Abendländische Mystik im Mittelalter
Symposion Kloster Engelberg 1984

Herausgegeben
von Kurt Ruh

J. B. Metzlersche
Verlagsbuchhandlung
Stuttgart
Inhalt

Vorbemerkungen ........................................ VII
Abgekürzte Literatur (Editionen und Reihen) ............ X

1. Tag: Meister Eckhart
ALOIS M. HAAS (Zürich): Einführung .................. 1
KARL ALBERT (Wuppertal): Meister Eckharts Mystik der Seinserkenntnis .................. 7
OTTO LANGER (Bielefeld): Zum Begriff der Innerlichkeit bei Meister Eckhart ............ 17
THEO KOBUSCH (Bochum): Mystik als Metaphysik des moralischen Seins. Bemerkungen zur spekulativen Ethik Meister Eckharts .................. 49
DIETMAR MIETH (Tübingen): Die theologische Transposition der Tugendethik bei Meister Eckhart .................. 63
FRANZ-JOSEF SCHWEITZER (Eichstätt): Die ethische Wirkung Meister Eckharts zwischen Laienfrömmigkeit und Häresie, besonders in den Niederlanden .................. 80
FREIMUT LÖSER (Würzburg): Diskussionsbericht .................. 94

2. Tag: Philosophisch-theologische Positionen und Voraussetzungen der mittelalterlichen Mystik
WERNER BEIERWALTES (München): Einführung ............ 116
KURT FLASCH (Bochum): Procedere ut imago. Das Hervorgehen des Intellekts aus seinem göttlichen Grund bei Meister Dietrich, Meister Eckhart und Berthold von Moosburg .................. 125
BURKHARD MOISICH (Bochum): »Dynamik der Vernunft« bei Dietrich von Freiberg und Meister Eckhart .................. 135
LORIS STURLESE (Pisa): »Homo divinus«. Der Prokloskommentar Bertholds von Moosburg und die Probleme der nachcheckhartschen Zeit .................. 145
P. HEINRICH STIRNIMANN O. P. (Lausen): Zu Augustinus' Soliloquium I, 1,2–6 .................. 162
MARTIN ANTON SCHMIDT (Basel): Verstehen des Unbegreiflichen in den beiden ersten Büchern ›De Trinitate‹ des Richard von Saint-Victor .................. 177
SIEGBERT PEETZ (München): Diskussionsbericht ............ 218

3. Tag: Ordensspezifische Ausformungen der abendländischen Mystik
KURT RUH (Würzburg): Einführung .................. 235
The question of the place of "The Mirror of Simple Souls" in the English tradition of spirituality has always been a complex one, in part because the discovery of the "Mirror" in England and the scholarly assessment of its value have occurred in reverse order to its original transmission. A brief review, therefore, of both the transmission of the "Mirror" and the modern scholarship on it may help to keep things straight. The "Mirouer des simples âmes anien-ties" is generally agreed to be the book for the repeated circulation of which Margaret Porete, a "beguine clergesse" of Hainault or Valenciennes, was condemned as a relapsed heretic in Paris on May 30, 1310, and handed over to the civil authorities for execution. The official account of her examination on April 11 records the first and fifteenth of the statements for which she was condemned:

\[\text{Quod anima adnichilata dat licentiam virtutibus nec est amplius in earum servitute, quia non habet eas quoad usum sed virtutes obediunt ut natura; and}\\ \text{Quod talis anima non curat de consolationibus Dei nec de donis ejus nec debet curare nec potest, quia tota intenta est circa Deum et sic impeditur ejus intenio circa Deum.}\\

The contemporary continuation of the "Chronica" of William of Nangis records another, unnumbered proposition:

\[\text{Quod anima annihilata in amore conditoris sine reprehensione conscientiae vel remorsus potest et debet naturae quidquid appetit et desiderat concedere.}\\

The "Grandes Chroniques de la France" declare further that she had trespassed against sacred scripture and made statements contrary and prejudicial to the sacrament of the altar. Further, it is probable that the imputed doctrines of the beghards and beguines detailed in the Clementine constitution "Ad nostrum qui" were drawn at least in part from the "Mirouer des simples âmes".

Three copies of this book are known to have survived into modern times: one, Chantilly, Musée Condé MS F xiv 26, is the late-fifteenth century base text of the modern edition; a seventeenth-century manuscript was mentioned in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque municipale of Bourges, but seems to have been sent to the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, where it has dissappeared without a trace; a third copy, dating from the fourteenth century and containing a large number of textual variants from the Chantilly manuscript, is reported to be in the possession of a French-speaking contemplative community living outside of France, who wish its location to remain unknown, and its text
unexamined by scholars. A Latin translation of the ›Mirouer‹ survives in one early-fifteenth century, and three late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth century manuscripts in the Vatican library, and a fragment in the Bodleian. Two independent Italian translations appear to have been made from this Latin version: one, an anonymous translation of the fourteenth century, survives in a single manuscript in Florence; the other, which carries an attribution to the Dominican Margaret of Hungary, survives in three manuscripts in Naples, Vienna and Budapest. Some three dozen references also exist to copies of the ›Mirouer‹ circulating in Italy during the fifteenth century. [1]

The ›Mirouer‹ was also translated directly from French into Middle English; of the translator’s name we know only the initials ›M.N.‹ with which he bracketted his explanatory glosses to the text. This version survives in three mid- to late-fifteenth century copies: St. John’s College, Cambridge, MS 71, which belonged to London Charterhouse; Bodleian MS Bodley 505, given to London Charterhouse by Edmund Storoure, prior there from 1469 to 1477, then at Hinton, where he died in 1503; and British Library, Add. MS 37790, a well-known devotional collection annotated by James Grenehalgh at the end of the fifteenth century or the beginning of the sixteenth, presumably at Sheen Charterhouse, seven miles up the Thames from London. This version, ›The Mirror of Simple Souls‹, was itself translated into Latin by Richard Methley, a Carthusian of Mount Grace in Yorkshire from 1476 to 1477 to 1528. Methley’s Latin translations of the ›Mirror‹ and ›The Cloud of Unknowing‹, made in the summer and fall of 1491 for his Mount Grace confère Thurstan Watson, survive in a single copy, Pembroke College, Cambridge, MS 221, written by William Daker, a scribe at Sheen Charterhouse (d. 1513), and also perhaps annotated by Grenehalgh.

The existence of at least the Latin and Italian versions of the ›Mirouer‹ has been known to scholars for the past century, as has the historical evidence for the condemnation of Margaret Porete. It was the English version, however, which was first published, and the occasion of its publication had nothing to do with previous continental scholarship. In 1911, J. A. Herbert, Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum, brought the newly-acquired Additional manuscript to the attention of Evelyn Underhill, an English devotional writer and friend of Baron Friedrich von Hügel, and herself one of the greatest amateur scholars of European mystical literature. Miss Underhill published a note and a set of extracts from the ›Mirror‹ in the same year [2]; and the entire work was printed in a modernized version by Clare Kirchberger in 1927. [3] Miss Kirchberger argued that the translator ›M.N.‹ was to be identified with Michael of Northburgh, bishop of London 1354–61. Northburgh was employed in the royal service on the continent, and particularly in France and the Low Countries, as early as 1328, and held a series of positions and commissions, including that of King’s Secretary in the early 1350’s and Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1352. He is said to have conceived of the idea of founding the London Charterhouse after visiting the Charterhouse of Paris during a stay in that city on his return from the Roman court. [4] Northburgh’s agreement with Walter de Manny, principal founder of the London house, altering Manny’s original intention of founding a secular college, and his letters to and conferences with the priors of Witham and Hinton, persuading them to found a metropolitan house like those at Paris, Avignon, Bruges, St.-Omer and Cologne, was dated shortly before his death in 1361. Because of his connections on the continent, and particularly with the court of Hainault, and because the surviving manuscripts of the ›Mirror‹ are all associated with the two Charterhouses of the London area, Miss Kirchberger reasoned that Michael of Northburgh would have proved the ideal link for the transmission of the ›Mirouer‹ to England.

In 1946, Romana Guarnieri identified the ›Mirouer‹ as the work from which the propositions were drawn for which Margaret Porete was condemned [5]; she later published the text of the French original, first privately [6], and then as a part of her major study of ›Il Movimento del libero spirito‹ in Giuseppe de Luca’s ›Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà‹. [7] Marilyn Doiron produced a critical edition of ›The Mirror of Simple Souls‹ for a doctoral dissertation in 1964; in the same year, she published an article in the ›Reypens-Album‹ defending the orthodoxy of the text as explained by its Middle English translator. [8] Dr. Doiron’s text was published in the ›Archivio‹ in 1968 [9], with a short introduction by the editor and a long appendix by Fr. Edmund Colledge and Dr. Guarnieri. In her introduction, Doiron pointed out that Miss Kirchberger’s identification of the translator was far from certain, but retained the dating of the text as a product of the fourteenth, rather than the fifteenth century, which that identification necessitated. She also briefly referred to her defense of the orthodoxy of the ›Mirror‹ (although the reader is never told where to find this defense). Colledge and Guarnieri argued against Doiron’s point-by-point defense of the Middle English translator’s explanatory glosses with a point-by-point comparison of the textual lemmata with the propositions for which Margaret Porete was condemned and the declaration of errors in ›Ad nostrum qui‹. Noting that there is exact verbal correspondence between several of the lemmata and the condemned propositions, they were able to draw up from their collation a provisional list of eleven of the extracted sentences which would have been submitted to Margaret Porete’s examiners, to which also her Middle English translator seems to have been compelled to answer. Fr. Colledge also read a paper giving a more polemical version of their conclusions at a conference in Toronto, Canada, in 1967. [10] In the same year, Fr. Colledge and Fr. James Walsh completed an edition of Methley’s Latin translations of the ›Cloud‹ and ›Mirror‹, to be published in the ›Archivio‹; it has been at press ever since. It should also be noted that Colledge and J. C. Marler have recently produced a study of the influence of the ›Mirouer‹ on Ruusbroec and Eckhart. [11]

Jean Orcibal contended in an article published in 1969 that the ›Mirouer‹ may not in fact have been heretical, and that the reasons for the condemnation of Margaret Porete may have been pastoral rather than doctrinal; he also registered his doubts that the condemnations in ›Ad nostrum qui‹ derived from the trial of Margaret Porete. [12] Robert E. Lerner has also refined and restricted some of the observations made by Colledge and Guarnieri, showing in particular the weakness as historical evidence of some of the accusations commonly made
against "free spirits". Lerner further demonstrated that the "Jacobus cisterciensis" listed among the theological examiners of the "Mirouer" was not to be identified with Jacques Fournier, later pope Benedict XII, and that the Council of Vienne thus probably did not learn of the errors of the beiugines from that source. [13] Finally, Kurt Ruh produced a pair of studies of the "Mirouer" in 1975 and 1977, comprising a survey of manuscripts and previous scholarship, and an analysis of the language and imagery (particularly the recurrent courtly imagery) used by Margaret Porete, in comparison with her German- and Dutch-speaking contemporaries. [14] It should be noted that these two studies provide the details for some of the observations, sketched out by Jean Dagens in a note published in 1961. [15]

In his introduction, the Middle English translator of "The Mirror of Simple Souls" declares that he had originally translated the book from French many years before. He undertook to rework it, however, because he was informed that there were words in it which had been mistaken (Fr. Collde has pointed out that this could mean either "mistaken" in the modern sense of "misunderstood", or "taken amiss"). The translator declares his difference both in the original work of translation and in this reworking of it, since the book treats of things beyond his own understanding and experience. He counsels the reader to "taste and see" the doctrine of this book: that is, to experience it before attempting to judge it; and he warns that some things in it are declared differently to those who live active and contemplative lives, and to common people. But again, because it hab be mystake of summe persoones pat haue red be booke (248.25-6) [16], he has glossed the text where it seems to need explanation, putting his initial "M" before his own additions, and the initial of his surname "Ne" after. Finally, he comments that the French text was poorly copied and corrupt: in summe places for defawe of wordes and silables be reson is awue (249.1-2), but that he attempted to folewe be sentence acordyng to be matere (249.4-5), and submitted the whole to the correction of the church, of goosil lywers and clerks pat pei wole fordchesauf to correcte and amende pere pat I do amys (249.6-7). The keynotes of all future discussion of the doctrine of the "Mirror" are thus already present in this introduction: that it is a book of spiritual sophistication which must be interpreted charitably; that it must be experienced before it can be understood; that parts of it mean different things to different types of readers; and that the text is in places so corrupt that the translator must interpret it according to his understanding of the material.

The translator's first gloss, which occurs in the first chapter of the text, seems to be the result of a case of textual corruption, although it is in fact treated as a doctrinal point. The Soul -- the author's representative in the dialogue of the "Mirouer" -- describes her situation in this world as that of a lady who has fallen in love with the king of a distant land, to whom this king, touched by her love, has sent a picture of himself, Mais non obstant que j'aye son ymage, n'est il pas que je ne soie en estrange pais et loing du palais ouquel les tres nobles amis de ce seigneur demourant, qui sont tous purs, affines et franchis par les dons de ce roy, avec lequel ilz demourant (522.2-5). The author continues, according to the Chantilly manuscript, Et pource nous vous dirons comment Nostre Seigneur n'est mie du tout enfranched d'Amour, mais Amour l'est de Lui pour nous, afin que les petis le puissent oir a l'occasion de vous: car Amour peut tout faire sans a nully meffaire (522.6-9). The Middle English version of the first half-sentence seems to depend upon a misreading of la paix for le pais: But not for panne I dwelle not in feredum of pees, pouz I haue his ymage; but I am a strange lond fer fro pe pees (251.17-19). The second occurrence of the word pees, depending apparently on an original reading paix rather than the palais of the Chantilly text, is independently confirmed by the reading ab illa ... pace in the Latin version in Bodleian MS Laud lat. 46, as I am informed by Nigel Palmer. The second sentence of the French text is divided in two in the Middle English version: the first half is the subject of the first gloss; the second half (joined to the first words of the following rubric) is given after. Doiron suggests that even the French version is corrupt, and that the original may have been closer to the first Latin translation and the Italian version based upon it. The reading of the Laud manuscript is: Et dicemus vobis qualiter dicuntur penitus libri, non nos tamen sed amor de se pro nobis — depending thus on an original reading Et pource nous vous dirons comment ils sont mie du tout enfranched, non nous, mais Amour de lui (for: lui même) pour nous. The Middle English version represents either a textually corrupt version of this original, or a compression in translation: Heere I schal seie sou hou not we lordis fre of al, but loue of him for us (251.20-21) -- comment Nostre Seigneur n'est mie du tout enfranched d'Amour would thus have been, comment non nos seigneurs mie du tout enfranched, or to incorporate some of the wording of the conjectural original of the Latin text, comment nous (original: nos?) seigneurs mie du tout enfranched, non nous, mais Amour de lui pour nous. Both Latin and English translators would seem to have been uncomfortable with some such reading, the Latin interpreting seigneurs as referring back to the amis de ce seigneur of the previous sentence and supplying the verb dicuntur; the English interpreting seigneurs as referring to us we, and leaving the phrase without a verb.

The Middle English translator's gloss seems to have been intended to provide some sense to the sentence he had just translated, and comments on how we may be free of all in this life. One cannot avoid the impression here that he was also taking the first opportunity available to point out that the author of the "Mirouer" does not claim perfection in this life — one of the claims, in fact, which has been most strongly urged against her. Much the same point is made in the translator's second gloss, which follows the Soul's poetic rhapsody on Love's statement that Ceste Arme de telle amour ... peut dire aux Vertuz qu'elle a esté par long temps et par mainte journee en leur servage; Vertuz, says the Soul, je prens congé de vous a tousjours (524.37-525.4). Love's statement is rendered in English as, The soule of such loue ... may seie ples to uertues: I take leave of you. To pe which uertues pis soule many a day hab ber servaunt to; the Soul continues, perfore I seie: Vertues, I take leave of you for evermore (254.24-28). The passage repeated in the English version, that the soul may take leave of virtues, is of course the basis of the first of the reported errors of the "Mirouer", Quod anima admichilata dat licentiam virtutibus, repeated in the
sixth article of Ad nostrum qui: Quod se in actibus exercere virtutum est hominis imperfecti, et perfecta anima licentiat a se virtutes. [17] The translator's gloss on this passage points out that in the beginning of the soul's progress to perfection it must struggle to gain virtues and extricate vices: this struggle is like gnawing on the bitter bark of a nut until one comes to the sweet kernel — the love of God which drives out alle peynes and bittirnesse and alle doutes and dreges (255.30). It is in this sense, he explains, that one must understand the soul's taking leave of virtues. The translator thus defends the »Mirror« against the charge of teaching immorality — so common a charge in writings against heretics, as Lerner points out [18], that it may virtually be considered a literary topos — but in so doing, he leaves open the possibility that it may teach impec-

The third gloss occurs a few sentences later, where Love states that understanding of the statement that ceste Ame ... ne fait compte ne de honeur, de povreté ne de richesse, d'aize ne de mesaise, d'amour ne hayne, d'enfer ne de paradis ... Ainsois est ce don conné du Treshault, en qui ceste creature est ravie par plaunté de congonnaisence, et demeure rien en son entendem- 

The translator comments that the reader may find these words very strange, that be soule is lost in be rišt hize bi plente of knowinge, and become nost in hir vndirstandinge (255.16–15) — not only these words, but many others before and after. The French text continues, in fact, Et telle Ame, qui es devenue rien, a adonc tout et si na nient, elle vieult tout et ne vieult nient, elle scait tout et ne scait nient (525.31–33). We may note textually that devenue rien in the second sentence has supplanted demeure rien in the English version of the first, and the following clause, that the soul all and has nothing, wills all and wills nothing, knows all and knows nothing, is lacking.

Colledge and Guarnieri have treated the statement that the soul is lost in the Most High by fullness of knowing, and is become nothing in her understanding, as equivalent to the fifth article of Ad nostrum qui: Quod quaelibet intellectualis natura in se ipsa naturaliter est beata, quodam anima non indiget lumine gloriae, ipsam elevante ad Deum videndum et eo beate fruendam. The proscribed doctrine, however, that such illumination can be acquired naturally, without the agency of divine illumination, is neither stated nor necessarily implied in this passage: throughout the »Mirour«, in fact the author betrays no interest in the scholastic distinction between the claim that rapture results in a permanent change in nature, and the orthodox teaching that every occasion of rapture is a special grace. According to Orcibal, this doctrine derives rather from Dietrich of Freiberg. [19] The translator's gloss, which declares only that a repeated reading of this book will clarify its more paradoxical statements, and does not directly address itself to the question of the agency of illumination, appears to have been motivated more by the fear that whatever was unusual or confusing in the text might be interpreted »ad peioerem« than by any specific doctrinal complaint.

The fourth gloss, however, is specifically doctrinal, and was occasioned by one of the great »scandala« of the »Mirour«. Reason asks Love how it is that the soul, which has been described as willing nothing, can be said to will that

which this book describes. Love responds that this soul no longer wills by means of its own will, but the will of God wills in her. Ainsois demoure Amoure en elle, qui a prisne sa vouleté, et pource fait Amour sa vouleté d'elle, et adonc oeuvre Amour en elle sans elle, par quoyle il n'est meseais qui en elle puisse demourer (525.38–40). Such a soul, says Love, fait ce qu'elle fait par usage de boîne acoustomence, ou par commandement de Sainte Esglise, sans nul desir, car la vouleté est morte, que desir luy donnoi (526.3–5). Reason recurs to the question, how the soul can take leave of the virtues which are necessary to avoid damnation or deception; Love replies that the soul has long served reason and the other virtues, but that love is now so great in her that the virtues serve her sans null contredit et sans travail de telles Ames (526.25), to such an extent that it would be the greatest torment to demourer en Amour et estre en l'obédience des Vertuz. Car il convient donner aux Vertuut tout ce qu'elles demandent, que qu'il couste a Nature (526.29–30). Love later reverses this, saying in the summation of her argument on the danger to the soul of desiring virtues to the exclusion of the needs of nature, that L'Ame ne desire ne des priere ne despriser ne tribulation, ne messe ne sermon, ne jeune ne oraison, et donne a Nature tout ce qu'il lay fault, sans remors de conscience (327.17–19). The English translator's gloss at this point explains that the text can only refer to those times when the soul is so united to God that sche ne hab wile ne werk ne no desire, sache penkip on nopinng pat is binepe pat (258.17–18). Alternatively, he continues, it may describe the state of the soul which has laboured for years to gain the virtues, desiring for God's sake poverty and tribulation, discomfort, masses and sermons, fastings and prayers, depriving nature of its pleasure and comfort, so that in the end she has more pleasure in the love of God than discomfort in depriving nature. Finally, he comments that none should be so carnal in their understanding as to think that the text schulde mene to zoue to nature eny lust pat drawip to fleischli synne, for God knowip wel it is not so ymenen (259.20–22).

Doiron refers the lemma of this gloss to the second of the propositions recorded from the trial of Margaret Porete: Quod tales anima non curat de consolationibus Dei. Although, as we shall see, a later and stronger version of this statement in the »Mirour« may well have been the source of this condemned proposition, the present occurrence seems more appropriately referred to Colledge and Guarnieri to the unnumbered, additional proposition recorded in the Nangis chronicle: Quod anima annhilata in amore conditoris sine reprehensio conscientiae vel remorsu potest et debet naturae quidquid appetit et desiderat concedere, and the second of Ad nostrum qui: Quod iewiare non oportet hominem nec orare, posquam gradum perfectionis dulcis-

mori fuerit assecutus; qua tunc sensualitates est tia perfecie spiritui et rationi subjecta, quod homo potest libere corpori concedere quidquid placet. It should be noted that the language of the condemned propositions is stronger than that of the original text at this point: tout ce qu'il lay fault becomes quidquid appetit et desiderat, quidquid placet. This wording may in fact derive from a later statement of the argument, in a question by Reason, asking for an explanation of Love's doubles mots and repeated thereafter: Ceste Ame donne a Nature
quauqu'elle luy demande (537.28). Colledge and Guarnieri pointed out that the conflation of these two passages is particularly interesting in that the explanatory sentence following the earlier passage in the French, Latin and Italian versions occurs following the second passage in the Middle English version. This raises the possibility that the orthodox explanation was not authorial, but originated as a marginal gloss which was incorporated into the text following two separate but verbally similar passages in different recensions of the original. In fact, the two passages are not identical (the Middle English version is somewhat expanded), and the textual problem is of some importance. The French explanation, which follows the first statement that the soul donne a Nature tout ce qu'il luy fault, sans remors de conscience, reads: mais telle nature est si bien ordonnee par transformation de unité d'Amour, a laquelle la voulenet de ceste Ame est conjointe, que la nature ne demande chose qui soit defjendue (527.19-21). The use of demande here, rather than falloir, does not necessarily imply a verbal connection with the second passage (and thus diminished textual authority for the explanation), since it may only be an anticipation of the further discussion of what Fine Amour et Charité demande (527.29, 32). Further, since the English translation is al pat he askip, the French original of this passage may have been tout ce qu'il luy demande. The Middle English explanation of the second passage reads: for al propittie of nature ben mortified in þese creatures, and þerfore þe lawe of our Lord Itesu Crist is wiþynne suche liif closed, and þe diuine zifes ben aboue þis lawe. þis is soothe, seip loue, pat þis soule hæp not so myche price ne loe in temperel pinges, pat seche koude wynne in refusynge nature his askinge, wherof þanne schulde sche make conscience to þiue nature pat pat owip be to his? But such nature is so wel ordened bi þe coniuncion of vnite of þe diuine loue wherinne þe wille of þis soule is coniunct, þat seche askip noping þat is azens þe ordainancys of þe diuine rightwisnes (270.26-33). This explanation is not written as a gloss by the Middle English translator (indeed, he does not gloss the second passage at all), so we must assume that he found it in the French text before him.

It should be noted that, although the proposition from the condemnation of Margaret Porete follows the bare French text, the wording of the proposition quia tunc sensualitas est tia perfecte spiritui et rationi subiecta in >Ad nostrum qui seems rather to reflect the unexpanded, French explanation found in the Chantilly manuscript. We may thus conjecture that the two states of the explanation, and its attachment to two occurrences of the same proposition in the text, may be the result of two successive attempts to give an orthodox statement of this proposition; and that the fact that the proposition in >Ad nostrum qui seems to refer to the wording of the explanation, while the record of the trial of Margaret Porete does not, would imply either that the explanation was added after her death, or that the examiners in the two cases chose independently to cite from different loci in the text – in either case, it would seem that the Council of Vienne drew its knowledge of the teachings of the »Mirouer« from an independent examination, and not simply from the record of the trial of Margaret Porete. Finally, it should be noted that the English translator does not draw upon the later explanation for his gloss upon the first occurrence of the statement that the soul may grant to nature what it demands, but rather points out, as is his wont, that the author is here speaking only of the experience of a few moments in this life, following a long struggle of the soul to become virtuous.

The fifth of the Middle English glosses occurs following Love's list of the twelve names of the soul, which Reason has requested for the understanding of those who lead an active life: Son dornier non est: Obliance (528.18). The translator comments that the name of the soul is Forsetel . . . for it is hir maner myche to comprehend & soone to forsete (260.20-21). The soul comprehends much when she beholds how worthy and glorious God is, and how mighty in his works; and she forgets both all she had been and known before, and herself as well. The next gloss occurs in the middle of the next paragraph of the French original. Reason thanks Love for providing some knowledge for the actives, and asks further, je vous prie des contemplatifz, qui tousjours desirent croyster en connoissance divine et qui en desir d'Amour sont et demourent, que par vostre cou stomme vous expouez les IX poinz dont avez parle devant (528.28-31). The Middle English version of this text is somewhat expanded: Reason says, Now I preie you for pe contemplatius . . . pat alwey desiren to encrese in diuine knowinge; Love replies that, pei ben yuel constreynewd . . . to pat pat pot owip (260.34-261.1). The translator's gloss to this reply, which does not occur in the Chantilly text, points out that this is as much as to say that the contemplatives have no desire, their own wills being so united to the will of God, that they have no proper will or desire, and surpass the state of scholars as much as masters of divinity surpass the schools. The translator then returns to a re-casting of Reason's request: A lady loue . . . expowne now pe neyn poynete, for soure curtesie, to be desirouse contemplatius pat in desire of loue ben and dwellen (261.7-8).

Doiron comments that these two glosses »seem to be more directly explanatory than defensive, and show how the soul forgets itself in its love of God«. Colledge and Guarnieri, on the other hand, state that the translator »perceives clearly that, although Margaret in the ensuing chapters 11–14 provides no such explanation of this name as of the others, in >Forgetting< it is the epitome of all this section, her anti-intellectual insistence upon the Soul's ability, of its own powers, to attain to an immediate knowledge of and union with God, of which knowledge and union she must not be asked to give any account«. This is not entirely true: although a good deal of the »Mirouer« is anti-rationalist, it is so primarily as part of a description of the inability of the traditional trinity of powers of the soul to comprehend God by their own efforts; she has all, and has nothing; she wills all and wills nothing; she knows all and knows nothing. The question of heterodoxy arises, as Colledge and Guarnieri point out, when one specifies that this quiet is achieved by the soul's own efforts, or by an alteration of the nature of the soul, rather than by grace; and Margaret Porete does not specify this – although it must be admitted that she does not specify its opposite, either.

The Middle English translator's seventh gloss is to Love's exposition of the statement that ceste Ame se saulte de foy sans oueuvres (529.10). Love states
that the soul is so occupied in sustaining in itself ce que Foy luy administre de la puissance du Pere, de la sapience du Filz et de la boneté du Saint Esperit, que chose cree ne peut demourer en sa souvenance, qui ne passe brefment, pour l'autre occupacion qui a environné l'entendement de ceste Ame Adniente. Ceste Ame ne scet plus ouevr, et sans faille aussi elle est assez excuexe et exomine, sans ouevr, de croire que Dieu est bon et incomprehensible (529.14–19). She points out further that faith surpasses all works, a tesmoing d'Amour mesmes (529.20). The translator supplies the scriptural citation, Unde sapiens, Iustus ex fide vivit (Rom. 1,17, Gal. 3,11, Heb. 10,38, all reflecting Hab. 2,4), and argues that the text does not mean pathei stynien de alle gode werks for euermore, and neuredon nor werke, but sitten in solitude and ydelnesse of soule and body... But it is jus: God is enabited in hem, and werkip in hem, and pese soules suffren hem werke his divine werks in hem (262.3–7).

Doiron's comment on this gloss addresses itself only to the translator's English prose style; his doctrine is apparently clear enough to need no comment. [20] Colledge and Guarnieri, however, point out that the French, Latin and English versions of the climactic sentence of Love's exposition of the meaning of «faith without works» are all slightly different, and that «it would therefore seem that this crux derives from a very early tampering with the text, where a reprehensible remark has been differently emended in different manuscripts». The French version of this crucial reading is: et sans faille aussi elle est assez excuexe et exomine, sans ouevr, de croire que Dieu est bon et incomprehensible. The English: O soperi, sche hap ynoys of feib wipouten werke to bileLLU pai God is good wipoutre comprehendinge (261.30–31), presumably represents a French text reading. Elle a assez de foi sans ouevre[r] de croire que Dieu est bon incomprehensible [ment]. The Latin version, Et cete est sufficiens ad credendum quod deus est incomprehensibiliter bonus absque eo quod alliquid operetur, could represent a third reading, elle est assez a croire que Dieu est bon incomprehensible[ment] sans ouevre[r], in which the translator would have had to expand the displaced phrase sans ouevre[r] in order to make it intelligible. The variation, then, seems to be the result of loss of the words excuexe et exomine from the ancestors of the English and Latin versions, and thus confusion as to the placement of the modifying phrase sans ouevre[r]; because the English and Latin versions disagree on the placement of this phrase, it is difficult to argue in the other direction. The Chantilly text thus probably represents the author's original.

The eighth gloss is to an extended statement of the Soul, in the explication of the eighth of the names of the annihilated soul, that no one can give anything to this soul. She comments that no one can know God perfectly: autre Dieu n'est que celluy dont on ne peut rien cognoistre parfaictement (530.37–38). Further, nothing that she can say of the goodness of Love is any better than missaid: Ce point est petit a oir, dit ceste Ame, au regart du plus grant, dont nul ne parle. Mais j'en veull parler et n'en scay que dire. Non pour tant, dame Amour, dist elle, mon amour est de tel arbitr, que j'ame mieus a oir chose medesire de vous, que que on ne die aucune chose de vous. Et sans faille ce fais je: j'en misdes, car tout ce que j'en dis n'est fors que mediser de la boneté de vous (531.2–6). She missays everything she says about love (note that the verb is mésdière, and not mentir: the translator uses gabs), yet is forgiven, for celuy mesdit bien de vous qui toujours parle de vous, et si ne dit jamais nulle chose de la boneté de vous (531.8–9). She never ceases speaking of him, and yet the more she speaks, the more she is abashed. She then reverses her standpoint: ce me seroit grant aillen, que on me feist entendent, que on m'en dist aucune chose; car il sont deceuvez qui le croient, car je scay certainement que on n'en peut rien dire, et se Dieu plaist, je n'en seray jamais deceuce, et ne vieulx jamais oir mentir de la divine boneté de vous (531.12–15).}

The translator comments that this should be excused as an vsage in loues dalaunce ... pei ſenken pei ne opire kunne not ne move not seie but al is gabinge, for as myche as pei may not arche to a poyn of pe fulheede of soofiſt-nesse (264.11–17). Colledge and Guarnieri point out that orthodox doctrine may say that what is spoken of God is «more like a lie than the truth... but we may guess that [the translator’s] adversaries have been able to lay their finger on this passage as proof that Margaret had taught 'That everything which men say of God is lies...'. We should note, however, that in its context this statement is the second member of a comparison of what the author claims that she could at best say of the bounty of God (mésdéir) and her reaction to what other people say (mentir). It is important that the word lie is not predicated simply of what can be said of God. Doiron, accepting the gloss as sufficiently self-explanatory, again comments only on the translator’s prose style.

The ninth gloss occurs somewhat later, in a passage on the sacrament of the altar, after Love and the Soul have completed their exposition of the names of the annihilated soul. Reason asks Love to explain some of the doubles mots that have been used: que ceste Ame n’a compte, n’a honne ne a honner, n’a pouvreté ne a richesse, ne a aise ne a meseais, ne a amour ne a hayne, ne a enfer ne a paradis. Et avec ce dit que ceste Ame a tout et n’a nient, elle scet tout et ne scet nient, elle veult tout et ne veult nient ... Et si ne desire ... ne despit ne pouvreté, ne martire ne tribulacions, ne messes ne sermons, ne jeunes ne oraiions, et si donne a nature tout ce qu’elle luy demande sans renors de conscience (533.23–29). Love responds that this soul wills only by divine Love, and knows only by faith: ceste Ame a Dieu par divine grace, et qui a Dieu il a tout; et si dit qu’il n’a nient, car tout ce que ceste Ame a de Dieu en elle par don de divine grace luy semble nient; et aussi est ce, au regart de ce qu’elle ayme, qui est en luy, laquelle chose il ne donnera nully fors que a luy. Et selon cest entendement ceste Ame a tout et si nul nient, elle scet tout et si ne scet nient (534.34–39). Love then gives a pair of examples of what, and how, this soul knows by virtue of faith. She begins with a statement of trinitarian theology containing one major impression, that la personne du Filz a en luy trois natures, c’est assavoir celle mesme nature que le Pere a, et nature de ame et nature de corps (535.8–9). No Christological errors, we may note, are listed in either the trial records or Ads nostrum qui; nor did the English translator seem to feel compelled to gloss this text, or to alter it in translation, as Clare Kircherberger did.

Love goes on, however, to state that Ce croyre, ce dire, ce penser est vraie contemplacion; c’est ung povoir, ung savoir, et une voulenent; ung seul Dieu en trois personnes; trois personnes et ung seul Dieu. Ce Dieu est partout en sa divine
nature; mais l'humanité est en paradis glorifiée, joincte a la personne du Fils, et ou Sacrement de l'Autel tant seulement . . . Ceste divinité et ceste humanité reçoivent les chretiens quant il prennent le Saint Sacrement de l'Autel. Combien ceste humanité leur demouvre, ce aprent Foy et ce svent les clers (535.11–19). To explain how the humanity of Christ is present in the sacrament, and particularly that it is not present by somehow Christ is present from heaven, Margaret Porete uses a provocative example: can one see whence this person comes, or supposing the sacrament were pounded to dust in a mortar, along with other matter, could one then see where it went? Truth answers against Temptation that whereas the saints and angels in heaven see even the humanity of Christ, which is in the sacrament, in the same semblance that we do (sub specibus panis et vini?), it is for them by spiritual understanding, but for us by virtue of faith.

The text here speaks primarily of the mode of perception of the humanity of Christ in the sacrament, rather than of the agency or mode of his presence; the translator's gloss emphasises this latter aspect: It is pus pat pe manhode neipre comeb ne goip of Crist thesu, but hi bi diuine miiszt and bi pe uertu of his hooli word pe oost turnepe into his own precious body of fleisch and blood. His glorious body pat in is heuene & knyt to be diuine persone of pe Sone comeb not down into pe oost, but pe oost turnepe into him as it is aforesaid, so pat it is ereded his own precious body pat for us sufride deep, pankid and worshipid he be euere prefore. pus pe diuine myyst hapyordyne pis worpi sacrament (268.23–29).

The passage on the presence of the humanity of Christ in the sacrament, the possibility of its coming or going, and the example of pounding the consecrated host in a mortar, seems to have been objectionable to the early translators of the >Mirouer< as much as to its critics: two sentences are dropped from the Middle English version, one perhaps partially paraphrased in the last sentence of the translator's gloss; and the entire section is lacking in the first Latin translation and the Italian version based upon it. As Fr. Stephanus Axters has pointed out [21], it may be that the >Mirouer< gives here, as in its treatment of the >three natures< of Christ, merely a clumsy version of a dogma better defined by other writers. If one keeps in mind that the author uses this example to show how Christians are here dependent upon faith for knowledge precisely in a case where natural knowledge must fail, the primary objection is simply that it sounds irreverent. [22] This alone may have been enough to secure for the >Mirouer< the reputation, recorded in the >Grandes Chroniques de la France<, of speaking >paroles contraires et préjudiciables< concerning the sacrament of the altar.

Colledge and Guarnieri's comment on this lemma depends upon Guarnieri's previous identification of the proposition Quod talis anima non curat de consolationibus Dei nec de donis ejus nec debet curare nec potest, quia tota intenta est circa Deum et sic impediretur ejus intentio circa Deum, recorded from the trial of Margaret Porete, with the only specifically eucharistic error condemned in >Ad nostrum qui<: Quod in elevazione corporis Iesu Christi non debent assurgere nec edem reverentiam exhibere: asserentes, quod esset imperfectios eidem, si a puritate et altitudine suae contemplationis tantum descenderent, quod circa ministerium (al: mysterium) seu sacramentum Eucharistiae aut circa passionem humanitatis Christi cigitarent. [23] The problem with this identification is that there is no verbal correspondence between these two propositions, as there obviously is in both of the other pairs of propositions identified by Guarnieri, nor is there any verbal correspondence between either of these two propositions and the text of the >Mirouer< at this point. Yet if the condemned propositions were in fact drawn from the >Mirouer<, and not merely extrapolated from the implications of some of its statements, then we should expect verbal correspondence. Further, there actually is verbal correspondence between the condemned proposition and two other statements in the >Mirouer<. The first occurs in the treatment of the douies mots just before the discussion of faith in which the eucharist is mentioned: Je vous certitif, Raison, dit Amour, que telles Ames, lesquelles Fine Amour demaine, ont aussi cher honte comme honnere, et honnere comme honte, et pouverté comme richesse, et richesse comme pouverté, et tourment de Dieu et de ses creatures comme confort de Dieu et de ses creatures, et estre amee comme hayé, et hayé comme amee, et en enfer comme en paradis, et en paradis comme en enfer, et petit estat comme grant, et grant estat comme petit, pour elles ne pour leurs personnes. Et ce cest bien Verité, et aussi qu'elles ne veullent ne devoient nulles de ces prosperitez ne de ces adversitez; car telles Ames n'ont point de vouletant, fors ce que Dieu veult in elles, et le divin vouloir n'occupe point ces surmontans creatures de telz encombremens, comme nous avons devise (534.12–21). The second half of the proposition seems to correspond to a later statement by Love, in a discussion of how the soul loves nothing, except for the love of God: Meditation d'Amour Pure n'a que une seule entente, c'est que elle amast tousjours loyaltay sans vouloir avoir nul guerdon, et ce ne peut faire l'Ame se elle n'est sans elle, car Loyal Amour ne daignerait avoir nulles consolations qui vensissent de son acquesion (544.17–20). It would seem, then, that the proposition that the anihilated soul cares not for the consolations of God, nor his gifts, for it is intent only on him, ought not to be identified with the eucharistic proposition in >Ad nostrum qui<, and through it with the one chapter of the >Mirouer< to speak of the eucharist, but rather with a different pair of statements in the >Mirouer<, which the Middle English translator did not in fact gloss. Further, the translator's gloss to the passage on the eucharist would thus seem to have been motivated by a general fear of misinterpretation, or perhaps knowledge that the >Mirouer< was said to have spoken against the sacrament of the altar; but not by reference to the condemnations recorded either from the trial of Margaret Porete or in >Ad nostrum qui<.

The tenth of the translator's glosses occurs somewhat further in the book, a little after the statement that >meditation of Pure Love has but one intent<, cited above. Reason asks Love what is meant by the expression, que adonc est ceste Ame en la droicte franchise de Pure Amour, quant elle ne fait chose qui soit contre la demande de la paix de son estre de dedans (545.16–18). Love replies, C'est qu'elle ne face chose, pour rien qui adviengne, qui soit contre la parfaicte paix de son esperit. Ainsi le fait . . . le vray innocent, et l'estre dont nous parlons est vraye innocence. Raison, . . . je vous donne ung example. Regardez l'enfant qui est pur innocent: fait il chose ne lesse a faire pour grant ne pour petit, se il ne
laye plaint (545.19-24)? Upon this passage, admits Doiron, falls the shadow of the Brethren of the Free Spirit. Colledge and Guarnieri state that «It is more certain than in any of the other glosses that [the translator] is constrained to reply to adverse criticism, for the fact is that here, for once, he has nothing useful to say». Specifically, they point out, he has nothing useful to say to the condemnation in «Ad nostrum qui: of the doctrine that illi qui sunt in predicto gradu perfectionis et spiritui libertatis, non sunt humanae subiecti obedientiae, nec ad aliqua praecepta Ecclesiae obligantur; quia (ut asserunt) »ibi spiritus Domini, ibi libertas» (2 Cor. 3.17). Certainly the translator's gloss is as quietist as the text upon which it comments: it is to meene pat pese creatures schulde not do for oone ne for opir [for hizze ne for lwove] pat myzte vrenst be quie of her spiritis. For pese spirituuel soules pat ben louyers of God, to whom loue spekib in pese personne of oone for alle to vndirstonde, pese ben so meued and updrawen bi pese werk of hooi Goost pat pei may not suffre pat eny bing toweche hem but pe pure touchinges of loue or ping bi whiche ledib perto . . . So pese stonden for to attende and whatte to foletwe pese lordis werk, pat is souerayne maister, for if pese don pere contraire, sopeli, it wol vrenst hem. And pese foer loue biddib hem pat pese do nothing pat myzte breke pese reha and reste of her spiritis (279.11-22). Colledge and Guarnieri assume that the text here is that upon which the condemnation in «Ad nostrum qui: is based, even though neither the formulae specified there, nor the scriptural justification of the term 'free spirit' occurs in the text; then take the translator's failure to answer this charge as evidence that here particularly he must have been replying to it, and finally express their surprise «that he has here failed to make the obvious point that the Lord will not ask such souls to show themselves disobedient to the laws and governors of his Church». A simpler explanation may be that he did not answer these charges because he did not know that he was supposed to reply to them: the point that he was expected to make is obvious only to those who are certain that both the condemned propositions in «Ad nostrum qui: and the Middle English glosses derive from a list of the errors of Margaret Porete, and from nowhere else.

The eleventh gloss occurs a few pages later, in the course of a discussion of how this soul comprehends her beloved, who is himself Love, in love and knowledge. She compares the greatness of those things which he comprises in himself, to the smallness of those things which she is capable of receiving from him — yet she is abashed to speak, for what she has received is a continual awareness of the Trinity, which is itself so far above the body's ability to perceive that it was not given even to the body itself, but only to the angels and saints, whom themselves the body cannot perceive! She says that the Lord has donné ce don a mon esperit a tousjournés, tant comme vous serez Dieu (549.19-20), and of her abashment, that je n'ay autrue usage ne ne puis avoir, pour la continuacion de ceste cognaison (549.10-11). The Middle English translator renders the last phrase as so me on comph pis knowinge in continence (282.35). Colledge and Guarnieri are right in pointing out that his original probably read continuance, and that continuance is an English scribal error. The translator's gloss is Takep kepe of pese wordis pat pe soule seip, pat sche hap noon opir usage ne noon opir may haue. Pat is to seie, as for pe tyne of pat usage, for rizt so every usage stondep for pe tym of his werk, not bat a soule is continuouly beynge in hem, for pat may not be, but every usage is had oon aftir anopir, as loue werkib & as disposicions come & goon, but pese usages been enat in pe soule and used in custom. Perfore is it seid in suche termes as alwe, itus. In pis wise many suche opir wordis in pis booke mooste be take (283.1-7). Colledge and Guarnieri reply that the text itself states »that the soul on earth can have a constant, lasting perception and experience of the divine nature. This is, of course, directly contrary to the experience and teaching of all approved and accepted teachers of mystical theology, from St. Paul onwards«. Margaret Porete seems here to be speaking of an habitual awareness of God, however, and not of rapture. When she does speak of rapture, she specifically says that it is not a lasting state: Ceste Ame . . . est en esbaus ou cinquiesme estat avec son amant. La ne faut elle mie, et si est souverain ou sizziese ravie, mais pou ce luy dure. Car c'est une ouverture a maniere de esclar et de hastive closure, ou l'en ne peut longueilmen demonuer, ne elle n'est oncques mere, qui de ce secest parler (566.6-10): Further, against the contention that Margaret Porete taught that one could attain in this life to heavenly beatitude, let it be noted that this is what she describes as the seventh state: Et le septiem esarde Amour dedans elle, pour nous donner en parmanable gloire, duquel nous n'aurons cognoissance jusques ad ce que nostre ait cuit nostre corps laisst (613.38-40).

The twelfth gloss occurs again considerably later in the text, when Love declares the inability of reason and all his scholars to understand the matter of this book, and the Soul replies, C'est verite . . . car celluy tout seul l'entend, qui Fine Amour mistrie; et si convient que celluy soit mort de toutes mors mortificantes, qui finement l'entend, car nul ne goste de ceste vie, s'il n'est mors de toutes mors (563.1-3). Reason asks, de quantes manieres de mort vous convint il mourir ains que vous entendissiez finement ce livre (563.6-7)? Love explains that, besides those who are dead in sin, there are two types of persons who live the life of perfection by works of virtue in affection of the spirit: the first are those who mortify the body in doing works of charity: these are called kings, but only so in the kingdom of the blind; those who have two eyes know them for servants — and they will perish in their works. Next are lesquels sont marriz, qui sont sers et marchans, mais ilz font plus saigmente que les periz ne font (565.4-5). They do better than the perished, says Love, Pour ce . . . qu'ilz tiennent qu'il est estre meilleur que n'est leur estre, et si cognoissent bien qu'ilz n'ont pas cognoissance de ce meilleur que ilz croient (565.17-19). The translator interrupted the dialogue leading up to this exposition to comment pis word persichid may not be taken as for persiching de perdicion of soule, pat pefi schulde not be saued, but it is to mene, rizst as loue seip, pei leue so to her own werke, wenynge pat it is best, so pat pefi kepe to folowe noon opir and perfore pefi may not atayne to pe hizest (297.16-19) — that is, he must assure the literal-minded reader that the virtuous will not go to hell. Colledge and Guarnieri do not comment upon this gloss, and their count of the following glosses is thrown out by one as a result.

The Mirouer goes on to say that the marred souls, realizing their imperfection and the impossibility of achieving perfection by their own volition, may
come by grace to the state where their wills are annihilated in the divine will, to that fifth estate, the far-nigh (loingprès) from which they may occasionally be taken up into the sixth estate of rapture. The author describes this process by the analogy of three deaths, to sin, to nature, and to the soul (meaning, apparently, to sin, to the flesh, and to the self); by the courtly analogy of villains, servants or merchants, and royal lineage; and she eventually describes the seven stages of perfection, in this life and the next, to which she has alluded from the beginning of the book. She berates those qui sont si bestes et si asnes que il m'escovient pour la rudesse d'eux celer et non parler mon langage ... tair e celer mon langage, lequel j'ay aprins es secrez de la court secrete du doux pays (572.27–31). She speaks of the soigne and the soucy in which such men labour – the Middle English version translates both as synagoge – and of the mercy shown them by Christ, qui ne les vouldoit mie perdre, si les a de luy mesmes affiez par sa mort, et par ses Euvangiles, et par ses escritures, la ou gens de labour se radressent (573.8–9). Reason asks the Soul ou vous radressez vous, if not by labour, to which she replies, Non, ... je suis de ce quicte: ailez est mon meilleur, qui est si loing de ce, que on n'y pourroit mettre comparaison: en Dieu en est le terme, qui n'a point de temps – mais je l'ay, pour le mien de luy attendar; le mien est, je soye en mon nient planie (573.13–16). At this point, the Middle English translator inserts his thirteenth gloss – one of the longest and as he intended, his last: pis is in pe tyme of rausychinge and vinion in God; it hap not of tyme, for it laste but litel while in eny creature heere in his world, for pe corrupcion of pe fleisch leyt it peat sua soule may not pere longe abide ... Rigt pis alle suche wordis most be declared wipynne hemsilf pat raued pis boke (304.28–36). The translator suggests that the author has so written the dark words and high matters of this book, that those who are drawn to this work may thus search by intellectual subtlety to find out its meaning. He closes with the declaration that now I schal stynyte of my wordis but if it be pe more neede. I haue answeryd to po poynes pat haue be mistake aftir my lewed kunynge (305.25–27), and begs his readers to forgive him for his ignorance, to correct his mistakes, and to thank God for any good effect that his words may have. Doirion simply points out that the translator seems to have been satisfied at this point that he has explained his text sufficiently; Colledge and Guarnieri see this gloss, like the others, as completely contradicted by the heretical, Gnostic teachings of the >Mirouer< itself.

The translator's fourteenth gloss occurs several pages later in an address by the author to the audience of her book, Or entendez ... la glose de ce livre (579.31). The gloss refers specifically to the Soul's statement concerning meditation on the glorified Christ that, qui courtosis seroit, il n'ameroit que ce qu'il devroit. Oncques n'ama l'Umanité, qui ama temporalité. Oncques n'ama divinement, qui rien ama corporellement; et ceux qui ament la Deité sentent peu de l'Umanité. Oncques ne fut joinct ne uny ne divinement rempli, qui corporel sentit. Et de quoy sentiroit on? Se Dieu ne se mouit, aussi rien se mouit. Or entendez par noblesse l'entendement de la glose (581.37–38.2). The translator remarks as usual that pe menynge of peke wordis pat pis soule seip, pat her inwardnese ne felip, ne sche hirself ne meuph, it ymnete for pe tyme of rauechinge in

vnyon (313.27–28), and again counsels his readers, pus se mest wipynne zovuresil glose suche derke wordis (314.2). He adds that a fewe wordis mo I seie in pis booke to brynge sou in pe weie, not wipstandinge pat I was in purpus aforo to hause glosed no more (314.4–6). Doiron comments only on the translator's change of plan; Colledge and Guarnieri again point out that although some of the expressions in the >Mirouer< can be paralleled in orthodox mystical writings, the book's Gnostic, possibly Pelagian, heterodoxy is such that it is hard for us to share [the translator’s] conviction that Margaret taught what the Church teaches.

The last of the Middle English translator's glosses to >The Mirror of Simple Souls<, like the first, may be the result of a textual corruption. The Chantilly text reads, nientplus que Dieu peut pecher, qui voulire ne le peut, ne puis je pecher, se ma voulenté ne veult. Telle franchise m'a l'amy de moy de sa bonté par amour donnee (599.19–21). For the expression l'amy de moy in the last sentence, the first Latin translation has dilectus meus, and the Italian version based upon it, el diletto mio. The English text, however, has the inexplicable reading, pe summe of me, which the translator explains as meaning pe knowinge pat sche hap of pe goodnesse of God, and pis goodnesse of God pat is pe Hooli Goost werki in hir pat zauhe hir fre wille (329.11–13). Colledge and Guarnieri suggest that the translator may have been intended by his adversaries to explain away the accusation that the >Mirouer< taught that the annihilated soul was impeccable, that he seized upon this lemma, and proceeded to comment upon something else entirely. It may be rather that he was unsatisfied with the nonsense reading (presumably la somme de moy) which he had translated, and attempted only to make some sense of it.

Finally, we come to the questions whether the >Mirouer des simples âmes< was heretical, and what the intention of the Middle English translator was, both in translating and glossing this work. It has obviously been as difficult for our own age to determine the question of the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of the >Mirouer< as it was for the theologians of the fourteenth century: but several observations ought to be made. First, the reputation of the book has suffered because of traits that may well simply reflect the personality of the author: Margaret Porete seems to have been deliberately provocative, and singularly lacking in a sense of self-preservation. She makes no secret of her contempt for those at least of the clergy who pursue virtue, like the Pharisée of the parable, for its own sake, and pay less attention to their own imperfection, or to the perfection of God in comparison to which all their perfections are as nothing. These she castigates as beasts, asses and (the ultimate insult in courtly literature) villains et serv: it is little wonder that Margaret Porete would be characterized by a contemporary as Beguina quedam, quae libellum quedam adversus clerum ediderat. [24] Her provocative stance and lack of caution give rise as well to a methodological problem. She opens her book with a series of blunt statements and contradictions to which Reason must object. It is only much later that they are set into contexts in which they are capable of bearing orthodox interpretations. She never comes back to say that she did not intend those
bad words to have bad meanings; she leaves the reader in the dangerous position of having to decide for himself. Those who choose orthodoxy must, like the Middle English translator, constantly gloss with cautious qualifications statements the literal meaning of which demonstrates nothing more or less than false quietism. Those who choose to see the ›Mirror‹ as heterodox must ignore the orthodoxy of the author’s own qualifications and explanations, and particularly the description of the seven stages of the spiritual life, or view these as a set of cynical lies, intended only to delude the book’s possible critics. In either case, the provocative stance of the ›Mirror‹ may well demonstrate, as Fr. Colledge has pointed out, somewhat less of common humility than one might expect in a simple âme adniente. Another important consideration is that, in any period of rapidly-growing literacy or interest in a particular branch of knowledge, there must always be writers the sophistication of whose thought or experience exceeds their command of the technical vocabulary used in the schools to describe this thought and experience. This is particularly a problem in the vernacular, where the common use of a word may not have that precision of meaning which its Latin cognate or ancestor bears. Thus the references in the ›Mirror‹ to the three natures of Christ, or the two natures of man (598.32–599.4), and the failure to distinguish between perfection by grace or by nature may imply lack of schooling, rather than heterodoxy of teaching.

The Middle English glosses to the ›Mirror of Simple Souls‹ present a different set of problems. In the first place, we can probably dismiss the possibility that the translator was deliberately putting into circulation in England a book which he knew to be heretical: he takes too many pains to counter any heretical interpretation, and answers such interpretations with such an uninspired repetition of the argument that the author is only speaking of the transitory experience of rapture – even when this argument is not properly applicable – that one does not suspect him of any devious purpose. Further, we should note that there does not seem to have been any interest in the heresy of the free spirit in England: the references to devotional excesses and heterodoxy that occur in English spirituality in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are, apparently, invariably aimed at the followers of Rolle or of Wycliffe. We should also note that the manuscripts in which the ›Mirror‹ occurs do not betray any interest in heterodox doctrine. The ›Mirror‹ occurs alone in the St John’s College manuscript. In the Bodleian manuscript, it is accompanied only by ›The Chastising of God’s Children‹, a compilation dealing with the problem of withdrawal of comfort and the sense of the presence of God in contemplation, drawn primarily from Geert Groote’s Latin translation of Ruusbroec’s ›Geestelike Brulocht‹, plus smaller amounts of a number of other spiritual writings. The British Library manuscript, on the other hand, is an anthology of less-well-known late medieval spiritual writings in English, containing among other things one of the three copies extant not only of the ›Mirror‹, but also of Richard Misyn’s translations of Richard Rolle’s ›Incendium Amoris‹ and ›Emendatio Vitae‹, as well as the unique surviving copies of the short text of the ›Revelations‹ of Julian of Norwich, the › Treatise of Perfection of the Sons of God‹, the Middle English version of Ruusbroec’s treatise ›Van den blincken-

den Steen‹, and a short compilation drawn from Rolle, Walter Hilton, ›The Cloud of Unknowing‹ and associated works, and Hugh of Balma’s ›Viae Syon Lugent‹. The only relatively popular piece in the book is a chapter of the Middle English extract of Suso’s ›Horologium Sapientiae‹. These connections display an interest in contemplative literature, certainly, but no interest at all in heresy.

Perhaps something more of the circumstances of the ›Mirror of Simple Souls‹ can be seen in the ownership of these manuscripts: for they all belonged to London and Sheen Charterhouses. The fact that Richard Methley translated the ›Mirror‹ at Mount Grace adds one more house to the census, but even this version is extant only in a single copy from Sheen. The picture which we derive is of limited circulation at best, and only among the Carthusians. A rubric added by William Darker, the scribe of the manuscript of Methley’s Latin ›Mirror‹ adds one more intriguing detail: above the incipit of the book, he writes Iste liber alter intitulatur Russbroek [Ruusbroec] qui fuit prior de ordine cartustensi, et hunc libellum primo composuit; across the bottom of the page, he adds Nota quod iste liber solum pro his compotitor qui intelligunt eum, et quod non potest per scientiam attingit, etc. (Pembroke MS 221, f. 41). The English Carthusians knew Ruusbroec, as Fr. Colledge has showed, from an observation of ›Com Le Couteux [25] – through a confusion of the Latin forms of Greven-dael and Vauvert – as the prior of the Charterhouse at Paris. Fr. Colledge pointed out that this mistaken parochial interest in Ruusbroec is probably one of the causes of the interest that the English Carthusians seem to have taken in his work. If they also mistakenly thought that Ruusbroec, prior of the Paris Charterhouse, had written the ›Mirror‹, this could well explain why they might have expected to find him writing French, why they would have circulated the Middle English version of the ›Mirror‹ only among themselves, and why the translator might have been predisposed to consider its teaching orthodox.

Another interesting comment on the ›Mirror‹ was written by one of the several early sixteenth-century annotators of the Pembroke College manuscript (possibly the same who noted at the bottom of f. 47, Wylye correh his boke). At the foot of f. 40v, the blank page facing the opening of the ›Mirror‹, he has written: De Begaardis In clementinis de Religiosis decretalibus. capitulum Ad nostrum. [26] The fact that one at least of the early English readers of the ›Mirror‹ was aware that it contained statements condemned in Ad nostrum qui raises the possibility, explored by Colledge and Guarneri, that the Middle English translator had been presented a list of condemnations, drawn perhaps from a still-surviving record of the trial of Margaret Porte, to which his glosses were intended as a response. The present examination, however, would tend to limit and qualify these conclusions. We should note that only two of the three propositions recorded from the trial are definitely among the lemmata of the Middle English glosses. The third proposition, that the soul does not, and needs not, care for the consolations of God, is glossed only when one considers it to be implied in the discussion of the eucharist; if, as we have seen, the condemned proposition can be better identified elsewhere, then the likelihood is that the critics of the ›Mirror‹ did not in fact have a list of the condemned
11 Colledge and Marler: »Poverty of the Will«: Ruusbroec, Eckhart and 'The Mirror of Simple Souls', paper read at the Louvain Ruusbroec-conference, 1981; the proceedings of the conference are at press, and I have been allowed to cite this paper by kind permission of Fr. Colledge, Mr. Marler, and the Institutum voor Middleewse Studies, Universiteit Leuven.
16 In order to avoid repetitious footnotes, I have given page-and-line references to the Guarnieri and Doiron editions of the »Miroir« and the Middle English »Mirror« in the text of each citation. Further, since both Doiron's commentary and Colledge and Guarnieri's appendix to the Doiron edition follow the order of the text itself, I have refrained from further references to either except where necessary.
17 The text used for 'Ad nostrum qui in this paper is that in Denzinger-Schönnetzer, Enchiridion symbolorum, 1965, Nos. 891–98.
18 Lerner: Heresy of the Free Spirit [Fn. 13], p. 20–25.
19 Orcibal [Fn. 12], p. 40 fn. 6.
20 The inclusion of such comments is not so great an anomaly as it seems, if one remembers that a chapter of rhetorical analysis is virtually requisite in any edition of a medieval contemplative text for an American doctoral dissertation in English, in order to escape the prejudice that religious literature is not legitimate literature, and textual criticism is not legitimate criticism.
22 It is interesting to note that Methley's comment on this passage is: Notanter premisset per simulitudinem. Vnde consequens est quaod per hoc nec precipit nec consulti realiter fieri. Noli inde alliquid pertinaxceri affirmare, si non vis fallacier errare (Pembroke 221, f. 51).
23 Guarnieri: »Movimento« [Fn. 7], p. 416.
26 Colledge and Walsh (eds.): 'The Cloud of Unknowing' and 'The Mirror of Simple Souls' in the Latin Glossed Translations by Richard Methley of Mount Grace Charterhouse, Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà, at press, have identified all of the annotations in Pembroke 221 as the work of James Grenehalgh. Only the monograms in the lower right margin of f. 31, and at the top of f. 47 seem to me to be possibly identifiable as his work (and I am not certain even of these); the remaining annotations are in two main hands, and seem definitely not to be his. One of them, in fact, notes the entry Quomodo intelligitur quod dictur, salvat se fide sine operibus & de sua vocacione ad hoc in the index to the »Mirror« on f. 99" hoc hic 1542 – better than a decade after Grenehalgh's death.
27 P. Glorieux (ed.): Jean Gerson, Oeuvres complètes, vol. 2, Paris 1960, pp. 60, 102; cf. André Combes: Essai sur la critique de Ruysbroeck par Gerson, vol. 1, Paris 1945, pp. 618, 629, vol. 2, 1948, p. 103. Glorieux dates the two letters to March, 1402, and 1408; Combes to December 1398–March 1399, and 1408. If the Middle English translator was responding in his glosses to critics who were aware of Gerson's condemnation of Ruusbroec, then he could not have been Michael of Northburgh, although so late a dating of the translation would not conflict with the dating of the surviving manuscripts of the »Mirror«.