval England*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006)

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

formulated in such a way that it becomes closely related to the mystery of the Eucharist. The terminology and argumentation are very similar to those which Love will insert into his passages about the Eucharist.

The doctrine of the Eucharist, in many traditional expositions, mainly in those, which were formulated in a credo-form and for the instruction and use of the laity begin with the same formula: "the body of Christ is present in the Eucharist which was incarnated in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and which suffered for us on the Cross, etc." We find such formulas in sermons⁵⁰⁰, expositions of the Eucharistic doctrine, in tractates⁵⁰¹, Eucharistic verses,⁵⁰² etc. The vocabulary is also specialised, abounding with philosophical notions as "substance." The exposition Love writes evokes that of the Eucharist also in that it treats the mystery of substances which are in unity, nevertheless keep their separate identities as well, a problematic phenomenon which Love will treat and expose in great detail and complexity in his *Treatise* about the sacrament. Love uses here his frequently recurrent method of preparing his audience in advance to the presentation of his main asset by taking previous steps, treating material similar to that which will be focused on later. He uses this technique recurrently in the *Mirroure* and in the *Treatise*, as a stylistic and rhetoric device.

An important part of the conceptual and terminological set used thus by Love in his later expositions of the Eucharistic doctrine, which is always formulated in an accentuated way to confute Wycliffism, is presented here. The twofold incapacity: "Bot zit maiþ þou not undirstande by mannes reson ne conceyve with þi bodily wit,"⁵⁰³ as well as "kindely reson" is treated more in detail in the *Treatise*. The same formulations occur later in his *Treatise* verbatim expressed against Wycliffite heresy in relation to the Eucharistic doctrine. Intellectual speculation as well as a quest of high contemplation pertaining to such issues is then prohibited.

However, Love steals in a compassionate and partaking element here again, as he repeatedly does throughout his translation. Love uses the first person plural and asserts that the conception and understanding of such mystery exceeds not only the intellectual capacity of his (admittedly) lay readers, but of all: "for it will not be while we be in þis ... body lyuyng

⁵⁰⁰ See e.g. *The Ross Sermons*.

⁵⁰¹ See Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi*.

⁵⁰² See Michèle Theresa Priscandero, *Middle English Eucharistic Verse*.

⁵⁰³ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 23.

here in erþe”⁵⁰⁴ Naturally, he most likely was aware of the fact that some persons were dealing with such issues either intellectually (the theologians with ‘grete clergie’) or in contemplation, but he omits mentioning these, emphasising the generality of the impossibility of a complete understanding of ultimate divine realities such as the essence of God, of the Trinity, by human capacities. The same unique pastoral care and tactfulness is exemplified here as in many other occasions throughout Love’s text. He sweetens his restrictions by creating the atmosphere of partaking, thus also blurring the boundaries between lay and cleric, author ad audience.

The inherent link to the Eucharist is reinforced also by Love’s addition as the text follows that Christ became true man ”3it was he never departed fro þe fader or þe holi gost in his godhed, but euer was dwelling stille with hem one verray god in heuen”⁵⁰⁵ This addition is a very rare one in traditional treatments of the Incarnation, but is paralleled with expositions of the Eucharist where the bodily presence of Christ in the sacred Host is explained referring to his simultaneous heavenly presence as well. Love’s technique of preparing later expositions is at work also in this respect.

After a short passage taken from Bonaventure, he repeats the same idea in a longer phrasing than in the original text: ”For þourh þat holy trinyte is euery where by presence of his godhede, neuerlese þou maiþ þenk & vnderstand, þat he is þere in a more speciale manere by reson of þis hie worke, of þe Incarnacion.”⁵⁰⁶ Thus Love prepares the transition from the mystery of the Trinity, through that of the Incarnation, where the Trinity is present on earth in the person of a man, Christ, to the exposition of the mystery of the Eucharist, where the divine presence will be manifest in an object, the consecrated Host, a mystery truly unattainable by human “reson”. Thus Love here restricts the working of the imagination which would lead to the contemplation of divine realities (although in other cases, as argued for above, in the previous subchapter, he does allow the imagination even of “þe trinyte or of þe godhede or of gostly creatours as angeles and soules”⁵⁰⁷) instead, he presents another way of attaining contemplative mystical experiences. This “new way” will be presented in the following subchapter.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 24.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

V. 2. 7. Sacramental Exposition, Mystical Experience and Christ's Presence in the Soul

The exposition of Love's sacramental doctrine embedded into the Last Supper scene is a very rich text still offering room for ample research, even if Sargent, Sarah Beckwith and David Aers did already some work on it.⁵⁰⁸ It may be briefly characterised by doctrinal correctness, a surprisingly sophisticated theological terminology in English and a similarly complex rhetoric, directed against the Wycliffite tenets denying transubstantiation. I detected another essential element of Love's discourse: Love's unique invention of linking Eucharistic doctrine to mystical experience. I would focus on one aspect only.

Love built his Eucharistic teaching into the text of the *Mirroure* in two places, into the chapter containing the scene of the Last Supper and later into his *Treatise on the Sacrament*. The *Treatise*, being much longer, contains his main argumentation. Love prepares some of these by the Last Supper passage. One main element of this argumentation is a contrast built between reason and miracle, which represents the domain of the unreasonable transcendental realities having their own irrational, still valid transcendental logic. This contrast will be elaborated upon more fully by a masterly rhetoric art in the *Treatise*.

With an eye on confuting the Lollard heresy, now referring to the Apostles, Love writes that they "left their natural reson of manne, beleuyng without any doute, þat *he* (*Christ*) was *god & miht not erre*. And so most þou do þat wolt fele & haue þe vertu & þe *gostly swetenes* of þis blessed sacrament!"⁵⁰⁹ (italics mine) Thus Love conjectures that a conscious suspending of natural reason and of its speculations is needed to accept the miracle of the sacramental presence guaranteed by the authority of Christ as described in the Scriptures, equated with the authority of the Church. Furthermore, Love, with an ingenious turn, states that this acceptance of the correct Eucharistic doctrine will serve as a prerogative for feeling the mystical sweetness of the Eucharist. He develops further the logic of this conflict between reason and miracle, as it designs the essence and constitution of the sacrament of the Eucharist as "reasonable," and shifts the working of the miraculous element to the domain of the effects of it. Eucharistic presence creates miraculous, that is, transcendental states and experiences in the chosen souls: "gracious & resonable making & ordinance of þat blessed sacrament, and after þe gret worþines & *merveylous worching therof* in chosen soules to

⁵⁰⁸ See Sargent, *Mirroure*, Introduction, Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body*; and David Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, p. 12-28.

⁵⁰⁹ Sargent, *Mirroure*, p. 149.

confort & strenging of oure feiþ”⁵¹⁰ Love even calls for a conscious activity of all his readers, assuming that those who humbly accept the Eucharistic teaching of the Church will be rewarded by the experience of feeling the miraculous sweetness of it: ”And so by *inwarde consideracion* tast we þe *swetnes* of þis heuenly foode”⁵¹¹ He will strengthen and further develop this argumentation in the *Treatise*. After a sporadic mentioning of the chosen souls, Love includes all faithful orthodox readers into the camp of those who are granted access to enjoying this sweetness.

This instruction seems to be similar to those given for the fruitful usage of the techniques of meditation, where the feeling of the sweetness of devotion is the result of the working of the intellect and imagination. The sweetness of devotion is to be differentiated from the experience of the sweetness given as a gift, instilled from above, in a rapture, or in a similar state of mystical experience. Love uses both types of “sweetness.” He often alludes to that of devotion, a fruit of meditation: ”þat wolt fele þe sweetnesse & þe fruyt of þees meditacions.”⁵¹² On the other hand, “sweetness” also can mean the special gift which signals the state of contemplation. James of Milan wrote that one who meditates on Christ's earthly life "will be rescued from the depths, brought to innermost secrets, and lifted to the highest heights with sweetness."⁵¹³ Love quotes the same taste of “dulcor”, the “sweteness” in his exposition about the Eucharist as a mystical experience.

Love, in his attempt to offer assistance to those who aspire for more elevated spiritual experiences, also used a second strategy. This consisted in informing his readers of how to reach mystical encounters. He describes this presence in very similar terms as the often quoted authorities use on contemplation. The same conceptual and terminological set will be applied in the case of his main topic: in the narration of his own mystical experience, which he inserts in the exposition of the Last Supper and which he alludes to later, in his *Treatise on the Sacrament* as well, in both places preceded by the recounting of several other miracles of the Eucharist, many of which containing visionary experiences.

Love explicitly states that he recounts his visionary experience to confute the Lollard tenets about the Eucharist. He presents his narrative after a long exposition of the orthodox

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., p. 150.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Ibid., p. 80.

⁵¹³ James of Milan, *Stimulus amoris, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi* 4 (Rome: 1905), prologue, p. 3: "ab infimis eripitur, ad intima colligitur, ad summa erigitur cum dulcore."

Eucharistic teaching formulated in contrast to the Lollard tenets. He introduces his experience with these words:

*Bot here in confusion of alle fals lollardes, & in confort of alle trewe loueres & wirshiperes of þis holi sacrament (...) I sal say more ouer sumwhat in speciale þat I knowe sobely of þe gracious wirching in sensible felyng of þis blessed sacrament, þe which merueylouse wirching & felyng aboue commune kynde of manne shewep & prouep souereynly, þe blessed bodily presence of Jesu in þat sacrament.*⁵¹⁴

Later, in his *Treatise*, Love formulates repeatedly his endeavour to equip his readers/hearers against the erroneous doctrine of the Lollards by the testimony of miraculous events about the orthodox doctrine of the transubstantiation. In this passage he works for the same aim: the mystical experience, endowed with a heightened credibility and with a convincing dramatic touch, as recounted quasi first-hand, is intended to convince the readers, orthodox, hesitant and Lollard, of the veracity of the doctrine of the Church about the true nature of the Eucharist, that is, the real presence of Christ in the Host.

The description, that is, sharing a first-hand mystical experience strongly implies that such a phenomenon may be close, within reach. This effect is strengthened by Love's precision that the experience happened in the course of meditating on the Passion, as a sudden, unexpected, but notwithstanding natural fruit of it. Love writes in terms which allude to the recounting of Paul's rapture in the 2. Corinthians 12, 2, blurring the identity of the person who experienced the mystical encounter, thus veiling, at the same time revealing the autobiographical nature of the narration: "þere is one person þat I knowe now lyuyng & perauenture þere bene many þat I knowe not."⁵¹⁵ It is also noteworthy that Love does not specify whether the recipient was lay or cleric, although very presumably he writes about his own experience, thus suggesting that it could happen to all.

The way in which Love describes his experience is identifying it with a contemplative rapture. He uses the terminology of classical treatises on contemplation, however, the rhetoric of the scene betrays an intense personal implication: a genuine personal voice radiates from it. The essential attributes of a contemplative ecstasy are all present. First, the unexpectedness of the event, the admiration-awe caused by the experience is suggested, as Richard of Saint Victor defined in his *Benjamin Maior* how meditation is transformed into contemplation:

⁵¹⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 152.

⁵¹⁵ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 152.

*If the mind after a long time of searching finally finds the truth, then it usually happens that it receives the new insight with appetite, gazes at it with wonder and jubilation and stays in this amazement for a longer time. This means to exceed meditation within meditation and to proceed from meditation to contemplation. Because the characteristic of contemplation is to dedicate itself to that which it sees full of joy and with astonishment/admiration.*⁵¹⁶

Contemplation is “a sight of admiration”⁵¹⁷, which “exceeds its capacity of understanding.”⁵¹⁸ Love writes in similar terms: “in trefynge of that blisshed sacrament with the ynwarde sist of his soule and deuowte meditacioun of his precieuse passioun / sodeynly feleth also sched in to the self body ioye and a likynge that passith with oute comparisoun the hyzeste likynge that eny creature may haue or fele as by way of kynde in this lyf.” Hilton also uses similar concepts when describing the ecstatic rapture: “But thanne thorough openynge of the goostli yye into Jhesu, the love is turned and the soule is reised up aftir here owen kynde above alle bodili creatures; and thanne the bihaldynge and thenkyng and usynge of hem is goostli, for the love is goostli.”⁵¹⁹

In Love’s narrative the transcending of the human, natural faculties is present by reaching into another domain where spiritual understanding takes the place of the natural cognitive faculties. The sensing of the divine presence is accompanied by that of excessive sweetness and joy, paralleling Guigo II’s description in his *Scala Claustralium*:

*Reading is a busy looking into the scriptures with an attentive mind. Meditation is a studious activity of the mind, which searches for some hidden truth under the guidance of one’s own reason. Prayer is a devout turning of the heart to God to get evils removed or to obtain good things. Contemplation is a certain elevation of the mind above itself, being suspended in God, tasting the joy of eternal sweetness.*⁵²⁰ (italics mine)

⁵¹⁶ Benjamin maior I, 4 (Aris, 10,13-17): Nam veritatem quidem diu quaesitam tandemque inventam mens solet cum aviditate suscipere, mirari cum consultatione, eiusque admirationi diutius inhaerere. Et hoc est iam meditationem meditando excedere et meditationem in contemplationem transire. Proprium itaque est contemplationi iucunditatis suae spectaculo cum admiratione inhaerere.

⁵¹⁷ Benjamin maior I, 4 (Aris, 9,25-28): Contemplatio est libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula cum admiratione suspensa vel certe sicut praecipuo illi nostri temporis theologo placuit, qui eam in haec verba definiuit: Contemplatio est perspicax et liber animi contuitus in res perspicendas usquequaque diffusus.

⁵¹⁸ Cf. Benjamin maior V, 9 (Aris, 133,15-134,18).

⁵¹⁹ Hilton, *Scale*, p. 238.

⁵²⁰ Guigo II, *Epistola de vita contemplativa*, 84,32-38: Est autem lectio sedula scripturarum cum animi intentione inspectio. Meditatio est studiosa mentis actio, occultae veritatis notitiam ductu propriae rationis investigans. Oratio est devota cordis in Deum intentio pro malis removendis vel bonis adipiscendis. Contemplatio est mentis in Deum suspensae quaedam supra se elevatio, aeternae dulcedinis gaudia degustans.”

Finally, the union with this divine essence occurs in Love's text. This union is described in quasi erotic terms, (just as in the rich tradition of contemplative literature), and the heavenly nature of the place or state of the experience is also evoked: "A lorde Jesu / in what delectable paradysse is he for that tyme that thus feleþ that blessed bodily presence of þe in that preciouſe sacrament· þoruſ the whiche he feleþ him ſenſibly / with vnſpeakeable ioye / as he were ioyned body to body?"

The transcendental nature of this union is also alluded to by emphasising the intensity of the feeling which exceeds the limits of human capacities of forbearance, where without divine sustenance the experience of heavenly joy could not be born alive:

...þoruſ þe whiche ioye and likynge alle the membres of the body ben enflawmed of ſo delectable and ioyfulle an hete / þat hym þinkeþ ſenſibly all the body as it were meltyng for ioye / as wax doþe anentes the hote fyre· ſo ferforþ that the body myzt not bere that excellent likynge / bot that it ſcholde vtterly faille / nere the graciouſe kepyng and ſuſteynynge of the toucher / oure lorde Jesu / abouen kynde.⁵²¹

Love also emphasises the incomprehensible nature of the experience by human cognitive faculties, stressing that no one may understand the true nature of it unless experiencing the same, as well as the impossibility of verbalising it. One essential element of Love's recounting is the incongruent linking of the spheres of cognition with that of sensation: he repeatedly says that "no man knoweþ bot he that feleþ it", and "no man fully and in truth knowe it but onely he that in experience feleþ it", and so on, suggesting that true cognition in ecstasy happens through the senses, where, in the transcendental realm, these faculties are united. Consequently, the experience recounted by Love proves to be one of classical contemplative ecstasy. Love designates his experience as the "merueylouse wirching & felyng aboue comune kynde of name!"⁵²² The same notion of "merueylouse" signalling divine intervention and intention, appears later in the *Treatise*, expounding and playing with its multiple meanings.

Love closes the narration of his experience by a further interpretation of the wonderful, transcendental nature of it:

Dus haue I vnderſtande of þe foreſide graciouſ, wondurfulle & myraculoſe wirching of oure lorde Jesu, ſhewyng ſenſibly his bleſſede delectable bodily preſence, in þat moſte excellent ſacrament of þe autere, in maner as þe foreſeide perſone þat felt it miht telle it

⁵²¹ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 152.

⁵²² *Ibid.*

so in partie, & als I koude shortly & imperfitey write it, & þe which miraculous wirchyng to my vndirstonding hauing consideracion to alle þe circumstance therof passed many gret miracles þat we redene shewede in þis holy sacrament, in als miche as þe witte of þat bodily felyng passed in certeyne þe witte of siht, & had lasse of straunge likeresse, & more of þe self sobfastness.⁵²³

What is more original and surprising is the further equating of the divine presence of Christ with that of the Holy Spirit, by pointing to the identity of the mystical experiences: perceiving Christ's presence in the Eucharist becomes compared to the presence of the Holy Spirit as felt by the Apostles at Pentecost. Thus Love creates a theologically interesting compound, at the same time he validates the personal experience told by an authentication with Scriptural and liturgical sources:

And þerwiþ also in þe body he felþ sensiblye þe bodily presence of oure lorde Jesu in manere as it is seide before, with so grete ioy & lyking þat þere can no tonge telle....And as it semeth þat ioyful felyng in þe body is like to þat holi chirch singed of þe Apostles & disciples at þe feste of Pentecost, when þe holi goste was sent to hem sodeynly in þe likeness of fire withoutforþ, & vnspekable ioy in hir bodies withinforþ, þat is þat hir bowels filled with þe holi goste ioyede souereynly in god. þat blessed be euere, & souerenly for þis hie zift of grace to man.⁵²⁴

Love continues the same train of thought in his treatment of the Pentecost scene. Here he expounds on the nature of spiritual experiences which happen due to an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In previous chapters he prepares the introduction of the topic repeatedly, always stating the significance of receiving the Holy Spirit, the utmost Gift, who is sent for all. In the passage about the *Pater Noster* the Holy Spirit is mentioned as the Divine Person who teaches prayer which leads to contemplation. Love writes: "For þorh preiere is goten þe zift of þe holi gost, þat techeþ þe soule al þinge þat is needful þerto."⁵²⁵ In the chapter preceding the Pentecost Love prepares the following exposition by mentioning again the Holy Spirit, as the supreme Gift: "For þen was ziuen þarto þat hie worþies zift, þat is þe holi goste."⁵²⁶ The section of the Pentecost follows, which Love fashions according to his own taste translating only a few sentences at the beginning then expanding the topic with his original text, thus revealing that he considered it as being of importance. Interpreting the gospel narrative for

⁵²³ Ibid., p. 153.

⁵²⁴ Ibid., p. 154.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., p. 110.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., p. 217.

this day by actualising its meaning, Love evokes the state of spiritual drunkenness, an equivalent of a mystical experience when one is transported out of his natural reason, of Saint Bernard: “so praying, in hees blessings of gostly swetnes, so þat þou shalt haue so grete lyking in his mynde & in þoo gostly drinkes, þat he shale make þe drunken oft in soule;”⁵²⁷

Then he interprets it:

*Loo by þis foreside sentence of seynt bernarde we mowe se in partie, what behouet to receyue þe holi goste & his loue. Wherfore þat we mowe be able to receyue here þat grete zift of þe holi goste & his conforte, & after come to þat blisse þat oure lorde Jesus is now steye vp to (...) we mowe folowe sumwat þe blessed life of oure lorde Jesu in þis worlde...*⁵²⁸

Love signals that this gift of the Holy Spirit is enabling the exceptional cases of “spiritual drunkenness,” that is, mystical experiences, it is, however, to be wished by all, as it is also the guarantor of attaining the “imitatio Christi” and finally, salvation. Here Love does not make any differentiation between the special gift of the Spirit and His gift of salvation distributed to every baptised Christian, thus indirectly implying the possibility of receiving both graces similarly by anyone. Thus Love, in spite of his declaration that he wrote for the ‘symple soules’ who have to be fed with the light milk of doctrine and not with the “sadde mete of grete clargie and of contemplacion”⁵²⁹ fed his readers with sophisticated sacramental theology and with several paths showing the way to contemplative mystical experiences, to equip them against the erroneous doctrine of the Lollards.

Finally, I sense another point where Karnes’s claims seem exaggerated as well, that is the reclaiming tone. Love emphasises a difference between the probability and frequency of accessing such contemplation by the laity and the contemplatives. This is in absolute congruence with the medieval conception of the spiritual hierarchy which is built on the notion of divine ordering and determination, and which postulates the free divine choice and the free human answer given to it. Being a monastic contemplative meant the realisation of a special calling to contemplation: the monastic lifestyle was itself the embodiment of the acceptance of such a call. Being a contemplative ultimately meant a secular having given a positive answer to a call to high contemplation. Even so, as all texts testify, no technique, no status, no lifestyle, not even sanctity can guarantee the free gift of the actualization of the

⁵²⁷ Ibid., p. 220.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

contemplative ecstasy. Thus, the approach of modern scholarship claiming the “empowering” or guaranteeing such “spiritual possibilities” to the laity seems somewhat misplaced, anachronistic, not tuned with the medieval *mentalités*.

V. 3. The *Treatise on the Sacrament*

The *Treatise on the Sacrament* is Love's original work and it is a great piece which attests to his excellent skills of a thinker and rhetorician. Although it was written with the single aim to expose the orthodox doctrine on the Eucharist, it is of considerable length, eighteen manuscript pages. It consists of theoretical elaborations and of the narration of numerous *exempla*, that is, stories of Eucharistic miracles. Notwithstanding the extreme complexity of the text, Love succeeded in creating a compelling unity of content and style, thus revealing his outstanding talent of prose writing. All the more surprisingly, the *Treatise* has attracted scarce critical attention yet. Elisabeth Salter, discovering Love's excellent style, deals also with the *Treatise* besides the main text of the *Mirror*, but only minimally.⁵³⁰ Michael Sargent⁵³¹ offers a detailed description of its content, sources and some of its Anti-Wycliffite pronouncements, but leaves ample room for a more thoroughly applied close reading. Felicity Maxwell devotes a whole chapter to it in her MA thesis on the *Mirror*, but she focuses mainly on the narrated Eucharistic miracles.⁵³² Kantik Ghosh⁵³³ makes sporadic references to parts of the text but did not undertake a systematic study of it.

Nonetheless, the text of the *Treatise* would deserve one. In the present subchapter I will limit my investigations to the aspect of how the *Treatise* presents Love's endeavour to treat the complex issue of divinely inspired personal exegesis which accedes to the heights of contemplation. In the *Treatise*, just as in the expositions attached to the Last Supper scene, Love creates a direct connection between such contemplative experiences and orthodox belief, positioning the latter one as an absolute prerequisite of the first.

Love ingeniously introduces his text with a scriptural quotation which combines the two key concepts on which the whole *Treatise* is built: "Memoriam fecit *mirabilium* suorum misericors, et miserator dominus *escam* dedit timentibus se."⁵³⁴ (*italics mine*). The notions of "miracle" and "bread" or "food" dominates the whole discourse of the text from the beginning to the end, deploying a full scale of their semantic and doctrinal richness, creating a web of

⁵³⁰ Elisabeth Salter, *Nicholas Love's Myrroure*.

⁵³¹ Sargent, *Mirror*, Introduction.

⁵³² Felicity Maxwell, *Nicholas Love*, pp. 76-94.

⁵³³ Ghosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy*, and Kantik Ghosh, "Nicholas Love."

⁵³⁴ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 223.

intertwining of unusual intricacy. The introductory *locus* already presents a summary of the work, at the same time it provides a typological foundation of the Eucharistic doctrine. Love continues with implementing the other pillars of his discourse in his text: David prophesied thus about the Eucharist, long before the Incarnation, says Love, before translating his quotation into English. Then, he expounds the meaning of “mete” by identifying it with the Eucharistic bread, and states that this bread is meant for those who “trewly dreden him as hir lorde god, by whiche drede, þei kepen hem out of deadly sinne, & mekely standen in þe steadfast byleue of holi chirch.”⁵³⁵ Thus, already at this early phase, the identification of the sacrament of the Eucharist takes place in relation to the heretics, who do not submit themselves to the teaching of the Church. The connecting of the sacrament and of the “merveille” follows in which Love alludes to the priest’s words during the consecration. The reference to the priest and to the canon of the mass strengthens the orthodoxy of the exposition, as both the necessity of the ordained priesthood and of the act of consecration were criticised by Wyclif. The extraordinary accumulation of the word “miracle” serves an important rhetoric aim. In one long sentence Love condenses his conception of the essentials of his doctrinal message: the sacrament of the Eucharist, just as all the deeds of Christ are miracles, and the *Mirroure* is destined to testify to it.

*And þis gostly mete he ziueþ, & hap made þerebye a special mynde of hees merueiles, þat is to sey as þe preeste reherseþ in þe canone of þe messe in mynde of his merueylous & blessed passion, & of his merueilous Resurrexion & of his merueylous & glorious Ascension & generally in mynde of alle þe merueilous werkes & dedes of him in his blessed life here in þis worlde, þe which is tretede in alle þis boke before written.*⁵³⁶
(italics mine)

This over-abundance of the key word is paralleled and prepared by the passage in the Last Supper where Love writes about the “gracious, wonderfule, and myraculouse worchyng of Jesu in his bodily presence.” The *Treatise* will consistently keep this proliferation to the end. Love continues by identifying Christ’s body present in the sacrament with the same body which was miraculously incarnated, miraculously born, and did “merveilleuse words and dedes,” thus using the classical credo-like formula of Eucharistic expositions, as mentioned above (thus it also alludes back to the Incarnation-Trinity passage.)

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

Love uses a varied lexicon denoting the miracle: miracle, merveille, vision, fair vision, and revelacion are named. The extensive usage and play with the multivalent meanings of one word are stylistic devices which Love applies also in the case of his other key concepts, namely of “mynde,” and “fele.” Thus he creates a real masterpiece of allusions through spiralling structures of re-occurring concepts which carry the first meaning, and in their second occurrence they are already endowed with a new meaning as well. Thus they grow richer and richer in their semantic filling, and bring an ever-growing set of allusions to their previous meanings.

Love uses the word “mynde” also in its meaning of remembrance, but also signifying understanding, and several other concepts in his text.⁵³⁷ His choice of this exact word as a central one for his *Treatise* was surely not accidental. Wyclif’s critique of the Eucharistic presence also revolves around the interpretation of the same word in its scriptural context,⁵³⁸ and Wyclif decided for a limited, “literal” interpretation of it. By an accentuated exploitation of the semantic richness of the same word, resulting in the presentation of its doctrinal multivalence which has a consequence on the Eucharistic doctrine itself, Love counters his opponent using the same weapon.

In the next sentence “mynde” is replaced by the *terminus technicus* of Eucharistic doctrine: “sacramental commemoracion.” The explanation of it follows, now in a blend of common, everyday speech and of a special, philosophical-theological terminology: “he is verreyly & bodily present wiþ us under an opere fourme but sobely in his owne proper substaunce verrey god & man.”⁵³⁹ Love supports his statement with a scriptural text: “Loo I am with 3ou alle þe daies to þe worlds ende.”⁵⁴⁰ In a next step Love makes “mynde” of how in the Eucharist the divine and human presence are unitedly present, switching to the terminology used by the manuals on contemplation: “not only by þe gostly presence of his godhead bot by þe bodily presence of his manhede.”⁵⁴¹ He joins to all this the concept of “merveille” again, qualifying Christ’s Passion, thus adding the other core element of orthodox Eucharistic doctrine: that the Eucharist is a re-enactment of the Passion. Love continues with

⁵³⁷ For the variety and changes of meaning of the word “mynde” in the Old and Middle English literature, see Agnes Kiricsi’s dissertation, *Semantic Rivalry of Mod/Mood and Gemynd/Minde in Old and Middle English Literature*, PhD Dissertation, Budapest, 2005, <http://doktori.btk.elte.hu/lit/kiricsi/diss.pdf>, last accessed 26 June 2013.

⁵³⁸ Wyclif, *De Eucharistia*.

⁵³⁹ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 224

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*

the narration of the scriptural passage of the instauration of the Eucharist, quoting Christ's words: "þis doþe 3e in mye mynde."⁵⁴²

Now Love introduces his original invention of connecting the sacramental exposition to the mystical experiencing of the taste of spiritual sweetness: "þis is þat precious gostly mete & special mynde of oure lord Jesu, in þe whiche is hade alle gostly lyking, & þe sauour & taste of alle sweetness,"⁵⁴³ and he describes the sacrament as the "swete memoriale and hyzest zift."⁵⁴⁴ He already applied the same concept in his exposition in the Last Supper passage, and this paragraph is only introducing a whole series of instances where Love presents the same idea in the *Treatise*.

The next sentence again sums up what has been said before, emphasising repeatedly that this gift is given for the faithful, thus implying the exclusion of the unfaithful heretics: "þus oure lorde Jesu of his grete mercy haþ made a lyking mynde of hees merueiles in þis gostly mete, þe which is moste merueile of alle merueiles, ziuynng þis mete specialy to hem þat dreden him."⁵⁴⁵ In the following Love enumerates the cases of differing partakings in this mystery of the Eucharist, naming four categories. Those who have a servile love of Christ receive a simple sustenance of their faith, but those with a genuine affectionate love are gifted with a mystical experience of spiritual comfort and sweetness. Love, to describe this state, uses the same quotation of a Psalm which he used in two other instances, both describing mystical union in the *Mirroure*, once in a Bernardian citation and the other in the narrative of his own mystical encounter: "Aa lorde god how mikel is þe manyfolde plente of þi swetnes, þe which þou hast hidde to hem þat dreden þe."⁵⁴⁶

Those who do not feel the sweetness are sinners or heretics. "Fele" thus becomes the criterion of belief or unbelief, of being in truth or error, ultimately, of being in grace or out of grace, which is expanded to such extremes as being saved or damned, belonging to Christ or the Antichrist. Love proceeds with a detailed presentation of the error of the Lollards. He lists reprovingly their general attitude (they do not fear God and the Church), their core vice of "presumptuously leuyng vpon hir owne bodily wittes and kyndely reson,"⁵⁴⁷ and the exact details of their erroneous belief in the Eucharist, presented in a philosophical-theological vocabulary.

⁵⁴² Ibid.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 225.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

Love then treats the core vice, that is the pride of Lollards and states that their main error consists in their unbelief in God's omnipotence, why they reject miracles. Denying the omnipotence of God makes them worse than the Jews or the pagans. Everything, which is spiritual, the essence of spirituality is contained in 'merveile', which is "abouen þe reson of man"⁵⁴⁸ and is contrasted with "kyndely reson," which hinders Lollards to recognise the true nature of God's miracles, and finally God himself in the Eucharist.

Love also constructs an antagonism of sight, naming the bodily eye in opposition to the goostly eye.⁵⁴⁹ Those who rely on their own bodily wit will be denied transcendental understanding, those who seek bodily sight will be denied the spiritual sight of the true nature of the Eucharist, of Christ himself. Again, the working of the spiritual capacity of mystical recognition serves as a prerogative of embracing the right doctrine.

Love proceeds with a categorization of the miracles related to the Eucharist. He differentiates between inner and outer miracles. The inner are those which pertain to the true nature of the Eucharist, as Christ's presence in the Host and His presence in all the hosts of the world without multiplication of His essence. The outer ones are those which testify to this, the Eucharistic miracles. After the exposition of the first type, Love inserts his second great speech of restriction which parallels with the one written in the Incarnation-Trinity section:

*þerfore it is grete foly & gostly perile to seke curiously in ymaginacion of reson þe merueiles of þis worþi sacrament. Bot it is moste sikere namely to a simple soule, & suffice to sauacion touching þe forseide merueiles & alle oþer of þis blessed sacrament, to þenke & fele in þis manere, þus hauen holy doctors tauht, & holi chirch determined, and þerfore þus I trowe & fully byleue þat it is in soþenes, þouh my kyndely reson azeyn sey it.*⁵⁵⁰ (italics mine)

This speech is very similar to its pair in many ways. It reveals that Love saw an inherent unity between the Trinitarian and Eucharistic doctrines, the correctness of which he ardently protects. Nonetheless, in this second passage he adopts a more personal tone. Instead of the partaking usage of the first person plural here Love uses the first person singular, thus creating a direct personal confession of his beliefs. It seems that the significance of the Eucharistic doctrine to be defended urged him to do so.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 226.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 229.

The second type of miracles openly proves the real presence. First, the story of King Edward the Confessor and of his earl Leveriche is narrated. Interestingly, Love chose an *exemplum* the protagonists of which were both actives. Their reaction is described in a similar way to that of the ecstasies narrated by Love in his mystical experience and in the scene of Pentecost: “Aftere þis þei boþe of so ioyfulle a siht gostly confortede, & turned alle in to deuout praieres & swete weping teres, *were made gostly drunken* of þe plente of goddus house, & *fedde wiþ þe riwere of his souereyn ioy & gostly lyking*.”⁵⁵¹ (italics mine)

The main protagonist of the third miracle is also a secular, a Roman matron who did not believe in the real presence and ridiculed it. As she did not see the divine essence behind the materiality of the bread, her example may have been chosen for having a connection to that of unbelieving Lollards, just as the narration of her conversion was presumably intended to set an example to them.

After the narration of the miracles another theoretical section follows, now describing the nature of the Lollard dissent in even more details. Wyclif is never mentioned by name but is described as a great clerk who was led astray by his excellent knowledge and wit and by his pride. The compound “grete clergie”, appearing at the beginning in the *Proheme*, and in the *Treatise* several times, is used to signal Love’s fear of deception, which leads to error. It is characterizing the Lollards, expressedly Wyclif, who is named as ”þe forseide master of Lollardes,”⁵⁵² and as ”hir maistere þe which þorh his grete clergy and kunnyng of philosophye was deceyuede.”⁵⁵³ Again, Love expounds his theory: “many grete clerkes, þe which leuen so miche vpon hir owne kyndely reson, & þe principiæes of philosophy, (...) þat þei wole not leue þe trewe feiþ taught by holy chirch of þis blessed sacrament, & þerfore þei fele not þe soþfast comfortable effecte of þe merueiles & miracles before seide neiþer opune nor priuely touching þis holy sacrament.”⁵⁵⁴

Furthermore, Wyclif is even connated with the Antichrist: ”þe comyng of Anticriste & hees disciples, ...& þat by grete clergy of mannus konynyng, & by merueiles & miracles worchinge,”⁵⁵⁵ or verbatim identified as: ” howe þe disciples of Anticrist þat bene clepede Lollardes hauen made mich dissension & diuision in holy chirch, & putte many men in to

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., p. 231.

⁵⁵² Ibid., p. 237.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., p. 236.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 237.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 236.

errour of þis blessed sacrament, by þe fals doctrine of hir maistere þe which þorh his grete clergy & kunnyng of philosophye was deceyuede.”⁵⁵⁶

The discourse here is also formed using the same key notion: miracle. Now great knowledge and miracles will be coupled. Love inserts a quotation of Gregory the Great who cites the biblical passage describing the last days by the appearance of the Antichrist. Apocalypse, which was already alluded to in the Last Supper exposition, enfolds in Love’s imagination.⁵⁵⁷ In his conception, the central test of belief will be the correct doctrine of the Eucharist, the confession of which will be rendered extremely difficult by the ruses of the Antichrist who, by his cunning and by the great miracles he performs, will deceive many and thus causes their perdition. Love names these two methods of deception: “by clergy & euidence of worlds konnyng acordyng to naturele reson & by merueiles & miracles worching fals deception.”⁵⁵⁸ The identification of Wyclif with the Antichrist is easily made considering the first element as both appear as deforming the right sacramental doctrine by human speculation and reasoning. Nevertheless, the second tag of the description of the Great Illusionist does not coincide with the reality of Lollard practice. Lollards were ill-famed for not producing any miracles, which would have validated their teachings. Love was conscious of this, as well as his contemporaries. The testimony of an anonymous macaronic sermon attests to it, as it says that those who die in this Lollardy never come back; no miracle is shown by them: “Words alone without works are not to be believed. Where are the miracles? Where are the dead they have raised? Where are the lepers they have healed?”⁵⁵⁹

The enigma of the non-existing miracles wrought by Lollards did not stop Love from persevering in his identification. Love states that the power of Antichrist is so effective in Lollards that the greatness of their knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy and theologizing is in itself the miracle, destined to cause deception and destruction: “Antecrist hade in hem hadde so grete powere, þat þei hade with hir rezones, also wrought merueiles & miracles.”⁵⁶⁰ Love seems truly amazed by the expertise of Lollards and warns that even if an angel came to teach doctrine which would contradict that of the Church about the Eucharist, his words

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ The identification of the appearance of Lollardy with the coming of the Last Days is not new to Love, it also appears in Henry Knighton’s *Chronicle* and other contemporary polemical works.

⁵⁵⁸ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 238.

⁵⁵⁹ “Sed nuda verba sine operibus non sunt credenda. Vbi sunt miracula facta per virtutem annuli eorum? Vbi sunt mortui quos suscitaverunt? Vbi sunt leprosi quos mundauerunt?” Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 649. f. 19v. Quoted from Siegfried Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons. Bilingualism and preaching in late-medieval England*. (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1994), p. 374.

⁵⁶⁰ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 237.

should not be given credence, as “is þe Angele of Sathanas & not of God, as bene alle þe false lollardes.”⁵⁶¹ Love uses the harshest terms to denote Lollards, thus aligning the tradition of the polemic which, from both sides, reciprocally “honoured” the other party with such denominations. Wycliffite sermons and tracts also abound with such identifications of their opponents.

However, Love utters the last word on Lollards repeating his main accusation: “þe false lollardes þe which hauen neiþer trewe drede nor parfite loue of oure lorde Jesu, & þerfore þei fele not þe gostly swetenesse of þis heuenly mete of his precious body, ne þe lyking mynde of hees meruiles shewede in þat blessed sacrament.”⁵⁶² Consequently, Love formulates his theory in terms of who is worthy or not of the divine grace which grants a transcendental spiritual understanding of the true essence of God’s mysteries, and also a “lyking” pleasure in tasting the spiritual sweetness, the reward of all faithful. Thus Love, who began by offering cautious hints towards a possible access to the phase of contemplation for those readers whom he hoped to possess a more advanced spritual affinity, in the course of his transaltion became progressively bolder. By the recounting of his own contemplative experience Love brings such a spiritual state to a close proximity to his readers. In the passage of the Pentecost he suggests that all should aspire for the spiritual “drunkenness” caused by the divine visitation of Grace, the Holy Spirit. Finally, in the *Treatise* Love reformulates his concept about who is eligible to experience the highs of mystical understanding and ‘jouissance:’ those who by “wipstondyng of temptaciones” of the Lollard heresy continue to “zeue more credence to þe trewe dotrine of holi chirch.”⁵⁶³ Thus, investigating the way Love encoded a more inclusive, richer spiritual program into his *Mirroure* which also targets contemplation besides meditation, leads me to conclude that Love pursued his assisting of spiritual advancement also in the light of his program to combat Wycliffism.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 237.

Chapter VI. Variations of Anti-Lollard Strategies for a Mixed Audience: The *Mirroure* in the Context of Some Late-Medieval Polemic Sermons

VI. 1. The Orthodox Response in Homilies and Sermons

Besides drama another genre of late-medieval religious writing may be signposted as a genre *par excellence* which was destined to reach a wide audience: that of the sermons. Homiletic material was never scarce but by the fourteenth and fifteenth century it flourished into an abundant bunch, both written in Latin and in the vernacular; moreover, the mixture of these languages is also exemplified by the so-called macaronic sermons. Preachers, conscious of their great influence and responsibility, treated multiple issues of actuality besides their primary task of preaching the Gospel, among them that of the threat of Wycliffism. Sermons exerted an impact not only on their audience who attended the liturgical celebrations in churches but also on the creation of other written material, religious or even secular. Although no direct textual influence has been detected so far between late-medieval sermon production and the *Mirroure*, they shared very similar aims, both by attempting to help their audience to a mediated access to the Gospels and by communicating the right attitude and doctrine of the Church in the context of Wycliffism. In this chapter I shall attempt to investigate how the same effort of combatting Wycliffism appeared in the homiletic material, which constitutes an important background to the *Mirroure*. Setting Love's writing into this context with similar policy against Wycliffite doctrine, I hope to clarify how these texts written for various audiences created different strategies of refutation and how this influenced their popularity.

The choice of homiletic material to present a background for the *Mirroure* may be justified on several grounds. Firstly, Love's work was designed very conscientiously to meet the needs of its readers and these form roughly the same kind of audience as that of the sermons, i.e. predominantly the late-medieval laity, as attested also by the ownership of the extant *Mirroure* manuscripts. Secondly, as noted in previous chapters, Love wrote his *Treatise on the Sacrament*, which was appended to almost all the extant manuscripts of the *Mirroure*.

Although the *Treatise* was meant for devotional reading, it is written in the form of a sermon, a typical modern university type. The *Treatise* was composed specially to accompany the text of the *Mirroure*, forming an organic part of it. Moreover, being entirely the original composition of Love it contains in a condensed and emphatic form the main message its author intended for his audience.

I tried to choose examples of sermons which are characteristic of their types, encompassing a large scale of possibilities. As the entire corpus of sermons written in the vernacular is rather voluminous, containing around twelve great blocks of sermons (with numerous variations, recurring in different collections), as the seminal study of Spencer listed,⁵⁶⁴ an all-embracing comparative work would definitely exceed the limits of this dissertation and would require the creation of a volume on its own. Thus I opted for the choice of a limited number of sermons which are typical of their genres and which share important characteristics with the *Mirroure*. I chose sermons which were written for a mixed or a predominantly lay audience and contain Anti-Wycliffite propaganda. Thus the similarities and differences of the strategies these texts apply can be formulated on the basis of an intentional selection of test-items. The chosen homiletic texts form a chain of successive steps from the written treatise in the form of a sermon (Love's *Treatise*), through the written sermon meant to be read (the *Macaronic sermons*⁵⁶⁵), followed by sermons written to be delivered to a mixed audience (*The Ross sermons*⁵⁶⁶) and finally closing with sermons written definitely and emphatically to be delivered mainly to the most common, massively illiterate laity (John Mirk's *Festial*⁵⁶⁷). One sermon-type is catalogued by Spencer as written exclusively to refute Wycliffism.⁵⁶⁸ I consider it, however, a different type, where the text written had no other scope than exerting this criticism. In the chosen texts, however, the Anti-Wycliffite message had to reach the public incorporated into the body of the texts relating to other issues as well. I concentrated on sermons which were intended for a relatively similar audience than the text of Love, thus I excluded the sermons written for an elite, as the university sermons or sermons delivered for an exclusively monastic audience. I also excluded sermons written entirely in Latin with a sophistication which also required a highly

⁵⁶⁴ H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in Late Middle Ages*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 523-529.

⁵⁶⁵ Siegfried Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, p. 77.

⁵⁶⁶ *Middle English Sermons*, ed. Woodburn O. Ross. EETS Original Series 209, 1940. (Milwood, New York: Kraus Reprint, 1987)

⁵⁶⁷ *Mirk's Festial: A Collection of Homilies*. Ed. Theodor Erbe. EETS Extra Series 96, 1905. (Milwood, New York: Kraus Reprint, 1987)

⁵⁶⁸ Spencer, *English Preaching in Late Middle Ages*.

erudite medium of reception. Thus, I do not intend to study the Latinate university sermons, although several of them, those including such authors as Philip Repington, John Felton, and others played an important part in combating Wycliffite ideas. However, their audience is quite distant from that of the *Mirroure*, being a clerical and academic one. The Anti-Wycliffite strategies of these sermons, just as of those selected for the present study, has already received scholarly attention. A comparative analysis of these strategies, however, has not been carried out yet, thus one will be attempted this present chapter.

The 10th canon of the Fourth Lateran Council⁵⁶⁹ stated that among all other things, which aim at the salvation of the Christians, “the food of the Word of God,” preaching, is the most important. This gave not only a status to preaching but, through the new regulations of the religious life of all Christians, with a special focus on the laity, also created new circumstances, favourable for their instruction. This programme, that is, “to attack the heretic deviations and to confirm the Catholic faith”⁵⁷⁰ was, to a great extent, carried out by sermons delivered to lay people. These endeavours were paralleled by the new demands of the laity for a stronger devotional life.

The sermon was the genre “par excellence” where the two spheres, the clerical and the lay, were most visibly in a close relationship; thus the transmission processes from one to the other, that is, a reciprocal influence can be detected. These sermons lay at the intersection of orality and textuality: they were either actually delivered or written for devotional reading not only for clerics and members of religious houses, male and female, but also for lay people needing devotional literature. Moreover, there are several variations of the function of a sermon text, whether it be an actual draft, a *reportatio* of a heard speech or a model for a speech to be written, and so on. They were also at the junctions where languages intermingled: Latin and the vernacular.⁵⁷¹ The basic idea was to deliver a speech in Latin for a clerical audience and in the vernacular to the lay, but there were several possibilities of variations and interchange.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ Lateran IV, canon 10, *De predicatoribus instituendis*, in *Conciliarum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. J. J. Alberigo, et al. (Bologna: Istituto per le scienze religiose, 1991), p. 329.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁷¹ For basic works on this issue, see Michel Zink, *La prédication en langue romane avant 1300*. (Paris: H. Champion, 1976), and *idem*, “La prédication en langues vernaculaires,” in P. Riché and G. Lobrichon, eds., *Le Moyen Âge et la Bible. Bible de tous temps 4* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1984), 489-516.

⁵⁷² Anna Maria Valente Bacci, in her article “The Typology of Medieval German Preaching,” in Jacqueline Hamesse, Beverly Mayne Kienzle, Debra L. Stoudt and Anne T. Thayer, eds., *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University. Proceedings of International Symposia at Kalamazoo and New York. Textes et Études*

The dynamism resulting from all these aspects has allowed scholarly work on sermons to flourish.⁵⁷³ These works classify sermons and offer a well-documented overall account of such general issues as form, audience, provenance of texts, function of the texts, etc. Studies of all these aspects are on the scholarly agenda of the day; new source editions and text studies transform and overthrow previously accepted views, such as too rigid categorisations. For a classification of sermons – from homily to the more flexible and transformed form of late medieval sermon types – several attempts are now being made at creating a typology, but the diversity of the material seems to withstand the claim of a clear-cut and all-embracing systematisation.⁵⁷⁴ As regards the form of the *sermo*, an important change seems to have taken place around the twelfth century, when the *homilia*, which means the systematic, verse-by-verse treatment of the Gospel pericope, gave way to the later form, called *sermo*, where a certain theme was elaborated upon, not necessarily the scriptural passage, and the basic structure was *thema-prothema*- and then the development of the different *divisiones* and *subdivisiones*. However, recent studies meticulously call attention to the fact that a great variety of forms existed, even enriched by the parallel survival of the *homilia*-type from older times.⁵⁷⁵ All of these aspects have a significant relevance for the discovering of their functioning and for the functioning of their message as well.

Sermons are also treated as important sources for a better construction of the “histoire des mentalités” by the study of variations of *topoi* related to the appearance of these in other

du Moyen Âge 9 (Louvain-la-Neuve: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d’Études Médiévales, 1998), 313-329, gives a concise list of the possible variants: “1) In Latin that existed as models and sources of inspiration for preachers and were never delivered orally before the public; 2) delivered in vernacular which have reached us in Latin; 3) In a mixture of Latin and in vernacular; 4) In vernacular, based on Latin models; 5) Originally in vernacular; 6) Originally written in vernacular, to be translated into Latin at a later date.” In “The Typology of Medieval German Preaching,” 321.

⁵⁷³ See Jean Longère, *La Prédication Médiévale*, Études Augustiniennes (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1983), and Nicole Bériou, *L’avènement des maîtres de la Parole. La prédication à Paris au XIIIe siècle*. (Paris: Institut des Études Augustiniennes, 1998). Hervé Martin, *Le métier de prédicateur à la fin du Moyen Âge 1350-1520*. (Paris: Cerf, 1988). The basics of this work are to be found in general monographs such as those of Jean Longère, Nicole Bériou, and others; and on late medieval sermon production the work of Hervé Martin is useful. The main, seminal work on the late medieval English sermons is by H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages*. See also Gerald Robert Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England: An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period 1350-1450*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926); and the more recent works of David d’Avray.

⁵⁷⁴ Valente Bacci, “The Typology of Medieval German Preaching,” it presents the competing systems of Jean Longère, *La Prédication Médiévale*, Rudolf Cruel, *Geschichte der Deutschen Predigt im Mittelalter*, repr. (Detmold: Meyer, 1879); J. B. Schneyer, *Geschichte der katholischen Predigt* (Freiburg in Breslau: Seelsorge Verlag, 1969); and those of G. C. Zielemann, “Das Studium der deutschen und niederländischen Predigten des Mittelalters,” in *So Predigend Eiteliche. Beiträge zur deutschen und niederländischen Predigt im Mittelalter*, ed. K. O. Al Seidel, *Goppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik* 378 (Göppingen: Kummerle, 1982), 5-48.

⁵⁷⁵ An important contribution to this is offered by the monumental and important work of Hervé Martin on the situation of late medieval preaching; see Martin, *Le métier de prédicateur*.

genres as well. The studies trying to map the interchanges between “Gelehrtenkultur” and “Volkskultur”⁵⁷⁶ are increasing, embracing cultural and religious anthropology as well.⁵⁷⁷ The problems of diffusion of forms are also attracting more and more attention, besides the changes in the discourse according to the “horizon of expectation” of the audience, or according to the message that the preacher wanted to convey. Jacques Verger⁵⁷⁸ contributed to the former aspect with interesting studies about the “middle class” of the transmitters of clerical culture to the laity. The appropriation of this culture by the laity and the altering of the models of transmission are mostly reflected by the changes in the discourse.⁵⁷⁹

The considerable increase in the sermon-production of the fourteenth century is followed by a similar increase of the transmission of these in the fifteenth century, and scholars agree that this was closely connected to the religious reform movements of the late Middle Ages.⁵⁸⁰ This explosion was also manifested in the appearance of a large number of sermon-types, determined by the historical context, the function, and the audience of the delivery. The new figures of preachers carried out their activity in rural areas or in cities for large lay audiences and eventually with a great popularity. The concern for the instruction and pastoral care of laity helped the further development of the genre of the sermon as a text to be heard, and even read by laity as well.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁶ Ernst English, “Deutsche Predigten als Vermittler Zwischen Gelehrtenkultur und Volkskultur,” in Peter Dinzelsbacher, ed., *Europäische Mentalitätsgeschichte*. (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1993), 147-158.

⁵⁷⁷ Somewhat in contrast the theory of Alain Boureau about the existence of a common culture of clerics and laity already from the twelfth century. See Alain Boureau, *L'événement sans fin: récit et christianisme au Moyen Âge*. (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1993). The “histoire des mentalités” also emphasises the different pace at which culture norms and forms were changed and settled; it is interesting to see how the “longue durée” phenomena were paralleled by those of the “courte durée,” and how all these are reflected in the sermon production of this given period (for example, by heterodox movements, and so on, as factors which influence the changes in the “courte durée”).

⁵⁷⁸ Jacques Verger, *Les gens du savoir dans l'Europe de la fin du Moyen Âge*. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1997)

⁵⁷⁹ See P. J. Horner, “Preachers at Paul’s Cross: Religion, Society and Politics in Late Medieval England,” in Hamesse, Mayne Kienzle, Stoudt and Thayer, eds., *Medieval Sermons and Society*, 261-282, and Peter Howard, “Diversity in Discourse: The Preaching of Archbishop Antoninus of Florence before the Pope, People and Commune,” in Hamesse, Mayne Kienzle, Stoudt and Thayer, eds., *Medieval Sermons and Society*, 283-308.

⁵⁸⁰ See Schiewer, in Kienzle, *The Sermon*, 922. For the sermon production of the thirteenth-century in Latin, see Johann Baptist Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1150-1350*, 9 vols. (Münster: Aschendorff, 1969-1995)

⁵⁸¹ “The reasons for a sudden increase in *plenaria* with gloss after 1400 are most likely to be sought in the increasing and programmatic transfer of theological knowledge to the laity as we were able to observe.” Hans Joachim Schiewer, in Kienzle, *The Sermon* p. 895.

VI. 2. The Sermons and the *Mirrou*: Different Responses

The chosen sermons to create a context for Love's *Mirrou* represent some of the problems mentioned above. In some cases authorship is not detectable, as in the case of the *Ross Sermons* and the *Macaronic* ones, and the types, whether written for actual delivery or as models, is not clear in all cases. However, they all share important common grounds, and from these two are of relevance to our present investigation, that is, that they were all meant for the laity as well, and secondly, that they all contain Anti-Wycliffite hints.

Love's *Mirrou* was translated especially for a lay audience, but for such a substratum which was literate, as Love explicitly states in his *Proheme* to the work. The long doctrinal expositions with a highly specialized philosophical-theological terminology attest to the fact that it was designed for a readership judged to be erudite enough to understand it and to show interest in it. Resulting from my analysis of the text, it seems to me that Love's main strategy in refuting Wycliffite doctrines and gaining his readers to the cause of orthodoxy mainly consist in creating a positive approach toward his readers instead of being menacing or admonitory, and also in showing an attractive face of a Church, which esteems and incorporates those who are faithful and willing to submit themselves to its protection. I will argue for my hypothesis later, in the course of presenting the differing texts put parallel against that of Love.

The first group of sermons chosen to contextualize the *Mirror*, and which represent maybe the most distant type from it is a collection of macaronic sermons, described and analyzed by Siegfried Wenzel, in his book entitled *Macaronic Sermons*.⁵⁸² These are famous for their fervent anti-Wycliffism. Almost all sermons mention Lollards by name. From the doctrinal points mainly that of the auricular confession and the doctrine of the Eucharist are treated, being themselves the main issues of the Wycliffite attack on the sacramental doctrine of the Church. Sometimes the sermons, following a tendency detectable in other writings of orthodox apologetics, do not present an explicit controversy in these doctrinal issues, rather expound the official theology thus reaffirming the readers in the sanctioned opinions. This chapter will focus mainly on two sermons. One is entitled *De celo querebant*, labelled by Wenzel as O -22, preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 649, ff. 40v-48. The

⁵⁸² Siegfried Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*. See also Siegfried Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections from Later Medieval England. Orthodox Preaching in the Age of Wyclif*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

second macaronic sermon is taken from another collection, which is by the same author, sermon W-154, *Quem teipsum facis* from Worcester, Cathedral Library MS F.10.

The first section of the macaronic sermon-series is supposed to be the creation of the Benedictine Paunteley. Some of these sermons were intended for a lay audience, others were aimed at the clergy, and some evidently addressed both. All belong to the type called "scholastic sermon": they are based on a short biblical *thema*, which, after a *prothema* and introduction, is formally divided, with the divisions then being developed. The macaronic sermons are first of all products of literary composition, and internal evidence proves that some of them were intended for reading. Their language is macaronic with sudden and hitherto inexplicable switches from one to the other. However, the language of the written sermons does not indicate in any way the language of their actual delivery. As they are in majority written for a mixed audience, it is supposed that they also were delivered in a bilingual way.

Wenzel noticed an interesting phenomenon in the structure and form of the sermons in this collection: the parallel presence of two different forms of sub-categorizing the *thema*. These different ways were traditionally used for distinct audiences, thus the hybrid nature of the intended audience of the collection is evidenced further:

*We find here the successive application of the two traditional ways to divide the thema: intra (dividing the verbal matter of the thema) and extra (dividing the concept that is contained in or suggested by the theme). The two techniques not only were recognized in a popular ars praedicandi attributed to St. Bonaventure but were linked there to different audiences, with the former being of greater appeal to trained exegetes (the clergy) and the latter more easily grasped by theologically untrained minds (the laity). It is surprising that we should find both kinds used simultaneously in several macaronic sermons preserved in different manuscripts.*⁵⁸³

Love's *Treatise* is structured similarly in a complex way, itself revealing the composite nature of the intended audience, from the simpler members of laity to the more erudite.

The Middle English sermon collection from British Library MS Royal 18 B. 24. is known as the **Ross sermons**, after their editor. They form a miscellany of randomly collected sermons, written both for *de tempore* and *de sanctis*, and it seems that the sermons were designed to be preached, not simply to be read. From internal evidence we may assume that they were intended for a mixed audience, even for the most part for the laity, as the frequently

⁵⁸³ Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, p. 77.

recurrent salutation: 'Good men and wymmen' shows. Their language is Middle English, and their form is mixed, some modern, scholastic, others simpler. Four of the sermons contain expressed Anti-Wycliffite views.

The Macaronic sermons and the Ross sermons, however, share a common ground in applying a different tactic than that of Love. This tactic consists of exercising a harsh, outspoken critique, of using a strongly admonishing style, and a different attitude towards their audience. In my view they form a separate group from that of Love's *Mirroure* with which the last collection, Mirk's *Festial* bears striking similarities in respect of their policy.

Judy Ann Ford in her book about *Mirk's Festial*⁵⁸⁴ provides an excellent analysis of the strategy Mirk invented to gain his listeners for the cause of the orthodoxy against the Wycliffite challenge. She summarizes Mirk's strategy in the *Festial* in these terms:

*Mirk's Festial constituted a potentially potent force in persuading the ordinary parishioners of late-medieval England that they belonged to a tradition that embraced illiterate commoners (...) Moreover, the Festial's compelling images of lay agency functioning within established orthodoxy could serve as a ballast against an heretical ideology which set lay agency and clerical authority in opposition.*⁵⁸⁵

Mirk's strategy was not that of a fierce, direct attack on Wycliffism, but rather an indirect infiltration of his preaching material with larger amounts of doctrinal expositions of issues criticized by Wycliffites and therefore claiming more accurate and solid orthodox treatment. Moreover, by the preponderant usage of narratives which have lay people as positive agents in the form of the exempla Mirk created the sensation of a greater partaking of his lay audience in the spiritual life exhibited in his sermons, which fulfilled a thirst which was detected and attempted to be responded to by Lollardy itself.⁵⁸⁶

Love and Mirk seem to apply the same strategy, although to a different public: Mirk's audience was the common, in the majority completely illiterate stratum, whereas that of Love

⁵⁸⁴ Judy Ann Ford. *Mirk's Festial*. As for the manuscripts of the *Festial*, see H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages*, pp. 311-316.

⁵⁸⁵ Ford, *Mirk's Festial*, p. 150.

⁵⁸⁶ "Mirk provides a model of lay agency within the church; he offers an alternative to Lollardy for those who wished to have a more active role in their own salvation. (...) Such inspiration was present in a sermon collection which was, as Susan Powell has so bluntly expressed, '... intended to be preached by the most ignorant of priests to the most ignorant of people.'" Ford, *Mirk's Festial*, p. 25. She goes on later to explain: "Other medieval sermon collections, in contrast, include narratives describing the process of confession in which the priest was a principal actor, asking questions and drawing out the penitent (...) The passage allows the audience to view the power of transubstantiation as a great dignity yet still consider the priest exercising it as a fellow human, subject to moral failings, needing to improve himself, and in just as much danger of damnation as anyone else alive." Ford, *Mirk's Festial*, p. 32.

was constituted mainly of the literate, urban and moderately well-read middle-class. Both authors' concern is to ensure their audience of their sympathetic attitude towards them, which stands in sharp contrast with that of the Macaronic-Ross doublet.

The anti-Wycliffite stances of the macaronic sermons have been analyzed by Haines⁵⁸⁷ in several articles. The aspect my investigations are more directed to are their attitude towards their audience, the overall tone, and the style of these sermons which display a consequent heterogeneity. This style is outstanding for its strong admonitory, reprehensive character, which permeates the whole texture of the sermons. Although these are built on a thematic structure in which the discourse against Wycliffites forms only one constituent, the tone of address remains dominant for the entire text.

This intonation attains the heights of acrimony at the passages where Lollardy is attacked. Surprisingly, however, the criticism is extended to the orthodox audience as well, which proves to be a mixed one, including clerics and lay persons. The same tone is preserved in a series of attacks on the negligence of clerics and of the irresponsible attitude of laity which are both to be blamed for the spread of the Lollard pestilence and the ruin of the country. Clerics are targeted first. The author of sermon W-154, *Quem teipsum facis*, attaches an explanation to an exemplum narrated about the viles of a monk, to avoid the misunderstanding that he is criticising only Franciscans. He assures that everyone understands that he is all-inclusive in his reproach: (Let no one report of me, please, that I am saying this in reproach of the venerable order of the Friars Minor, because as you will find out later, I am not saying this of them any more than of monks and the secular clergy!)⁵⁸⁸

The author describes the Lollard threat, stating that its root is excessive pride:

And what is the cause of this useless and widespread doctrine that has recently grown in the Church, and specially in our realm? Surely it is the proud presumption and vainglory of those who started these errors and of those who continue to hold them in the belief that their own ingenuity surpasses that of all who have lied before them. (...)They preach, among other things, that we must not pray to any saint, that we should not give thites to our curates, and that one need not pay attention when a curate

⁵⁸⁷ Roy M. Haines, "Church, Society and Politics in the early Fifteenth Century as Viewed from an English Pulpit," *Studies in Church History* 12 (1975): 143-57.

⁵⁸⁸ "Nemo reportet me hic, queso, quod hic reprobacionem venerabilis Ordinis Fratrum dicerem, quoniam vt infra patebit non lus loquar de ipsis quam de monachis et secularibus sacerdotibus." Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, pp. 328-29. (all translations are made by Wenzel).

pronounces the excommunication of this error. This doctrine is false, for the love of God, stay away from it."⁵⁸⁹

He continues by blaming the orthodox preachers and believers for the spread of the heresy:

*If you do not guard yourselves, you are certainly to be belamed before all others, for I will say boldly that after Oxford, Cambridge and London, there is noother town or village in the kingdom that hears more good semons than this city, may God keep it. Because you therefore have so many good sermons through which you can know God's will, if you do the opposite, you deserve more blame than other people. And you will be like the one of whom the Lord says in the gospel: "A servant who knows his master's will and does not act accordingly will be beaten with many stripes. Truly, the prelates and the ministers in their jurisdiction are much to blame if they allow those to preach, (that is, the Lollards) for it is their duty to correct them."*⁵⁹⁰

The author of the sermon accuses the member of higher clergy with the charge that due to their avarice they do not inform their flock about the correct use of the images, fearing to lose the offerings made for these. He continues the same inculcation of clerics, using a pathetic tone, building up an allegory in which love was stolen, but Christ cannot find it either among the archbishops, bishops, other prelates and preachers, not even among the brethren (that is, the mendicants):

But if we look now, what shall we find there? Indeed, in many of them only the basket, which is nothing but the sign of their priestly order; it remains, but love has flown away. Seculars, too, and some married people show forth a beautiful basket, that is, the name of Christianity, but their basket is empty. That this is true is plain to our eyes, for

⁵⁸⁹ „Que eciam est causa istius vnþryfty and rowyng doctrine que creuit iam in Ecclesia et specialiter in isto regno? Certe, superba presumpcio et vanae gloria quam habuerunt fundatores istorum errorum, et illi similiter qui continuant in illis, susspicando quod ingenium illorum excederet omnes ante illos. (...) Hi predicant inter cetera quod non debemus orare aliquem sanctum, non daremus decimas curatis, et si curatus excommunicationis sentenciam /dederit pro eisdem/, docent de illa non curare. Ista doctrina est falsa, et Dei amore caueatis de illa.” Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, pp. 334-337.

⁵⁹⁰ “Et nisi vos caueritis, certe multum estis culpandi pre ceteris, quia audacter dicere volo quod post Oxon, Cambrug, et Londoun non est aliqua ciuitas seu villa in regno que habet plures bonos sermons quam hec ciuitas, Deus eam saluet. Ex quo tunc habetis tot bonos sermons per quos potestis scire que est voluntas Dei, si feceritis contrarium, multo plus ceteris estis culpandi. Et sic eit is prout dominus ille in ewangelio sic dicit: “Seruus /qui cognouit/ voluntatem domini sui et non /fecit secundum voluntatem eius/ plagis vapulabit multis,” Luce xii capitulo. Et vere, prelati Ecclesiae, et ministry qui occupant iurisdictionis locum sub ipsis, multum sunt culpabiles, qui ipsos permittunt predicare, quia illis incumbit tales corrigare.” Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*. pp. 336-337.

*many among both clergy and laypersons are glad to hear of their neighbors' misfortune, ready to push them down.*⁵⁹¹

In the macaronic sermons the laity is offered an image of its state in a rather exclusive, degrading way, moreover, repetitiously so, with the obvious pedagogical aim to teach them to keep to their predestined status in the hierarchy of the society and of the Church. The rich and the poor are equally reprehended. After having admonished the governing strata to fulfill their duties in due way, the preacher of O-07, *De Celo querebant*, carries on with an allegory:

*What is more like it than the powerful rich people of this world, whose riches and positions are changeable like the moon, for as is seen daily to our eye, this moon is never stable or steadfast, [a man is] now a lord then a servant, now a knight then a stable boy, now rich then a beggar.' (...) Devotion is much abandoned, almsgiving is almost forgotten. I fear the moon has entered the head or tail of the dragon and is in an eclipse.*⁵⁹²

Then the preacher turns to the poor commoners, who are admonished not to forget their designed place, and fulfill their duties:

*These rails are nothing else than the community of the realm, the common people who are under the rule of the lords, who must be rooted in humility, suffer without groaning and gnashing of teeth against the correction by their superiors if they have done wrong; they must obey their governors in everything that is lawful and support the vines of their lord with their body and goods.*⁵⁹³

They are equally scorned in an all-exclusive exhortation, ensuring that no one could feel himself exempt.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹¹ "Set si queramus nunc, quid ibi inuenimus? certe in pluribus nisi calatum, qui nichil aliud est nisi signum ordinis sacerdotii; istud remanet, set caritas auolauit. ÍSeculares eciam pretendunt eciam pulcrum calathum, idest nomen Christianitatis, et quidam coniugii, set calathus vacuus est. Et quod sit verum ad oculum patet quoniam plures in ecclesiasticis et secularibus sunt leti audire de aduersitate proximorum, parati eos posteroare." Ibid., pp. 330-331.

⁵⁹² "Quid melius potest comparari quam grandi diuites istius seculi, quorum diuicie et honores (blank) et varie sicut luna? Nunc crescent and wex per magnum besines and travail, nunc þai wansyn o þin perlos suorum bonorum robbyn and brennyn. ...Ista luna est numquam stabul nec stidfast, quia sicut cotidie is sen ad oculum, nunc dominus nunc seruus, nunc miles nunc garcio, nunc diues nunc mendicus. (...) Deuocio multum remittuntur, elemosina fere obliuiscitur. Timeo quod intrauit caput vel caudam draconis et est in eclipsi." Ibid., pp. 284-287.

⁵⁹³ "þes railis nichil aliud sunt nisi communitas regni, populous qui est sub gubernacione dominorum, quos oportet fundari in humilitate, pati wytout grangynge and grennynge superiorum correccionem si delinquent, þai most obey to her gouernouris in omnibus licitis et supportare vites domini corpora and catel." Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, pp. 276-277. The author describes his metaphor of the vicuallers in greater detail, emphasising their obligations, first, to do their worldly business well, in order to be able to pay their duties to the Church, as their position prescribes them. Ibid., pp. 290-291.

⁵⁹⁴ "Because our victuallers lack truth, their words are so uncertain and unstable that no one has any pleasure in their talk, no one puts any trust in them And for many of them it is not sufficient to falsely deceive their

Finally, I quote from sermon O-22 another passage which warns the listeners, now taken individually, against Pride, which is a true gem of medieval rhetoric:

In this way, though you may have individual virtues, even if you have grown from a noble stem and come from an exalted line, do not set your heart too high so that you may not become proud. Put a mirror, yourself, before your eyes; consider what you are. What are you, do you think?(...) However much alive, agile, or lively you may be, you have a skin with death inside, you carry death around you no matter how fair or fresh in complexion you may be. (...) St. Bernard gives a homely description: you are but dust and ashes, and-I am ashamed to quote his text-"sack full of filth, sack full of dung, sack full of excrement, you are but filth, however beautiful you are."⁵⁹⁵

Mirk's strategy greatly differs from this. In constructing his collection he employs several techniques to carefully balance the clerical-lay dichotomy. In the sermons of the *Festial* the laity is required to participate in the sacraments administered by the clergy, yet his expositions and mainly his numerous exempla are formulated in such a way that lay people become the central characters and the clergy essential but marginal figures.

Another characteristic of the first group of sermons, the Macaronic ones and the Ross collection is the lack of a systematic theology, both in the "real" sermons of the period which were most presumably actually delivered and in the model ones. The sermons surveyed here seem to avoid the treatment of delicate doctrinal issues, as well as the special philosophical terminology abounding in such terms as substance and accidents. This harmonises with their negative assumptions about the intellectual capacity and scope of their audience, thus also closing them out of a discourse retained exclusively for clerics.

Mirk seems to have avoided a high-brow academic terminology, which naturally correlates with the fact that he wrote for the illiterate commoners. Notwithstanding, a certain

neighbors, but in maintaining their falsehood, they aggravate their sin by taking God's name in vain, tearing apart Christ's limbs (...) This is not just one or two people, but nearly everybody, men and women, old and young. "In Latin: "sic ex quo nostril vitularii carent veritate, verba illorum sunt adeo incerta et instabilia quod nullus habet saporem in her talking, nullus confidit in eis. Et non sufficit pluribus illorum false decipere proximos suos, set in meynteynynghe sua falsitatis in aggrauacionem sui peccati capiunt nomen Dei in vanum,dilacerant membri Christi.(...) Hoc non est vnus vel duo, set fere omnes hominess, mas et femina, sense et iuuenes." Ibid., p. 290-291.

⁵⁹⁵ Isto modo, quamuis habeas singulars virtutes, licet creuisti super generosam stipitem, venisti de sublimi progenie, set not þin hert to hie ne superbias, instatue speculuzm-teipsum-coram visu tuo, cogita quid es. Quid es, credis? (...) Be þou neuer so quik, so qwyuer aut liuelich, habes cutem þat deth is in, geris mortem circa te, be þou neuer so fair ne so freshe of hu. (...) Sanctus Bernardus dat an homli descripcioun: es nisi terra et cinis, et pudet dicere solum quod est suus textus: saccus plenus of filth, saccus plenus fimo, saccus plenus stercoris, es nisi a filth, quantumcumque sis pulcra." Ibid., p. 104. Sermon O -22, 115r-v.

quantity of Latinate philosophical terms, as “substance”, “fourme”, “fugure”, “lykeness”,⁵⁹⁶ found their way into his expositions about the Trinity, exactly in the sermon where his explicit attacks on Lollardy is included. Mirk even writes that God may grant an understanding of the mystery of the Trinity even to the common people: “Wherfor it is nedfull to yche christen man and womon forto pray to God bisily, þat he zeue hym grace of vndyrstondyng and of perfyte beleue in þe Trinite.”⁵⁹⁷ Thus the *Festial* could suggest a confiding attitude in the comprehensive capacities of its undoubtedly simple listeners.

Nicholas Love’s text is a genuinely outstanding exception in this respect. In the whole body of his translation of the *Mirroure*, but most prominently in his original expositions of the doctrine of the Eucharist both in the main body of the *Mirroure* and in his *Treatise*, he uses a startling amount of philosophical-theological academic terminology in displaying his complexly written long theological argumentations. In my reading this is also an eloquent proof of his honourable treatment of his own readership.

Another sign of his respectful judgment of the state and of the cultural dignity he bestows on his readers is his assumption that they are well-read, and also have access to a considerable amount of devotional, and, what is more, theological literature. In several passages of the *Mirroure* Love explains his decisions to cut off material from the original as these can be found and attained in “othere bookes”.

*Where of and othere vertuose exercie that longeth to contemplatyf lyuyng and specially to a recluse and also of medled lyf that is to saye somtyme actyfe and somtyme contemplatyf as it longeth to dyuerse persones that in worldely astate hauen grace of goostly loue who so wole more pleyne be enformed and tauzt in Englisshe tonge lete hym loke the tretys that the worthy clerke and holy lyuere maister Walter hyltoun the chanoun of thurgartun wrote in englische by grace and hize discrecioun and he schal fynde there as I leue a sufficient scole and a trewe of alle thise: whose soule reste in euere lastyng blisse and pees as I hope he be ful hize in blisse ioyned and knytte with outen departyng to his spouse Jesu by parfite vse of the beste parte that he chase here with marye of the which parte he graunt vs felawschippe Jesu oure lorde god. Amen.*⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁶ Mirk, *Festial*, pp. 166-167.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁵⁹⁸ Sargent, *Mirroure*, pp. 122-123.

By this assumption Love gives the impression that he to a certain extent includes his lay readers into some of the spiritual and intellectual activities of his own, charging them with intellectual tasks, equating his readers with lower clerics, albeit in his *Proheme* he separates them from the high clergy and the contemplatives, that is the spiritual aristocracy.

Another recurring theme in orthodox preaching is the warning not to engage in theological speculation, ‘not to seek too high’. This issue is a recurrent one in the large corpus of late-medieval religious writing in England, with many important implications for the contemporary cultural and religious scene, as Tamás Karáth’s dissertation amply investigates.⁵⁹⁹ In the treatment of this question some difference may also be detected between the two groups of texts and authors.

Although the sermons criticize both the clerics and laity, Sermon 13 creates again a sharp caesura between them, emphasizing by rhetorical means the baseness of the latter: “And so you who are prefigured by Moses, (that is, the clergy), give yourselves up to your cure of souls, engage in devout prayers and the understanding and contemplation of God. And you, who belong to the laity, take your Our Father and your Creed and do not climb any higher.”⁶⁰⁰17.

The Ross sermons basically deliver the same message repeatedly in very similar terms, as in Sermon 22: “And if therefore you are a lay person, it suffices you to believe what the Holy Church teaches you.”⁶⁰¹ Mirk keeps silent on this issue.

Nicholas Love applies a somewhat different approach. Although he also repeatedly warns of the dangers of a theological speculation which reaches too high, he does not formulate it in the same humiliating, degrading terms for the laity, as the Ross and the Benedictine preacher do by sharply differentiating between a clergy who have the right, and the laity who are denied this right of intellectual quest of spiritual mysteries. Although Love also clearly states that laity has to accept the teaching of the Church without reservations, this boundary between laics and clergy is to some extent blurred as his formulations, using such categories as ‘mannis resoun’, and changing the person of address from the second person singular to the first person plural, (“it wole not be while *we* be in þis bustous body”) also implies a general warning of the danger of such speculation which may prove difficult or even impossible:

⁵⁹⁹ Karáth Tamás, “*Altum Sapere.*”

⁶⁰⁰ Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons*, p. 72.

⁶⁰¹ Ross, *Sermons*, p. 127.

*What tyme þou herest or þynkest of þe trinyte or of þe godhede or of goostly creatures as aungeles and soules þe whiche þou maist nat see wiþ þy bodily eyȝe in her propre kynde ne fele wiþ þy bodily witt studie not to fer in þat mater occupie not þy witt þerwiþ as þou woldest vnderstonde it by kyndely refoun for it wole not be while we be in þis bustous body lyuyng here in erþe.*⁶⁰²

He goes on, by assuming that the lay reader may still understand and grasp something of the mystery of the Trinity in his presence by the incarnated Christ: ‘A lorde / what hous is þat where suche gestes ben / and suche þinges ben done! For þouȝ þat þe holy trinite is euery where by presence of his godhede / neuerþeles þou maist þenke and vnderstonde þat he is þere in a more special manere by resoun of his hiȝe werk of þe Incarnacioun.’⁶⁰³ Thus Love, here as well, applies a more tactful, more nuanced strategy in conveying the same message as that of the sermons.

As a conclusion, the analysed sermons reveal important differences of strategy although they all share the common ground that they were intended for very similar audiences and attempted to convey the same message against the Lollard heresy. The authors of all the chosen sermons were writing for an audience composed both of clerics and laity, with perhaps more chances for a clerical audience in the case of the macaronic sermons. The Ross sermons were for the most part addressed to laity, for the “good men and wymmen.” In this they closely resemble the homiletic material written by John Mirk and the text of Love. Both authors, Mirk and Love, expressly address a lay audience, the “symple soules,” but they both were conscious that their work will reach the members of the clergy as well. Mirk, although intending the content of his sermons for lay believers, was definitely aware of the fact that the medium of transmission would be a clerical one. It was the duty of the members of most presumably the secular clergy to actually preach the sermons to the lay congregation. Thus he could be certain that his text would reach both strata, a (presumably relatively modestly erudite) clergy as well as an, in the great part illiterate, laity. Love also expressed his intention that he wrote his translation for the “simple” laity. At the same time, as his text attests to it, he was also counting with a clerical readership, with monastics or secular clergy. Although there were differences between the degree of erudition of the assumed lay audiences (a rather illiterate laity for Mirk, a literate and supposedly to a certain degree learned laity in

⁶⁰² Sargent, *Mirror*, p.23.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*

the case of Love), the fact remains that they both primarily intended the transmission of spiritual instruction to the active lay populace and were aware that this instruction will reach simultaneously the clergy as well. There is another characteristic with which all authors counted when composing their texts. They all knew that their audiences could be doctrinally heterogenous, at least in the sense that they may also have been faced with the challenge of Wycliffite ideas besides the orthodox teaching of the Church. The differences of strategies also derive from the way the authors of the texts reacted to this diversity of religious ideas of their readership/congregation.

The efficacy of the different strategies of the two groups of sermons may be deduced from the popularity of the respective texts. Whereas only one copy came down to us of the Macaronic and of the Ross collections, (with a maximum of a double occurrence of certain sermons from them), Mirk's *Festial* proves to be the most representative, most popular sermon collection in the vernacular in late medieval England, and its popularity spanned unbroken into the era of Reformation. The number of the extant manuscripts of the *Mirroure* text, which exceeds sixty and is paralleled with those of Chaucer, speaks for itself, let alone its manifold influence on other contemporary texts.

Obviously, this popularity was primarily due to other reasons, such as supplying a model-series of sermons for the lower clergy in accessible style and format in the case of the *Festial*, and such as the provision of an appealing devotional reading material for the interested laity in Love's case. However, the success of the chosen Anti-Wycliffite and pro-orthodoxy strategy by Love and Mirk may have had its role as an additional component. They most presumably were conscious of the multiplicity of effects, ideas, and views which characterized their late-medieval English believers and tailored their strategies accordingly, with a better psychological sense than the authors of the macaronic and Ross sermons. Their subtle strategy seems to have been popular, even if we do not know how effective it was in keeping their flock within the protecting walls of the Church, preserving them from the alluring threat of Lollardy.

Conclusions: *Dat treuly byleuen, & to confusion of alle false Lollardes & heretykes*

Due to the new urging demand of the laity for spiritual instruction and also to the continuous presence of the Wycliffite challenge, the response to these offered by the *Mirroure* was welcome, as the dissemination of the text demonstrates. A wide range of audience could benefit from the richness the text presents, from monastic circles, the aristocracy, down to the lower urban urban populace. Besides the unknown readers of the Morgan copy, the Lancastrian nobility and their *entourage* could also benefit from the instruction and reassurance provided by the text and exceptional pictures of the Advocates manuscript.

Although the manuscripts, both the text and the images, primarily served the needs of private devotion by offering textual and visual help for meditation, it also provided a new form of instruction in the doctrine of the Church to equip the believers against Wycliffism. My concern in this dissertation was to investigate how this twofold programme was exposed, on many levels, directly and indirectly, in the text as well as in the illustrations of the *Mirroure* manuscripts; and how it influenced the way in which Love offered assistance to the access to higher forms of devotion, that is, to contemplation, to his readers-hearers.

First, complementing previous works done by Michael Sargent and Kantik Ghosh, I attempted to enlarge our understanding of how Love created his strategy against Wycliffism in his translation. I have tried to demonstrate that the Anti-Wycliffite messages had already been implanted in the compilation, reorganising the original material. This resulted in the creation of such emphasised thematic groups as the scandal-group and the great sacramental section. I have also highlighted as relevant with regard to Wycliffism Love's treatment of such themes as the *contra superbiam* one, personal and prescribed prayers, the Virgin, and the representation of spiritual realities taught by the Church, though invisible for the "bodily syght," such as the Trinity, the Celestial Hierarchy and finally some new motives as regards the real presence in the Eucharist. I also believe that Love used Suso's *Horologium* as an inspirational source for the expository part of the *Treatise on the Sacrament*, introducing new elements into the sacramental instructional discourse.

Supported by Scott's investigations about the influence of Wycliffism on the style of book-production and illumination, I focused on the reflection of this influence in the iconography. Following the study of Ann Eljenholm Nichols on the Wycliffite influence on the sacramental representations, I complemented it with a closer look at manuscript illumination, also investigating other iconographic themes besides the sacramental representations. Two illustrated manuscripts cannot really prove the existence of a wide-ranging illustrative tradition of the *Mirroure*, and no continuation of such can be detected in the printed editions. Nevertheless, the illustrations of the two richly illuminated manuscripts do, through their common features, allow us to deduce that the two manuscripts share a common programme. They attest to the fact that Wycliffism had an influence on the iconographic representation of late medieval manuscripts, a new idea which has not been hitherto proposed by scholarship.

In the study of the correspondence between the text and the illuminations I have taken into consideration the warning of Kathleen L. Scott, presented in her article "Caveat Lector,"⁶⁰⁴ to beware of an overall application of the idea that the content of a picture was dependent completely on the text, saying that "Even a picture that occurs with a vernacular text not illustrated elsewhere may represent not a reading of that text but a subject transferred from another text or composed of standard elements."⁶⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the illuminations of the two manuscripts do differ from the illumination tradition of the period in more cases, and the non-standard elements often seem to have a close relation to the text of the *Mirroure*. In some cases the text was considered, at least some passages of it, as a basis for the creation of the illustration, where the illustrations follow the text verbatim. Moreover, the same ideology appears also on the level of the general intention of the work. The illuminations, in their own way, express the same programme of providing a faithful and expressive representation of the doctrine of the Church, in the fight against Wycliffite ideas. The closer correspondences between the text and images are present mostly in the instances where the Anti-Wycliffite programme is implanted: in the representation of the Hierarchy, suggesting that obedience and acceptance of the legitimacy of the Church is justified, as opposed to pride and leaning on one's own *reson*; the representations of the Eucharist, by the expression of the Marian devotion, and that of angels. The main incongruence between the text and the visual representation also appears at the same place, that of the Last Supper. Consequently, the text

⁶⁰⁴ Scott, "Caveat Lector," p. 63.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 52.

and the images, through their specific devices and in their entirety form the Anti-Wycliffite campaign of the *Mirroure*.

Defining the audience Love could have in mind when writing his translation is a complex task as it demands a close textual study as well as an investigation into the contemporary habits of practising religion, by a populace, which was far from being homogeneous regarding their religious colouring. My reading of the *Mirroure* offers a more varied picture than Love's brief statements that he intended his work for the "symple soules, men and women." Besides the committed orthodox, Love also thought of those whose degree of orthodoxy is "hard to define" as his intended audience, may also be of Lollards. This hybridity was characteristic not only of the readership but also of texts. In studying the miscellaneous manuscript of the Pierpont Morgan library, containing the intriguing company of the *Mirroure* next to the Brigittine extract and the Lollard tract advocating biblical translation, I found the explanation most evidenced that the latter found its way next to the *Mirroure* as its origin and ideological filling may not have been identified as dangerous heretical material.

The other axis of my investigations was the nature of the *Mirroure* as meditational manual. Modifying Karnes's views that Love diminished the purport of his original text as he banned all clues which would help his readers attain contemplation, I state that he was building in elements into his text encouraging even contemplation. I supported this point on the basis of numerous textual evidence found in the text of the *Mirroure* and of the *Treatise* attached to it, and considering the context offered by other texts advancing contemplation. Love's originality consists thus also in the fact that he did not exclude the possibility of contemplation even of a consciously targeted active, lay readership, besides his primary aim to offer them material for meditation. I also highlighted that Love counted on the working of divine Grace which enables a correct exegetical activity of the readers when performing imaginative meditation. In this Love shares Wycliff's concepts about the personal biblical hermeneutics. However, a basic difference occurs in that Love applies restrictions to an unlimited exegesis exercised by the laity, partly motivated exactly by his fear of heresy. Love assumed that the same divine Grace enables chosen readers to transcend the lower phases of meditation and progress towards contemplation. The narration of his own contemplative-mystical experience served the aim of encouraging aspirations for similar experiences by those who, through their spiritual sensitivity are called to higher access to transcendental knowledge and union. In the analysis of the *Treatise on the Sacrament* I showed that Love

continued the exposition of his original invention of making mystical experiencing of the taste of spiritual sweetness dependant on the faith in the Eucharistic doctrine of the legitimate Church. Consequently, Love revealed his conviction that doctrinal faithfulness and access to contemplation are closely interrelated, and thus he presented another motivating factor for his readers to withstand the temptation of the Wycliffite heresy.

Put into the context of some contemporary sermons containing Anti-Wycliffite passages, it became clear that Love treats his readers in the *Mirroure* in a more respectful way than the other authors of sermons, although they might count with a very similar audience. Love gives proof of a better psychological sense applying his strategy of refutation in more refined ways. The visible fruit of this is the much greater popularity of his text, together with those of John Mirk, allying Love's ways.

Consequently, my investigations result in showing a modified image about how some late medieval orthodox authors reacted to the challenge of Wycliffism. Beside the harsh repression exercised by the Church in several cases, some of its defenders also learned to value certain undeniable achievements of Wycliffites and made attempts at using these results for their own purpose to strengthen their believers in their orthodox beliefs. Nicholas Love was one of these authors. The popularity of his translation attests to the success of his strategy, as well as to the success of his work to provide material for spiritual advancement for readers of varying demands.

Several perspectives offer themselves for further research. A comprehensive study of the *Meditationes* tradition in relation to the *Mirroure* manuscripts would be useful, as would a full study of the two illumination cycles, as this present study is limited only to the investigation of one aspect. A detailed comparative study of other manuscripts produced in areas with Wycliffite activity, as part of an investigation into the possible existence of similar anti-Wycliffite programmes, would also enlarge our understanding of the Wycliffite influence on iconography. Comparing the Continental manuscript illuminations produced in areas and times of heretical activities to those of their English antecedents might prove to be profitable for the study of both the English and Continental iconography.

The research on a direct textual influence of the *Mirroure* on the sermon literature of the fifteenth century, and even beyond has not yet been undertaken. It would be an immense work which surely would yield results, as well as a positioning of the *Mirroure* into the context of other treatises with Anti-Wycliffite programme, and into that of other translation of meditational works, an enterprise which has been pursued by the *Geographies of Orthodoxy*

project. The study of the later influence of the work on the texts of John Fisher, Thomas More and other Catholic writers would also be worth an attempt, as the popularity of the *Mirroure* reached well into the next century, demonstrated by its several subsequent editions in print.

Although a vast field still awaits further study, I hope this dissertation has contributed with certain new aspects of understanding of how Love's *Mirroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* managed to achieve such great popularity as a guide of meditation and also as a device in the combat against Lollardy, so that "it was still being invoked, more than a century after its composition, for the edification of the faithful, and the confutation of heretics and Lollards,"⁶⁰⁶ as Sargeant formulates. Nonetheless, the latter quotation from Love's *Proheme*, which was taken over verbatim also by Archbishop Arundel into its *Approbation* of the work to function as the label of the whole enterprise, in its original form "þat treuly byleuen, & to confusion of alle false Lollardes & heretykes,"⁶⁰⁷ intrigues me. The formula "false Lollardes & heretikes" may point to a simple use of the rhetorical device of doubling. Or it may point to something else. It may suggest that Love was thinking not only of Lollards, but also of heretics of another sort. Future research will show.

⁶⁰⁶ Sargeant, *Mirror*, p. 96, with reference to the closing line of Arundel's *Approbation*.

⁶⁰⁷ Sargeant, *Mirror*, p. 223.

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**Appendix A. The Approbation of Archbishop Arundel: The
*Memorandum*⁶⁰⁸**

Memorandum quod circa annum domini millesimum quadringentesimum originalis copta huius libri scilicet speculi vite cristi in Anglicus presentebatur london per compilatorem eiusdem Reverendissimo in cristo patri et domino Thomas Arundell Cantuariensi Archiepiscopo ad inspiciendum debiti exammaudum ante M fuerat libere comunicata Qui post inspectionem eiusdem per dies aliquot retradens ipsum librum memorato auctori eiusdem libri proprie vocis oraculo ipsum in singulis commendavit et approbavit nec non in auctoritate sua metropolitana ut pote. Catholicum publice communicandum fore decrevit et mandavit ad fidelium edificationem et hereticorum sive lollardorum confusionem Amen.

⁶⁰⁸ Sargent, *Mirror*, p. 7.

Appendix B. The Two Tables of Contents of the *Meditationes* and of the *Mirroure*

Latin *Meditationes* Table of Contents

- Ch. 30. Of the girl who was resuscitated and Martha who was cured
- Ch 31. Of the conversation of the Lord Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well
- Ch 32 How the Lord was chased to the top of a hill to be thrown over
- Ch. 33. Of the Man with the withered hand healed by the Lord
- Ch. 34. Of the multiplication of the bread
- Ch. 35. Of the flight of the Lord when the multitudes wished to make him king
- Ch. 36. How the Lord Jesus prayed on the mount and descended to walk on the waters where Peter was submerged
- Ch. 37. Of the Canaanite woman
- Ch. 38. How some were scandalised by the words of the Lord
- Ch. 39. of the retribution for relinquishing all
- Ch. 40. How the Lord sought to learn from the disciples what was said of him
- Ch. 41. Of the Transfiguration of the Lord on the Mount
- Ch. 42. Of the casting out of the false buyers and sellers from the Temple*
- Ch. 43. Of the sheep pool*
- Ch. 44. How the disciples of the Lord took the ears of corn when they were hungry**
- Ch. 45. Of the ministry of Martha and Mary

Love's *Mirroure* Table of Contents

How þat Martha was heled of hirsekenes by touching of de hem of oure lordes cloþing. Capitulum 21m

Of þe convesrion of Marie Maudleyn Capitulum 22m

Of þe spekyng of oure lorde Jesus wyth þe woman Samaritane at þe þitte of watere Capitulum 23m

Howe þe disciples of Jesu plukkenden þe eres of corn & eten it for hungere on þe sabbote day. Capitulum 24m

Of þe fedying of þe grete peple with brede multiliede. Capitulum 25m.

Of þe feyng of oure lorde Jesus when þe peple walde haue made him hir kyng. Capitulum 26m

Of þe praiere of oure lorde Jesu in þe hille. Capitulum 27m.

How þe pharisees & opere token occasion of sclandre of þe wordes & þe dedes of Jesu. Capitulum 28m.

Of þe speciale rewarde of oure lord Jesu behoten to alle þoo dat forsaken þe world for his loue. Capitulum 29m

Of þe transfiguration of oure lord Jesu in þe hille. Capitulum 30m

Of þe seke man heled at þe water in Jesrusalem, clepede probatica piscina. Capitulum 31m.

How oure lorde Jesus cast oute of þe temple, þe biggeres 7 De sellers a3eynus goddus lawe. Capitulum 32m.

Sacramental group in bold

Scandal-group in italics

Appendix C. The Illuminated Chapter Headings

A == Advocates MS image
P= Pierpont Morgan MS image

<i>f. 1^r</i>	¶ SPECULUM VITE CHRISTI	[Page number]
A, P	At þe bygynnyng þe proheme of þe boke þat is clepede þe Mirroure of þe blessede life of Jesu criste.	9
¶ Þe ferst part for þe Moneday.		
A, P	5 ¶ A deuoute meditacion of þe grete conseile in heuen for þe restoryng of man & his sauacion. Capitulum primum	15
P	¶ Of þe manere of lyuyng of þe blessed virgine Marye. Capitulum 2 ^m	19
10	¶ Of þe Incarnacion of Jesu, & þe feste of þe Annunciacion & of þe gretyng, Aue Maria. Capitulum 3 ^m	22
	¶ How þat oure lady went to Elizabeth & mekely gret hir. Capitulum 4 ^m	31
A, P	¶ How Joseph þouht to leue priuely oure lady seynt Marye. Capitulum 5 ^m	34
P	15 ¶ Of þe Natiuite of oure lord Jesu criste. Capitulum 6 ^m	37
	¶ Of þe Circuncision of oure lord Jesu. Capitulum 7 ^m	41
	¶ Of þe Epiphanye, þat is þe opune shewyng of oure lorde Jesu Criste. Capitulum 8 ^m	43
	¶ Of þe purificacion of oure lady seynt Marie. Capitulum 9 ^m	47
A, P	20 ¶ Þe secunde part for þe tuesday.	
	¶ Of þe fleyng of oure lord Jesu in to Egipte. Capitulum 10 ^m	51
	¶ Of þe turnyng a3eyn of oure lord Jesu fro Egipt. Capitulum 11 ^m	55
	¶ How þe child Jesus laft alone in Jerusalem. Capitulum 12 ^m	57
25	¶ What maner of lyuyng oure lord Jesus hade & what he dide fro his xij 3ere, in to þe bigynnyng of his xxx 3ere. Capitulum 13 ^m	61

A	¶ Of þe baptisme of oure lord Jesu & þe weye þerto. Capitulum 14 ^m	65
	¶ Þe iii part for þe Wennesday.	
A, P	5 ¶ Of þe fasting of oure lord Jesu & hese temptacions in deserte. Capitulum 15 ^m	69
	¶ How oure lord Jesus began to teche & geder disciples. Capitulum 16 ^m	76
	¶ Of þe myracle done at þe bridale of water turned in to wyne. Capitulum 17 ^m	78
A, P	10 ¶ Of þat excellent sermon of our lord Jesu in þe hille. Capitulum 18 ^m	82
	¶ Of þe seruant of Centurio & þe sone of þe litel kyng heled of oure lord Jesu. Capitulum 19 ^m	86
	15 ¶ Of þe paletyke man let don in his bedde by þe house hillyng, & heled of our lord Jesu [þorh þe byleue of hem þat beren him]. Capitulum 20 ^m	87
	¶ How þat Martha was heled of hir sekenes by touchyng of þe hem of oure lordes cloþing. Capitulum 21 ^m	87
	¶ Of þe conuersion of Marie Maudleyn. Capitulum 22 ^m	88
A, P	<i>f. l'</i> 21 ¶ Of þe spekyng of oure lorde Jesus with þe woman Samaritane at þe pitte of watere. Capitulum 23 ^m	94
	¶ Howe þe disciples of Jesu plukked en þe eres of corn & eten it for hungere on þe sabbote day. Capitulum 24 ^m	96
	¶ Þe iiij part for þe Thursday.	
A, P	25 ¶ Of þe fedying of þe grete peple with brede multipliede. Capitulum 25 ^m	101
	¶ Of þe fleying of oure lorde Jesus when þe peple walde haue made him hir kyng. Capitulum 26 ^m	103
	30 ¶ Of þe praier of oure lorde Jesu in þe hille [& how aftir he came to his disciples goynge]. Capitulum 27 ^m	106
	¶ How þe pharisees & oþere token occasion of sclandre of þe wordes & dedes of Jesu. Capitulum 28 ^m	109
	¶ Of þe speciale rewarde of oure lord Jesu behoten to alle þoo þat forsaken þe world for his loue. Capitulum 29 ^m	111
	35 ¶ Of þe transfiguration of oure lord Jesu in þe hille. Capitulum 30 ^m	112
	¶ Of þe seke man heled at þe water in Jerusalem, clepede	

	probatica piscina. Capitulum 31 ^m	113
	¶ How oure lorde Jesu cast oute of þe temple, þe biggeres & þe selleres a3eynus goddus lawe. Capitulum 32 ^m	115
5	¶ Of þe receyuyng of oure lord Jesu by þe tweyn sistres Martha & Marie, & of þe two maner of lyuyng þat bene actif & contemplatife in holi chirch. Capitulum 33 ^m	116
	¶ Of þe reisyng of Lazare & oþer tweyn dede bodies. Capitulum 34 ^m	123
10	¶ Howe þe Jues token hir conseil & conspirede a3eynus Jesu in to his deþ. Capitulum 35 ^m	134
	How oure lord Jesu came a3eyn to Betanye þe saturday before Palmesunday, & of þe sopere made to him þere, [& of þo þinges done þerat]. Capitulum 36 ^m	135
15	¶ How Jesu come to Jerusalem vpon palme soneday. Capitulum 37 ^m	139
A, P	¶ What oure lord Jesu dide fro palmesuneday in to þe þursday after next suyng. Capitulum 38 ^m	141
20	¶ Of þat worþi sopere þat oure lord Jesu made þe night before his passion, & of þe noble circumstances þat befelle þerwith. Capitulum 39 ^m	144
	¶ Þe v part for þe Fryday.	
	¶ Of þe passion of oure lorde Jesu criste, & first of his praier & takyng at matyne tyme. Capitulum 40 ^m	159
f. 2 ^r 25	¶ Of þe bryngyng of oure lord Jesu before pilate at prime. Capitulum 41 ^m	167
A, P	¶ How oure lorde Jesu was dampnede to þe deþ of þe crosse about tierce of þe day. Capitulum 42 ^m	170
	¶ Of þe crucifyng of our lord Jesu at þe sexte houre. Capitulum 43 ^m	174
30	¶ How oure lord Jesu zelde vp þe spirite at none. Capitulum 44 ^m	177
	¶ Of þoo þinges þat befelle after þe deþ of oure lord Jesu [at] aftere none. Capitulum 45 ^m	179
	¶ Of þe takyng done fro þe crosse oure lordes body Jesu at euene songe [tyme]. Capitulum 46 ^m	181
35	¶ Of þe buryng of our lorde Jesu at Complyn tyme. Capitulum 47 ^m	183
	¶ What was don of our lady & oþer after þe buryng of Jesu. Capitulum 48 ^m	186

¶ Þe vj part for þe Saturday

¶ What oure lady & oþer with hir diden on þe saturday. Capitulum 49^m 189

¶ Þe viij part for þe sonday.

A, P	5	¶ Of þe gloriouse Resurrection of oure lorde Jesu, & of þe first aperyng of him to his blessed modere as it may be resonably trowede. Capitulum 50 ^m	193
		¶ How þat Maudleyn & oþer Maries come to þe Graue. Capitulum 51 ^m	195
	10	¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede [aftir his Resurrection] to Maudleyn. Capitulum 52 ^m	197
		¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede to þe þre Maries. Capitulum 53 ^m	199
		¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede to Petre. Capitulum 54 ^m	200
	15	¶ Of þe comyng aʒeyn of oure lord Jesu to þe fadres, & of hir ioyful songe. Capitulum 55 ^m	201
		¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede to þe two disciples goyng towarde þe Castell of Emaus. Capitulum 56 ^m	201
		¶ How oure lorde Jesus aperede to hese apostles & disciples þat were reclused for drede on þe self day of his Resurrexion. Capitulum 57 ^m	203
	20	¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede þe viij day after to hees disciples Thomas presente. Capitulum 58 ^m	206
		¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede to þe disciples in Galile. Capitulum 59 ^m	207
	25	¶ How oure lord Jesus aperede to þe disciples at þe see Tiberiades. Capitulum 60 ^m	207
A, P		¶ Of alle þe aperynges of our lord Jesu in generale. Capitulum 61 ^m	209
A, P		¶ Of þe Ascension of oure lord Jesu. Capitulum 62 ^m	210
	<i>f. 2^v</i>	¶ Of þe sendyng done & þe comyng of þe holi gost. Capitulum 63 ^m	218
A, P	30	¶ Of þat excellent & most worþi sacrament of Cristies blessedde bodye. Capitulum 64 ^m	223

Expliciunt Capitula

Appendix D. The Images

The images are reproduced from microfilm by permission of the National Library of Scotland and of the Pierpont Morgan Library.



Figure 1. Coat of Arms (Advocates MS, fol. 5v)

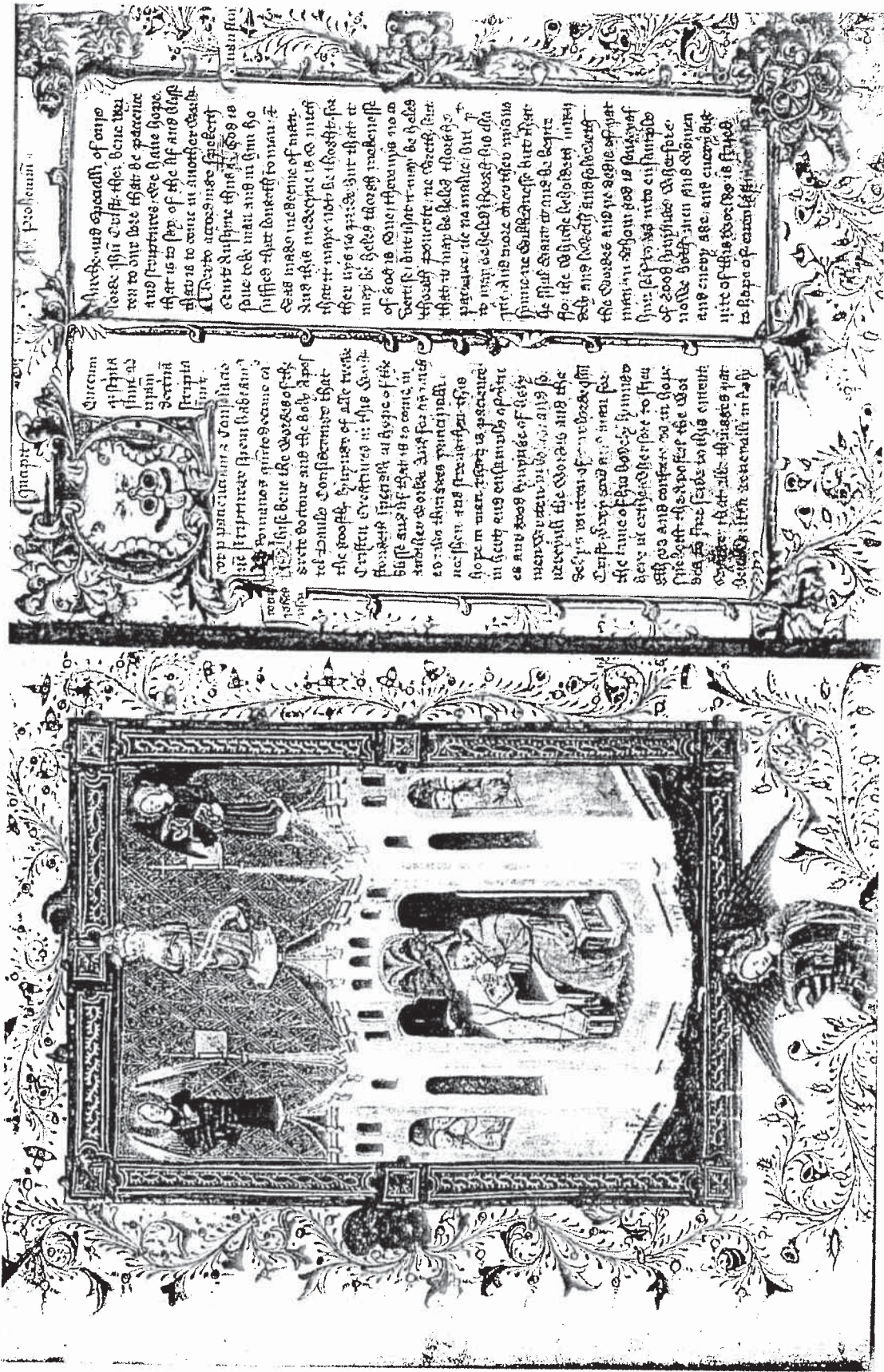


Figure 2. Bonaventure (Advocates MS, fol. 9)

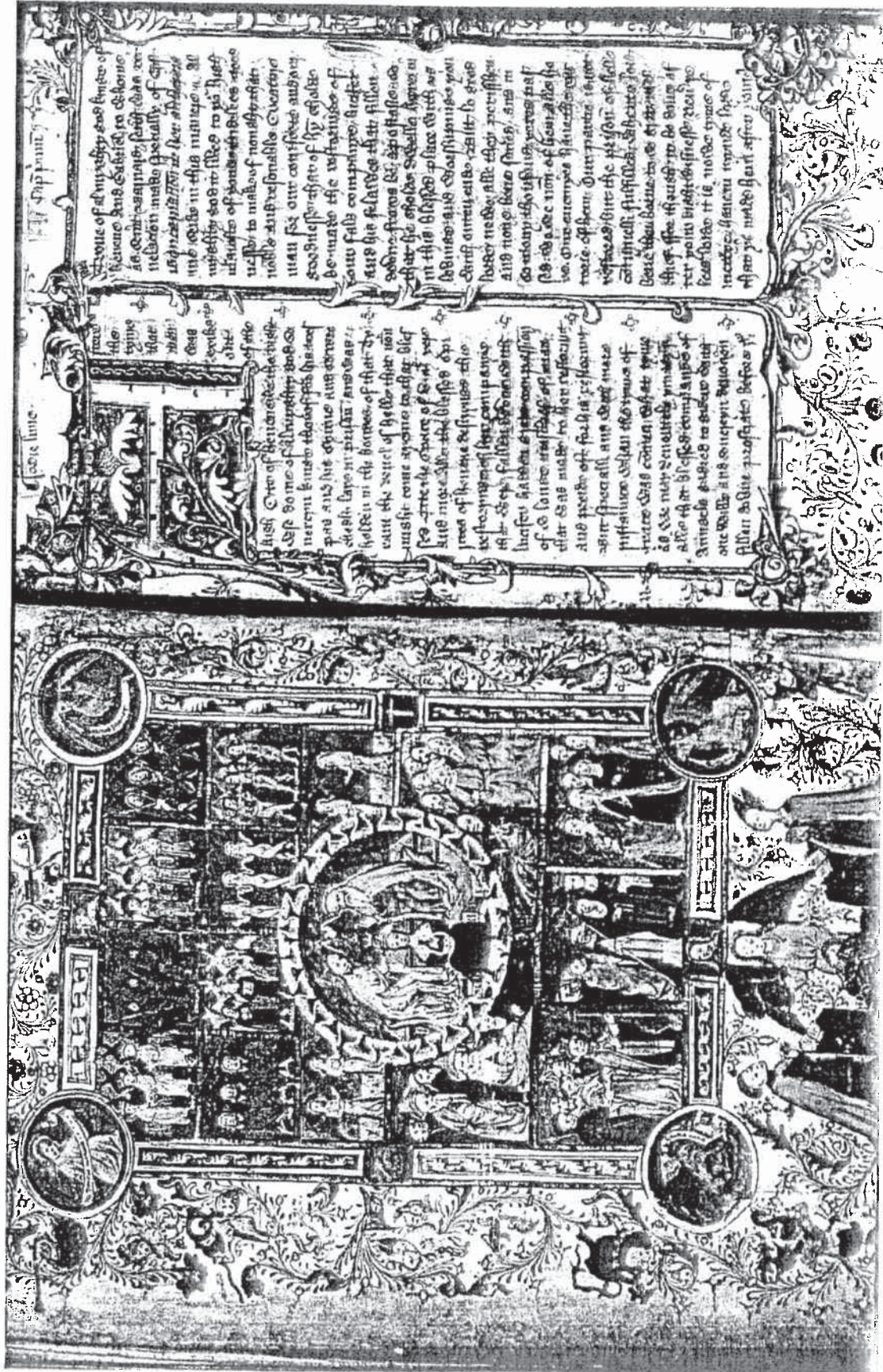


Figure 3. Coronation (Advocates MS, fol. 12v)

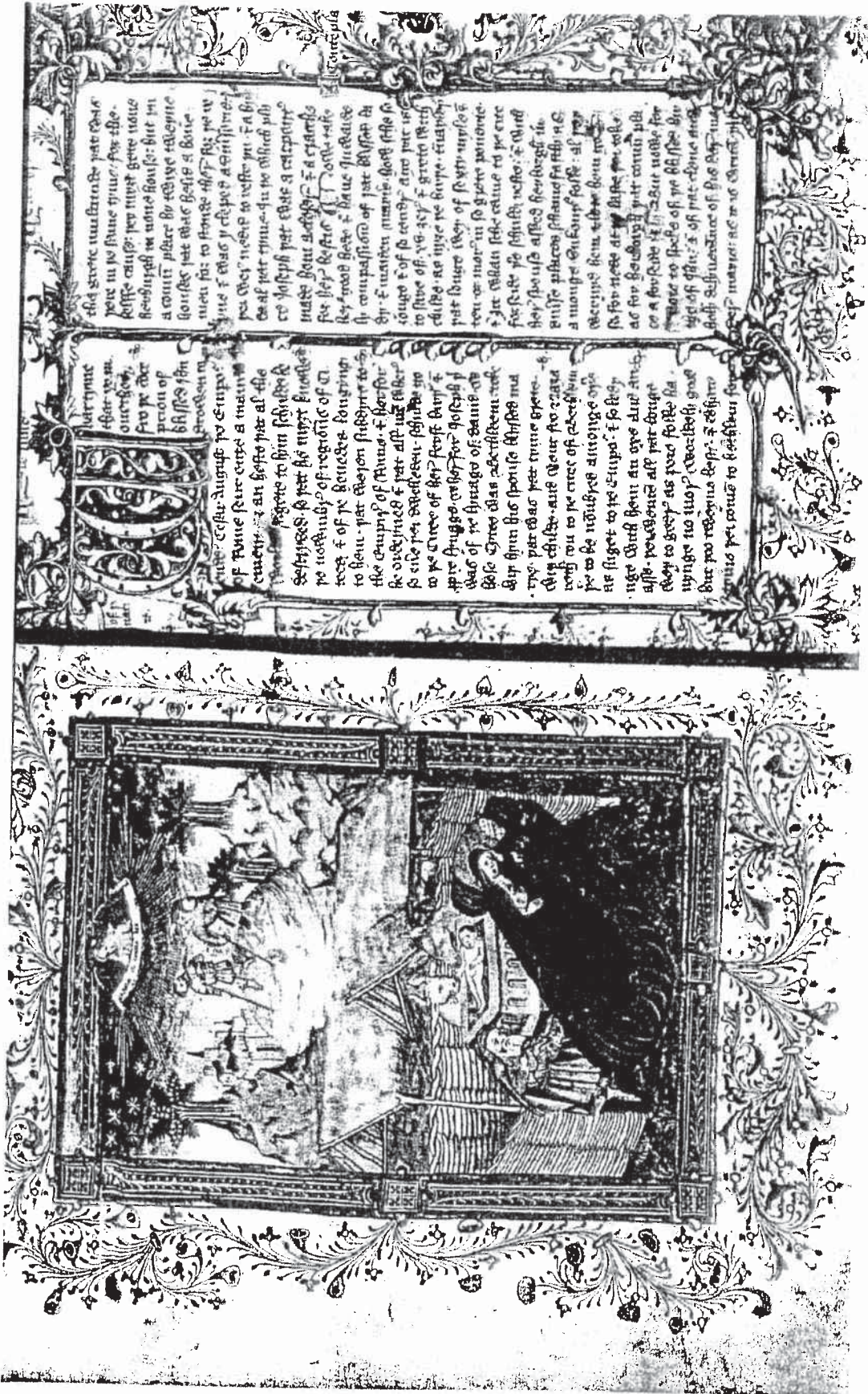


Figure 4. Nativity (Advocates MS, fol. 27v)

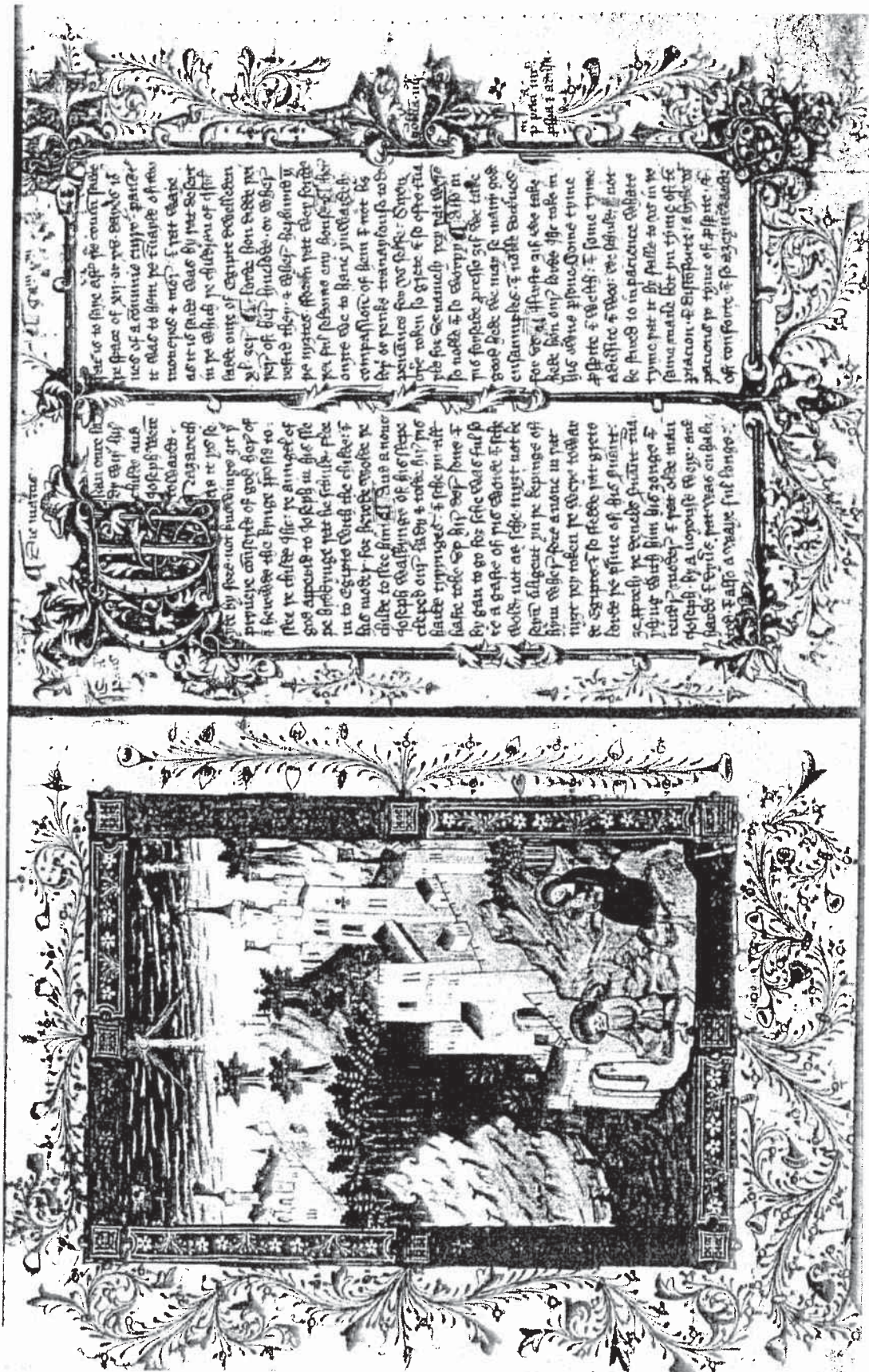


Figure 5. Flight into Egypt (Advocates MS, fol. 36v)

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 f po pat heu tempale f wech
 fayinge for so pat heu ston
 the f cullhinge: tpe dli gaw
 fow: 3if tpe deshen eueh a gab
 weff ro dony se dme f om: w
 oite wch pndicunsh pmpat f
 also so aut: 3if eue qunadane
 sh poute f knoken oij fesse
 ber as pndicunsh f stinmy
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 zote: f And all tpe: 3if sh
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 pnt: aft: 3if: but as: dith: out
 burp: we schid: so: hith: and
 fuch: se: spise: f sete: at: nouit
 all: pte: dghter: pntesse: and
 wode: f f: wech: wode: fect: the
 fempur: of: p: seap: t: f: s: of
 oij: fow: sh: q: d: t: p: m: f
 be: me: to: p: war: for: same
 p: he: fonde: john: deap: t: p: g: r:
 fust: it: f: wch: p: p: h: pat
 was: couit: pdey: to: hey: f: r:
 p: d: e: e: a: e: for: joy: h: d: e: n: h: p:
 pat: t: p: me: de: c: w: p: and: p: mo
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 p: r: o: d: e

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 p: a: t: i: s: h: e: p: a: t: i: s: h: a: s: i: n: s: i: a: r:
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 o: u: r: f: o: u: d: h: e: a: t: t: h: i: s: t: y: n:
 e: h: a: n: b: e: t: h: i: s: s: i: g: n: f: o: d: e:
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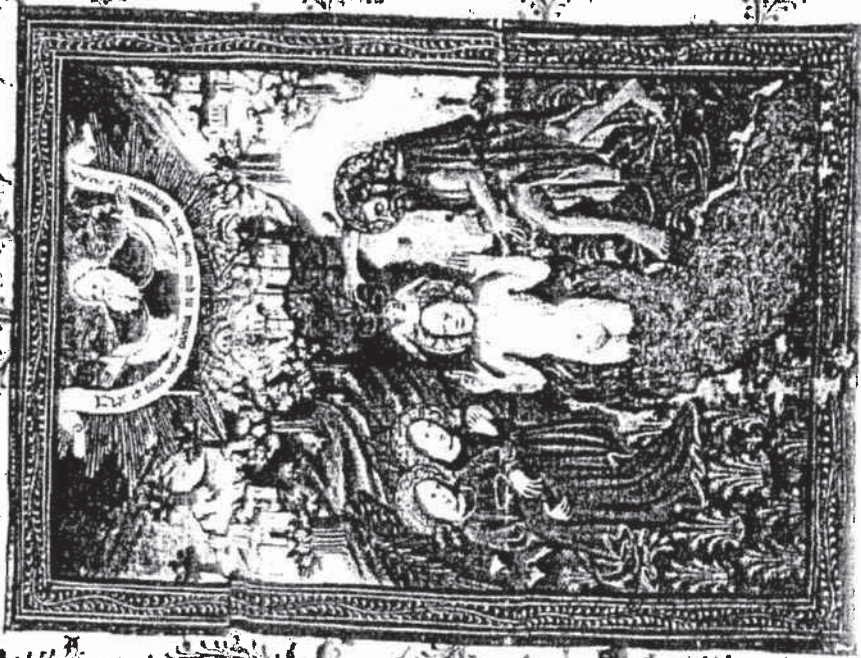


Figure 6. Baptism (Advocates MS, fol. 46v)

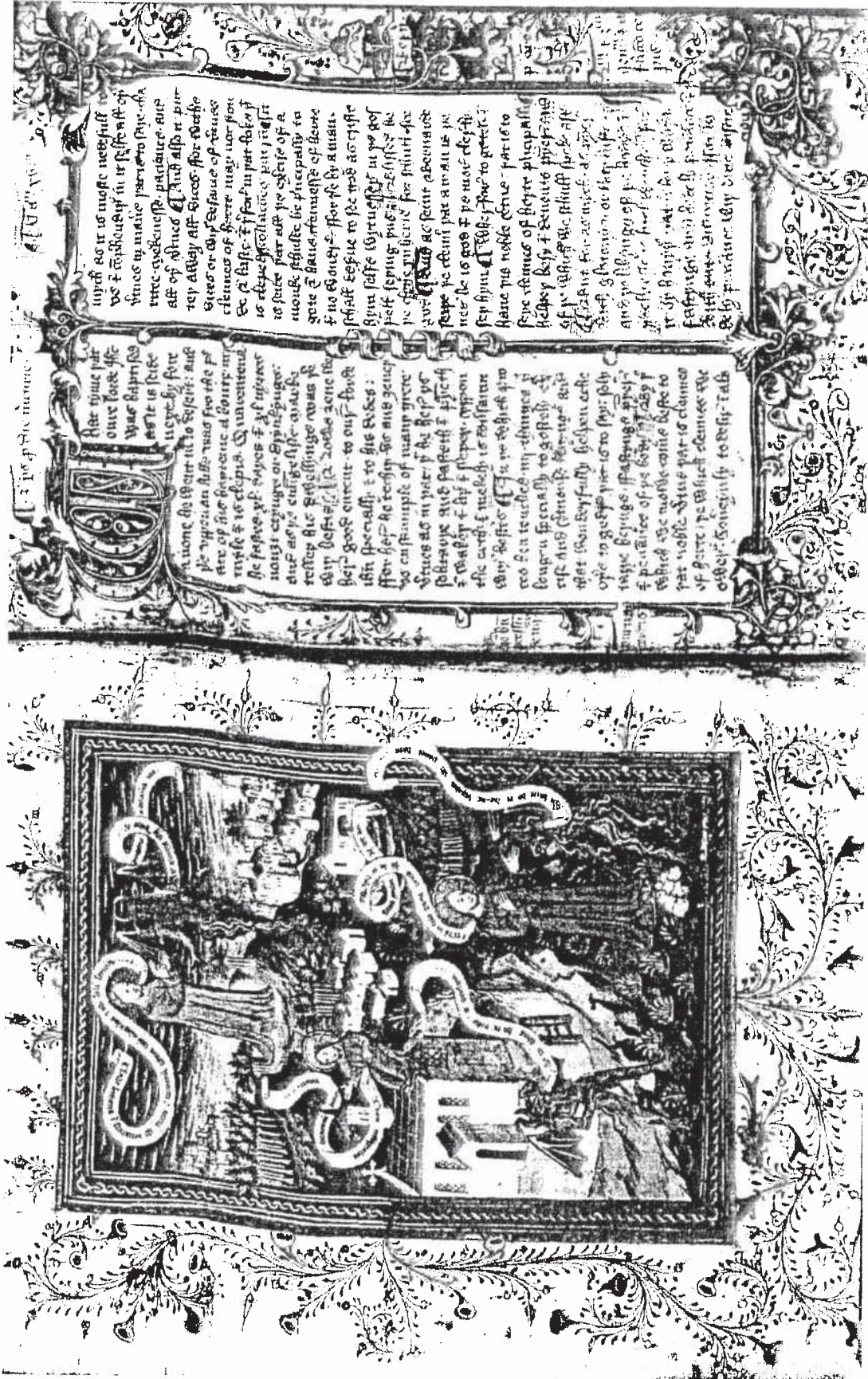


Figure 7. Temptation (Advocates MS, fol. 49v)

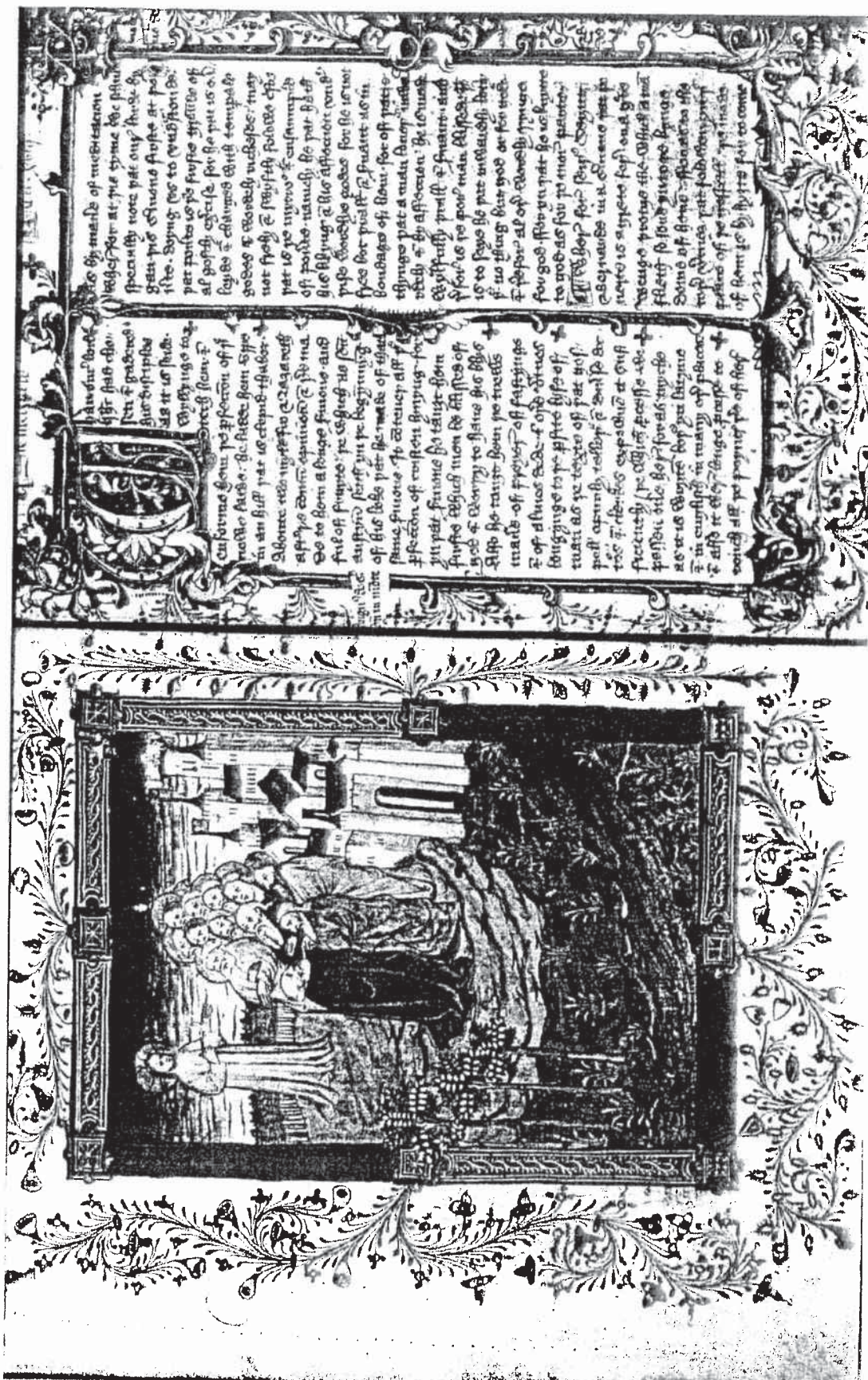


Figure 8. Sermon on the Mount (Advocates MS, fol. 57v)

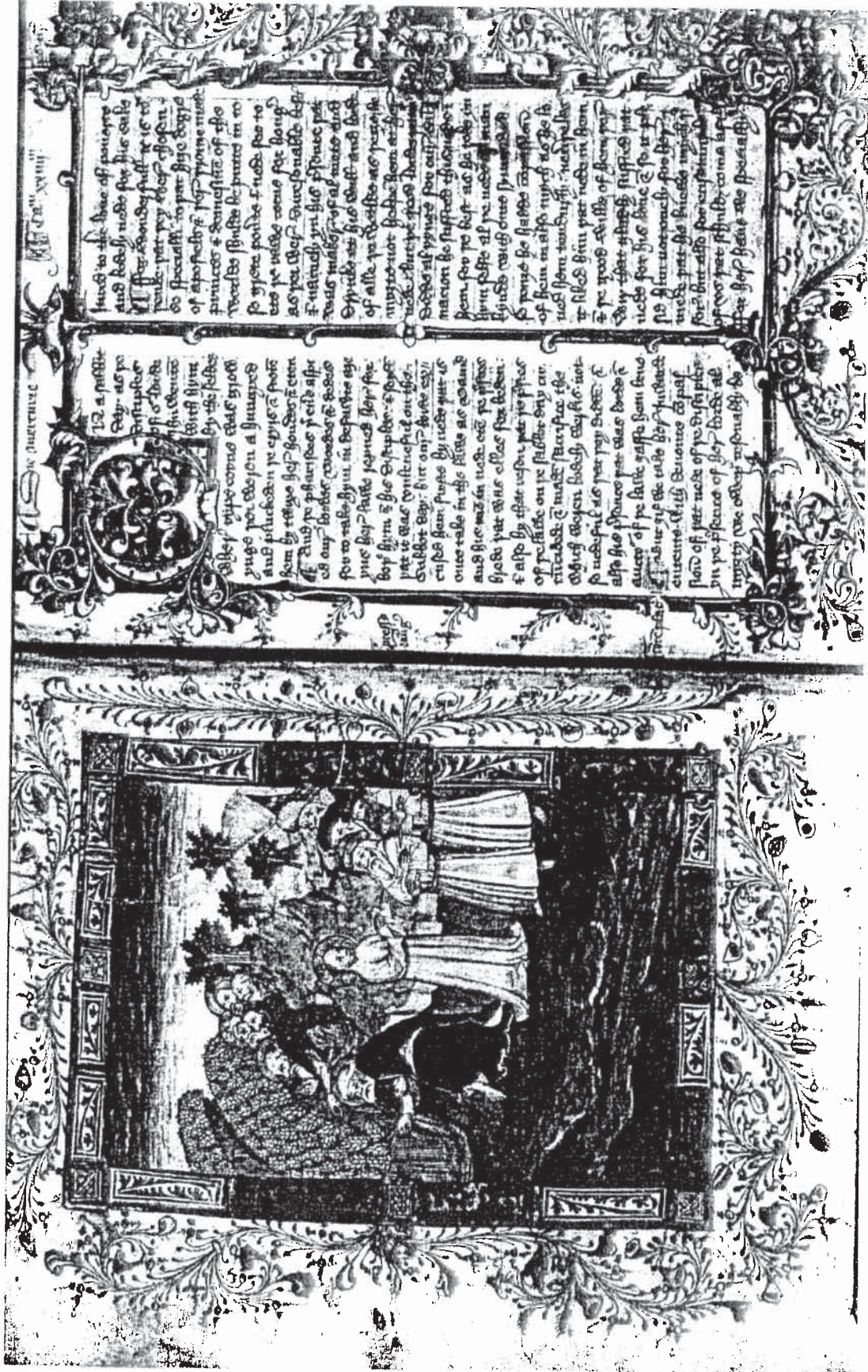


Figure 9. Plucking of the Wheat (Advocates MS, fol. 66v)

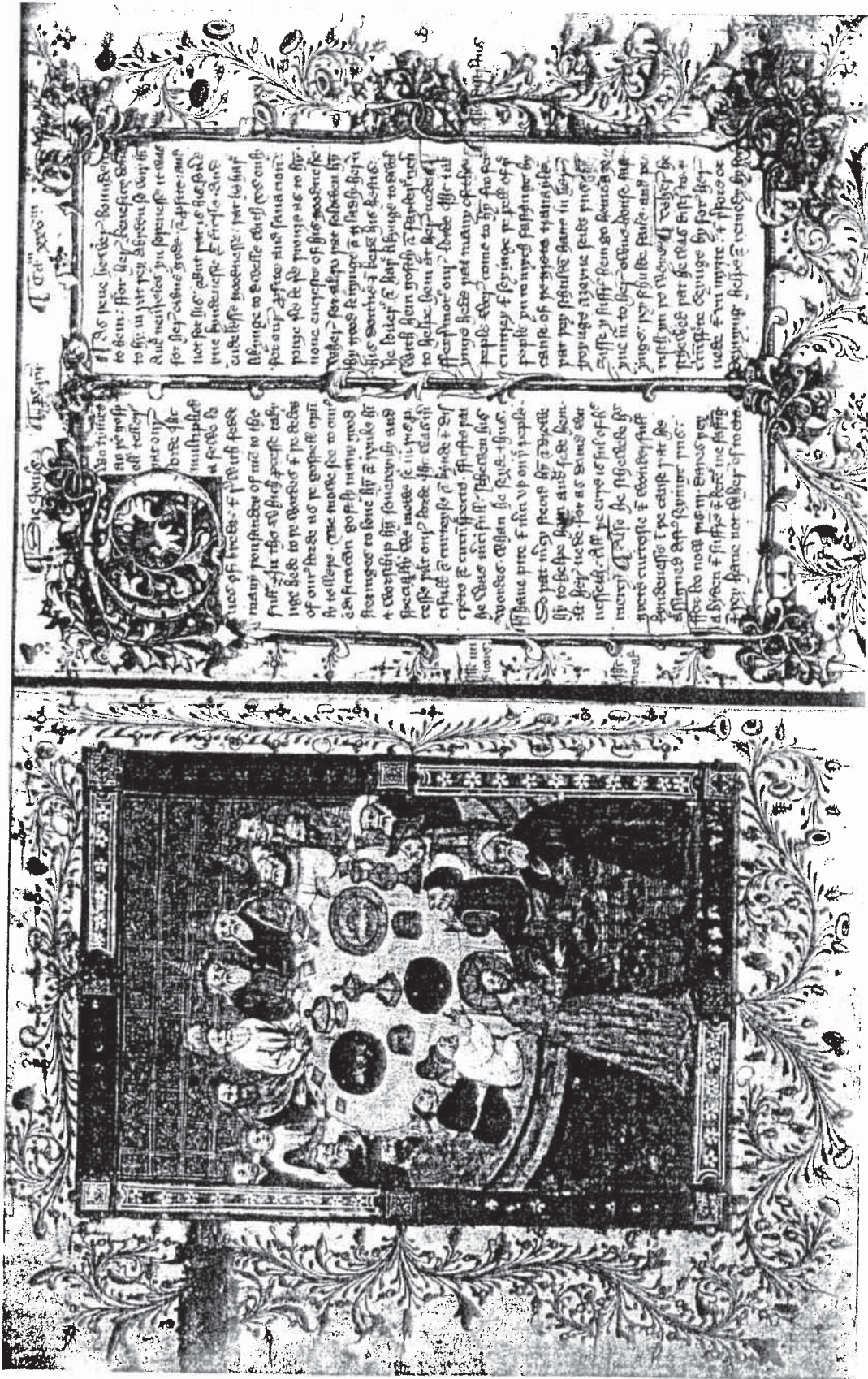


Figure 10. Multiplication (Advocates MS, fol. 69v)

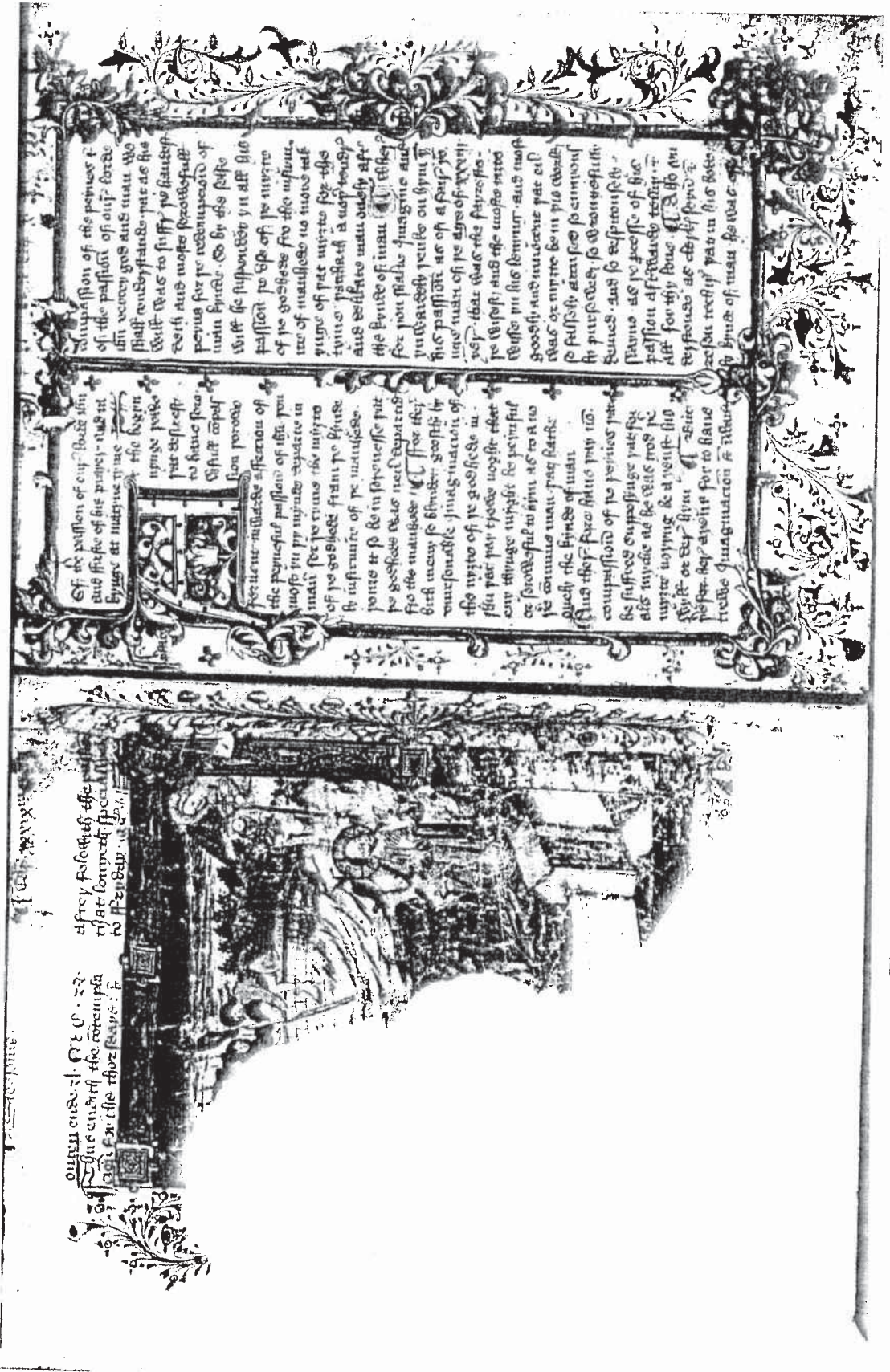


Figure 11. Agony in the Garden (Advocates MS, fol. 94)



Figure 12. Crucifixion (Advocates MS, fol. 118v)

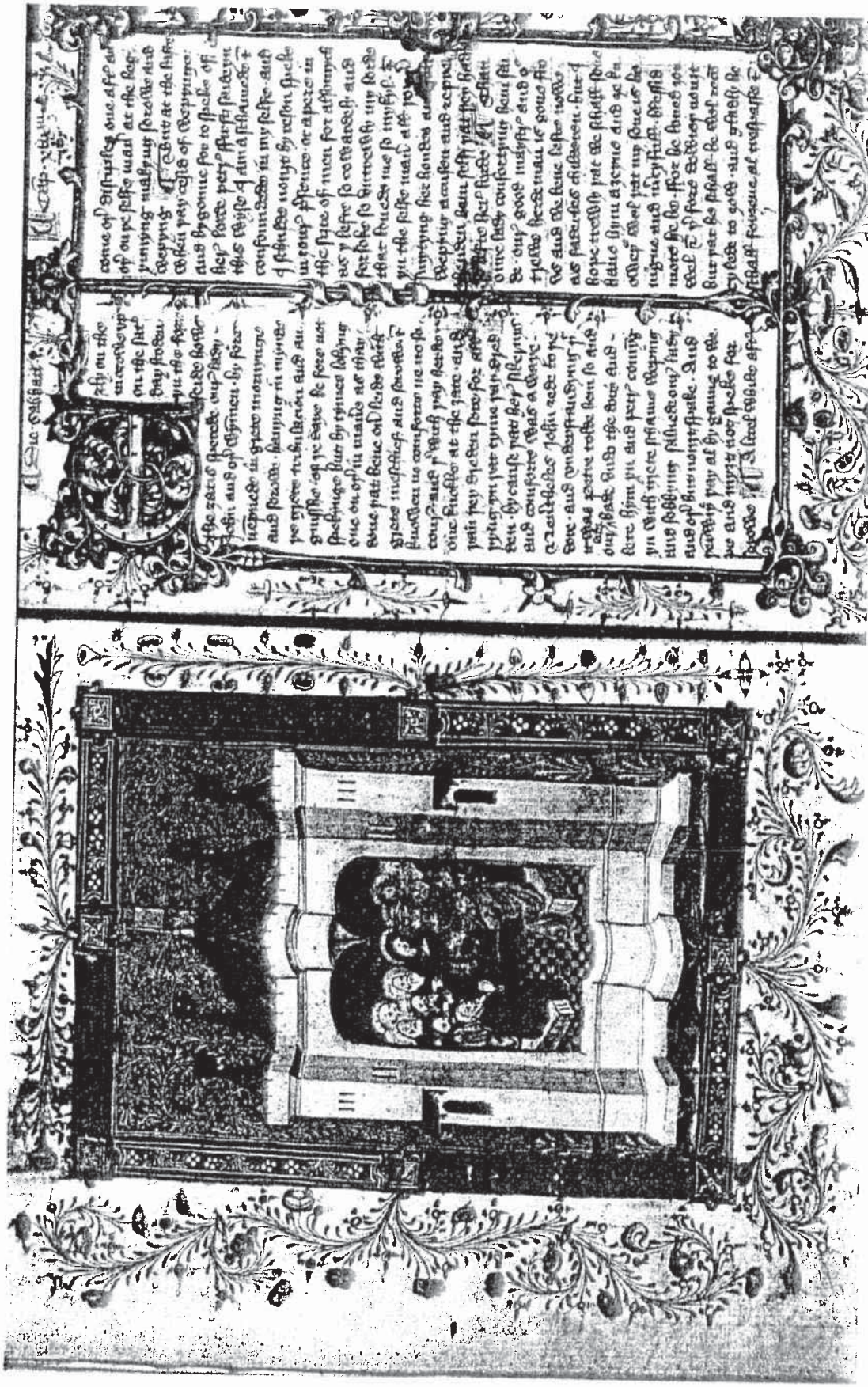


Figure 13. Holy Saturday (Advocates MS, fol. 126v)

and we fores hem to pat
 shis so pat sey seid for forche
 worpesh. by some and so in
 ympnes and joyful purges
 of pe pphesie fulfilled frost
 adant and his pphesie. And
 apsey doo and habrahim
 and miloyde and dauid.
 With all of holy faderes.
 and pphesie sonyng and so.
 spryng our frod. ffrin couron
 ned. yet wyt hym and his
 blessed aunces. In to the
 tyme pat hym alle to take
 hem pene wyt in owe shew
 myrre and sette hem in pe
 diste thetre. wher pat chynel
 and helle lounen in the wchich
 alle they solymesh con for
 red of his adronise pleure
 wyt pat flesch bores abden
 pe tyme of hurecryste. f
 And when it drewe to vach
 day. wyt in pe son day pat.
 Was the thynge day fro his
 passion our bedde. ffrin ffride
 to hem al. and suide t frise
 mail. wordes. ffrin ffride
 is tyme that i resp my ffrid
 fro dech to kro and i ffrid
 loes. i ffrid go and take
 my loby agone and they
 wher pay all salyng. dwele
 and shoushipinge hym ffrid

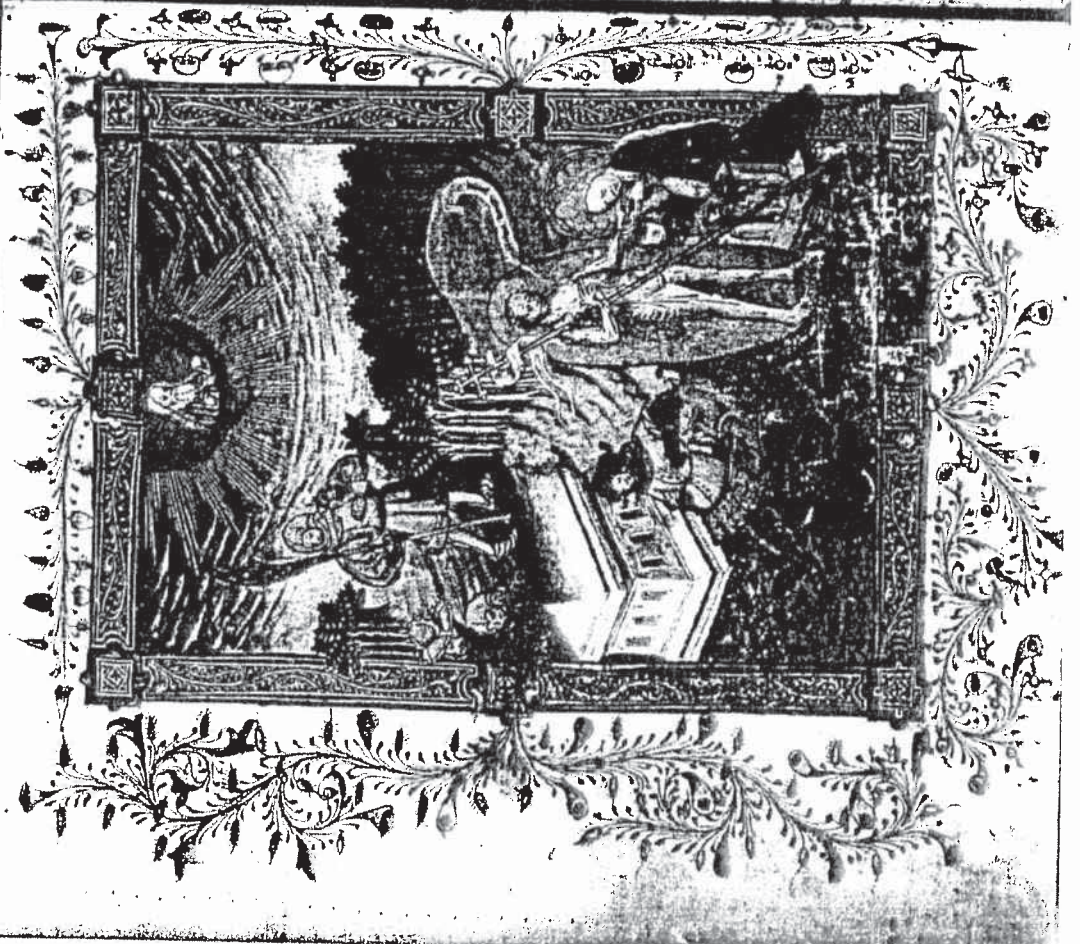


Figure 14. Resurrection (Advocates MS, fol. 129v)



Figure 15: Ascension (Advocates MS, fol. 140v)

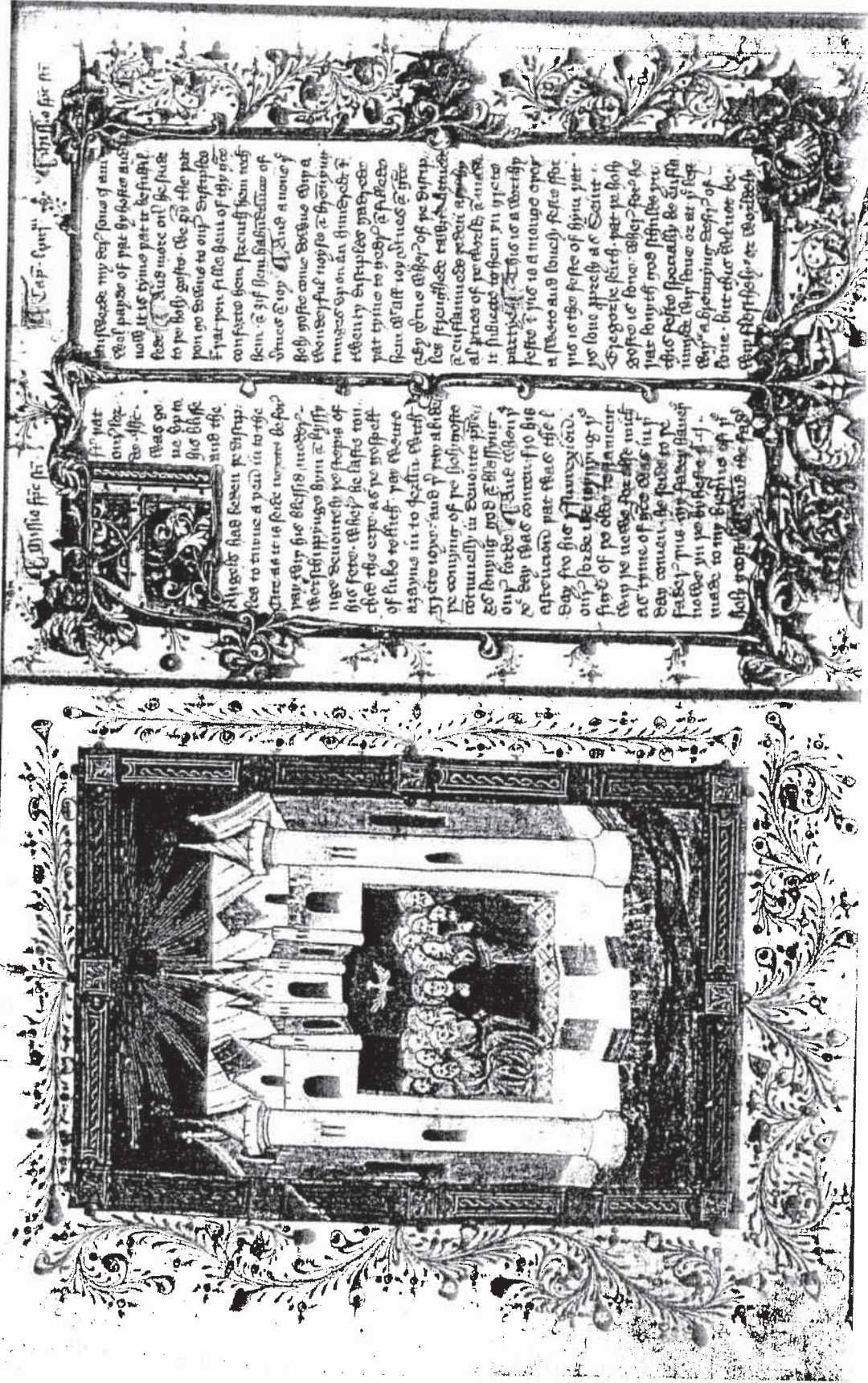


Figure 16. Pentecost (Advocates MS, fol. 146v)

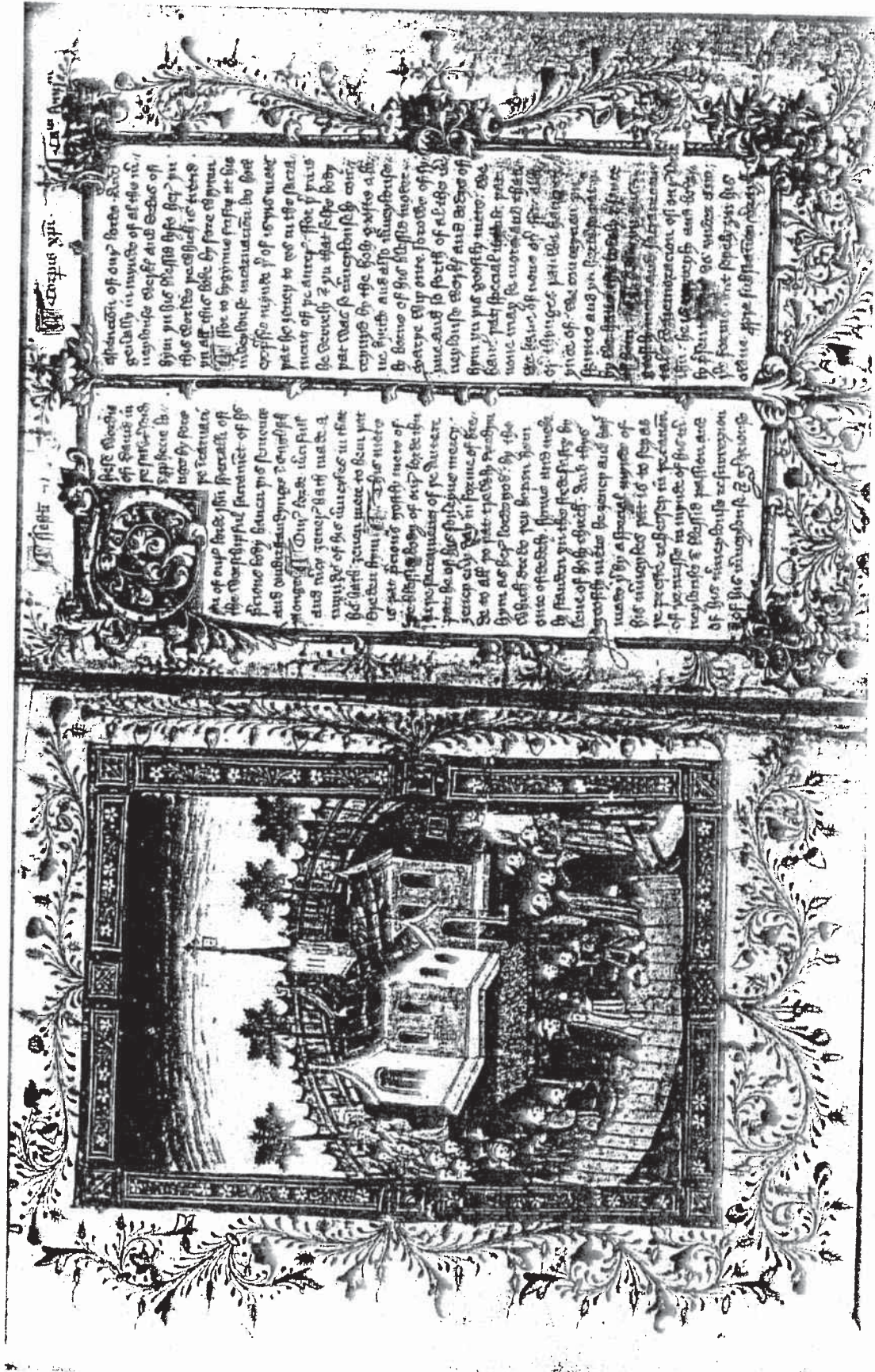


Figure 17. Corpus Christi (Advocates MS, 149v)

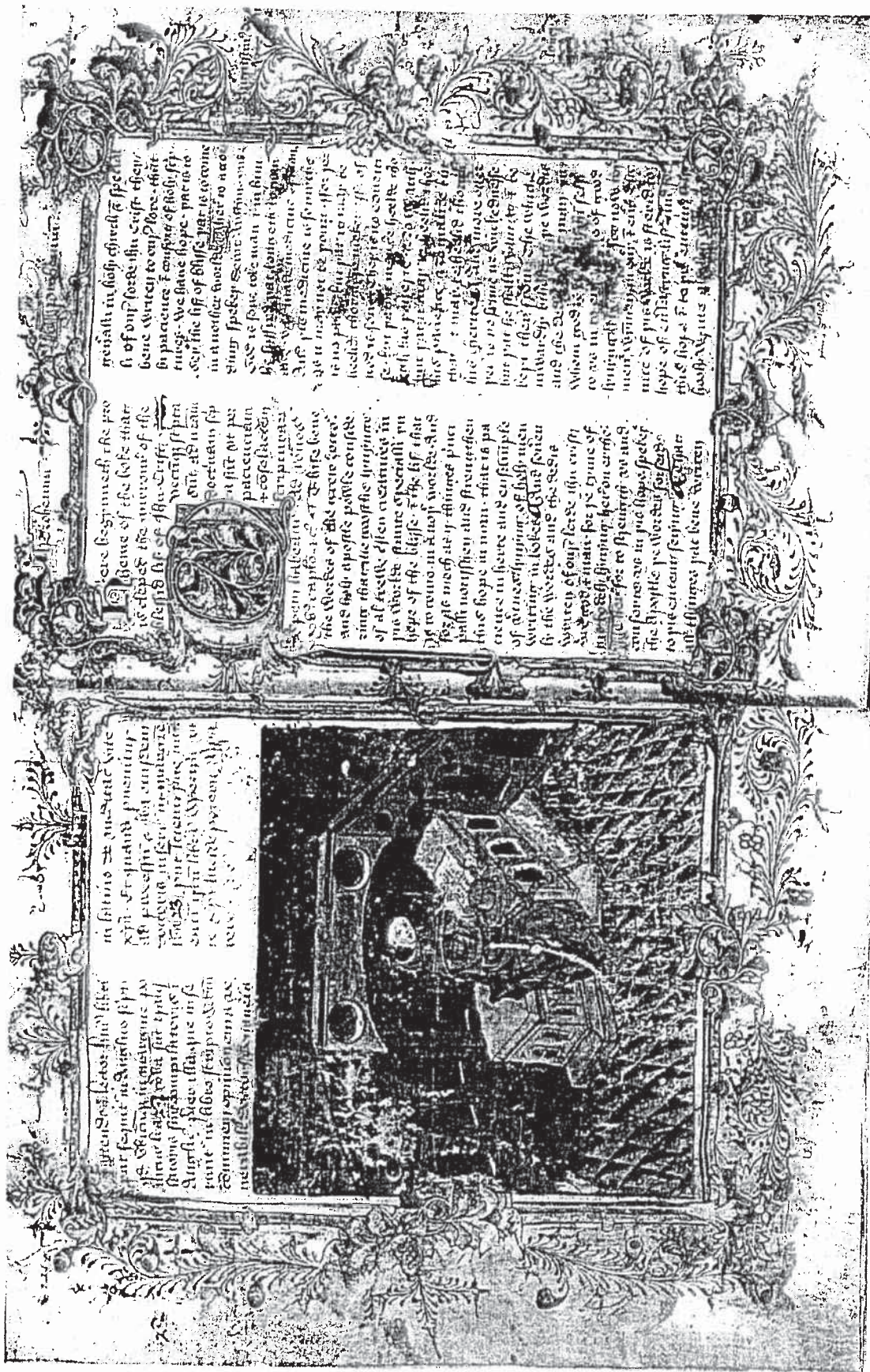
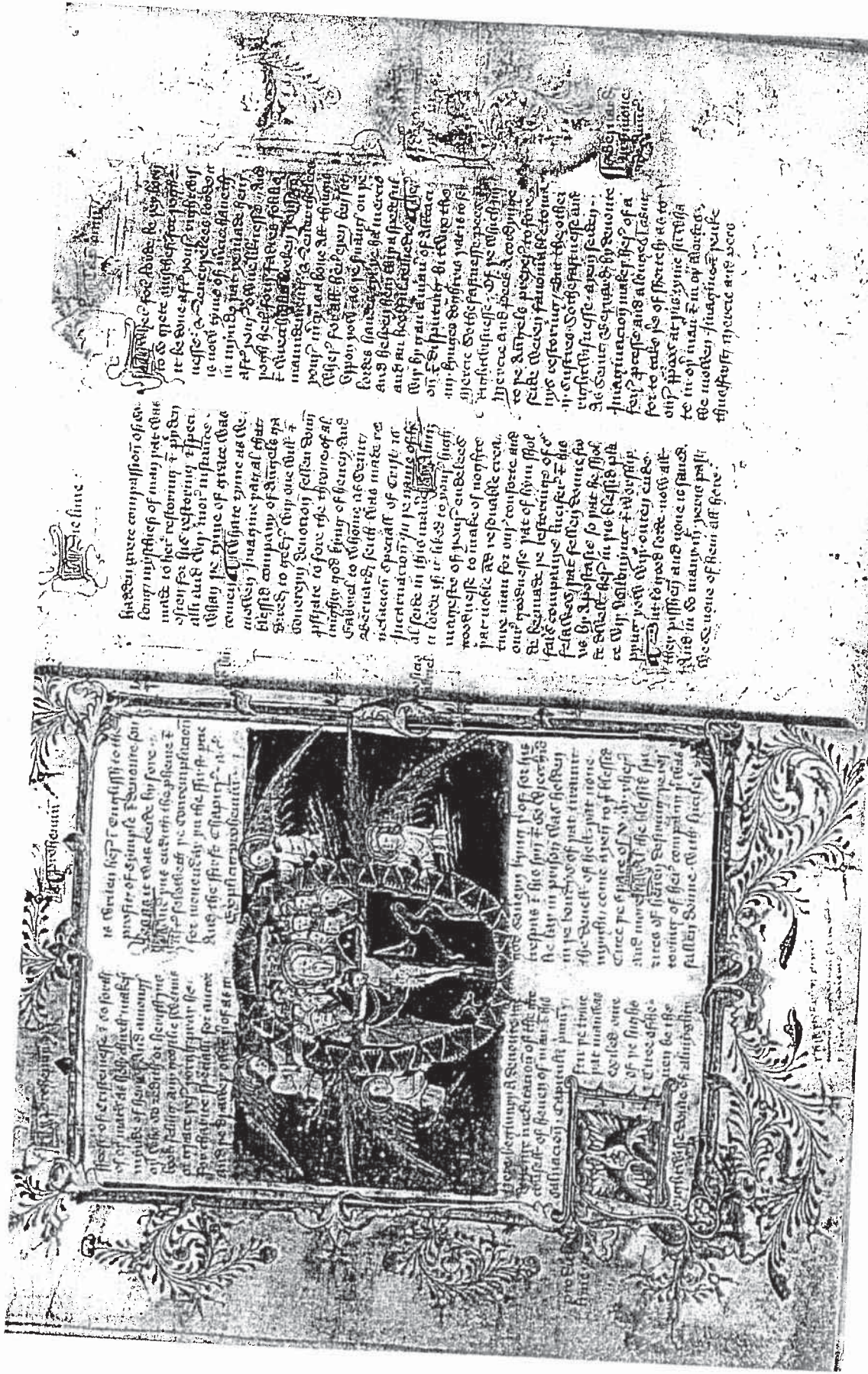


Figure 18. Bonaventure (Morgan MS, fol. 2v)



19

he haden were compassion of
 long mythyng of many pat-
 uen to her restoring & yden
 all and chy not instance
 wlay p gyfte of grace was
 tomen wllshare yme as we
 answy imagine pat al ther
 blessed company of dyngels
 shes to refy wyne wll &
 woneyng demonyon fesson don
 pphate to fore the thoure of al
 myssy god kyng of heven and
 salval to wllome n Certy
 ascertayd scilicet had made re
 viction special of Crist in
 luctuacion in p nays offe
 al fode in the maner of
 it had yf it lles to your shyn
 unspse of wyng endles
 par noble to make of non fre
 trys man for ony conforte and
 our gadesse pat of hym spot
 de be mane pse lefterung of
 falyng companye lictes & ho
 ve by dyligence so pat he shol
 de dyligently in the flesch pat
 re wyng dyligence & worship
 pnyer wyl wyng outeys eys
 wllshare to good fore nosh all
 after pnyer and gone is fane
 had in & many nysene past
 the soule of hem all here

he haden were compassion of
 long mythyng of many pat-
 uen to her restoring & yden
 all and chy not instance
 wlay p gyfte of grace was
 tomen wllshare yme as we
 answy imagine pat al ther
 blessed company of dyngels
 shes to refy wyne wll &
 woneyng demonyon fesson don
 pphate to fore the thoure of al
 myssy god kyng of heven and
 salval to wllome n Certy
 ascertayd scilicet had made re
 viction special of Crist in
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 it had yf it lles to your shyn
 unspse of wyng endles
 par noble to make of non fre
 trys man for ony conforte and
 our gadesse pat of hym spot
 de be mane pse lefterung of
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 pnyer wyl wyng outeys eys
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 after pnyer and gone is fane
 had in & many nysene past
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he haden were compassion of
 long mythyng of many pat-
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 tomen wllshare yme as we
 answy imagine pat al ther
 blessed company of dyngels
 shes to refy wyne wll &
 woneyng demonyon fesson don
 pphate to fore the thoure of al
 myssy god kyng of heven and
 salval to wllome n Certy
 ascertayd scilicet had made re
 viction special of Crist in
 luctuacion in p nays offe
 al fode in the maner of
 it had yf it lles to your shyn
 unspse of wyng endles
 par noble to make of non fre
 trys man for ony conforte and
 our gadesse pat of hym spot
 de be mane pse lefterung of
 falyng companye lictes & ho
 ve by dyligence so pat he shol
 de dyligently in the flesch pat
 re wyng dyligence & worship
 pnyer wyl wyng outeys eys
 wllshare to good fore nosh all
 after pnyer and gone is fane
 had in & many nysene past
 the soule of hem all here

Figure 19. Crucifix-Trinity (Morgan MS, fol. 5v)



Figure 20. Annunciation (Morgan MS, fol. 10)

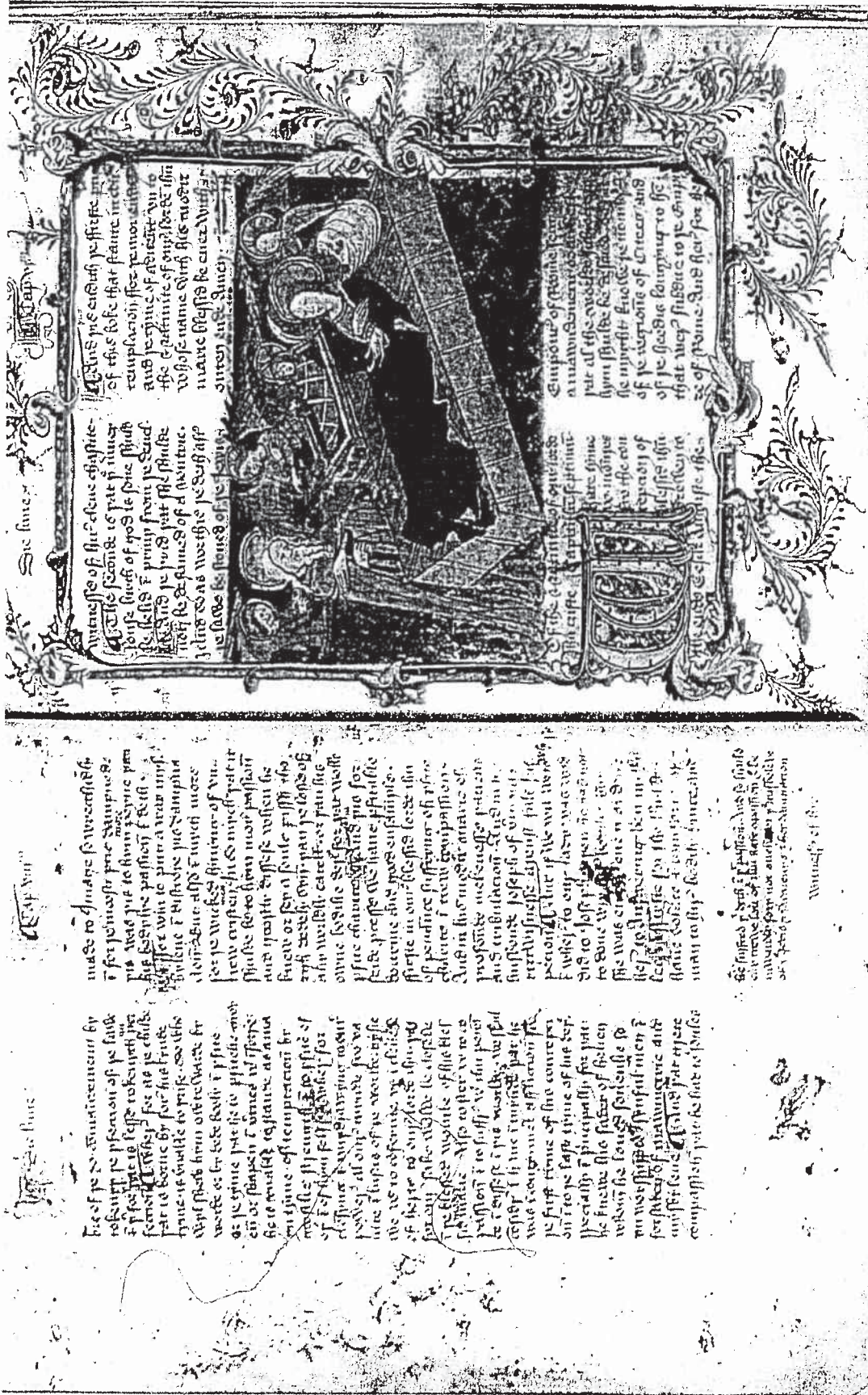


Figure 21. Nativity (Morgan MS, fol. 19)

made to / iungie forwertidh
 i fer iermoste pite dampned
 this was iug to hyn ierome pan
 hie beseint passion f deith
 that se wun to pine a tear my
 blynde f vshoke iug dampna
 dour-dure and f iustice more
 ier ier wicheg sputur of vii
 new crysten hit inep pater
 shrike so to hyn moor passoit
 and iustice dresse vshen he
 fure or fer a soule f iustice
 zth delye swym ier londs of
 a hie wicheg caretes pan the
 owne f dalye dyltes par woth
 ystie chynure sputur ius for
 sate pte se we harte pteille
 bovine dnt was anshupe
 shre in our blessed lord ihu
 of poudinre sustenur of pte
 choure f toun troupasser
 And in his moost amare of
 pteille wechese pteille
 au tribulation. And in h
 sustenur iustice of vte vte
 reryshness. And iust fete
 person. And he is we vte
 dnt to our lare was we
 to dnt wy. And iustice
 the was cryed out in dnt
 hel to iustice heu in the
 lere. And iustice for the fete
 harte dnt f iustice
 man to iustice. And iustice

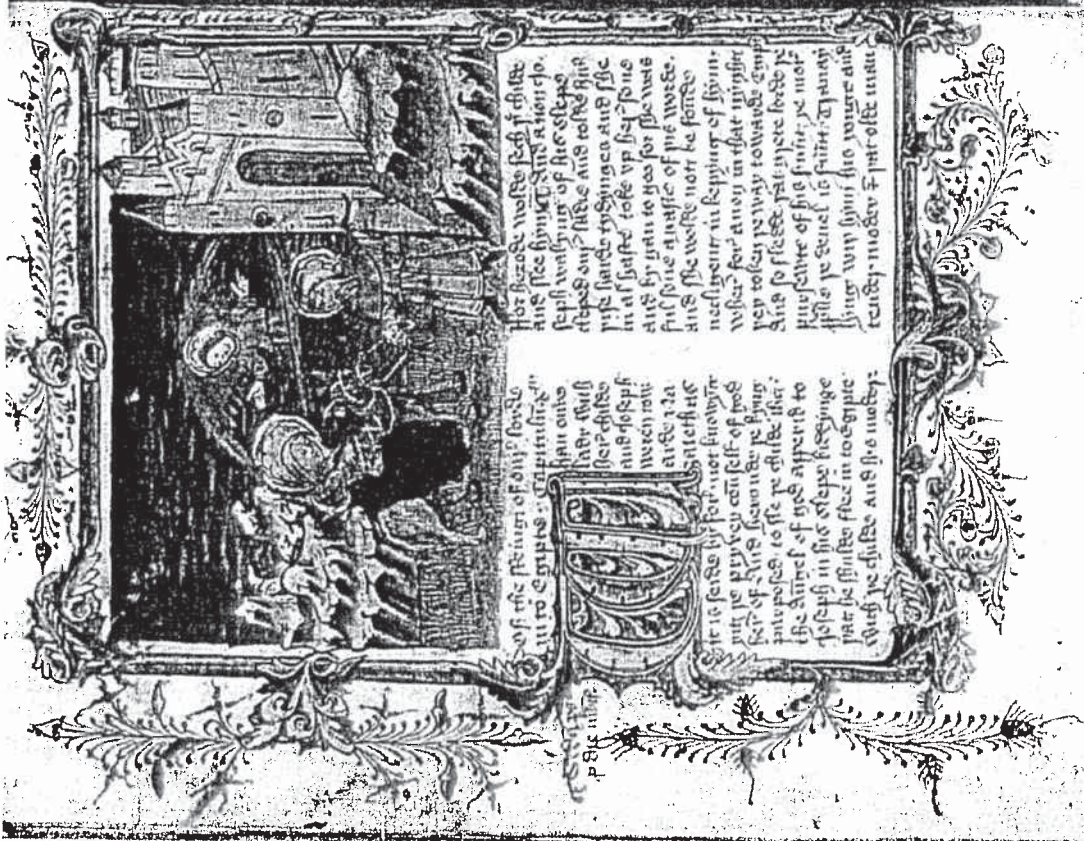
he inspired f dnt f iustice. And he
 carmed out of the more dnt
 indure par nor anshupe f iustice
 dnt fete dnt dnt dnt dnt

The Sinner

The Sinner

The Sinner

Writen by the
 Writen by the



the marke

so fast by a nyght way & hard
as hee yett was not in halles
and also a way full house patre
to say as he came sawe
of a tennie curio pauentur
to hem it was he thar
wasle of y mouche & more
and put way as it seer was
by glar de faire in pe which the
chilren of swal had oure of
theire dulle & syke
the howe the sepe of her sh
wode on wsher restes her aut
wher wep sye harborled the
wines for in pat way full sette
pimdes by any house
oure we to hane unwarde
conuasson of hem and not
be lokt or tenke thany house
to do penance for our self
euen of the toke so grete
so ofte swaile forde manes
pat se we be so noble and sh
worne dylly in his for seke
pre fast we toke good hede
we mo we see many good en
pauentes and notable souer
ues to escheffe if we take be
de soue our to do the toke
his owne psones on tyme
pate and welly and on tyme
de hie & we we shulke not se
stent to impatience where sy
the pat it by fell to ve yfaine

the marke

made but in tyme of tempta
cion and dyston for the wy
patreuce pe tyme of the
of conforans es aenward
oy pat of sice and if you wyl
the eu samis help of in the
holle fupre in his kirke he was
manuscrip to be de men as ad
wyl gne and sone as he was
circuised a Gumpis man
with serouice pat he boug
compt to spay & worship
shyn solerwise both in the
poune & in ptece wse ad
pat se de hie he etyff in pat
stralle amonge left i ptece
weppyn as a ny childe of
a Gumpis man
usentes I pe tumpis wyl
shyn and gte poures wyl
fected and spoken of hym
as of god al myghty
he to be de of pe angest to se
fro se arde in to tye ar se
wyl a pun wyl ouy wyl se
so se pe mo we may synke I
all the list ptece & escheffe
we gnt to gese to our smp
and rechyng of we for se
we de hie conforans to a
sone pat we se for the se
and so wyl se sone de hie
cion & dyston for to be to
in ghe de hie pat the
ngt our owne wyl de hie

Figure 23. Flight into Egypt (Morgan MS, fol. 27)

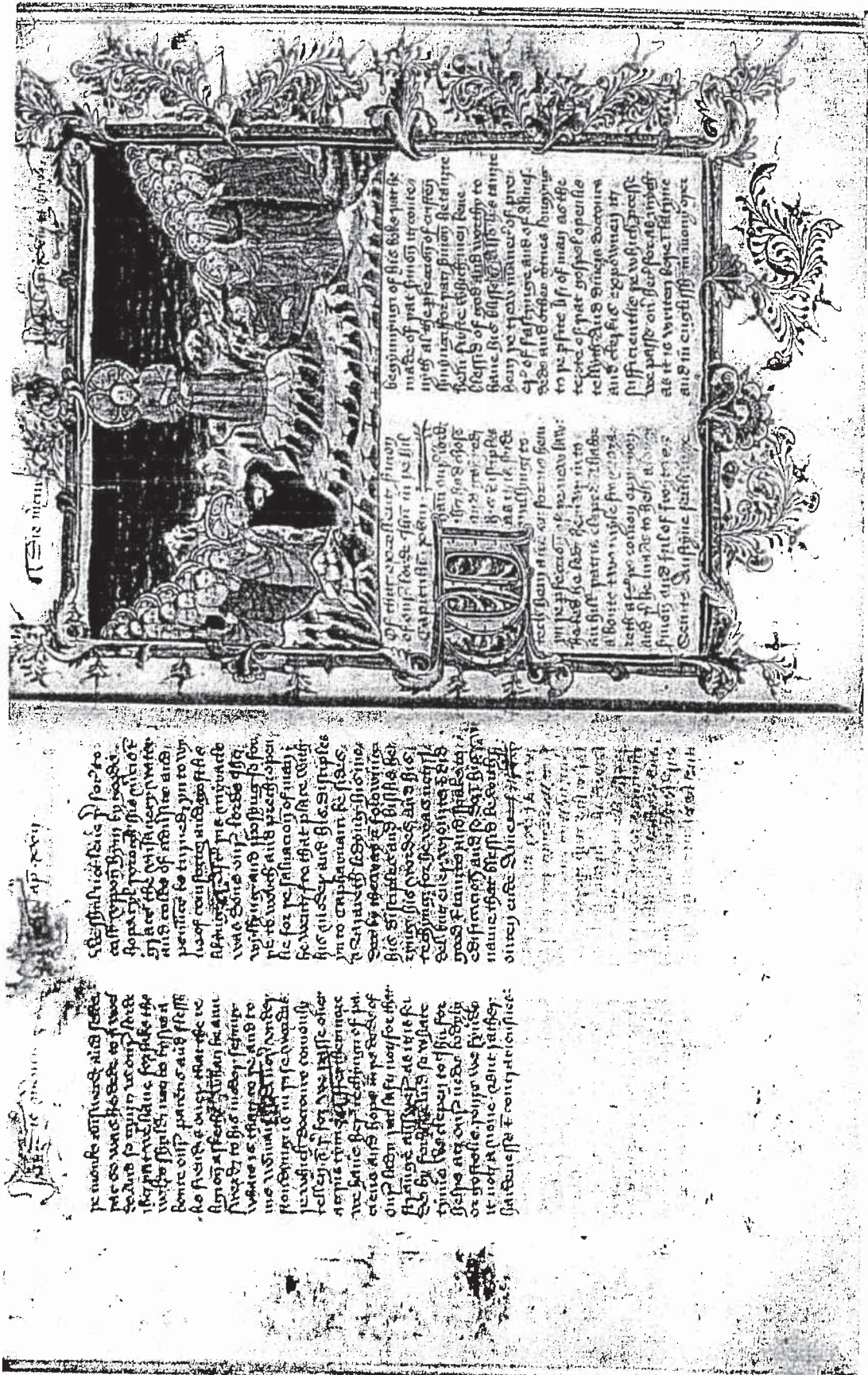


Figure 25. Sermon on the Mount (Morgan MS, fol. 46)

The firste part of this booke is a treatise of the
 nature of wheat and howe it groweth and
 what is the best sort to be sowne and
 howe to manure the ground and when
 to sow and howe to water it and
 howe to weede it and howe to
 mow it and howe to thresh it and
 howe to winnow it and howe to
 store it and howe to make it into
 bread and howe to make it into
 ale and howe to make it into
 other uses.

The second part of this booke is a
 treatise of the diseases of wheat
 and howe to cure them and howe
 to prevent them and howe to
 knowe when they are come and
 howe to take awaye them and
 howe to save the wheat from
 beinge spoiled and howe to
 knowe when it is ripe and
 howe to take it in and howe
 to store it and howe to
 use it.

Figure 26. Plucking of the Wheat (Morgan MS, fol. 54v)

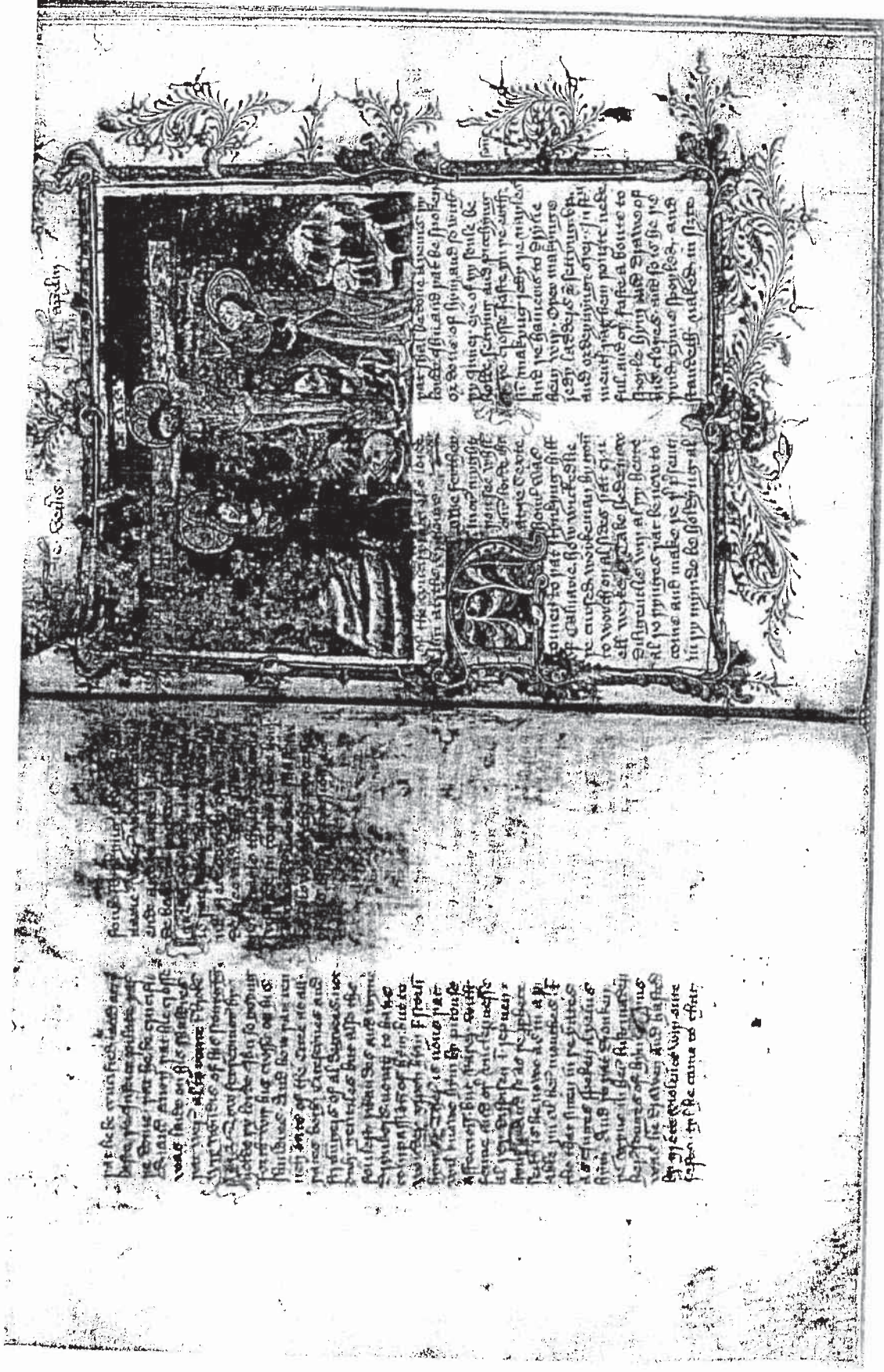


Figure 29. Crucifixion (Morgan MS, fol. 102)



Figure 30. Resurrection (Morgan MS, fol. 119)

for thy touch my soul
 has raised and quickened
 and thou art my life and
 my resurrection. I have
 been dead in sin, but
 thou hast quickened me
 by thy grace. I have
 been blind, but thou
 hast opened my eyes.
 I have been in darkness,
 but thou hast shined
 in me by thy light.
 I have been cold, but
 thou hast warmed me
 by thy love. I have
 been in the shadow of
 death, but thou hast
 quickened me by thy
 grace. I have been
 a stranger, but thou hast
 made me a son of
 thy house. I have
 been in bondage, but
 thou hast redeemed me
 by thy blood. I have
 been in the valley of
 the shadow of death,
 but thou hast quickened
 me by thy grace. I
 have been in the
 shadow of death, but
 thou hast quickened
 me by thy grace. I
 have been in the
 shadow of death, but
 thou hast quickened
 me by thy grace.

him in his resurrection
 of his own accord and
 by his own power. He
 is the firstborn of the
 Father, and he is the
 only begotten Son. He
 is the true light, which
 gives light to every man
 that cometh into the
 world. He is the life,
 and the light of men.
 He is the word, which
 was with God, and
 which was God. He
 was in the beginning
 with God, and he was
 God. He was with
 God, and he was God.
 He was in the
 beginning, and he was
 God. He was with
 God, and he was God.
 He was in the
 beginning, and he was
 God. He was with
 God, and he was God.

but as he said unto
 his disciples, he said,
 I have ascended into
 heaven, and I am
 sitting on the right
 hand of the Father.
 I will come again,
 and I will sit with
 my Father, and you
 shall sit with me.
 I will be with you
 always, even unto
 the end of the world.
 I am the first and
 the last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.
 I am the first and
 the last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.
 I am the first and
 the last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.

of the resurrection
 of our Lord Jesus
 Christ, which is
 the first and the
 last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.
 I am the first and
 the last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.
 I am the first and
 the last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.
 I am the first and
 the last, and he that
 is in the midst of
 the world. I am the
 beginning and the end,
 the first and the last.

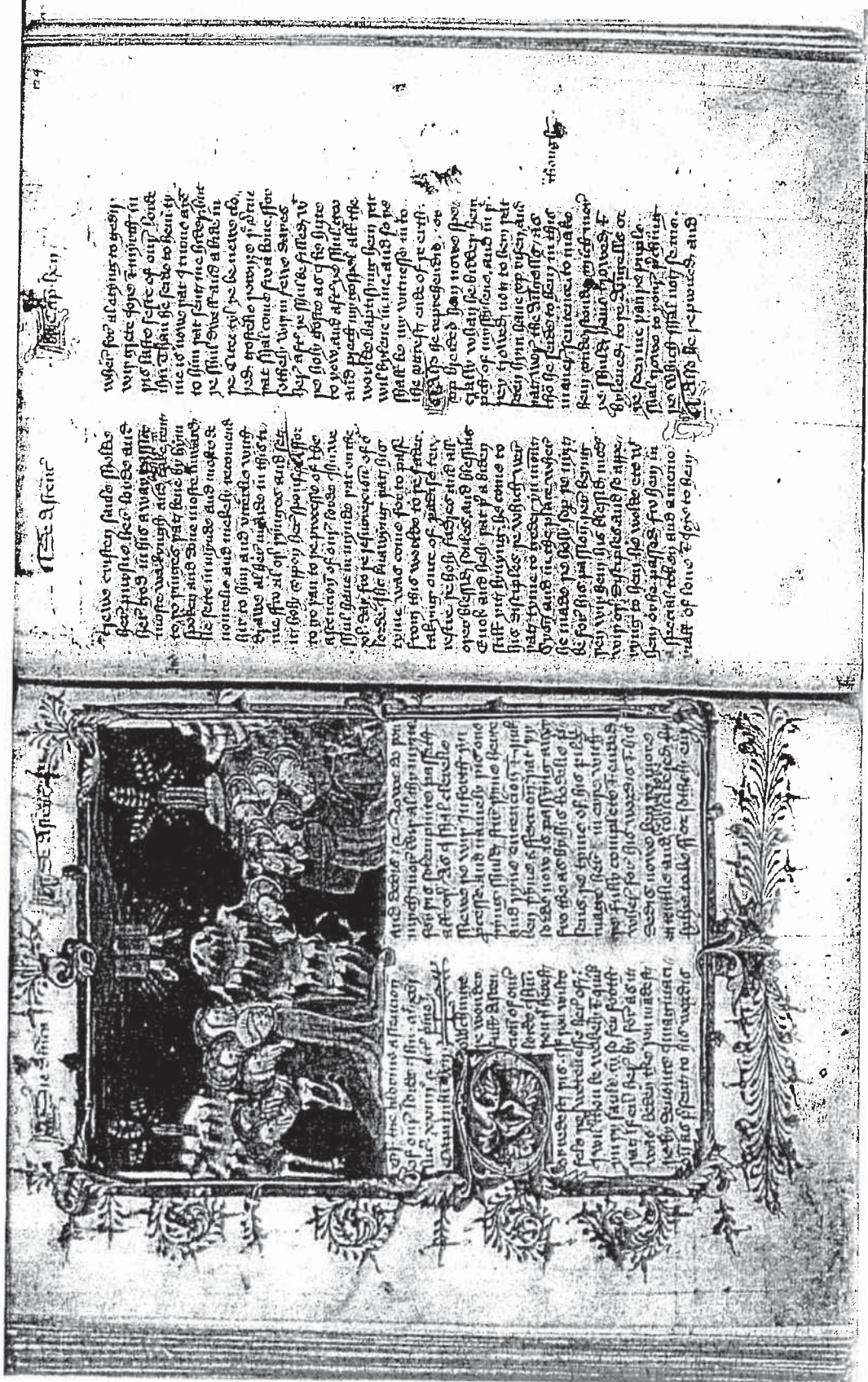


Figure 31: Ascension (Morgan MS, fol. 123v)

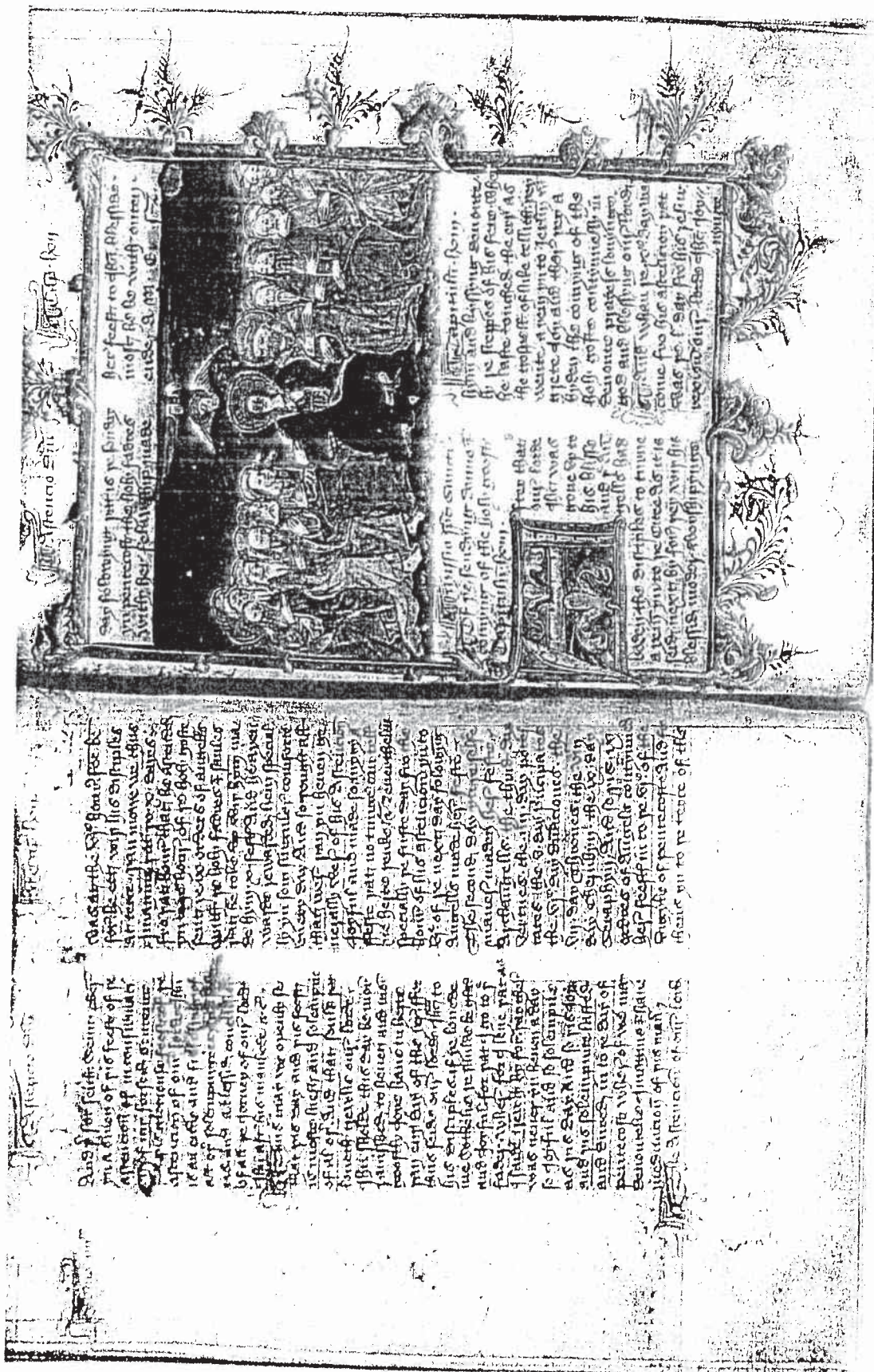


Figure 32. Pentecost (Morgan MS, fol. 129)

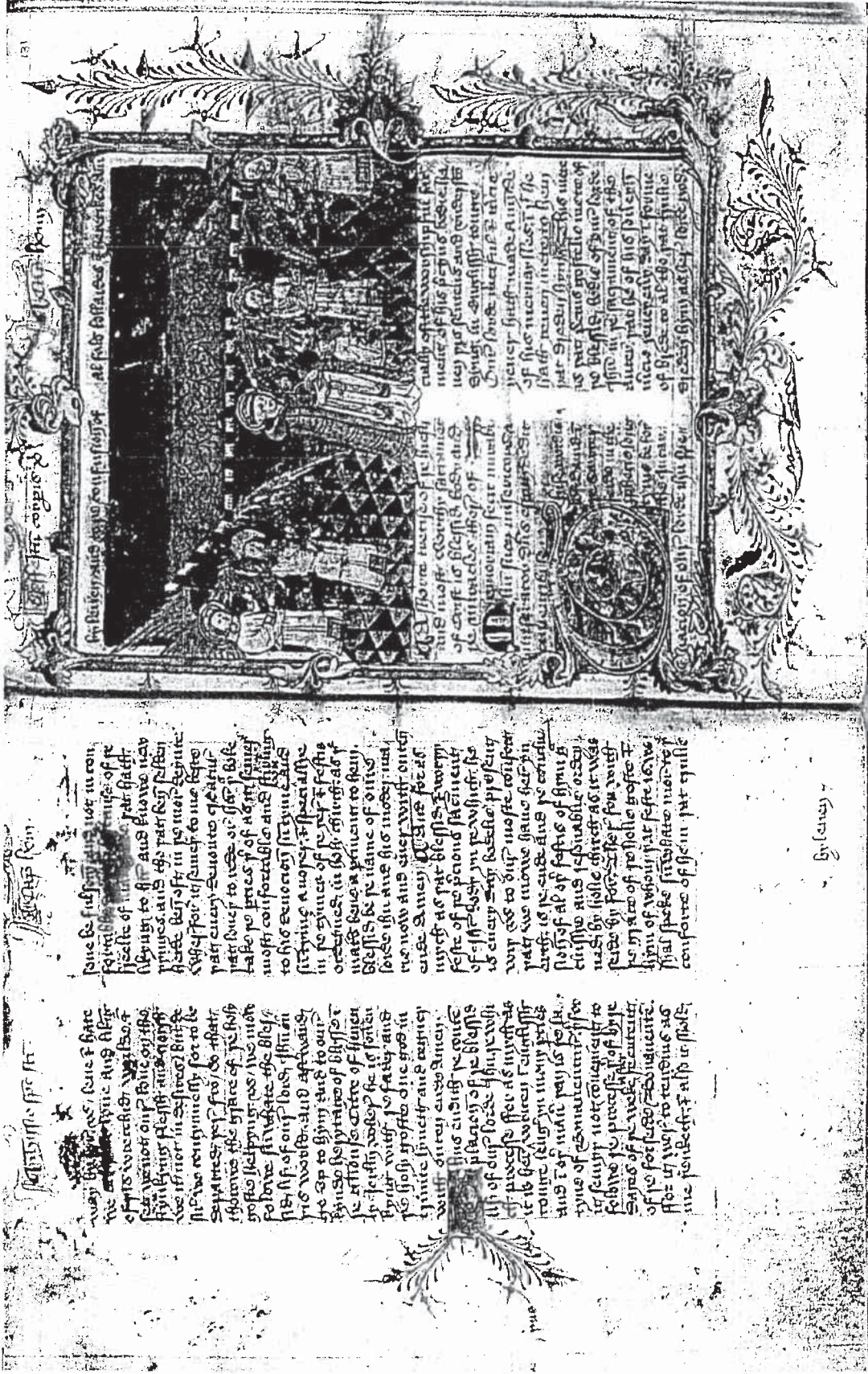


Figure 33. Cornus Christi (Morgan MS, fol. 131).