lated *Institutione* precisely to serve as the manuscript's preface. It seems possible in fact that Thomas and the editor were the same man, who named himself in the introductory pages of his manuscript not only to link himself to the great Cistercian abbot but also to place his own signature at the front of his 'omnium gatherum'.[42]

While such thoughts on the origins and audience of the Vernon manuscript are and probably will continue to be largely speculative, what is certain is *Informacio*'s exemplification of the way fourteenth- and fifteenth-century English spirituality developed out of the most innovative affectivity of the twelfth century. In adding spiritual affectivity to Aelred's great work of affective spirituality, Thomas was gilding the lily — as was the editor of the Vernon manuscript when he placed Thomas's work at the very beginning of his great collection of vernacular religious works — but in both cases the effect was gold indeed.

Despite all that is not known of the Thomas who drew *Informacio* from *Institutione*, he was unmistakably a fine writer — rhetorically graceful and controlled, self-confident, clear about his goals and the best methods for achieving them, and consistent in his techniques and effects. In not merely translating but updating his source, he enhanced its spiritual affectivity, making it both more affective and more spiritual. No wonder his translation was copied into the Vernon manuscript, leading the way to all that was to follow and inviting readers to love Jesus with confidence and boldness, so to come to know him and to achieve true intimacy with him in his sacred humanity.

[42] Robinson, 'The Vernon Manuscript', p. 27.

'Opyn þin hert as a boke': Translation Practice and Manuscript Circulation in *The Doctrine of the Hert*

Denis Renevey and Christiania Whitehead

Introduction

The *De doctrina cordis* is a devotional Latin treatise of French provenance, written in the second quarter of the thirteenth century and addressed to women leading enclosed and vowed lives. Although, for many decades, its authorship remained a matter of uncertainty and dispute, this dispute has recently been authoritatively resolved in favour of the French Dominican cardinal and papal legate, Hugh of St-Cher (*ca* 1200–63).[1] Divided into seven chapters, each of which is linked with a gift of the Holy Spirit, the treatise explores how the heart must be metaphorically prepared, watched, opened, consolidated, offered, lifted up, and, finally, cut, in its journey towards union with God. Extant in Latin in over two hundred manuscripts distributed between sixteen European countries, *De doctrina cordis* was also translated into Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish

[1] Guido Hendrix, 'Les *Postillae* de Hugues de Saint-Cher et le traité *De doctrina cordis*', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 47 (1980), 114–30; '*De apercione cordis*, *De impedimentis* and *De custodia linguae*. Three Pseudo-Bernardine texts restored to their true author, Hugh of St Cher', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 48 (1981), 172–97. For an earlier attribution see André Wilmart, 'Gérard de Liège. Un traité inédit de l'amour de Dieu', *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique*, 12 (1931), 345–430.

between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Nonetheless, despite its contemporary popularity, the clarity and competence of its didacticism, and the vigour and originality of its persistently metaphorical method of procedure (which bears comparison with the vigorous metaphoricity of *Ancrene Wisse*), to date the *Doctrina* has suffered undeserved scholarly neglect.

The following linked sections will focus upon the early fifteenth-century Middle English translation of the *Doctrina: The Doctrine of the Hert,* which is currently extent in four manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 330; Durham, University Library, MS Cosin, V. III. 24; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, McClean 132; and Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 14. 15. Paying attention to a two-page prologue in the *Doctrine* original to the translator, the essay initially addresses the ways in which the Middle English translator views the authorship of the *Doctrina,* and situates his own activities as a translator. This discussion will be followed by an analysis of the translator's attitude toward his designated audience, and of his recommendation of a 'sauourly' process of reading.[2] The second and third parts review the translator's translation strategy in the text as a whole, interrogating this strategy in the light of the ecclesiastical legislative milieu of the early fifteenth century. The essay concludes by reviewing the evidence for the ownership and fifteenth-century circulation of the *Doctrine* amongst lay and religious women readers, in order to arrive at an opinion on the degree to which the *Doctrine's* actual usage and contexts of reading tallied with the translator's theoretical expectations.[3]

Authorship, Readership, and Modes of Reading

Three of the four extant manuscripts of the Middle English *Doctrine of the Hert* offer a prologue which is original to this vernacular version.[4] A close textual analysis of this prologue proves rewarding, and uncovers significant textual strategies with a particular Middle English resonance, which should contribute to a better perception of the situatedness of this text in the context of fifteenth-century translation practice in medieval England. Space is lacking here to address the question of Middle English literary theory, or even the whole question of translation practice, issues which have been dealt with very thoroughly by former members of the Conference in *The*

[2] Mary P. Candon, '*The Doctrine of the Hert*, edited from the manuscripts with introduction and notes' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Fordham University, 1963), p. 2.8.

[3] Although much discussion took place between the authors about all sections of this essay, Christiania Whitehead is responsible for the introduction, and for sections two and three, while Denis Renevey carries responsibility for section one.

[4] For another vernacular prologue see the Middle Dutch version, *Hugo de Sancto Caro's Traktaat De Doctrina Cordis: Pragmatische Editie van Dat Boec van der Bereydinge des Harten naar Handschrift Den Haag, K.B., 135 F 6*, ed. by Guido Hendrix (Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 2000), pp. 1–2.

Idea of the Vernacular.[5] Middle English texts are usually concerned with the uncertain state of English as a medium; they also feel the need to provide a justification for its use, instead of Anglo-Norman or Latin. There is what one can call a 'situatedness of Middle English', which is very particular and which is self-consciously deployed by Middle English writers who, rather than addressing theoretical issues, instead address in their prologues questions about audience, translation, English communities, and the universality of the English language. Discussions on literary issues are therefore heavily situated in Middle English texts, in the social and ideological issues evoked by those texts and their use of the vernacular. One needs therefore to take into consideration the strategic functions of those texts if theoretical implications can be extracted from them. Much of the following material is informed by the above-mentioned considerations, and is the result of a close companionship with, and scrutiny of, the theoretical material and the Middle English prologues included in the *Idea of the Vernacular* volume.

A relatively concise Middle English prologue to *The Doctrine* is found extant in the following three manuscripts: Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V.III.24; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 132; and Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.15.[6] The prologue, offered in full below, is the same in the three manuscripts and is therefore useful in providing us with the way by which the text was circulated and received in late-medieval England:

> *Intelligite insipientes in populo et stulti aliquando sapite.* As Seynt Austyn seith, þes wordes ben vndirstonde in þis wyse [manner]. Ye that been vnkunnyng [ignorant] in the noumbre of Goddes peple inwardly vndirstondith; and ye that ben vnavysed [not well advised], yif ye haue grace of ony gostly kunnyng, sumtyme sauorith sadly [firmly] in herte. Might not wel þes wordes be vndirstonde of suche that ben vnkunnynge in religyon þe whiche also nowadayes ben moche vnstable in þeire lyunge folowyng rather the ensample of secular folk than the ensample of sad gostly religyous folk? I trowe [believe] yis.
>
> Suche symple sowles it ys charite to enforme [advise] namly sethe Oure Lord yeveth vs in charge seying be the prophete Ysaie thus: *Loquimini ad cor Ierusalem,* that is, spekith to þe hert of Ierusalem. Þis word Ierusalem is noþing elles to mene in þis place but symple chosen soules to the hertis of whom Oure Lord wold þat we spak. O ho durst be so recheles [careless] in enformyng of such symple soules which Oure Lord bought with His precyous blode & þerto also haþ chosen to His spouses as ben þo þat dwellen in religyoun? Many I wot wel þer ben þat speken to þe bodi outward

[5] *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory 1280–1520*, ed. by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999).

[6] Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 330, begins with the following: 'a mynchen schuld cutte her herte to God be þe ȝeft of wisdom', which is the second half of the sentence describing the seventh and final chapter in the prologue to the other manuscripts. That this manuscript contained the whole of the prologue at one point during its history is therefore highly likely. See Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. viii and 3.

but fewe to þe hert inward of simple soules & þat is pite. I, þerfor, on of þo which Oure Lord had clepid [called] to His seruise in religioun, alþough I be no trew seraunt of His, haue compiled þis tretice þat is clepid þe Doctrine of þe Hert to te worschip of God principaly, & to edificacioun of simple soules wheryn is comprehendid [meant] an informacioun of hertis diuidid into seuen chapitres in þe which þei mow be þe grace of Almighty God com to sadness of good lyuyng if þei wil do þeire besynesses for to rede & vndirstonde þat þei fynde ywryte in þis same tretice, not only with þe lippes [lips]of þe mouth but also & namly with þe lippis of þe soule. Clene & chast soules euer desiren so forto rede þat þei myght feele it sauourly [deliciously] with inforth.

Hertly [affective] redyng is a gracyous mene to gostly feeling. In þis wyse þerfor schuld þis tretyce be rad & herd & þan wil Oure Lord worche be His grace, namly þer þe hertis be clene that redith it or heriþ it. Seynt Gregor seiþ in an omelye [homily] vpon þis text of Seynt Iohn: *Vncio eius docet nos de omnibus.* Þe soule, he seiþ, is ful febly enformed [advised] be þe voys with outforþ but it be anoynted [blessed] be þe grace of þe Holi Gost with inforþ. Wherfor I beseche Almighty God þat al þo þe which han this tretice in hond mow so rede & vndirstond it þat it mow be to hem encrece [increase] of vertuos & stable lyuyng. Amen.

Capitulum Primum. How & in what wyse a mynche [nun] schuld mak redi here hert to God be þe yifte of drede.

Capitulum Secundum. How & in what wise a mynche schuld kepe here hert to God be þe yifte of pite.

Capitulum Tercium. How & in what wise a mynche schuld open here hert to God be þe yifte of kunnyng.

Capitulum Quartum. How and in what wise a mynche schuld stable her hert to God be þe yifte of treuþe.

Capitulum Quintum. How & in what wise a mynche schuld yeue here hert to God be þe yifte of counseyl.

Capitulum Sextum. How & in what wise a mynche schuld lift vp here hert be þe yifte of vndirstondyng.

Capitulum Septimum. How & in what wise a mynchen schuld cutte her hert to God be þe ȝeft of wisdom.

This essay focuses on three of the most important issues covered in the prologue: those of authorship, readership, and ways of reading.

Authorship

In his *Commentary on Peter Lombard's Sentences* (*ca* 1253–57), Bonaventure (*ca* 1217–74) writes:

> there are four ways of making a book. For someone writes out the words of other men without adding or changing anything, and he is called the scribe (*scriptor*) pure and simple. Someone else writes the words of other men and also his own, but with those of other men comprising the principal part while his own are annexed merely to make clear the argument, and he is called the commentator (*commentator*), not the author.

> Someone else writes the words of other men and also of his own, but with his own forming the principal part and those of others being annexed merely by way of confirmation, and such a person should be called the author (*auctor*).[7]

Such a distinction may serve in assessing how the translator/compiler positions himself with regard to his text. There is no indication whatsoever of a concern on the part of the translator of the *Doctrine* about the authorship of the Latin text. Whether the text circulated anonymously at this stage already or whether the Middle English translator did not deem it necessary to associate a name with the text is nevertheless relevant for our understanding of the perception he has of himself as *auctor*. As a matter of fact, although a more systematic close reading of the text alongside the Latin version is still wanting, one can already state with some degree of certainty that he does not offer a very innovative Middle English rendering of the Latin text. As Candon has shown, the Middle English translator follows closely the Latin.[8] Despite this conservative approach, one should nevertheless point out his self-assumed importance as an *auctor*, as one providing important material for which he feels great responsibility. The self-appointed function of compiler ('haue compiled') does not in any sense reveal any demeaning role, the more so as a discussion about authority for the Latin text is markedly absent.[9] Rather surprisingly, the prologue thus insists uniquely on the compilation role and is therefore devoid of considerations about the difficulty of rendering into Middle English the Latin original. It does not speculate on the situatedness of the English language and its adequacy for the rendering of a metaphorically complex text. Unlike many other Middle English prologues, such as, for instance, those which introduce John Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (1387) and Bishop Fox's *The Rule of Seynt Benet* (1517), language competence and politics seem to be of no concern to the compiler.[10] However, and even if the prologue does not demonstrate the same kind of complexity as, for instance, Bokenham's *Legendys of Hooly Wummen* (1443–47) and its subtle appropriation of scholastic Aristotelian prologue, *The Doctrine of the Hert* authorizes itself by discussing, in the words of Bokenham, the 'fynal cause' for the making of this compilation: the work has been compiled 'to the worschip of God principaly, &

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[7] *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c.1100–c.1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. by A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott, with the assistance of David Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), p. 229.

[8] Although this is going to be subject of further scrutiny as part of the editorial project Christiania Whitehead and I are pursuing with *The Doctrine*, for the moment we rely mainly on the statement made by Candon. See Candon, *Doctrine*, p. lxv.

[9] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 1.24

[10] For a version of those prologues see *The Idea of the Vernacular*, ed. Wogan-Browne, et al., pp. 130–38, 162–65.

to edificacioun of simple soules'.[11] We shall return to the compiler's address to his audience, but we shall do well to pause briefly here to consider further the high regard accorded to the idea of compilation by the prologue.

One should take into consideration that the compiler/translator renders faithfully into Middle English all quotations from the Bible, as in for instance the enumeration of the fourth of the seven ways of getting one's heart ready to receive grace: 'The fourth is þat Seynt Poule techeth us to stable our hertis to God whan he seith þus: *Optimum est gracia stabilire cor.* He seith þus: þe best þing þat is to stable þe hert is grace'.[12] Faithful translation of the biblical Latin is consistent throughout the treatise. One can explain such consistency by the anxiety that could accrue to the making of a vernacular religious text in the post-Arundel era. However, one wonders nevertheless why the rendering of the Latin title's original text is not given at all by the translator in his reference to the treatise: 'I haue compiled this tretice that is clepid the Doctrine of the Hert'.[13] If compilation were carried alongside translation activity, would it not be adequate here to mark that activity by giving the Latin title for the work, i.e., *De doctrina cordis?* Considering the significant compilation activity, with a list of chapter headings, a Middle English text reduced by a third, and some small but nevertheless significant additions marking an address to a female readership, is it not reasonable to ponder over the possibility that the Middle English version we have of *The Doctrine* may be a compilation of a longer, possibly more complex, Middle English version? Such a possibility would account for the complete absence of discussion on translation activity in the extant Middle English prologue. *A Talkyng of the Love of God,* written in the mid-fourteenth century, which is a compilation of two earlier meditations ('An Orison of God Almighty' and 'The Wooing'), also shows a noticeable absence of concerns about translation activity and the English language in general, and insists instead on the poetic quality of its prose.[14] We may have to consider the possibility that translation and compilation activities were carried out by two different individuals, over a different time period.

[11] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 1. 25–2. 1. For a version of Bokenham's prologue see *The Idea of the Vernacular*, ed. Wogan-Browne, et al., pp. 64–72.

[12] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 3.21–24.

[13] See Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 1.24–25.

[14] For an edition of *A Talkyng* see *A Talkyng of þe Loue of God: Edited from MS. Vernon (Bodleian 3938) and Collated with MS Simeon (Brit. Mus. Add. 22283)*, ed. by Salvina Westra (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950). See also Renevey, 'The Choices of the Compiler: Vernacular Hermeneutics in *A Talkyng of þe Loue of God*', in *The Medieval Translator/Traduire au Moyen Age* 6, ed. by Roger Ellis, René Tixier, and Bernd Weitemeier (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 232–53.

Readership

The readership for the treatise is at the forefront of the concerns of the compiler. It has an important bearing on the way the text is authorized. Indeed, the initial Latin quotation from Ps. xciii. 8, 'Intelligite insipientes in populo et stulti aliquando sapite' (Understand, you who among the people are unreasonable and fools, and learn something) decides the tone and the relationship between compiler and reader/listener.[15] However harsh the Latin quotation, it is not translated word for word but rather smoothed over by an interpretation attributed to Augustine. There is, however, a sense of authority that also emerges from the way in which the compiler positions himself with regard to his audience: his mode of address is hortatory, if not even commanding, with a sense of superiority that is beyond question. Unlike other prologues which clearly signpost their paternal affiliations (*The Orchard of Syon,* 1420–40); Rolle's *English Psalter, ca* 1345, for Margaret Kirkeby; Bokenham's *Legendys* and its reference to the Augustinian Friar, Thomas Burgh), the *Doctrine*'s prologue remains vague in the way it traces its process of composition and the role which the audience might have played in it.[16] The latter is indeed described too disparagingly, at least initially, to allow more precise identification. There is therefore no reference to either a specific community or an individual as the recipient of the text. Instead, the key term of address at this point is 'unkunnyng', which occurs at line 4 and is repeated at line 8. Further information follows about the fact that those lacking knowledge belong to a religious community, as the negative comment that follows makes clear:

> Might not wel þes wordes be vndirstonde of suche that ben vnkunnynge in religyon þe whiche also nowadayes ben moche vnstable in þeire lyunge folowyng rather the ensample of secular folk than the ensample of sad gostly religyous folk? I trowe yis.[17]

The reference to secular ways of living to connote negatively the superiority of the religious way of life is rather surprising for a text written in the fifteenth century, at a time when devotional texts had an immense appeal to the laity.

One other important mode of address used by the compiler is 'symple sowles', used five times in the second paragraph in the previously quoted passage from the *Doctrine.* Although a comment like 'Suche symple sowles it ys charite to enforme . . .' seems to show contempt for the addressees, other contexts are less harsh. I would like to suggest that, although its initial use seems almost indubitably disparaging, later uses suggest it could also be read in the context of anti-scholastic propaganda, in the same vein as *The Mirror of Simple Souls,* with which this text shares a

[15] *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Clementinam*, ed. Alberto Colunga and Laurentio Turrado (Madrid: Biblioteca de auctores cristianos, 1991), p. 533. The translation is my own.

[16] For an edition of those prologues see *The Idea of the Vernacular*, ed. Wogan-Browne, et al., pp. 64–72, 235–38, 244–48.

[17] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 1.7–11.

brief concluding prayer.[18] Also, considering the larger context of mystical writings, and more especially the apophatic tradition as expounded by the Cloud-author in *The Cloud of Unknowing,* 'vnkunnyng' may resonate more positively in the context of that apophatic tradition.

I believe therefore that, although the compiler places himself in a superior position with regard to his intended audience, he nevertheless uses a terminology which is striking by its multivocality, thus inviting a large spectrum of positions for the real audience of that text. In fact, the compiler has made an initial direct distinction as to at least two different various positions his audience may have towards the text: 'Ye that been vnkunnyng in the noumbre of Goddes peple inwardly vndirstondith; and ye that ben vnavysed, yif ye haue grace of ony gostly kunnyng, sumtyme sauorith sadly in herte'.[19] There are therefore several possibilities as to how one can approach *The Doctrine.* Despite an initial tone that clearly places a segment of the readership in a position lower than that of the compiler, access to the text can be achieved without necessarily assuming the humble position the often-used term 'simple soule' implies.

Modes of Reading/Hearing

Ways of approaching and reading texts are a major concern of Middle English prologues in general, and of those that introduce religious texts in particular. Various models and images of the reading process seem to have been strategically deployed in all sorts of texts. One could represent reading as a form of meditation, as a means of arousing feeling, or as a measure undertaken to save the soul.[20] Some forms of readings appealed to the rational faculties, while others required a more affective response, based on the reading model deployed by Anselm of Canterbury in his *Prayers and Meditations* (1070–1104).[21] Leaving to one side the model of reading which may be revealed by the whole of the *Doctrine,* we propose here to discuss the mode of reading proposed by the prologue. The second part of the prologue is dedicated to the reading process in particular and it describes a complex reading model which blends scholastic biblical reading practice with a highly affective mode of

[18] See Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 156.1–4.

[19] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 1.4–7.

[20] See Nicholas Watson, 'Models and Images of the Reading Process', in *The Idea of the Vernacular*, ed. Wogan-Browne, et al., pp. 211–22.

[21] For an English translation of the St Anselm's prayers and meditations see *The Prayers and Meditations of Saint Anselm. With the Proslogion*, ed. by Benedicta Ward (London: Penguin, 1988). For a discussion about the Anselmian model and early Middle English literature see Renevey, 'Enclosed Desires: A Study of the Wooing Group', in *Mysticism and Spirituality in Medieval England*, ed. by William F. Pollard and Robert Boenig (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), pp. 39–63. See also Vincent Gillespie, *Looking in Holy Books: Essays on Late-Medieval Religious Writing in England* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, forthcoming).

apprehending the text's message. Also, it shows some anxiety as to the potential reading abilities of its vernacular audience. As the text itself is heavily loaded with metaphorical utterances, the prologue ensures that it triggers in the readership a reading process that will result in the use of a spiritual grid to decode the utterances. That process, according to the compiler, is possible only if the understanding takes place inwardly: he therefore chooses to speak, not to the body outwardly, but to the heart inwardly, as, he claims, very few people do. What does the compiler mean exactly? Common sense brings us immediately to associate love with heart. However, the heart as conceived in the medieval period was understood to incorporate both the rational and the affective faculties. It corresponds to what Christian theology calls the inner being, that is, the whole of the spiritual faculties of a human being.[22] Augustine seems to have played a crucial role in the construction of the association between the heart and love (*caritas*). But love should not be reduced only to the affect; it is an instrument for the apprehension of the divine, of the spiritual realities, and the heart becomes the seat where those spiritual faculties (*intellectio* and *affectio*) operate. The compiler wants to address the whole spiritual being, and he uses a set of lexical terms which invite the reader/listener to delve into her inner being and to allow the words to touch her innermost person. Without such an understanding of the reading process, and of the fact that the compiler is working with the paradigm of the inner spiritual senses, the sensuous vocabulary used by the author would seem rather out of place. Such a medieval conception allows for the use of words like 'sauorith' (1. 6) and 'savourly' (2. 8) and expressions like 'not only with the lippes of the mouth but also & namly with the lippis of the soule' (2. 6–7). It is also possible that the use of lexical terms making reference to orality ('Many I wot wel ther ben that speken to the bodi' (1. 21)) participate to this same process of accessing more directly the innermost being of the reader or hearer (2. 10).

The compiler seems to be in very good control of the reading process he would like his female readership/audience to use. As mentioned above, he also demonstrates an ability to provide imaginative exegesis on the word *Ierusalem,* for which he assigns the meaning of 'symple chosen soules' in the context offered by *The Doctrine.*

All this shows the considerable literary sophistication of the prologue. As we have noted, in the late-medieval period, the prologue is almost a genre in its own right, and the compiler has here revealed an easy mastery of the ways in which a prologue should address issues such as authority and the *auctor,* readership, models of the reading process. We need now to consider whether what the compiler promises in his prologue is effectively rendered in his Middle English version of *De doctrina cordis.*

[22] See Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, '"Aimer de fin cuer": Le Cœur dans la thématique courtoise', in *Il Cuore/The Heart*, ed. by Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, *Micrologus*, 11 (2003), 343–71 (esp. p. 350).

The Politics and Practices of Translation

In the appendix to his groundbreaking essay 'Censorship and Cultural Change', Nicholas Watson names the *Doctrine of the Hert* as one of approximately thirty-five Middle English religious works composed or translated in the wake of Arundel's Constitutions of 1409, in the course of the fifteenth century.[23] This categorization, read in conjunction with Watson's analysis of the Constitutions and their aftermath, suggests that the *Doctrine* participates in a post-Arundelean religious climate of unprecedented caution and conservatism — a climate in which religious writers 'talk down' to those whom they address; in which the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is carefully shored up; and in which Arundel's advocated return to the catechetical basics of Archbishop Pecham's 1281 Syllabus, *Ignorantia sacerdotum* and its mid-fourteenth-century update, Thoresby's *Injunctions*, effectively strangles more radical or experimental spiritual instruction.[24]

The majority of the thirty-five texts that Watson lists have not yet been individually reassessed against the terms of his proposed paradigm. Accordingly, this section proposes an investigation of the fifteenth-century Middle English translation of the *Doctrina cordis* as a primarily politically situated text, a text located in a half century in which the translation and content of religious instruction was the focus of marked political and personal anxiety. Bearing in mind that the fifteenth-century *Doctrine of the Hert* seems, on the surface, to be a very close translation of its thirteenth-century Latin original, except for a consistent practice of abbreviation, is it nonetheless possible to find ways of penetrating this surface and uncovering some kind of individual engagement, whether of compliance, resistance, or circumvention, with Watson's envisaged climate of textual restriction and anxiety?

The remainder of this section is devoted to affirming that possibility, and to mapping a number of ways in which the translated text can be made to talk to us politically and analytically. These points will largely support Watson's hypothesis, although the specific circumstances of textual production and purpose will also necessitate certain qualifications.

First, the translated text of the *Doctrine* shows an enhanced catechetical awareness. Significantly more effort is made to organize the spiritual instruction around the numbered lists of faith basics approved by Pecham and Thoresby. To elaborate: the *Doctrina* is organized around seven actions of the heart. It must be prepared, guarded, opened, established, given, lifted up, and severed. These actions, part of a largely original metaphoric scheme, are loosely linked with the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost

[23] 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 (pp. 859–64).

[24] For a survey of ecclesiastical legislation in this period, and its impact upon religious composition and translation, see Nicholas Watson, 'The Politics of Middle English Writing', in *The Idea of the Vernacular*, ed. Wogan-Browne, et al., pp. 331–52.

by Hugh in his introduction to the treatise.[25] They are loosely linked and then forgotten. However, Hugh's fifteenth-century translator obviously feels the need to make more of this link, between the original and the canonical: between the creative motions of the heart and the biblical gifts of the Spirit. He reintroduces the vital link at the beginning of each chapter. We are to prepare the heart through holy fear. We are to guard it through pity. These strengthened links generate extra lines upon the character of fear and pity.[26] They are also crude, increasingly strained. Most of the pairings have little natural relationship. The respective gifts of the Holy Spirit contribute little towards the metaphoric scheme of each chapter, animated around the key motions of preparing, guarding, opening etc. One can see why Hugh abandoned them. The translator's decision to reassert their presence, and to keep reinjecting them into the fabric of the treatise, suggests a concern to mould his text toward the catechetical format favoured by Arundel. It suggests a concern to contain, or at least, frame, the allegorical adventurousness of the text, by nailing it with catechetical tags.

Second, the translated *Doctrine of the Hert* is markedly more nervous and wary about ecclesiastical authority. Throughout the treatise criticism of corrupt and malfunctioning church leaders is taken down a notch. If a monastic superior is criticized, the translator will make a partial retraction of that criticism.[27] Softeners and escape clauses are introduced. Much of this caution simply accentuates pragmatic stances already evident within the Latin text. For example, in a section upon fraternal correction (much of the treatise concerns the moral correction of others), Hugh records 'anoþir case þat þi blamyng may not auayle [. . .] ȝif a [. . .] gret potestate [very powerful figure] haþ ytrespaced'.[28] In other words, do not correct those greater in rank than yourself. Simply confine yourself to prayer on their behalf. Alongside his preoccupation with correction, obedience is endlessly stressed. It is necessary to be as obedient to one's 'souereyne' (i.e., to one's abbess or prioress) as a man holding still beneath the razor of his barber.[29] If one is cursed with a 'boistous souereyne', that is, a disruptive, spiritually dysfunctional superior, it is necessary to cultivate *yet more* obedience — like a man holding *yet more* still beneath the hand of a 'rewde [inept] barbour'! Correction is compromised by *realpolitik*. Obedience acquires an uncomfortably nervous edge.

[25] Throughout this essay, the Latin text used is that of the second printed edition, misleadingly entitled Gerardo Leodiensi, *Speculum concionatorum* (Naples, 1607). This edition will be referred to as *Doctrina*. This edition has no substantial differences from the first edition: *Liber de doctrina cordis* (Paris, 1506), which has been checked for accuracy against the thirteenth-century Oxford, Bodleian Library manuscript: MS Lat. th. F 6. There is no modern critical edition.

[26] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 4, 77, 98–9, 115–16, 130–31, 135, 143–44.

[27] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 108.18–109.3. *Doctrina*, p. 202.

[28] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 95.14–16.

[29] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 134.8–135.2.

Some caution towards spiritual superiors is discernible in the Latin text. More permeates the Middle English version as a consequence of subtle changes by its translator. The third chapter of the *Doctrina* is built around the image of the opening of the seven clasps of the Book of Life in the Book of Revelation.[30] As with so much in the *Doctrina*, this Book becomes the book of the nun's heart, the book of her moral conscience, which must be scrutinized and corrected daily. The Book of Revelation aligns the opening of the clasps with the meteorological terrors of a black sun and a red moon. Hugh's Latin text identifies this black sun as 'maiores praelati ut Episcopi, & archiepiscopi' who have lost the light of wisdom and the heat of love.[31] Three of the four surviving manuscripts of the Middle English *Doctrine* lose the specific application to bishops and archbishops, giving the image a much more diplomatic vagueness.[32] Similarily, the red moon of the Apocalypse which Hugh applies to 'minores praelati, ut Abbates, Archidiaconi, Decani, Presbyteri' who have adopted sinful habits, is reduced in the same three manuscripts to 'lesse prelates as curatis of chirches, souereynes of religioun'.[33] In a very small and discreet way, in each instance, there is a watering down. Great dignitaries are no longer specifically identified by title. Reference to the different functionaries of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is condensed and muted. To speak more broadly: where, forty or fifty years earlier, Langland would have leapt at the opportunity to apply Apocalypse images to the malpractices of the contemporary Church, the scribes of the fifteenth-century *Doctrine*, writing in a milieu only recently post-Arundel and post-Lollard, seem primarily concerned to tone down Hugh's embarrassing facility for ecclesiastical plain-speaking.

Criticism of church leaders and monastic heads of house is softened or retracted. Yet at the same time, the translated *Doctrine* is clearly keen to consolidate the authority of its didactic voice vis-à-vis its envisaged reader. Hugh seems to have composed the Latin *Doctrina* with heads of house significantly in mind. Certainly, he includes long sections advising monastic superiors on the best way to mete out correction to the sisters within their care.[34] His fifteenth-century Middle English translator subtly adjusts this emphasis. Several of these sections on correction disappear. In their place, the treatise is gently extended to encompass and even favour the nun conceived as subject rather than as superior:

[30] Revelation 5–6.

[31] *Doctrina*, p. 201, 'Great prelates such as bishops and archbishops'. All Latin translations are my own.

[32] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 107.10–13. The specific application is omitted in Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V. III. 24; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 132; and Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS B. 14. 15.

[33] *Doctrina*, p. 201, 'Lesser prelates such as abbots, archdeacons, deacons and priests'; Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 107.13–16.

[34] See, for example, *Doctrina*, pp. 251–55. This section is omitted from the Middle English translation: Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 135.6.

> Þou woldist wite what þis gray mornyng schuld be þat y spak of in þe begynnyng of þis chapitre [chapter] whan y seid a riȝtwis [righteous] man schuld ȝeue [give] his hert for to wake to Our Lord in þe erly morownyng [morning]. I schal telle þe. Thou wakist wele [are vigilant] in ȝeuyng of þin hert to God in þe erly morownyng whan þou wakist about þi soule in kepyng of new vertues by þe erly mornyng of þe entre of religion [the entry into the religious life]. It is to þe a new day, entre of religion, for alle þis is new to þe whan þou comest to religion.[35]

This extended explanation, identifying the 'early morning' as a sign for the early days of religious profession, is entirely original to the translator.

The translator shifts the emphasis of the *Doctrine* toward obedient subjection rather than oversight. At the same time, within the original Middle English prologue, he explicitly links his right to undertake the work of translation and, hence, instruction, to the fact that he is 'on of þo [one of those] which Oure Lord haþ clepid [called] to His seruise in religioun'.[36] Gone, as Watson has powerfully attested, are the dramatic, socially marginal figures who voice stinging spiritual truths in late fourteenth- and very early fifteenth-century religious texts — Pauper in *Dives and Pauper;* Piers Plowman in Langland's great allegory; *Pore Caitif* in the 1390 didactic compilation of that name.[37] The translator's patent sense that it is really most advisable to be a *cleric* to deliver spiritual instruction, taken in conjunction with his desire to construct a 'unkunnynge [. . .] symple' female reader,[38] indicates a conservative adjustment in textual authority, in line with Watson's assessment of the restricted, nervously orthodox character of fifteenth-century religious composition.

The first of these two linked considerations explores the translator's construction of an 'unkunnynge' female reader, that is, a reader marked by a kind of inward or intuitive knowledge entirely disassociated from erudite, Latinate, clerical culture.[39] That desired construction is supported by the fact that, in passing from Latin to English, and from the thirteenth century to the fifteenth century, the treatise loses a considerable amount of its initial *learnedness*. The theological complexities of the original are reduced — demanding discussions of the eucharist, the sacraments, the

[35] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 135.7–16.

[36] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 1.22–23.

[37] Watson, 'Censorship and Cultural Change', pp. 849–50.

[38] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 1.8, 1.12. The adjective *symple* is applied to the treatise's recipient no fewer than five times in the course of the translator's two-page prologue.

[39] It is worth comparing, and possibly contrasting, the translator's perception of 'unkunnynge' with the key significance given to the term within the late fourteenth-century *Cloud of Unknowing*. See discussion earlier in this essay of the key terms *symple* and *unkunnynge* (above pp. 131–32).

makeup of the church institution, are either omitted or curtailed.[40] A reference to the Manichean error in a chapter on the twelve articles of faith is dropped without comment.[41] Similarly, the entire paraphernalia of classical embellishments within Hugh's original text disappears completely. References to Seneca and Boethius fall away, along with a passage in which Plato is credited with a comment stating that death for the just is a light that reveals all mysteries, and an Aristotelian section identifying constancy of heart as a golden mean between pertinacity and mutability.[42]

The overall effect of these omissions and reductions is to narrow considerably the allusive scope of the translation, reworking it as a less learned, less intellectually demanding piece of writing. Since, in addition, the translator also makes every effort to extol a 'sauourly', 'hertly' or heartfelt, mode of reading in his prologue,[43] perhaps it is not going too far to say that one of the most fundamental generic transformations within the Middle English *Doctrine* arises from its wish to reassess its own content as primarily meditative and ruminative. Its insights are identified as words to taste, chew upon, and find sweet, and as wisdom intended for sensual rather than intellectual reception.[44]

The Middle English *Doctrine* wishes for this, but does it succeed? I would say not. It is almost as though the translated text teeters on the brink of affectivity but lacks the confidence to take the plunge. The prologue is probably more affective in implication than anything else within the treatise. The body of the translated text cuts out erudition but retains all the systematics of twelfth- and thirteenth-century scholastic writing — the numbered, ordered approach; the unremitting 'a=b' process of catechetical allegory. Even at moments where the text might seem to offer some leeway to the translator to become more fervent — the discussion of spiritual nuptials in the first chapter; the rise of the writing towards ecstatic love in the final pages — it is notable how restrained the translated text remains.[45] The spiritual nuptials remain at the mercy of systematic dissection. You marry Christ when you enter the cloister. There are three types of marriage that you must choose from. There are thirteen spiritual ornaments with which you must be arrayed. The tone remains a far cry from Margery Kempe's intimate, excitable account of her own spiritual nup-

[40] See, for example, significant omissions or compressions in Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 31.9 (*Doctrina*, pp. 59–62), 33.4 (*Doctrina*, pp. 64–65), 39.2 (*Doctrina*, pp. 75–76), 60.18 (*Doctrina*, pp. 124–25), 124.8 (*Doctrina*, pp. 222–26).

[41] *Doctrina*, p. 214; Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 117.21.

[42] For references to Seneca see *Doctrina*, pp. 3, 119, 158, 172, 253. For Boethius see *Doctrina*, p. 236. For Plato see *Doctrina*, p. 84 (Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 43.5). For the Aristotelian section see *Doctrina*, pp. 234–5 (Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 126.21).

[43] [rede & vndirstonde . . . not only with þe lippes of þe mouth but also & namly with þe lippis of þe soule . . . feele it sauourly with inforth], Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 2.5–8.

[44] See further Candon, *Doctrine*, comments on pp. 90.8–10, 144.12–16.

[45] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 43.11–77.4; 143.1–155.20.

tials.[46] The description of ecstatic spiritual love in the final pages makes links back to physical courtly practice — there are seven tokens by which you will be able to perceive if someone is in love — but breaks off abruptly at the point at which spiritual inebriation and garbled speech begin to gain a hold.[47] The translator is most happy with the scholastic residue of lists, and ordered premises, and systematics, but unhappy should boundaries begin to be transgressed. The treatise as it stands falls in with fifteenth-century legislative recommendations of playing safe, getting back to basics, and keeping a grip on speech and meaning and authority. It is notable for its failure to exploit any of the Latin text's affective openings.

I should like to end this part by offering one final comment upon the Middle English *Doctrine's* participation within Watson's proposed paradigm of fifteenth-century religious production. Once again, it is a comment generated mainly by omission — a comment on what the text chooses *not* to do. In a period when an increasing number of treatises and compilations address, or at least extend themselves to acknowledge, a devout lay constituency in some way — Hilton's *Mixed Life; Pore Caitif;* the *Abbey* and *Charter of the Abbey of the Holy Ghost; Book to a Mother;* the *Speculum devotorum* or *Myroure to Devout Peple;* Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ;* late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century versions and extracts of *Ancrene Wisse* — the *Doctrine* remains exclusively, doggedly, focused upon the routines and special circumstances of cloistered life. Of course, much of its teaching on the inner life — on virtue, self-examination and moral behaviour — translates readily from a religious to a lay context. The final part of this linked consideration will review how this is picked up by the translation's lay readers. Nonetheless, a significant, even dominant, part of the treatise is devoted to topics which do *not* translate at all easily: negotiating communal life; the elements of enclosure; obedience to a spiritual superior; fraternal correction; the imperative of physical stability; the oral reception of the martyrology; even appropriate singing etiquette in choir.

It would be wrong to suggest that this refusal to open up is particularly exceptional. The translation was clearly envisaged fulfilling a defined function, providing spiritual guidance for nuns, as were many of the translations for Bridgettine usage at Syon, as was the Middle English *Manere of Good Lyvyng*.[48] Nonetheless, there is none of the slippage, nothing of that sense of slightly blurred boundaries or enlarged constituencies, that is sporadically apparent beneath the surface of some other late-medieval devotional translations. The translator could open up, but he does not. He could make some gesture toward the well-charted, lay appetite of the late Middle Ages for spiritual instruction, yet he remains carefully constrained and contained. In

[46] *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. by Sanford Brown Meech and Hope Emily Allen, EETS o.s. 212 (1940; repr. 1997), pp. 86–91.

[47] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 154–55.

[48] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud, misc. 517. A critical edition of this text is currently being prepared for Brepols by Dr Anne Mouron.

the final count, then, the translator reads as an ultimately conservative figure, accentuating the basics, backing away from criticism of superiors, talking down to his reader, lowering the intellectual and theological demands of the treatise, confining himself to a pre-conceived professional and regulated female audience. In the third part of this essay, we shall see to what extent the ownership and exchange of the *Doctrine* comply with this theoretical expectation.

Manuscript Ownership and Circulation

The previous section argued that the translator cherished a relatively closed, constrained set of perceptions about the character and application of his text. In this section, as a result of investigating its physical usage and translation *between* readers and within reading communities, the aim will be to demonstrate that the *Doctrine* effectively succeeds in sidestepping a number of these perceptions. In effect, the Middle English text is *translated* into lay environments and new reading contexts that go well beyond the translator's stated designs for his translation. To summarize: where the previous section emphasized limitation and closure, this section will tend more toward destabilization and openness.

To begin with some thoughts upon gender: Hugh's Latin treatise addresses a community of unspecified sisters, and it has been suggested that much of the imagery of the treatise, in particular, the long domestic and nuptial passages within the first chapter, was initially compiled to meet perceived female devotional requirements. The unambiguous invocation, 'sistir', is retained in three out of four Middle English manuscripts.[49] However, in the fourth manuscript, Durham, University Library, MS Cosin, V. III. 24, female third-person pronouns are frequently replaced by masculine pronouns — 'so doth a cloisterer [religious] þat can not gouerne *his* tonge';[50] 'A souereyne [religious superior] blameth vnprofitably whan wetyngly [knowingly] *he* blameth anoþir þat is not *his* subjecte'[51] — or by gender-inclusive phrases such as: 'religious *man or* woman'.[52] These replacements suggest that the Cosin manuscript may well have been adapted for use within a male monastic setting, or within a double house, such as the Bridgettine house at Syon. Unsurprisingly, many of the Latin manuscripts of *De doctrina cordis* that can be traced back to medieval English libraries were housed within male monastic establishments such

[49] The appellation 'sistir' is actually replaced by 'menoresse' several times, toward the beginning of the second chapter in Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS B. 14. 15. Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 77.5, 77.7.

[50] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 89.13–14. My italics.

[51] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 98.1–3.

[52] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 89.18.

as Durham cathedral priory, the Benedictine monastery of Bury St Edmunds, and Syon library.[53]

Of course, these pronoun adjustments to suit a mixed or male audience were not at all uncommon. Many fifteenth-century translations and adaptations are moulded to this dual application. What they combine to suggest, however — a point made earlier by Denis Renevey — is the idea that the late Middle Ages saw a 'demasculinization' of devotional practice, such that texts explicitly proposing a religious woman as their ideal devotional subject, and offering imagery ostensibly geared to that purpose, were in fact used, with an apparent indifference as to their gendered content, by religious men and women alike.[54] Nonetheless, it is important not to forget that astonishing image of the man going to be shaved, and holding very still beneath the barber's razor. The *Doctrine* may trope its subject as a 'kyngis dowȝtir' [king's daughter], whose homeland is heaven.[55] It may devote page after page to details of its subject's allegorical bridal array. But it also draws a spiritual parallel with shaving. It also asks its subjects to identify themselves with arming, and with militarism, and defence.[56] In addition to the *textual* evidence of its presence within male monastic contexts, imprinted within the *imagery* of the text, and despite its address to a 'sistir', the ideal devotional subject of the *Doctrine* is simultaneously gendered both male and female.

Despite his relatively permissive approach towards gender, as we have already seen, the translator of the *Doctrina* makes no concessions towards lay readers. His translation remains doggedly focused upon claustral routines. Yet despite the *Doctrine*'s refusal to extend further, it happens anyway. Fascinatingly, a fifth, lost manuscript of the *Doctrine of þe Hert* is cited in the 1481 will of the Norwich gentry widow, Margaret Purdans:

[53] Durham, Dean and Chapter Library, MSS B. III. 18 and B. III. 19 contain inscriptions detailing their ownership by two fifteenth-century priors of Durham cathedral priory, Johannes Aukland (d. 1494) and Willelmus Ebchestre (prior 1446–56). London, British Library, MS Royal, 11. B. III, a summary of the *Doctrina*, is known to have belonged to the Benedictine monastery of Bury St Edmunds. Guido Hendrix, *Hugo de Sancto Caro's Traktaat De Doctrina Cordis: Handschriften, Receptie, Tekstgeschiedenis en Authenticiteitskritiek*, 2 vols (Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 1995), I, 30–31, 57; Neil Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964), pp. 20, 67, 252.

[54] Denis Renevey, 'Figuring Household Space in *Ancrene Wisse* and *The Doctrine of the Hert*', in *The Space of English*, Swiss Papers in English Language and Literature, 17, ed. by David Spurr and Cornelia Tschichold (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2005), pp. 69–84.

[55] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 141.16.

[56] See, in particular, the extended metaphor at the opening of Chapter 2 in which the sister is entreated to fortify her heart like a besieged castle, expelling the women and children who represent 'worldly þinges' and 'fleschly desires'. Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 77.11–89.18 (pp. 83.17, 83.14).

> And to the Convent of Nuns at Brosyerd, after the decease of the Lady Margaret Yaxley, I give the book called *Le Doctrine of the Herte* [. . .] Also, to the Nunnery of Thetford, an English book of *St Bridget* [. . .] Also, to Alice Barley a book called *Hylton*.[57]

Recent research by Mary Erler has made it possible for us to create a very detailed picture of Margaret Purdans. In particular, documents upon her life and bequests within her will reveal an extraordinary array of connections to members of the Norwich governing classes, East Anglian hermits and anchoresses, fellows and masters of Cambridge colleges, eight East Anglian nunneries, and the major London houses of Syon and Sheen.[58]

Since Purdans is being increasingly acknowledged as a key witness within the complex history of late-medieval religious book ownership, it is necessary to enquire what lessons can be drawn from her possession and bequest of the *Doctrine* that advance our understanding of the ways in which it was used and evaluated in the mid-fifteenth century. First, Margaret brackets the *Doctrine,* within her will, with an English *St Bridget:* presumably, the English version of Bridget of Sweden's *Revelations,* and a *Hylton:* very possibly the double text of Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* and *On the Mixed Life* that circulated in tandem in the late fifteenth century.[59] These are the only three books that she leaves, alongside the many money and material items, in her will, two of them to nunneries. It is always dangerous to conclude too much from simple physical proximities. Nonetheless, it would seem that a woman who enjoyed radical visionary spirituality and writing of some contemplative sophistication also enjoyed the *Doctrine.* This may be an indication that, despite the 'vnkunnynge [. . .] symple sowles' notified in the introduction, the *Doctrine* was actually regarded as a text of relatively advanced edification.

Second, Margaret indicates that, having already lent the *Doctrine* to Lady Margaret Yaxley, a nun at Bruisyard, an East Anglian Franciscan convent, it should become the general possession of the convent after Lady Margaret's death. To place this within some kind of context: this is one of approximately eight book bequests known to have been made to women's religious houses between the late 1440s and 1500, a small number of which were multiple book bequests by lay women.[60] Pur-

[57] Margaret Purdans, St Giles', Norwich, Widow 1481 (Dioc. Reg. Caston 163), quoted in Henry Harrod, 'Extracts from Early Wills in the Norwich Registries', *Norfolk and Norwich Archeological Society*, 4 (1855), 335–36.

[58] Mary Erler, *Women, Reading and Piety in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 68–84. Purdans's links to the Norwich hermit, Richard Ferneys; Hugh Darnlett, Master of Pembroke College, and Richard Poringland, priest of St Stephen's, Norwich, stand out as particularly significant.

[59] I am indebted to C. Annette Grisé for this information.

[60] Erler, pp. 40–41. In addition to Purdans's multiple bequest, in 1448, Agnes Stapleton, widow of Sir Brian Stapleton, left five vernacular books: *The Prick of Conscience, The Chastising of God's Children, The Book of Vices and Virtues,* a 'Bonaventure' (probably

dans's bequest of the *Doctrine* is an invaluable witness to a close-knit, fifteenth-century, literary culture shared between nuns and devout gentlewomen and recently identified by Felicity Riddy and Carol Meale, in which modes of private devotional practice and types of spiritual reading matter for laywomen and nuns seem increasingly to have become 'more or less indistinguishable'.[61] However, as well as being a Franciscan nun, Lady Margaret Yaxley was also a member of Purdans's extended family, her son-in-law's sister, to be precise.[62] As a consequence, we can interpret this book bequest, not only as a significant transaction between a lay woman and a local religious house with which she had spiritual links, but *simultaneously* as a translation from lay to religious ownership determined by familial and genealogical ties. The two work in tandem; they are not distinct. It has been ascertained that, of the books being bequested to female religious houses in the second half of the fifteenth century, the *Doctrina* was the most 'up-to-date' or recent translation, other English spiritual works and translations dating from the late fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century.[63] This permits an important new perspective. As well as embodying an unexpected flexibility of application, the *Doctrine* would also appear to have been received, in convents, in the 1470s and 80s, as a relatively 'up-to-the-minute' read; as a 'cutting edge' new translation.

All these things are little intimations of independence; areas of application and perception that the translator possibly did not quite expect. However, perhaps the most pressing question to come out of this bequest and from this lost manuscript, is, how would Margaret Purdans have read the *Doctrine?* In what way would *she* have been able to translate it to make it applicable to her sophisticated, but necessarily lay, spirituality? This is a hard question, because, as has already been noted, the communal life — being a novice, operating as a superior, living under obedience, applying correction — all continue to play a central role within the translated text. Let us momentarily compare the *Doctrine* with a much better-known early thirteenth-century guide for enclosed women, *Ancrene Wisse.* Like the *Doctrine, Ancrene Wisse* is used

Love's *Mirror*), a French saints' lives, and a 'French book', to a laywoman and five womens' religious houses. Felicity Riddy, '"Women talking about the things of God": A late medieval sub-culture', in *Women and Literature in Britain 1150–1500*, ed. by Carol M. Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993; 2nd edn. 1996), pp. 104–27 (p. 108). For further valuable discussion of religious book transmission in women's wills see Anne M. Dutton, 'Passing the Book: Testamentary Transmission of Religious Literature to and by Women in England, 1350–1500', in *Women, the Book and the Godly*, ed. by Jane Taylor and Lesley Smith (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1995), pp. 41–54.

[61] Riddy, p. 110.

[62] Erler, p. 76.

[63] Erler, p. 41. Other named books include Rolle's *English Psalter* (*ca* 1348), *The Chastising of God's Children* (*ca* 1390s), texts by Walter Hilton (*ca* 1380–96), Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* (1409), the *Pater Noster* (*ca* 1400s), and the English translation of Bridget's *Revelations* (*ca* 1410–20).

by lay readers in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but only because its redactors and adaptors and apologists are prepared to take many more liberties with the text. They chop off the external rule (Parts 1 and 7), play up the treatise's apparent indifference to institutional regulations, and endlessly stress the points of contact between lay people attempting to live a life of holiness in the world, and solitaries, pursuing perfection in similarly isolated and self-motivated circumstances.[64] Paradoxically, doctored in this fashion, of the two, it is the anchoritic text that makes the far smoother transition to devout lay readership. The *Doctrine* could have been similarly modified but, as we have seen, it was not. Possibly, this is because it was translated later, after Arundel's *Constitutions*, whereas many of the texts that shape *Ancrene Wisse* to suit lay spirituality date somewhat earlier, from the last quarter of the fourteenth century.[65]

So, Margaret Purdans has a harder job on her hands. The translator fails to ease her reading experience by outlining the similarities between the religious vocation and the life of lay perfection. Instead, it seems likely that she would have had to select carefully from those passages in the *Doctrine* that carry a potentially broader moral application. Elsewhere, Denis Renevey and I have both commented upon the ways in which the extended, distinctive allegory of the domestic household of the heart in the first chapter of the *Doctrine* would probably have resonated with members of gentry households as much as with the participants within conventual life,[66] since late-medieval nunneries showed a notable, somewhat unruly, tendency to divide themselves up into smaller *familiae* or households, run along secular, upper-class lines.[67] The exposition of spiritual nuptials and the analogy of ecstatic love with physical love in the final chapter would have had different, but still viable, resonances for a woman who had been married, as they did, so dramatically, for that other fifteenth-century, East Anglian married woman, Margery Kempe. If Margaret

[64] For a valuable account of *Ancrene Wisse's* fortunes in the late Middle Ages see Nicholas Watson, '*Ancrene Wisse*, Religious Reform and the Late Middle Ages', in *A Companion to Ancrene Wisse*, ed. by Yoko Wada (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), pp. 197–226.

[65] For example, *The Simple Tretis* (*ca* 1380s–1440s), and *The Pepys Rule* (*ca* 1360–90). Other significant works of lay spirituality, drawing upon *Ancrene Wisse*, include *Pore Caitif* (*ca* 1370s), *Þe Holy Boke Gratia Dei*, *Þe Pater Noster of Richard Ermyte*, and *Book for a Simple and Devout Woman* (all 1370–1400). Watson, '*Ancrene Wisse*, Religious Reform', pp. 209–21.

[66] Denis Renevey, 'Household Chores in *The Doctrine of the Hert*: Affective Spirituality and Subjectivity', in *The Medieval Household in Christian Europe, c.850–c.1550: Managing Power, Wealth, and the Body*, ed. by Cordelia Beattie, Anna Maslakovic and Sarah Rees Jones, International Medieval Research, vol. 12 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), pp. 167–85; Christiania Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), pp. 123–28.

[67] Riddy, p. 109; Roberta Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: The Archeology of Religious Women* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 123–27.

was prepared to ignore significant passages of the treatise, nonetheless, a sizeable amount remained eminently suitable for 'sauourly' reading and digestion.

Alternatively, Margaret Purdans may have played some part in the informal, devout, 'beguine-style' women's communities that Norman Tanner and, more recently, Roberta Gilchrist, have uncovered in late-medieval Norwich.[68] These spontaneous foundations seem to have involved informal, although not irrevocable, vows, communal living, some degree of oversight. This possibility requires further investigation, particularly in the light of Mary Erler's suggestion that Margaret Purdans may possibly have practiced some kind of vowed existence during the later part of her life.[69] It has also been suggested that Hugh's *Doctrina* could conceivably have been directed toward a beguine readership in Belgium or northern France, given his support for beguine communities in Aarschot, Douai, and Lille.[70] Although there is insufficent hard evidence at present to construct a clear hypothesis, these hints and traces provocatively suggest ways in which the ostensible enclosures and regulations of the Middle English *Doctrine* may actually unlock to reveal its application to less regulated, more informal, group forms of female spirituality.

The Middle English *Doctrine* may have been used in intriguing, partially uncharted ways, within a lay setting, in fifteenth-century Norwich. But it was also translated into the contexts in which it was designed to be used — in official women's institutions: the Franciscan convents of Bruisyard, and St Botolph without Aldgate, in London, and, possibly, in the Bridgettine monastery of Syon. To begin with the Franciscans: first, we have the unambiguous evidence of Purdans's book bequest to Bruisyard in 1481. In addition, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 14. 15 contains a note on its flyleaf detailing its possession by Christina St Nicholas, prioress of the London minoresses, together with her bequest of the book to the convent following her death in 1455.[71] That this manuscript seems to have been individually

[68] Norman P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370–1532* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), pp. 64–65; Roberta Gilchrist and Marilyn Oliva, *Religious Women in Medieval East Anglia: History and Archeology c.1100–1540* (Norwich: University of East Anglia, 1993), pp. 71–74.

[69] Erler (p. 81) cites the appellation 'domina' before Purdans's name on a 1451 taxation list.

[70] Renevey, 'Household Chores', pp. 168, 179–80; Penelope Galloway, '"Discreet and Devout Maidens": Women's Involvement in Beguine Communities in Northern France, 1200–1500', in *Medieval Women in their Communities*, ed. by Diane Watt (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), pp. 92–115 (p. 102).

[71] The note reads as follows: 'Hit ys to witt þat dame christyne seint Nicholas of þe menoresse of London dowghtyr of nicholas seint Nicholas squier ȝeff [gave] þis boke aftyr hyr dysses [decease] to þe office of þe [. . .] and to the office of þe abbessey perpetually þe whyche passed to God out of þe worlde þe ȝere [year] of owre lord m.cccc.l.v. þe ix day of marche of whoys soule god haue merci'. Additional information about Christine St Nicholas can be gathered from a 1446 entry in the Calendar of Close Rolls, where we learn that she was already prioress of the minoresses at this date and that her family owned land in the parish of

customized for a minoress or minoresses is further shown by the fact that the scribe replaces the unspecific appellation 'sistir', with 'menoresse' on several occasions.[72] To sum up: the *Doctrine* appears twice within female Franciscan settings, one of approximately thirteen English books known to have been housed in English Franciscan convent libraries, and the only book, apart from Walter Hilton, and two variant formulations of the *Book of Vices and Virtues,* to appear twice.[73]

What was it about the *Doctrine* that chimed with Franciscan experience? Certainly not its affectivity. Despite the well-known Franciscan association with affective writing, in particular, with lives of Christ, there is nothing of this in the text. Does it perhaps supply the meditative teaching on the inner life so conspicuously lacking in the Middle English version of the official Rule for Franciscan nuns?[74] Or is it simply a useful addition to the somewhat meagre literature of vernacular spiritual instruction for women living communally under a rule? And how should we view the *Doctrine's* grouping with Hilton (which repeats the juxtaposition in Purdans's will), and with the thirteenth-century Dominican-originated *Book of Vices and Virtues,* which also elaborates on the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost in the course of catechetical exposition, and which also considers their action within the human heart?[75] In many ways, the Latin *Doctrina* appears to expound rather similar material to the French *Book of Vices and Virtues,* although earlier, more meditatively, and with a more precise application to female religious practice. As a consequence, given

St Nicholas at Wade, in the Isle of Thanet, in Kent. 25 Henry VI, 1446, *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 4 (London, 1937), p. 441.

[72] See n. 49.

[73] David N. Bell, *What Nuns Read: Books and Libraries in Medieval English Nunneries*, Cistercian Studies Series, 158 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1995), pp. 121–22, 134–35, 149–52; Erler, pp. 140–41, 145–46. The two Hilton manuscripts are London, BL MS Harley 2397 which contains three texts by Hilton, given by Elizabeth Horwode, abbess of the London minoresses to the Aldgate convent for the use of her sisters; and Cambridge University Library, MS Hh. i. 11, a religious miscellany including the meditations upon the Psalms generally attributed to Hilton, which A. I. Doyle suggests may have been owned by the house of minoresses at Bruisyard. Alexandra Barratt, 'The Revelations of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary: Problems of Attribution', *The Library*, 6th ser., 14 (1992), 1–11 (pp. 3–4). The two versions of the *Book of Vices and Virtues* are Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 91, a 1507 edition of Caxton's *Royal Book*, owned by Margerie Bakon, a minoress of Bruisyard, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 18, William of Nassington's *Speculum Vitae*, owned, in the early sixteenth century, by Elizabeth Throckmorton, abbess of the Cambridgeshire convent of Denny.

[74] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS 585, a vernacular rule for enclosed minoresses, owned by the Aldgate convent, is published in *A Fifteenth-Century Courtesy Book and two Fifteenth-Century Franciscan Rules*, ed. R. W. Chambers, EETS o.s. 148 (1914, repr. 1963).

[75] *The Book of Vices and Virtues*, ed. W. Nelson Francis, EETS o.s. 217 (1942, repr. 1999), pp. 116–272.

their multiple appearance in Franciscan convents, might it be possible to regard these two texts, the Middle English *Doctrine* and the *Book of Vices and Virtues,* as joint witnesses to the continued, even obligatory, priority accorded Pecham's catechetical basics, in fifteenth-century Franciscan religious experience?

Finally, a word about Syon. There is no direct connection between any of the known Middle English manuscripts of the *Doctrine* and the famous Bridgettine foundation at Syon. However, there are a number of intriguing subsidiary connections which may — or may not — between them add up to something significant. Three Latin copies of the *Doctrina* have been traced back to Syon monastery library.[76] In two of the four extant manuscripts, the Middle English *Doctrine* travels in company with two other spiritual texts for nuns, *The Tree and xii Frutes of the Holy Goost.*[77] These two texts also exist in a third manuscript and in an early sixteenth-century printed edition, owned respectively by Dorothy Coderynton and Margaret Windsor, nuns at Syon immediately prior to the suppression.[78] A rather rare prayer at the end of the one of the Middle English manuscripts of the *Doctrine* also appears at the end of the Middle English manuscripts of *The Mirror of Simple Souls* of Marguerite Porete.[79] These manuscripts are all of Carthusian origin, and we know that the Carthusians were especially instrumental in supplying the nuns at Syon with spiritual material. Margaret Purdans had links with Syon. In her will, she left money to the foundation, and her executor was himself to become a Syon monk.[80] Various Syon monks are known to have formed compilations of religious reading matter for nuns in Franciscan convents. One such example is William Bonde, who compiled a number of treatises for a 'deuote Relygiouse woman of Denney'.[81]

Did Bridgettine nuns also enjoy the *Doctrine?* Or, could the text possibly have been translated or transcribed within a Bridgettine milieu for Franciscan nuns? We have already reviewed the ways in which it might have fitted with Franciscan reading. In what way does it fit with or deviate from known Bridgettine religious reading

[76] Syon Abbey, MSS M. 48; M. C2; O. 7. Vincent Gillespie, ed., *Syon Abbey. With the Library of the Carthusians*, ed. by A. I. Doyle, *Corpus of British Library Medieval Library Catalogues*, 9 (London: British Libgrary, 2001), pp. 236, 253–54, 306. In the first and third of these manuscripts, the *Doctrina* is attributed to John of Wales, OFM (d. 1285).

[77] Johannes J. Vaissier, ed., *A Devout Treatyse Called the Tree & xii Frutes of the Holy Goost* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1960). These additional texts appear with the *Doctrine* in Durham, University Library, MS Cosin, V. III. 24, and in Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MS McClean, 132.

[78] London, British Library, MS Additional 24192; Cambridge, Trinity College, C. 7. 12 (STC 13608). Vaissier, pp. xxiv–xxix, xxxii–xxxiii, xxxvii–xxxviii.

[79] Candon, *Doctrine*, p. 208. Information originally supplied by A. I. Doyle.

[80] Erler, p. 80.

[81] From the title page of William Bonde, *The Consolatori of Timorouse and fearefull Consciencys*, London, British Museum, I. A. 47940. Vaissier, p. xlvii.

tastes in the second half of the fifteenth century? *The Orcherd of Syon,* the well-known fifteenth-century adaptation of the *Dialogue* of St Catherine of Sienna, created for Bridgettine nuns, employs a similarly overarching metaphorical scheme — the scheme of the orchard — and sections the text along equivalently systematic lines as the *Doctrine.*[82] Does the *Orcherd's* compilation in this manner suggest that the nuns at Syon were trained in a systematic form of reading that would have enabled them easily to appreciate the *Doctrine* text? Once again, these are lines of conjecture and hypothesis that require further substantial investigation.

To conclude: the translator represents his ideal readers as 'unkunnynge [. . .] symple sowles',[83] whose task is to feel, not think. He reduces the learning of the *Doctrine,* and shows a mild tendency to orientate it towards subject rather than superior. In practice, the translation was owned and read by by Margaret Purdans, gentry widow, with links to masters of Cambridge colleges. It was owned by Christine St Nicholas, Franciscan abbess, daughter of a landowning gentry family in Kent. Its partner texts, *The Tree and xii Frutes of the Holy Goost* were owned by Dorothy Coderynton, Bridgettine nun and daughter of a knight, and Margaret Windsor, Bridgettine prioress and sister of a lord.[84] On the ground, the translator's contained, non-erudite expectations of his reader tally incompletely with the educated gentry women and aristocrats, superiors and sub-superiors of convent, who appear to have circulated his text. Can this tension be illuminated by returning our discussion full circle to Archbishop Arundel's legislation and its textual consequences? Recent research by Fiona Somerset acts to renuance Watson's initial interpretation, suggesting that the *Constitutions* were primarily concerned with clerical control, and that, while ownership of books was undoubtedly used as 'corroborative evidence' in accusations of heterodoxy against 'lower-class laypersons [. . .] these provisions were not used against members of the gentry and nobility. [. . .] Higher-status laity continued with impunity to own books of the prohibited kinds'.[85] The translator of the *Doctrine* yields to the clerical constraints of the early fifteenth century in the ways in which he contains and reduces his translation, and disempowers his reading subject. By contrast, the treatise operates on the ground in markedly less regulated circumstances, circulating by mid-century amongst high-status, well-educated religious and lay women readers, shielded from ecclesiastical suspicion and interference by their political and social power.

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[82] *The Orcherd of Syon, vol. I Text*, ed. by Phyllis Hodgson and Gabriel M. Liegey, EETS o.s. 258 (1966).

[83] Candon, *Doctrine*, pp. 1.8, 1.12.

[84] Bell, pp. 176, 183.

[85] Fiona Somerset, 'Professionalizing Translation at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century: Ullerston's *Determinacio*, Arundel's *Constitutiones*', in *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity*, ed. by. Fiona Somerset and Nicholas Watson (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), pp. 145–57 (p. 153).

The Radical Mary: Gonzalo de Berceo's Reinterpretation of the *Miracles of Our Lady*

Martha M. Daas

The Spanish poet and cleric Gonzalo de Berceo brought fame to himself and to his monastery by writing saints' lives and miracle tales. These texts demonstrate both erudition, in his knowledge of Latin and rhetoric, and a clear understanding of popular appeal. More striking than this clever combination of the 'high' and 'low' arts, however, is Berceo's claims of authorship. These claims emphasize the importance both of the provenance of the texts and the relationship the poet maintained with the texts.

We know little of the author himself. Writing in the middle of the thirteenth century, Berceo kept mainly to hagiographic themes. His poetry is often classified under the heading of *mester de clerecía.* Specifically, this name means 'work of the clergy' and is often compared to 'mester de juglaría', literally 'work of the *jongleurs*'. Berceo wrote epic tales of local saints like Saint Aemilianus, the patron saint of his monastery, and Saint Dominic of Silos, once an abbot of that monastery. It is likely that Berceo was involved in the keeping of the monastic records and finances, which would explain his interest in the pecuniary agenda of the monastery, an interest that has been explored by many critics. By the thirteenth century, the monastery San Millán de la Cogolla was one of the largest in Christian Spain. Fortuitously located near the pilgrimage trail to Santiago de Compostela, the monastery most likely profited from the vast number of pilgrims who, engaged in medieval sight-seeing, may have strayed off the trail. Berceo's exciting tales of local saints may have provided a reason to visit the monastery with which they were associated. But it is unquestionably Berceo's unique collection of miracles of the Virgin, the *Milagros de Nuestra Señora,* which claims an 'intimate relationship' with the great monastery and the local