PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS AS LIBERATOR: THE INFLUENCE OF THE NEGATIVE TRADITION ON LATE MEDIEVAL FEMALE MYSTICS

by

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Pseudo-Dionysius was a sixth-century Syrian monk who for at least a thousand years successfully disguised himself as Dionysius the Areopagite, a disciple of St Paul. This man, whoever his name was, remained anonymous for a good reason: he subscribed to the Neoplatonic or negative view of God. In this view, the eternal question, What is God?, is answered this way: since God is so superlatively great and infinite, he cannot be contained within any human adjectives we may devise. Therefore, it makes more sense to think of God as what he is not: as nothingness, a mystery, a darkness, which lies above our rational understanding.

But this does not mean he cannot be known. In his Mystical Theology, pseudo-Dionysius describes the steps or degrees of self-denial by which we may ascend to God and finally pierce the darkness. When we annihilate all awareness of ourselves, according to this theology, we ironically achieve self-knowledge, for we have replaced our egos with an awareness of the true, divine essence of our beings (hence the anonymity). To reach this state we must reject material things which distract the soul from quiet meditation and spiritual progress. At the highest level, God in his grace may show himself and pour his light through the darkness into the empty vessel of the soul. The experience of this union with God is apparently overwhelming and, in the end, indescribable.

The negative tradition, or via negativa, established by pseudo-Dionysius lies firmly within the Magisterium, or the authoritative teachings of the Church based on the writings of its fathers and doctors. During the high Middle Ages, mystical theologians such as St Bernard of Clairvaux and St Bonaventure both followed pseudo-Dionysius in their respective works, the Sermones super Cantica Canticorum and Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum. The neo-Platonic or negative image of God also influenced the more ‘affirmative’ medieval thinkers who relied on intellectual wisdom. St Augustine, for example, wrote in the fifth century A.D. of a mystical knowledge of God which was far superior to the quest for human knowledge through philosophy. St Thomas Aquinas in the Summa Theologica, dating from the thirteenth century, declares that the essence of God cannot be known by bodily senses or the created intellect. Only by grace, not natural reason, is God fully revealed in this life.

Pseudo-Dionysius was also extremely influential on two masterpieces of mysticism written in English during the fourteenth century: The Cloud of Unknowing and Walter Hilton’s The Scale of Perfection. The Cloud of Unknowing, again written by an anonymous author, was designed as a spiritual manual for a twenty-four year old novice entering upon the contemplative life. With great simplicity and conviction, the Cloud author explains the steps the contemplative must take in order to come face to face with God. First, he or she must put ‘the whole created world’ under a ‘cloud of forgetting’, corresponding to the degrees of denial prescribed by Pseudo-Dionysius. This is because God is a ‘jealous lover and will brook no rival’, or in other words, material things distract from the work of quiet meditation. The purpose of all this is self-knowledge, or ‘perfect humility’. Ironically, this involves an annihilation of the self in a spiritual sense so that the soul may be ready to receive God’s grace (and this is perhaps why the Cloud author chose to be anonymous).

The next step is to pierce the ‘cloud of unknowing’ between the contemplative and God. This cloud of unknowing is akin to the darkness of pseudo-Dionysius, or better yet, the ‘dark night of the soul’ of St John of the Cross. The way to pierce the cloud of unknowing is by simple prayer repeated over and over, such as ‘God’ or ‘love’. By continually beating upon the cloud of unknowing with the ‘sharp dart of longing love’, the contemplative eventually may know God if in his grace he shows himself and pours his light through the darkness into the vessel of the mystic’s soul. As a work of late medieval English literature, the Cloud of Unknowing probably ranks with Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, although it is not as well known.

The negative approach is likewise sponsored by Walter Hilton in The Scale of Perfection, written in the latter half of the fourteenth century for a contemplative nun. Indeed, the Cloud and The Scale are so similar in spiritual instruction that
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it has been argued they were written by the same man. Like the Cloud author, Hilton insists that his contemplative pupil first ‘forsake all worldly riches, honours, and outward business’. As the title implies, the way to a mystical union with God is through a gradual, step-by-step process culminating in the third part of contemplation. As does the Cloud author, Hilton emphasizes prayer as the most efficacious means toward the mystic’s goal. The third and highest kind of prayer Hilton characterizes as being ‘only in the heart, without speaking, and with great rest of body and soul’. This is similar to the ‘darkness’ and ‘lack of knowing’ with which the Cloud author describes the cloud of unknowing. Both these works had great and lasting influence on late medieval English mystics.

In addition, more modern experts of mysticism, who themselves were considered contemplatives, identified true mystical experiences with the dark night of the soul. In the twentieth century, they included Dom David Knowles, a Benedictine monk of Downside Abbey and later a professor at Cambridge University, and Evelyn Underhill, another English mystical theologian. The via negativa also shares many affinities with Eastern mystical traditions, as was recognized by the religious philosophers, William James and Thomas Merton. Perhaps this is explained by a common origin with the desert fathers, or the founders of Christian monasticism in the Middle East. Both the Hindu and Buddhist religions, for example, use simple mantras and stress a denial of materialism before the higher state of Brahma or Nirvana can be reached.

The negative tradition of mysticism which has just been outlined provides the standard measure by which the Catholic Church judges whether a given individual has achieved that unique, ineffable union with God. During the Middle Ages, this article will argue, this tradition was a liberating force for women because it provided them with a rare opportunity to gain equal status with men. Because its standards were based on theology, not gender, the negative tradition set a universal yardstick for mysticism which applied to everyone, be they men or women. For those who lived up to its standards, the mystical path of pseudo-Dionysius was one of the few avenues by which women during the Middle Ages achieved substantial power and respect.

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Examples from the Middle Ages of women who did just that abound. The most famous example from the high medieval period is Hildegard of Bingen, abbess of the Benedictine priory at Disibodenberg, Germany during the twelfth century. Her twenty-six visions, recounted in Scivias, are spiritual rather than sensory experiences, perceived, as she says in a letter to Guibert of Gembloux, ‘in my soul, with my external eyes open’. This is the quiet form of meditation preferred by the negative tradition to the more ecstatic and physical brands of piety.

During the fourteenth century, a real flowering of female mysticism occurred. In England, the leading example was Julian of Norwich. At the age of thirty-one, she was privy to sixteen ‘showings’ in a near-death experience in May 1373. These showings were to provide the basis for Julian’s subsequent lifelong meditations as an anchoress in the church of St Julian and St Edward in Conisford. Written down as a book of ‘showings’, or revelations, these meditations explore such theological questions as the nature of the Trinity, the wonder of creation and the Augustinian problem of evil and the redemptive power of Christ’s passion. The depth and profundity of Julian’s theology is testified by the number of scholarly books devoted to the subject.

That Julian belonged within the pseudo-Dionysian tradition is demonstrated by her progression from ‘bodely syght’ to ‘gostely syghte’, or to purely spiritual and intellectual visions which supplanted the corporeal. Her ‘noghte’, or self-annihilation, of the soul after it has been ‘noghed of alle that es made’ may be compared to the dark night of the clouds of forgetting and unknowing. Julian is also careful to emphasize that the showings by themselves are no proof of mystical grace but are given for the benefit of all Christians:

In all this I was greatly moved in love towards my fellow Christians that they might all see and know the same as I saw, for I wished it to be a comfort to them, for all this vision was shown for all men.

On the Continent, elements of the negative tradition can be found in the Book of the Blessed Angela of Foligno, the Dialogue of St Catherine of Siena and the Revelations of St Birgitta of Sweden. Angela, a Franciscan tertiary from
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Foligno, Italy, who died in 1309, experienced 'twenty steps of penitence' before she embarked on the mystical path. This in turn led to seven steps of revelations on the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist and the nature of God. The sixth step, a two-year-long struggle with horrible suffering, culminated in the dark night of the soul before the final step, her mystical marriage with her creator. Angela described the revelation to her scribe:

Afterward, I saw him in a darkness, and in a darkness precisely because the good that he is, is far too great to be conceived or understood. Indeed, anything conceivable or understandable does not attain this good or even come near it.... And in this most efficacious good seen in this darkness now resides my most firm hope, one in which I am totally recollected and sure.

Catherine of Siena, who lived between 1347 and 1380, was likewise affiliated with a mendicant order, in her case the Dominicans. In a similar pattern to that experienced by Angela, she followed three stages of purgation, illumination and union before attaining a 'perfect love' of God. Imperfect love, by contrast, was characterized by sensual pleasures or consolations:

There are others who become faithful servants. They serve me with love rather than that slavish fear which serves only for fear of punishment. But their love is imperfect, for they serve me for their own profit or for the delight and pleasure they find in me. Do you know how they show that their love is imperfect? By the way they act when they are deprived of the comfort they find in me. And they love their neighbours with the same imperfect love.

This second trial of spiritual desolation, however, in which God withdraws his presence from the soul and is comparable to the dark night, is in reality a blessing. For it is by such means that the soul may reach perfection, as God asserts to Catherine in their dialogue:

This is why their love is not strong enough to last. No, it becomes lax and often fails. It becomes lax toward me when sometimes, to exercise them in virtue and to lift them up out of their imperfection, I take back my spiritual comfort and let them experience struggles and vexations. I do this to bring them to perfect knowledge of themselves, so that they will know that of themselves they have

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neither existence nor any grace. I want them, in time of conflict, to take refuge in me by seeking me and knowing me as their benefactor, in true humility seeking me alone. This is why I give them these troubles.

Once again, prayer is the key by which the soul can overcome this trial. In a parallel process to the progression of love, the devout soul, Catherine explains, proceeds from 'imperfect vocal prayer' to a 'perfect mental' one.

Finally, St Birgitta of Sweden, a noblewoman and foundress of an order which took her name upon her death in 1373, experienced a series of revelations in which various doctrinal issues are addressed in the responses to her 'interrogations'. In these revelations the influence of pseudo-Dionysius is apparent. For example, in the fifth revelation of the fifth book, Christ admonishes Birgitta against a love of riches and praises the virtues of self-denial and humility. In the tenth revelation of the same book, Christ warns the saint that his teachings are obscure and must be understood in a spiritual rather than a corporeal sense:

Sometimes, too, I say things obscurely in order that you may both fear and rejoice — fearing that they may come to pass in another way because of my divine patience, which knows the changes of hearts, and rejoicing too because my will is always fulfilled. So too, in the Old Law, I said many things that were to be understood more spiritually than corporeally — as concerning the temple and David and Jerusalem — in order that carnal mankind might learn to desire spiritual things.

These women perhaps found social acceptance in part because they pursued their mysticism without the encumbrance of family. St Thomas Aquinas in the Summa Theologicae classifies marriage as directed to the bodily increase of the human race and therefore belonging to the active life. A contemplative existence, on the other hand, entails chastity because, as Aquinas explains, a divine good takes precedence over a human good. In the case of Angela, this problem was resolved by 1291 by the sudden deaths of her husband and all her children, for which she had prayed. Birgitta pursued her mystical career only after the death of her husband, Ulf, in 1344. She remained torn by her devotion to her eight children, and seems
to have resolved this by developing, like Julian, a distinctly maternal form of spirituality.42

By following the mystical path, Angela, Catherine and Birgitta all achieved celebrity in their lifetimes, a group of devoted followers, and, in the latter two instances, substantial political influence. Birgitta and Catherine both spoke out on the need for Church reform and a return of the Pope from Avignon to Rome, which Gregory XI finally did do in 1378.43 In 1970, St Catherine and Teresa of Avila, a sixteenth-century Carmelite nun, were made doctors of the Church, equal in status to Augustine and Aquinas, Bonaventure and Bernard.

There is one medieval woman, however, who is sometimes classified as a mystic yet remains outside the pseudo-Dionysian tradition. She epitomizes the debate currently raging in academic circles about how we are to define female medieval mysticism.

Born around 1373 in Bishop’s (later King’s) Lynn in Norfolk, England, Margery Kempe was the daughter of John Brunham, a wealthy and influential merchant in the city. At the age of twenty she married John Kempe and had the first of fourteen children and at the same time her first vision of Christ. Twenty years later, in 1413 at the age of forty, she persuaded her husband to take with her a vow of chastity and embarked on a series of pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago and Prussia which lasted almost until her death, perhaps in 1439. Throughout these later years of her life, she experienced various visions, sounds, sensations, bodily contortions, and her famous weepings, sobbings, roarings and shrill shriekings. All these physical signs she claimed to be manifestations of a mystical communion with God, dictating them to one or two friendly priests.44

Ever since the discovery and publication of the Book of Margery Kempe in 1934 by Colonel Butler-Bowden,45 religious historians have been sharply divided, as contemporaries were in Margery's lifetime, concerning her claims to be a mystic. Recently, a new generation of feminist/ Marxist historians have hailed Margery as the bold practitioner of an alternative, matriarchal, feminine kind of spirituality best summed up by Caroline Walker Bynum's phrase 'Jesus as Mother'.46 In this view, Margery's tears are to be celebrated as an example of an emotional, erotic, homely

mysticism every bit as legitimate as the traditional, pseudo-Dionysian version. Indeed, her weepings and roarings, to use the current terms, allowed her to subvert 'masculine modes of discourse', 'destabilize' restrictive public morals, break free of the oppressive, patriarchal 'halloccacy', 'privilege' her voice and 'empower' her own unique brand of mysticism.47 At the other extreme, an older generation of scholars, which included the Nobel Prize winning novelist Sigrid Undset and Evelyn Underhill, judged Margery to be an hysterical, neurotic, self-centered, egotistical exhibitionist.48 There is really no middle ground here. Either one is a mystic or one is not. Although 'hysterical' may be unkind and Margery Kempe may have been especially devout, this author does not believe she was a mystic.

The negative tradition would reject Margery Kempe as a mystic for two reasons. In the first place, physical sensations were held suspect on doctrinal grounds, not that of gender. The mystic should not rely only on sensual visions, locutions and cryings, because their veracity cannot be trusted. Unlike the soul who has attained a deep and purely spiritual form of contemplation, he or she who relies on affective piety is an imperfect instrument of God's grace. The working of the divine will overwhelms him or her because he or she is not yet prepared to receive it.49

Men as well as women were denied mystical status on this point. Richard Rolle, a hermit from Yorkshire who died in 1349, is sometimes assumed to be a mystic on the basis of his influential work, the Incendium Amoris or the Fire of Love.50 In this eloquent book, Rolle relates his sensations of heat, sweetness and song which he considered the highlight of his mystical experience:

I was sitting in a certain chapel, delighting in the sweetness of prayer or meditation, when suddenly I felt within myself an unusually pleasant heat. At first I wondered where it came from, but it was not long before I realized that it was from none of his creatures but from the Creator himself. It was, I found, more fervent and pleasant than I had ever known. But it was just over nine months before a conscious and incredibly sweet warmth kindled me, and I knew the infusion and understanding of heavenly, spiritual sounds, sounds which pertain to the song of eternal praise, and to the sweetness of unheard melody; sounds which cannot be
known or heard save by him who has received it, and who himself must be clean and separate from the things of earth.\textsuperscript{51}

In their respective works, both the Cloud author and Hilton regard such sensual experiences with great suspicion. They clearly are aware of Rolle's work, and although they do not mention his name, they caution their readers against placing too much faith in the kind of physical sensations which Rolle experienced. In chapter 45, the Cloud author warns young, novice mystics of a 'spurious warmth' giving rise to a 'sham spirituality':

And yet, maybe, they imagine it to be the fire of love, lighted and fanned by the grace and goodness of the Holy Ghost. In truth, from this falsehood many evils spring: much hypocrisy and heresy and error. For hot on the heels of false experience comes false knowledge in the school of the fiend, just as true experience is followed by true knowledge in the school of God.\textsuperscript{52}

Likewise, Hilton devotes the whole of chapter 26 to the perils of the 'fire of love':

Not all those who speak of the fire of love really know what it is, for what it is I cannot tell you, except for this. I tell you, it is neither material nor felt in the body. It can be felt in prayer or in devotion by a soul who exists in a body, but he does not feel it by any bodily sense, for although it is true that if it works in a soul the body may pass into a heat — as it were warmed by the pleasant labour of the spirit — nevertheless the fire of love is not in the body, for it is only in the spiritual desire of the soul.\textsuperscript{53}

The criticism of Rolle's contemporaries is seconded by the modern historian David Knowles, who dubbed Rolle a 'beginner' mystic because he 'mistook the first glimpses of the life of contemplation for the plenitude of grace'.\textsuperscript{54}

The problem that feminist historians of mysticism face is that by adopting a relativist or deconstructionist approach to the question of who is a mystic, they remove any standard of judging whether these visions are the product of genuine piety, of psycho-somatic disorders or of just plain charlatanism. The Cloud author gives several examples of the 'curious tricks' of pseudo-mystics: rowing the arms, holding the head to one side as if there's a worm in the ear, squinting like sheep banged on the head, and holding the mouth open to catch a heavenly 'dew', when in fact it catches only flies.\textsuperscript{55} This is paralleled, in our own day, by the antics of 'television evangelists' and other charismatic groups. Indeed, one scholar, intending to portrait Margery Kempe in a flattering light, makes comparisons between her and Pentecostal Holiness congregations in southern Indiana.\textsuperscript{56} Yet if we are to legitimize the weepings, roarings and shriekings of Margery Kempe, why not those of Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggert, Pat Robertson, and Tammy Faye and Jim Baker? If we are to believe that Margery could save a church from fire by calling down a snowstorm, which some scholars seem prepared to accept on face value,\textsuperscript{57} why not that Pat Robertson can stop hurricanes or balance the budget during a jubilee year, or that Oral Roberts will die unless we send him a million dollars?

The second objection the negative tradition has to mystical sensationalism is to its vanity or pride. By taking a literal approach to spirituality and trusting in physical sensations as ultimate signs of God's favor, the novice fails to progress any further towards a deeper, more inward spirituality.\textsuperscript{58} The pride which the sensational mystic felt as a result of his or her physical experiences is analogous perhaps to that of their modern sympathizers. In the introduction to one recent collection of critical essays about Margery Kempe, the editor states that 'each essay assumes that this woman and her Book are to be taken seriously'.\textsuperscript{59} Margery is assumed to be a mystic and modern scholarship is portrayed as monolithically shifting towards a vindication of her as a mystic. Any objection to this view from the pseudo-Dionysian perspective is immediately labelled as a 'misreading' and a 'patronizing appraisal' of Margery's book.\textsuperscript{60} Unfortunately, such conviction precludes any kind of dialogue.

What is remarkable about Margery Kempe's life, from a pseudo-Dionysian point of view, is the complete lack of any evidence of spiritual progress. Material things remained an important part of her spirituality. Her exhibitionist style of dress, for example, continued to draw attention to herself even after her conversion of 1413: Whereas previously it was from gold-piped headdresses and fashionably 'slashed sleeves, afterwards it was by wearing white.\textsuperscript{61} Eroticism figured large in both periods of her life: If before she was tested by a
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pretended admirer in church, afterwards she would stare to the point of sobbing at handsome men in Rome because they reminded her of her new ‘husband’, Jesus. Her visions, unlike those of her contemporary female mystics, seem to lack a certain generosity of spirit. In many long, private conversations, Christ continually reminded his ‘daughter’ that her weepings and visions marked her for special favour. If, as a result, she had to suffer insults from her travelling companions, such as being made to sit at the end of the table or having her dress shortened, this only increased her reward in heaven:

Then our blessed Lord Christ Jesus answered to her soul and said, ‘My beloved daughter, I swear by my high majesty that I will never forsake you. And, daughter, the more shame, contempt and rebuke that you suffer for my love, the better I love you, for I behave like a man who greatly loves his wife: the more envy that other men have of her, the better he will dress her to spite his enemies. And just so, daughter, shall I behave with you.'

Self-justifications such as these no doubt further exasperated her travelling companions and led to more ‘martyrdoms’. In addition, contemporaries may have objected to Margery’s abandonment of her husband and children, in contrast to the exemplary behaviour of Angela and Birgitta.

Margery’s book is also noteworthy for its intellectual aridity. It is essentially devoid of any deep theological content, such as exists in the writings of Julian, Angela, Catherine or Birgitta. Like Rolle, her visions retain throughout a physical quality without any evidence of spiritual progression. Shortly after her (quite literal) marriage to Christ in the church of Santi Apostoli in Rome, for example, she experiences a quick succession of physical sensations, including ‘sounds and melodies’, ‘white things flying all about her’, and, of course, the ‘fire of love’:

Our Lord also gave her another token which lasted about sixteen years, and increased ever more and more, and that was a flame of fire of love — marvellously hot and delectable and very comforting, never diminishing but ever increasing; for though the weather were never so cold she felt the heat burning in her breast and at her heart, as veritable as a man would feel the material fire if he put his hand or his finger into it.

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By contrast, God instructs St Catherine to interpret her ‘five stages of tears’ through ‘the mind’s eye’ and as a form of spiritual progression from imperfect to perfect love.

This intellectual or doctrinal aridity in Margery Kempe’s work presents a problem to revisionist scholars attempting to portray her as a genuine mystic. Modern books about Margery generally resort to one of three approaches: they recount her travels and her social milieu; or they discuss her within the context of her more famous female contemporaries; or lastly, through a deconstructive ‘liberation’ of the female body from repressive, patriarchal language (a process christened in feminist circles as ‘writing the body’), they attempt to create her own unique category of mysticism altogether.

The intention of this article is to bring the discussion of female medieval mysticism back to issues of theology rather than those of modern gender politics which do not apply to the Middle Ages. The negative tradition was the product of centuries of practical experience in contemplation, much of it by women. Judged by this tradition, Margery Kempe led an active rather than a contemplative life. This does not mean that in the eyes of the Church it held no religious value. What it does mean is that the two must be distinguished. If scholars refuse to acknowledge the Catholic position, they risk failure to understand the mystics in their medieval religious context and perhaps are guilty of religious bigotry.

More importantly, the negative tradition allows us to evaluate impartially and, in the end, appreciate the substantial achievements of female mystics. By seeking to elevate Margery as a ‘shaman’, for example, we may be robbing the glory of Julian as a theologian. The negative tradition provided a level playing field in the mystical arena, and thus enabled medieval women to achieve an unusual degree of power and influence. Yet achieving power and influence was not the point of the exercise, as the mystics themselves surely would have pointed out. Something deeper, more spiritual was supposed to be going on. Without the modern secular world realizing it, female mystics may have touched God and thus have performed a feat miraculous for either gender.

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NOTES


2. This summary is based on M.D. Knowles, The English Mystical Tradition (London, 1961), 1-38.


4. St Augustine, City of God, Book VIII, Chapter 10 and Book XIX, Chapter 4.

5. St Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Part II-II, Question 182, Articles 1-4.


7. The Cloud of Unknowing, Chapters 1 and 4 (pp. 59 and 64 in the Wolters edition).

8. Ibid., Chapters 2, 5, and 43 (pp. 60, 66, and 110-11 in the Wolters edition).


10. The Cloud of Unknowing, Chapters 6 and 7 (pp. 67-70 in the Wolters edition).

11. Walter Hilton, The Scale of Perfection, Book 1, Chapter 1 (pp. 77-78 in the Clark and Dorward edition).


14. Ibid., Chapter 8 (p. 82 in the Clark and Dorward edition).

15. Ibid., Chapter 32 (p. 102 in the Clark and Dorward edition).


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Western Europe in the Middle Ages (London and New York, 1984), 1-16.


28. Ibid., Chapters 4 and 27 (pp. 216 and 256 in part 1 of the Colledge and Walsh edition).

29. Julian of Norwich, Showings, Chapter 8 (pp. 190 in the Colledge and Walsh edition).


34. St Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogue*, Chapter 60 (p. 113 in the Noffke edition).

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., Chapter 66 (p. 125 in the Noffke edition).


39. Ibid., Revelation 10 (pp. 142-43 in the Harris and Kezel edition).

40. St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Part II-II, Question 152, Article 4; Question 182, Articles 1 and 2.


52. The Cloud of Unknowing, Chapter 45 (p. 114 in the Wolters edition).
53. Walter Hilton, The Scale of Perfection, Book 1, Chapter 26 (p. 98 in the Clark and Dorward edition).
57. D.B. Mahoney, 'Margery Kempe's Tears and the Power over Language', in Margery Kempe: A Book of Essays, 42.
58. Knowles, English Mystical Tradition, 12.
60. Ibid., xi.
61. Margery Kempe, The Book of Margery Kempe, Chapters 2 and 15 (pp. 43 and 67-71 in the Windeatt edition).
62. Ibid., Chapters 4 and 35 (pp. 49-50 and 123 in the Windeatt edition).
63. Ibid., Chapter 14 (pp. 65-67 in the Windeatt edition).
64. Ibid., Chapter 26 (p. 98 in the Windeatt edition).
65. Ibid., Chapter 32 (p. 117 in the Windeatt edition).
66. Fries, 'Margery Kempe', 231. It is not certain that all of Margery's fourteen children were fully grown when she embarked on her first pilgrimage, to Jerusalem in 1413.
71. See Margery Kempe: A Book of Essays, especially chapters by: Mahoney, 'Margery Kempe's Tears', 37-50, S.J. McEntire, 'The Journey into Selfhood: Margery Kempe and Feminine Spirituality', 51-