

James Simpson, "Visionary Writing in England, 1534-1550s"

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ABSTRACT

Post-Reformation recusant institutions produced exceptionally important witnesses of the pre-Reformation English mystical tradition. Those same offshore institutions also produced some new contemplative texts of their own, as did some very isolated figures still in England. Despite this preservation and production, however, the mystical tradition was under immense cultural and political pressure in post-Reformation English culture. Already in the pre-Reformation period there are powerful signs of new devotional traditions that eschew the resources of mystical writing. Post-Reformation, the mystical tradition becomes a tenuous stream, barely surviving in a largely hostile environment.

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I

The execution of Elizabeth Barton (also known as ‘The Holy Maid of Kent’), on 20 April 1534, might serve to mark the new and hostile climate with which English ‘mystical’ writings were obliged to contend. Elizabeth Barton (born c. 1506) was almost certainly illiterate, but in 1525 experienced visions; these were taken seriously enough by Archbishop Warham that Barton was admitted to the Benedictine priory of St Sepulchre, Canterbury. By 1527 she had taken her vows. Warham sent an account of her revelations to Henry VIII, and in

the late 1520s she was the object of sympathetic interest by the king and his closest advisors. In 1530, however, she prophesied disaster to the King should he divorce Katherine of Aragon. Barton was convicted of high treason in 1534, and subsequently hanged and beheaded, along with others involved in her case; John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was also implicated, and imprisoned at the King's pleasure.¹ The authorities managed to destroy all copies (seven hundred, by one contemporary estimate) of a book of her revelations.²

Action was taken against Barton clearly because her prophecies had become politically unacceptable to the King. Archbishop Cranmer (d. 1556) reports skeptically concerning the affair, in a letter written in December 1533, that Barton had 'in her trances many strange visions and revelations, as of heaven, hell, and purgatory, and of the state of certain souls departed'; she 'feigned' that her knowledge was from God, and sent letters designed to make people 'believe that those letters were written in heaven'. Having interrogated her, Cranmer reports that the truth is out: 'she never had a vision in all her life, but all that she said was feigned of her own imagination'.³

Cranmer's skepticism is driven most immediately by political alarm. But evangelical writing surrounding her execution also reveals a more theoretical hostility to the very idea of visionary writings and phenomena. If the Word of God was the sufficient and single path unto salvation, then supplements of any kind were to be rejected. Already in 1528 William Tyndale had described Barton's visions as 'done of the devil'; he says that they were designed to test

whether or not we 'will cleave fast to God's word'.⁴ Cranmer himself later returned to attack Barton in a more theoretical text, *The Confutation of Unwritten Verities* (1556).⁵ Here he sets all visionary words in a wider category of unscriptural material. The *Confutation* begins by citing Deuteronomy 4.2: 'Ye shall put nothing to the word which I command to you'. Cranmer's is a culture of the revealed Word alone, to which nothing is to be added or subtracted. Successive chapters demolish all other, non-Scriptural forms of especially verbal authority: the 'writings of the old fathers, without the written Word of God'; the pronouncements of the General Councils; the oracles of angels; the apparitions of the dead; miracles; and custom: all are wholly without foundation. Attacking oracles, he dismisses 'miracles, dreams and revelations'.⁶ The tract ends with an assault on various Catholic impostures and frauds, including Elizabeth Barton, who 'passed all others in devlish devices'.⁷ In this text Barton serves as evidence not so much of treasonous activity, as of feigned claims to authority that have no scriptural foundation.

One of those feigned claims to authority is, clearly enough, the entire tradition of visionary writing. To be sure, the issue of discretion of spirits (and especially with regard to women's spirituality) was already acute in late medieval Europe. Jean Gerson, for example, tried to reverse the canonization of Bridget of Sweden at the Council of Constance in 1415; he also wrote treatises about how to distinguish true visions from false.⁸ In, for example, his *On Distinguishing True from False Revelations* (1402), Gerson seems to be citing the

case of Margaret Porete, burned as a heretic in 1310. She fell into error in her visions, since, of the soul's passions, love

is the one that penetrates deepest and alienates us from ourselves. And if love is true, chaste and holy, it helps us inconceivably much in coming to know heavenly things. But if it is vain, in error, and lustful, it will fashion for itself different illusions, so that a person thinks he sees or understands matters of which he is wholly ignorant.⁹

If Porete had applied her vision differently, she 'could hardly have expressed anything more sublime', but intellectual pride caused her to err.¹⁰ Gerson's argument here is revealingly different from that of Cranmer in his attack on Elizabeth Barton: Gerson acknowledges the possibility of true visions, but is at the ready to spot the false; Cranmer, by contrast, denies the authority of visions altogether. In his *Catalogue* of British writers (1557), John Bale would seem to dismiss the entire late medieval feminine visionary tradition, in saying this about those churchmen who took the visions of St Bridget (whom Bale confuses with St Bridget of Ireland) seriously:

Huius Dianae tenebrosa somnia, seu, ut ipsi vocant, Revelationes, in scholis Oxoniensibus et in cathedris publicis, magistraliter exposuerunt magni sua aetate doctores...circa 1370, ut talibus muliercularum delirationibus sole clariorem Dei veritatem sophistae obnubilarent.¹¹

In dismissing feminine vision so completely, Bale and Cranmer both express the deepest persuasion of sixteenth-century evangelical culture, of all

stripes: that only Scriptural words have authority and credibility. In 1525 Luther himself had begun his attack on the 'enthusiasts' of Zwickau (who were claiming direct prophetic inspiration) by asserting that Christians should first pray to God for a 'right understanding of his holy, pure Word'.¹² Much later, in 1537, referring to the charismatic Münzer (d. 1525), Luther theorized the inherent insufficiency of non-Scriptural inspiration:

In these things, which concern the spoken, external word, it is certain to maintain this: God gives no one his Spirit or grace apart from the external word which goes before. We are thus protected from the enthusiasts, that is, the spirits, who boast that they have the Spirit apart from and before contact with the word.¹³

However much Luther was writing against specific forms of prophetic inspiration that threatened his own programme of renovation, his uncompromising emphasis on Scriptural words and only Scriptural words has direct implications for all visionary, prophetic and mystical writings. Not only that, but Lutheran emphasis on *sola scriptura* threatened a vast undergrowth of devotional practice that nourished the higher reaches of mystical vision. English evangelical writers clearly pitched Bible reading against conventional devotional practice. In his Preface to Numbers, for example, Tyndale contrasts Catholic and evangelical devotion: 'Devotion', he says, 'is a fervent love unto God's commandments, and a desire to be with God and with his everlasting promises'. He contrasts the riches produced by this verbal devotion to the Word of God to

the unsatisfying devotions to saints.¹⁴ In the attack on images made in his answers to the rebels of Devon (who opposed against the imposition of the 1549 English Book of Common Prayer), Cranmer dismissed the whole culture of affective devotion as an expression of 'all manner of superstition and idolatry'; its corrupt tendency to worship creatures is found especially in 'fond women, which commonly follow superstition rather than true religion'.¹⁵

In short, the events of 1534 establish the conditions for a very different spiritual world from that of pre-Reformation spirituality that could, even if with profound reservations, countenance a variety of spiritual sustenance. In his *Epistle on the Mixed Life* (?mid 1380s), Walter Hilton says that the fire of love for God in each soul needs to be nourished, but it can be fed with wood of diverse kinds:

And so it is good that eche man in his degree, after that he is disposed,
that he gete him stikkes of o thing other of another - either of preieres, or
of good meditaciouns, or reding in hooli writte, or good bodili worchyng
- for to nourische the fier of love in his soule.¹⁶

Whereas pre-Reformation visionary culture had often been motivated in part by a need to short-circuit the textual protocols of a learned, literate culture, the new evangelical culture of the sixteenth-century, with its rigid adherence to written verities and only written verities, prohibited that short-circuit of textuality; it insisted instead on a single path through the written, and through scripture. In his *Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529), Thomas More grounds the Church in the

ongoing tradition of unwritten verities: with regard to the Holy Spirit, More says that it was

...not promised by our Sauyour Cryst that he [the Holy Spirit] sholde onley tell his chyrch agayn his [i.e. Christ's] wordes but sayd further, 'I haue', quod he, 'besides all this, many thynges to say to you'.¹⁷

This Morean position was wholly out of step with an ascendant, evangelical culture committed to exclusively written verities.¹⁸

II

The year 1534 saw, then, not only the Act of Supremacy, but also the execution of the visionary Elizabeth Barton. The second event, in the context of the first, marks a powerful break in the English visionary tradition, a break provoked not only by specific political needs but also by much more profound ideological persuasions.

That there was some interest in contemplative writing right up to 1534 is attested by the response of England's early printers to the possibilities of that market. Although Caxton himself did not print contemplative works,¹⁹ his followers, and especially Wynkyn de Worde, had modestly exploited interest in vernacular and Latin contemplative texts, of both English and Continental origin. Some of these works were clearly abridgements for a wider, print public, while others were substantial books, in some cases prepared specifically for religious

houses. Thus in 1494 de Worde printed a complete text of Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*, which was reprinted in 1507, 1525 and 1533.²⁰ Hilton's *Epistle on the Mixed Life* was published by Richard Pynson in 1516.²¹ The brief *Golden Epistle* was also printed by Thomas Godfray in 1531 and again in 1535,²² along with a selection of four *Revelations* of Saint Bridget concerning the contemplative life.²³ The *Contemplations of the Dread and Love of God*, addressed to secular readers but including discussion of the contemplative life, was printed (in editions that attributed the work to Rolle) in 1506 and 1519.²⁴ A short extract of Rolle's *Form of Living* was published as *The Remedy ayenst the Troubles of Temptacyons* in 1508 and 1519. All four of the last mentioned printings came from the shop of Wynkyn de Worde, who had also produced a radically abbreviated, seven-page edition of *The Book of Margery Kempe* in 1501.²⁵ Latin works by Richard Rolle, the *Lectiones super Iob* and *Speculum spiritualium*, had been printed in, respectively, Oxford in 1483 and Paris in 1510.²⁶

Printers also capitalized on an interest in continental visionaries, who are in fact more substantially represented in print than English authors, Hilton aside.²⁷ Bridget of Sweden is represented by the *Lyfe of Seynt Birgette*,²⁸ and, as we have seen in the previous paragraph, by a selection of four texts from her *Revelations*.²⁹ The *Mirroure of Oure Ladye*, "a Middle English translation of and commentary on the Bridgettine office," was produced for the nuns of Syon Abbey in 1530.³⁰ Catherine of Siena's *Lyf*, as well as the Middle English translation of her *Dialogo*, the *Orchard of Syon* (originally also written for the nuns

of Syon), were both printed by de Worde in, respectively, 1492 (reprinted in 1500) and 1519.³¹ Gris  reports that selections of Elizabeth of Hungary were printed in 1492 with the *Lyf* of Catherine of Siena.³²

This printing activity comes to an abrupt halt in 1534. Before, however, we accept this crystal clear date as a marker of a new, anti-contemplative spirituality of the Word, we might pause to note that pre-Reformation, late medieval spirituality was already moving towards chastened, non-visual forms of spiritual experience. A passage from Thomas More's *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* (1532) underlines the deeper changes that were underway behind the more spectacular jurisdictional disputes of the 1530s.

In the *Confutation*, More hankers after an age of innocence, in which English lay readers were unbothered either by the works of 'heretics' (e.g. Tyndale) or of their respondents (e.g. More himself).³³ Instead, he advises them to read what he takes to be classics of the devotional tradition in English, which are also in conformity with 'the catholike faithe of thys 1500 yere'. The unlearned should be reading 'suche englishe bookes as moste may noryshe and encrease devocion. Of which kind is Bonaventure of the lyfe of Christe, Gerson of the folowyng of Christ and the devoute contemplative booke of Scala perfectionis'.³⁴ The works to which More refers here are, respectively: Love's translation (c. 1410) of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, the original of which was once ascribed to the thirteenth-century Parisian theologian Bonaventure (c.1217-1274), but which was in fact written c.1350-1380; the *Imitation of Christ*, often ascribed to the

Parisian theologian Jean Gerson (1363-1429), and now ascribed to the Netherlandish canon regular Thomas à Kempis (1379-1471); and the *Scale of Perfection* by Walter Hilton (d. 1396), canon of the Augustinian Priory of Thurgarton in Nottinghamshire.

More's account of that vernacular tradition as of long-standing is misleading in one respect. Certainly Love's work had been printed by Caxton in 1484 and 1490, and had been taken up by both Pynson and de Worde, the last of whom issued it four times between 1494 and 1525.³⁵ As we have seen, de Worde also printed *The Scale* in 1494, and the work was reissued three more times before 1533.

The *Imitation of Christ*, however, had had a very restricted circulation before its first printing in 1504.³⁶ Until that date, 'The *Imitatio* had remained virtually inaccessible to those English readers who could not read Latin'; the number of manuscripts is small (four), and the evidence for readership prior to 1504 points to 'a small, conservative, intellectual and spiritual elite'.³⁷ After its first printing, however, the *Imitatio* became hugely popular: it was translated no fewer than six times, and went through 51 imprints up to 1639, being produced by both insular and recusant presses.³⁸ Why was this so, and why did the *Imitation*, alone among pre-Reformation vernacular works and translations, vigorously survive the 1530s in both Protestant and more traditionalist cultures?

From the late fourteenth century at least some clerical vernacular

writers expressed a deep distrust of the imaginative affectivity of vernacular visionary and devotional writing. The author of the late-fourteenth-century *Cloud of Unknowing*, for example, attacks as no less than heretical those false contemplatives who are 'enflaumid with an unkyndely hete of compleccion', which must be a critique of the kind of bodily and intensely affective spirituality shaped by Richard Rolle (d. 1349).³⁹ The *Cloud* author's spirituality places an utterly transcendent God at its centre; that immaterial transcendence subjects the world of created things and language to deconstructive pressure. The only certainty offered by language and images is that they must fail to gain access to God, and so should be used, if at all, only to be broken in recognition of their inadequacy.⁴⁰ The *Cloud*-author's hostility to images is epistemological rather than theological, but it amounts to a kind of interior iconoclasm, since the true contemplative is to undo the very processes of both imagination and thought in the psyche, by way of approaching purest being. The radically philosophical, a-historical nature of the *Cloud*-author's God produces a correlatively elitist text, which is directed to a 'privy' audience of single persons, who must read the work, in order, from beginning to end.

The *Cloud* survives in seventeen manuscripts, some of which were connected to Carthusian houses in both Yorkshire and London.⁴¹ Carthusian environments probably also produced the first translation into English of the *Imitation of Christ* in the mid-fifteenth century; a second translation was printed by Pynson in 1504, and a third translation, possibly by Richard Whitford, a

Bridgettine monk of Syon Abbey, was printed in 1531.⁴² The first translation circulated in a very small group of readers within the Bridgettines and the Carthusians.⁴³ The heroic resistance of Bridgettine and Carthusian monks from Syon Abbey and Sheen to Henry VIII's claim to the headship of the Church of England is well known.⁴⁴ That resistance is not without its historical ironies: the religious houses from which these men came were founded by Henry V by way of harnessing powerful monastic foundations to royal interests; furthermore, the very spirituality of these houses, austere and imageless as it was, was not out of keeping with aspects of evangelical spirituality, despite the fact (a further irony) that Syon was dedicated to a visionary female saint.⁴⁵ The *Imitation* was popular from its printing of 1504, of which eight reprints were made up to 1528, but its popularity remained undiminished across the 1530s and well beyond: Whitford's own translation was reprinted twelve times up to 1585, and competed with other translations throughout the sixteenth century.⁴⁶

More's statement that the *Imitatio* was a classic of vernacular spirituality is, then, incorrect: unlike the other two books mentioned by More, the *Imitatio* expresses a chaste, austere and largely imageless spirituality; the *devotio moderna* enjoyed no popularity in England until the sixteenth century,⁴⁷ and it can be described as a classic in England only *after* the Reformation. This chaste spirituality, with its generally chaste prose, is also found in More's own *Dialogue of Comfort* written in the Tower in 1535 as More awaited execution.

Paradoxically, More's own chaste and Carthusian spirituality itself

converges, in some respects, with its evangelical enemy. Certainly by the mid-sixteenth century evangelical authors were deploying the works of Erasmus, More's friend and exponent of 'Christian humanism', on the side of an imageless spirituality.⁴⁸ For More, as for his ostensible enemy, John Ryckes, the author of the *Ymage of Love* (1525),⁴⁹ the truest account of God is imageless.

Rather, then, than offering us a picture of a venerable pre-Reformation devotional and/or contemplative tradition about to come to a brutal halt, More instead delineates both a pre-Reformation and a post-Reformation tradition: Love and Hilton represent the past, while the *Imitation of Christ* points rather to the future. One can see the bridge across pre- and post-Reformation culture represented by the *Imitatio* through the lens of its treatment by two royal women. On the one hand, Lady Margaret Beaufort (mother to Henry VII) translated Book 4 of the *Imitatio*, from the French (a text printed by Pynson in 1504);⁵⁰ on the other, the Protestant queen Katherine Parr drew upon Book 3 of the *Imitatio* in her *Prayers or Meditations* (1545).⁵¹ Interestingly, however, whereas Book 3 of the *Imitatio* is a dialogue between the plangent soul and Christ, the Parr translation omits the (obviously unscriptural) voice of Christ, and leaves the importunate voice of the soul unanswered by non-Scriptural words.⁵²

Changes in late medieval devotional practice, then, and in particular the introduction of the *devotio moderna*, were already, as it were, 'preparing' late medieval readers for a chastened, non-visionary forms of spirituality, which were more rooted in the scriptural text. One last example will suffice, also from

the writings of Katharine Parr. In his Good Friday sermon (?1531-4),⁵³ John Fisher used an unusual metaphor, as he called the crucifix a 'book'; the metaphor seems to be a new one, since Fisher registers the possible surprise of his listeners: 'But you marvell peradventure why I call the crucifix a book', he exclaims, before going on to elaborate the conceit.⁵⁴ Fisher's metaphor is designed to heighten devotion to the suffering body of Christ: just as a book has two 'boardes', so too 'the two boardes of this booke is the two partes of the crosse, for which the book is open and spread, the leaves be cowched vpon the boardes. And so the blessed body of Christ was spred vpon the crosse'.⁵⁵ Perhaps Fisher is himself wresting the terms of increasingly bookish culture back into the purview of a visual and potentially visionary devotional culture. If so, Katherine Parr wrests it back for books. In her moving, para-Psalmic text, *The Lamentation of a Sinner*,⁵⁶ she also deploys the metaphor: 'this crucifix is the boke, wherein god hath included all thynges, and hath moste compendiouslye written therein, al truthe, profitable and necessary for our saluation'.⁵⁷ Parr's elaboration of the 'book of the crucifix' moves in exactly the opposite direction from Fisher's: whereas Fisher's eye moves to the visible body, Parr's mind moves to (evangelical) theology: 'Christ hath shewed that in goddess sight, the righteousnes of the world is wickednesse: and he hathe yelded witness, that the workes of menne, not regenerated by him in faith, are evyl'.⁵⁸

Where, then, did the English contemplative tradition go after 1534, when its room for development was under severe pressure of various kinds, both acute and chronic? The obvious answer is offshore, into recusant communities based in Flanders and Northern France. Many factors subtend mystical writing: such textual practice depends not only on a pre-existent devotional culture, but it often also depends on institutions that permit the practice of contemplative meditation. Not only did the Reformation in England produce theory hostile to visionary writing, but in the later 1530s it also proscribed the institutions of the regular religious life.

The writings of one Robert Parkyn (*d.* 1569) reveal the fragility, both cultural and institutional, of post Reformation contemplative practice in England. By 1541 Parkyn was in orders and not long after this became curate at Adwick-le-Street in the West Riding where he remained until his death.⁵⁹ Bodleian Library, MS Lat. theol. d.15 contains copies by Parkyn of prose works by Richard Rolle (who had lived in Parkyn's own parish), poems by John Lydgate, and prayers in verse and prose by Thomas More.⁶⁰ Parkyn had profoundly Catholic sympathies, as his transcribed texts demonstrate; he seems also to have composed works himself, preserved in University of Aberdeen Library, MS 185. Many of these texts seem to have been composed by 1551 (i.e. before the reign of Queen Mary in 1553-1558), but the two works devoted to the contemplative life (the *Brief Rule* and its summary, the *13 preceptes necessarie for him that entendithe to lyve a*

contemplative lyffe) seem to have been written between 1557-9.⁶¹ In his *Brief Rule* he directs that those who wish to come 'unto perfection' must in the first place 'detest and abhorre all heresies and scismes, strongly stickyng and humbly submitte him selffe unto the Catholique churche, for who so ever goethe frome the catholike churche, yea, thowghe they seyme to lyffe never so virtuously, yet ar they partide and devidyde from god and the company of sanctis'.⁶² Given its circumstances, this apparently anodyne address has a certain piquancy, written as it is by a person of Catholic persuasion who knows that anodyne professions of faith to the "Catholic Church" had become, and could very soon again become, anything but anodyne. That address to a virtual institution is implicit in his little tract on *The Highest Learning*, in which he says that anyone who wants to 'usse thacttes of contemplatyve lyffinge' must 'in no wysse to intromytt nor medle with worldye besynes'.⁶³

Certainly Parkyn can imagine the contemplative life, and the joys of union with God; once brought to perfection, then

is the luffynge sowlle drownyde in gostlie love, and ther is suche a cunion of love bytwix god and the sowle, that god is in such a lovyngesowlle, and syche a lovinge sowlle is in god. Than burnithe the sowlle in love...the mynde is rapt from all terrestriall thinges in to god. Than whatt joye and cumfurthe, whatt gladness and spirituall myrthe the sowlle and bodie, the hertt and mynde doth fealle in god, no hertt can thinke, nor townge can tell.⁶⁴

This eloquent imagining is premised, however, on the possibility of withdrawing from all 'worldly besynes', when the obvious institutional bases of that withdrawal have now all but disappeared from England. While refurbishment and instruction at parish level were much more urgent needs in the reign of Mary (1553-1558),⁶⁵ the reign did nevertheless witness a modest restoration of some monastic institutions.⁶⁶ That modest restoration, reversed after 1558, was, however, an exiguous basis for the contemplative practice imagined by Parkyn.

If the institutional grounding for the practice of the contemplative life was no longer available in England, such institutions were, however, founded on the Continent, which is where we must look both for the preservation of the English medieval contemplative tradition, and for texts newly produced in aid of those wishing to pursue the contemplative life. Parkyn's *Brief Rule* is in part dependent on William Peryn's *Spirituell exercises and goostly meditacions and a neare way to come to perfection and lyfe contemplatyue* (1557).⁶⁷ That one of the addressees of this text is 'Sister Dorothy Clement, of the Order of St Clare in Louvain' points to the geographical change of location for English contemplative writing.⁶⁸ After the death of Queen Mary and the 1559 statute dissolving Mary's religious foundations, the regular religious of those foundations dispersed to the continent, the Carthusians of Sheen and the Bridgettines of Syon to Bruges and finally Nieuport; and a small community of Dominicans to Seland near Antwerp; and the nuns of Syon eventually to a long period based in Lisbon.⁶⁹ Benedictine monastic foundations for women were established in the following centres, from

the late sixteenth-century: Brussels (1596), Cambrai (1623), Ghent (1624), Paris (1651), Boulogne (1652), Dunkirk (1662), and Ypres (1665).⁷⁰ Benedictine priories for men were founded at Douai (1606), Dieulouard (1608), St Malo (1611) and Paris (1615).⁷¹ I present such evidence as there is for the preservation of a pre-Reformation contemplative tradition in these centres, before, very briefly, pointing to the major ways in which that tradition was developed.⁷²

Two of the five manuscripts containing a full text of Julian of Norwich's *Revelations* derive from the period 1650-c.1670, and were copied in English Benedictine nunneries in both Cambrai and Paris. One manuscript seems to have been copied by Mother Clementina Cary (d. 1671).⁷³ A fourth witness, the Serenus Cressy print of 1670,⁷⁴ also seems to derive from one of these copies, now Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Anglais, MS 40 (a text that attempts to reproduce the handwriting and *mise-en-page* of a medieval manuscript, though itself written c. 1650).⁷⁵

Julian's was not the only text reproduced and read in recusant nunneries. In 1629 Augustine Baker (1575-1641) wrote to Sir Robert Cotton asking for more pre-Reformation books fit for the nuns of Cambrai:

Their lives being contemplative the common bookes of the world are not for their purpose, and little or nothing is in thes daies printed in English that is proper for them. There were manie English bookes in olde time whereof thoughe they have some, yet they want manie....Hampoolles workes are proper for them. I wishe I had Hilltons *Scala perfectionis* in

latein; it would helpe the vnderstanding of the English; and some of them vnderstande latein.⁷⁶

Clearly other texts did make their way to recusant communities, since at least five manuscript copies of either the *Cloud of Unknowing* and/or the *Epistle of Privy Counsel* survive in copies made in Cambrai.⁷⁷ Augustine Baker also made a curious commentary on the *Cloud*, known as *Secretum sive Mysticum, containing an exposition of the book called The Cloud*.⁷⁸ In about 1632 Baker made a complete and modernized version of the *Scale of Perfection*.⁷⁹ Serenus Cressy (who was responsible for the printing of Julian's *Revelations* in 1670, and had been chaplain to the English nuns at Paris in 1651-1652), also had the *Scale of Perfection* printed in 1659, while he was at Douai.⁸⁰

These texts from an earlier contemplative tradition were clearly admired and actively read: Dame Margaret Gascoigne, for example, who was professed at Cambrai in 1629 and died in 1637, cites and meditates on Julian's *Revelations* in an independent work:

Thou hast saide, O Lorde, to a deere child of thine, 'Let me alone, my deare worthy childe, intende (or attende) to me, I am inough to thee; rejoyce in thy Saviour and Salvation' (this was spoken to Julian the Ankress of Norwich, as appeareth by the booke of her revelations.) This o Lorde I reade and thinke on with great joie, and cannot but take it as spoken allso to me.⁸¹

Extracts from Julian were also made in the Upholland Anthology, copied at Cambrai.⁸²

English works from the pre-Reformation tradition were, however, clearly not the only material available for those practising the contemplative life.

Benedict Canfield's *The rule of perfection* (first published 1609) was to have a long shelf-life in many languages; it was certainly designed to promote specifically mystical experience:

This will, pleasure and contentment of God, is so delitious a thing and so pleasant to the sowlle, when so she tasteth it perfectly, that it draweth, illuminateth, dilateth, extendeth, exalteth, ravisheth, and inebriateth her in such sort that she feeleth no more any will, affection or inclination of her owne, but wholly des[poyled] of herself, but all self-wil, interest and commoditie, is plunged into the bottomlesse gulfe of this will and the abyssal pleasure therof, and so is become one and the same spirit with God".⁸³

And the newly-developed, Ignatian devotional programme of spiritual exercises was also available to English monastic houses. In fact pre-Reformation English contemplative materials seem to have provided an alternative axis to the newer, 'activist' Ignatian spirituality, and to have been deployed in a larger cleavage between English Jesuits and Benedictines.⁸⁴ The Benedictine Augustine Baker, for example, who was spiritual director for the Cambrai nuns between 1624 and 1633, regarded Ignatian devotional exercise with condescension: 'All those

directions given by those Fathers are but, as it were, the ABC of the spiritual life'; 'the experimentall knowledge of mystick matters doth not properly belong to the Fathers of the Society'.⁸⁵ Baker himself is a central figure in the preservation and reuse of the pre-Reformation contemplative tradition. As we have seen, the anthology of pre-Reformation spiritual texts prepared by Baker contains selections from Julian's *Revelations* (i.e. St Joseph's College, MS Upholland), and he also wrote a 'commentary' on the *Cloud of Unknowing* (more an occasion for an spiritual autobiography) that twice appears with the text of the *Cloud* itself.⁸⁶

This is not the place for a conspectus of Baker's own spiritual writings. He wrote voluminously, without either stylistic or structural economy of any kind.⁸⁷ He excuses his style by referring to the intellectual simplicity of women, 'who haue good and pious wills, though no deep vnderstandinge'. If any 'learned reader' finds verbal superfluity, 'if thou reflect for whom it was written, the persons being religious women (who generallie are illiterate), the largenesse of [my] expressions may be excused'.⁸⁸ However much Baker seems to have had a low estimation of the capacities of recusant women, some testimonies suggest otherwise. From Cambrai, the remarkable Gertrude More's (1606-1633) surviving series of meditations (*Confessiones Amantis* (1625-1633)) attests a subtle, passionate spiritual culture grounded in Augustine's *Confessions*.⁸⁹ And, although outside the contemplative frame of the present volume, one should recognize the visionary power of Mary Ward (1585-1645),⁹⁰ who, in the face of

official persecution, founded what is now known as the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁹¹

Endnotes

I warmly acknowledge the counsel of my colleague Nicholas Watson in the writing of this article.

¹ For Barton's biography, see 'Elizabeth Barton', in *DNB*, at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/view/article/1598>. For wider discussion of the cultural significance of her downfall, see Ethan H. Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Chapter 2.

² E. J. Devereux, 'Elizabeth Barton and Tudor Censorship', *BJRL* 49 (1966), 91-106 (at p. 100).

³ Thomas Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*, edited by John E. Cox, Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), pp. 272-74.

⁴ William Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, edited by David Daniell (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 177.

⁵ Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. Cox, pp. 19-67.

⁶ Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. Cox, p. 41

⁷ Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. Cox, p. 65

⁸ See Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 264-96.

⁹ *Jean Gerson: Early Works*, translated by Brian Patrick McGuire (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), p. 357.

¹⁰ *Jean Gerson: Early Works*, trans. McGuire, p. 357.

¹¹ 'Eminent scholars of the time made learned commentaries, in both the schools of Oxford and in public places of teaching, on the murky dreams, or, as they call them, Revelations, of this Diana, in about 1370, in order that these sophists might obscure, with such ravings of little women, a truth clearer by the sun of God'.

John Bale, *Scriptorum illustrium maioris brytannie, quam nunc angliam et scotiam uocant, catalogus* (John Oporinus, 1559). (Both the 1557 and the 1559 volumes are printed in this book). (Reprinted in facsimile (Farnsworth, Hants.: Gregg International, 1971) 2 vols.), 2.188.

¹² Martin Luther, *Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments*, edited by Conrad Bergendorff, in *Luther's Works*, edited by Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), vol. 40, pp. 79-223 (at p. 80).

¹³ Martin Luther, *Schmalkald Articles*, in William R. Russell, *Luther's Theological Testament: The Schmalkald Articles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), Appendix A, p. 145. See also Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, translated by Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966; first published 1962), p. 36.

¹⁴ *Tyndale's Old Testament*, edited by David Daniell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 196.

¹⁵ *Answers to the Fifteen Articles of the Rebels, Devon, Anno 1549*, in Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. Cox, pp. 163-87 (p. 179).

¹⁶ Walter Hilton, *Epistle on the Mixed Life*, in *English Mystics of the Middle Ages*, edited by Barry Windeatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 110-136 (at p. 121).

¹⁷ Thomas More, *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, edited by T. M. C. Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour and Richard Marius, 2 Parts, in *The Complete Works of St Thomas More*, 6 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), I:178.

¹⁸ For the history of the relation between Scripture and the Church, see George H. Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church?* (London: Burns and Oates, 1959). Tavard makes the important point that the doctrine of unwritten verities is a late medieval development; see Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church?*, Chapter 3.

¹⁹ For Caxton's complaint that young gentlewomen 'occupye theym and studye ouermoche in bokes of contemplacion', see Jennifer Summit, 'William Caxton, Margaret Beaufort and the Romance of Female Patronage', in *Women, the Book and the Worldly: Selected Proceedings of the St Hilda's Conference*, edited by Lesley Smith and Jane H. Taylor, 2 vols. (Brewer, 1995), 2:151-65 (at p. 152).

²⁰ RSTC 14042, 14043, 14044, and 14045 respectively. The *Scale* was reprinted in 1653 and 1659. For an account of the printing of English mystical texts, see George R. Keiser, 'The Mystics and Early English Printers: The Economics of

Devotionalism', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England, Exeter Symposium IV* (1987), edited by Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987), 9-26.

²¹ RSTC 4602

²² RSTC 1915 and 1915.5. For editions of Richard Whitford's translation of the *Golden Epistle*, published between 1531 and 1535, see RSTC 25412, 23964 and 23964.7.

²³ RSTC 1915.5.

²⁴ RSTC 21259 and 21260.

²⁵ RSTC 14924. The Kempe selection was further published by Henry Pepwell in 1521 (RSTC 20972). For a differing views of the way in which de Worde and Pepwell abbreviated the text, see Sue Ellen Holbrook, 'Margery Kempe and Wynkyn de Worde', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England, Exeter Symposium IV* (1987), ed. Glasscoe, 27-46, and Jennifer Summit, *Lost Property: The Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 126-38.

²⁶ RSTC 21261 and RSTC 23030.7.

²⁷ For the printing of continental visionaries, see C. Annette Grisé, 'Holy Women in Print: Continental Female Mystics and the English Mystical tradition', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England, Exeter Symposium VII*, edited by E. A. Jones (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), 83-96. The present paragraph is dependent on Grisé's article.

²⁸ Appended to *The Kalendre of the Newe Legende of Englande*, which, as mentioned above, also includes Hilton's *Mixed Life*. For discussion of this edition, see Ann M. Hutchison, 'Reflections on Aspects of the Spiritual Impact of St Birgitta, the *Revelations* and the Bridgettine Order in Late Medieval England', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England, Exeter Symposium VII*, ed. Jones, 69-82 (pp. 69-71).

²⁹ These texts were also included in the first edition of Richard Whytford's *Werke for Housholders* in 1531 (RSTC 25412).

³⁰ Quotation from Grisé, 'Holy Women in Print', p. 84.

³¹ RSTC 24766, 24766.3, and 4815.

³² Grisé, 'Holy Women in Print', p. 86.

³³ The following six paragraphs are drawn from James Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 450-53.

³⁴ Thomas More, *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, edited by Louis A. Schuster et al., in *The Complete Works of St Thomas More*, 8 (Yale University Press, 1973), 2 Parts, Preface, Part 1: 37.

³⁵ RSTC 3259-3266.

³⁶ RSTC 23954.7.

³⁷ For the narrow circulation of the *Imitation of Christ* in the fifteenth century, see Roger Lovatt, 'The *Imitation of Christ* in Late Medieval England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series 18 (1968), 97-121 (p. 100; p. 114). See also Michael G. Sargent, 'Minor Devotional Writings', in *Middle English Prose: A*

Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres, edited by A. S. G. Edwards (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1984), pp. 147-63.

³⁸ RSTC 23954-23993.

³⁹ *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counselling*, edited by Phyllis Hodgson, EETS, 218 (London: Oxford University Press, 1944; rpt. 1981), p. 86.

⁴⁰ For an example of the *Cloud*-author's aggression towards the imagination, see *The Cloud of Unknowing*, ed. Hodgson, pp. 22-3.

⁴¹ For the seventeen manuscripts of the *Cloud*, see *The Cloud of Unknowing*, ed. Hodgson, pp. ix-xxvi.

⁴² For the first translation, see *The Imitation of Christ*, ed. Biggs. See RSTC 23954.7 for Pynson's edition of 1503, and RSTC 23961 for the first printing of Whitford's translation.

⁴³ Lovatt, 'The *Imitation of Christ*', p. 114.

⁴⁴ See James Hogg, 'The Contribution of the Brigittine Order to Late Medieval English Spirituality', in *Spiritualität Heute und Gestern*, edited by James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana* 35.3 (1982), 153-74 (at pp. 162-63), and further reference.

⁴⁵ For the Bridgettines as neither producers of visionary texts, and yet founded on a commitment to belief in the truth of a visionary record, see Vincent Gillespie, 'Dial M for Mystic: Mystical Texts in the Library of Syon Abbey and the Spirituality of the Syon Bretheren', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition: England*,

Ireland and Wales, Exeter Symposium VI, edited by Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge: Brewer, 1999), pp. 241-68 (at p. 262).

⁴⁶ For the 51 editions between 1503 and 1639, see RSTC 23954.7-23993.

⁴⁷ For which see James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics Under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

⁴⁸ See, for example, *A dialogue...of two persones...intituled the pilgremage of pure devotyon* (RSTC 10454).

⁴⁹ RSTC 21471; reprinted 1532 (RSTC 21472).

⁵⁰ RSTC 23954.7. The text appears after a translation of the first three books commissioned by Lady Margaret Beaufort.

⁵¹ RSTC 4818.5. The text is available in facsimile in *The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works*, Part 1: *Printed Writings, 1500-1640*, selected and introduced by Janel Mueller, Volume 3, *Katherine Parr* (Aldershot, Hants: Scolar Press, 1996).

⁵² Compare, for example, Parr, *Prayers or Meditations*, Biir-Biiir, with *The Imitation of Christ*, edited by B. J. H. Biggs, EETS, 309 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.30-3.32 (pp. 99-101). Parr's literary output is discussed by Jonathan Gibson, 'Katherine Parr, Princess Elizabeth and the Crucified Christ', in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing: Selected Papers from the Trinity/Trent Colloquium*, edited by Victoria Burke and Jonathan Gibson (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2004), 33-49.

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- ⁵³ For connections between the texts of Parr and Fisher, see Janel Mueller, 'Complications of Intertextuality: John Fisher, Katherine Parr and 'The Book of the Crucifix', in *Texts and Cultural Change in EarlyModern England*, edited by Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti (London: Macmillan, 1997), 15-36. Mueller's suppositions about the date of the sermon can be found on p. 20.
- ⁵⁴ 'A Sermon verie fruitefull...Preached vpon a good Friday' (London, ?1578), RSTC 10899, included as part of another text by Fisher. For Fisher's usage, see Richard Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 46.
- ⁵⁵ Fisher, 'A Sermon verie fruitefull', E8r.
- ⁵⁶ RSTC 4827. Facsimile available in *The Early Modern Englishwoman*, selected by Janel Mueller, Volume 3, *Katherine Parr*.
- ⁵⁷ Parr, *Lamentation of a Sinner*, C4r.
- ⁵⁸ Parr, *Lamentation of a Sinner*, D2v. See Gibson, 'Katherine Parr, Princess Elizabeth and the Crucified Christ', for a further, evangelical use of the metaphor in *The Institution of a Christian Man* (1538) (p. 37).
- ⁵⁹ For a brief biography of Parkyn, and further references, see 'Robert Parkyn', in *DNB*, at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/view/article/47143>. See also A. G. Dickens, 'Tudor Treatises', *Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series* 125 (1959), 17-88.

⁶⁰ For a full list of the contents, see A. G. Dickens, 'Robert Parkyn's Narrative of the Reformation', *EHR* 62, (1947), 58-83 (at pp. 58-60).

⁶¹ Dickens, *Tudor Treatises*, p. 22.

⁶² Dickens, *Tudor Treatises*, pp. 67-8.

⁶³ Dickens, *Tudor Treatises*, p. 61.

⁶⁴ Dickens, *Tudor Treatises*, p. 62.

⁶⁵ For which see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 524-64.

⁶⁶ For which see James P. Carley and Ann M. Hutchison, 'The Fall of the Monasteries and its Consequences' above.

⁶⁷ RSTC 19784.

⁶⁸ Peryn, *Spirituell exercises and goostly meditacions*, Prefatory Epistle, p. 1.

⁶⁹ For which see James P. Carley and Ann M. Hutchison, 'The Fall of the Monasteries and its Consequences' above.

⁷⁰ See David Lunn, *The English Benedictines, 1540-1688: From Reformation to Revolution* (London: Burns and Oates, 1980), p. 198.

⁷¹ See David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950-1959), III. 453.

⁷² For a general discussion of the preservation of the medieval contemplative texts in this environment, see Placid Spearritt, 'The Survival of Medieval Spirituality Among the Exiled English Black Monks', in *That Mysterious Man*:

Essays on Augustine Baker, edited by Michael Woodward, *Analecta Cartusiana*, 119.15 (Abergavenny, Monmouthshire: Three Peaks Press, 2001), pp. 19-41.

⁷³ See Julian of Norwich, *A Book of Showings to the Anchoress Julian of Norwich*, edited by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, 2 Parts, Studies and Texts 35 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1978), pp. 6-18. For the scriptorium at Cambrai, see Spearritt, 'The Survival of Medieval Spirituality', pp. 20-22.

⁷⁴ Wing (2nd ed.), C6902A. Cressy was a vigorous defender of mystical experience and culture against protestant skepticism in the person of Bishop Edward Stillingfleet:

I doe not now require of him an account of *Raptures, Extasies, Passive Vnions with God*, in which a pure soule only receives *Divine influences*: For these things he derides as *Phantasticall Enthusiasms*, and yet all ages have mentioned them, and afforded innumerable Examples of them, and they are recorded by persons eminent for Piety and Learning. But the *Doctour* has one argument unanswerable, which iustifies him to call that language *unintelligible Canting*, by which certain *Mystick Divines* endeavour, as well as they can, to express the most pure operations of the soule herself, and likewise of *God* upon the soule in *Contemplative Prayer*.

See Serenus Cressy, *Fanaticism fanatically imputed to the Catholick church by Doctour Stillingfleet and the imputation refuted and retorted / by S.C. a Catholick* (?Douai, 1672)

(Wing, C6898), p. 40. Cressy particularly defends Julian of Norwich against Stillingfleet:

Now having named in the last place poor *Mother Iuliana*, a devout *Anchoret* about three hundred years since living in *Norwich*, I must needs Signify my wonder, what could move his Spleen and choler against her litle *Book*. It is true, her language to the ears of this age, seems exotick: But it is such as was spoken in her time: therefore she may be excused: Her expressions touching *Gods* favours to her are homely, but that surely is no sin. For affections to *God* are set down with great simplicity indeed, but they are withall cordiall and fervent, and apt to imprint themselves.

Cressy, *Fanaticism fanatically imputed to the Catholick church*, p.64. For further extracts from the dispute, see *The Writings of Julian of Norwich: A Vision Showed to a Devout Woman and A Revelation of Love*, edited by Nicholas Watson and Jacqueline Jenkins (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), pp. 448-455.

⁷⁵ Images of folios from this manuscript can be seen in *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. Watson and Jenkins, pp. 51-2.

⁷⁶ Cited from Spearritt, 'The Survival of Medieval Spirituality', p. 22.

⁷⁷ Spearritt, 'The Survival of Medieval Spirituality', p. 22, and note 5.

⁷⁸ Now edited as Augustine Baker, *Secretum*, edited by John Clark, *Analecta Cartusiana* 119.7 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1997).

⁷⁹ See Hywel Wyn Owen, 'Another Augustine Baker Manuscript', in *Dr L. Reypens-Album*, edited by Albert Ampe (Antwerp: Ruusbroec-Genootschap, 1964), pp. 269-80 (at p. 274).

⁸⁰ For Cressy's life and his 'edition' of the *Scale of Perfection*, see 'Serenus Cressy', *DNB*, at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/view/article/6676>.

⁸¹ Cited from Margaret Gascoigne, 'A Treatise...composed by a Religious Virgin of the holy order of St. Benet', reproduced in *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. Watson and Jenkins, pp. 443-44. The citation is to Chapter 36 of the *Revelations*. See also the extracts from Julian's *Revelations* in the Upholland anthology, also reproduced in *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. Watson and Jenkins, 446-48. The contents of the manuscript have been described by Owen, 'Another Augustine Baker Manuscript'.

⁸² These extracts are also reproduced in *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. Watson and Jenkins, 446-48. The contents of the manuscript have been described by Owen, 'Another Augustine Baker Manuscript'.

⁸³ *The rule of perfection contayning a breif and perspicuous abridgement of all the vvhollie spirituall life reduced to this only point of the (vvill of God.)*, second edition (Rouen, 1635) (RSTC 10928.6), Ee2r. For Canfield's biography and works, see 'Benedict Canfield', in *DNB*, at

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/view/article/4550>. For the sources of Canfield's mystical theology, see Kent Emery, *Renaissance Dialectic and*

Renaissance Piety: Benet Canfield's 'Rule of Perfection' (Binghamton, NY: Medieval Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1987), pp. 60-85.

⁸⁴ For an account of the devotional differences between the two traditions, see The Benedictines of Stanbrook, *In a Great Tradition* (London: John Murray, 1956), pp. 8-10.

⁸⁵ Cited from Lunn, *The English Benedictines*, p. 206. For the disputes between Baker and those proposing an activist, Ignatian spiritual practice, see Lunn, *The English Benedictines*, pp. 206-8 and Spearritt, 'The Survival of Medieval Spirituality.

⁸⁶ For discussion of which see John P. H. Clark, 'Father Augustine Baker's *Secretum*: Sources and Affinities', in *That Mysterious Man: Essays on Augustine Baker*, ed. Woodward, pp. 123-35.

⁸⁷ The volume and repetitiveness have provoked heroic responses, first in the seventeenth-century abridgement by Serenus Cressy, *Sancta Sophia, or, Directions for the prayer of contemplation &c. extracted out of more then (sic) XL treatises / written by the late Ven. Father F. Augustin Baker* (Douai, 1657) (Wing, B480), and secondly in the editorial labours principally of John Clark, who has edited the corpus; see *Analecta Cartusiana*, 119.7-21.

⁸⁸ Augustine Baker, *Directions for Contemplation, Book D*, edited by John Clark, *Analecta Cartusiana*, 119.11 (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1999), pp. 4 and 7 respectively.

⁸⁹ *The holy practises of a devine lover, or, The saintly [sic] Ideots Deuotions the contents of the booke are contained in the ensuinge page.* (Paris, 1657) (Wing, M2631A). The second edition (Paris, 1658) (Wing, M2632) has the title *Confessiones amantis*. For More's biography, see 'Helen [name in religion Gertrude] More', in *DNB*, at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/view/article/19178>. For an excellent account of More, see Marion Norman, 'Dame Gertrude More and the English Mystical Tradition', *Recusant History* 13 (1976), 196-211. For both Gascoigne and More, see Heather Wolfe, 'Reading Bells and Loose Papers: Reading and Writing Practices of the English Benedictine Nuns of Cambrai', in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing*, ed. Burke and Gibson, pp. 135-56.

⁹⁰ For whose remarkable life, see 'Mary Ward', in *DNB*, at

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/view/article/28699?docPos=6>.

⁹¹ For the ways in which Ward's life and writings might initiate new forms of British literary history, see the profound article by David Wallace, 'Periodizing Women: Mary Ward (1585-1645) and the Premodern Canon', *JMEMS* (forthcoming).