The Latin Manuscripts of *The Mirror of Simple Souls*[1]

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The Latin tradition of *The Mirror of Simple Souls* (*Speculum Simplicium Animarum*) is a vast and still mostly untapped source of information on the history of the *Mirror*'s post-condemnation circulation. The surviving manuscripts reveal a lively, multi-faceted reception of the Latin *Mirror* amongst later medieval readers. On the one hand, it was immensely popular and successful; on the other, it was plagued by controversy and re-condemnation, and ruffled the feathers of many a fifteenth-century churchman. Though we have yet to fully discover the people behind the Latin tradition—its original translator, its copiers, its specific readers—the available evidence reveals a diverse circulation of manuscripts, both in terms of its audience and reception as well as its various physical manuscript forms. This chapter examines key aspects and issues in this varied tradition, discussing the characteristics of the surviving Latin manuscripts, the manuscript evidence revealing a negative reception of the *Mirror*, the potential origins of the Latin translation, its modes of dissemination, and the controversy it sparked amongst several religious circles in its fifteenth-century circulation in Northern Italy.[2]

[1] I would like to thank Robert Stauffer and Wendy Terry for inviting me to contribute to this volume. Thanks also to Zan Kocher and Robert Lerner for their many useful criticisms and comments which helped to greatly improve this piece.

[2] Late medieval opposition to the Latin *Mirror* tradition formed the subject of my doctoral thesis, Justine Trombley, *The Mirror Broken Anew: The Manuscript Evidence for Opposition to Marguerite Porete's Latin Mirror of Simple Souls in the Later Middle Ages* (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2014), which

The Latin tradition of the *Mirror* is represented today in six extant manuscripts: Vatican City, *Biblioteca apostolica vaticana*, Vat. lat. 4355, Rossianus 4, Chigianus B IV 41, Chigianus C IV 85, Vat. lat. 4953, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Latin 46.[3] Of these six, only four are complete *Mirror* copies—the remaining two consist of a list of quotes from a Latin *Mirror* which are refuted as errors (Vat. lat 4953), and the fragments of a once-complete *Mirror* copy which had most of its pages removed from the codex (Laud Latin 46). Five of the manuscripts are of Italian provenance; the sixth, Laud Latin 46, was copied in southern Germany in the fifteenth century.[4]

One Latin translation of the *Mirror* was made in England at the end of the fifteenth century by Richard Methley (1450/1-1527/8), a Carthusian monk of the

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contains detailed studies of the codices Laud Latin 46, Vat. lat. 4953, and MS 1647, as well as a more in-depth analysis of the events in Northern Italy. I am now preparing this thesis for publication as a monograph.

[3] A seventh manuscript, Padua, *Biblioteca universitaria*, MS 1647, which contains refutations of extracts from a Latin *Mirror*, can now be added to the above list, but its re-discovery has occurred too late for it to be discussed at length in this piece. On this manuscript see Justine L. Trombley, "New Evidence on the Origins of the Latin *Mirror of Simple Souls* from a Forgotten Paduan Manuscript", forthcoming in the *Journal of Medieval History*.

[4] There has been some debate over the origins of Laud Latin 46. Michael Sargent has stated that the handwriting of this manuscript does not resemble a German hand and has said that this manuscript is in fact Italian, based on a consultation with Nigel Palmer. See "Medieval and Modern Readership of Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simples âmes anienties*: the Continental Latin and Italian Tradition," in Alessandra Petrina (ed.), *The Medieval Translator/Traduire au Moyen Age* 15: *In principio fuit interpres* (Turnhout, 2013), 85-96, at 87-88, n. 8. I thank the author for pre-publication access to this article. The Bodleian Library designates this manuscript as "German," though the reason for this designation is unexplained. (See H.O. Coxe, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues: Laudian Manuscripts*, reprinted from the edition of 1858-1885, with corrections, additions, and historical introduction by R.W. Hunt (Oxford, 1973), 21-23.) The opinions of Sandro Bertelli and Attilio Bartoli Langeli are that the hands of this manuscript do not look at all Italian, but also not necessarily German. For the moment they have described the hands as "Northern European." I thank Dávid Falvay and Frances Andrews for facilitating consultation of Bertelli and Langeli. It is possible that the codex was copied in Germany by a non-German scribe. There are two watermarks in Laud Latin 46 that are almost an exact match to two South German watermarks (one from Pappenheim in 1442 and one from Frankfurt-am-Main in 1450) , so unless further paleographical/codicological evidence comes to light, I will refer to this manuscript as German in origin.

Mount Grace Charterhouse in Yorkshire.[5] This translation survives in Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 221, an early sixteenth-century copy done at the Sheen Charterhouse by the scribe William Derker, and which also contains Methley's translation of the fourteenth-century Middle English mystical work *The Cloud of Unknowing*.[6] This version of the *Mirror*, first completed on 9 December 1491, is attributed to Jan van Ruusbroec, the fourteenth-century Flemish mystic, and contains Methley's prologue and glosses on the text in addition to numerous other marginal comments and corrections in later hands.[7] This Latin *Mirror*, however, was made from the Middle English version and does not belong to the Continental Latin transmission. Therefore this manuscript is not discussed further in this chapter.[8]

In terms of specific ownership, there is only one manuscript which indicates where and when it was copied. A note in Chigianus C IV 85 tells us that it was

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[5] For an edition of the Methley manuscript see Richard Methley, *Speculum animarum simplicium: A glossed Latin version of 'The Mirror of Simple Souls,'* ed. John Clark, *Analecta Cartusiana* 266 (2010).

[6] A description of Pembroke 221 can be found in Montague Rhodes-James, *A descriptive catalogue of the manuscripts in the library of Pembroke College, Cambridge* (Cambridge: 1905), 197-198. The description states that a fragment of this *Mirror* is found in Laud Latin 46, though Laud Latin 46's fragment belongs to the Continental Latin *Mirror* tradition and is not from Methley's translation.

[7] See Clark (ed.), *Speculum animarum simplicium,* 1, fn. 2 for the Ruusbroec attribution. On Methley's glosses, see Edmund Colledge and Romana Guarnieri, "The Glosses by 'M. N.' and Richard Methley to the *Mirror of Simple Souls*,"in *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà* 5 (1968): 357-82.

[8] For more on Richard Methley and his Latin *Mirror* translation, see Clark (ed.), *Speculum animarum simplicium*, Colledge and Guarnieri, "The Glosses by 'M. N.' and Richard Methley," 357-82; Sara Harris, "'In cordis tui scrinio conserua': Richard Methley, *The Cloud of Unknowing* and Reading for Affectivity,"*Marginalia* (April 2011): 14-26; James Hogg, "Richard Methley's Latin Translations: *The Cloud of Unknowing* and Porete's *The Mirror of Simple Souls*,"*Studies in Spirituality* 12 (2002): 82-104; Laura Saetveit Miles, "Richard Methley and the Translation of Vernacular Religious Writing into Latin," in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. Kantik Ghosh and Vincent Gillespie (Turnhout: 2012): 449-66; and Nicholas Watson, "Melting Into God the English Way: Deification in the Middle English Version of Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simple âmes anienties*," in *Prophets Abroad: The Reception of Continental Holy Women in Late-Medieval England*, ed. Rosalynn Voaden (Cambridge: 1996), 19-50, at 48.

written in the Benedictine monastery in Subiaco, Italy, in November of 1521.[9] As to the ownership of the other four codices, we are left in the dark. None contain any marks of specific ownership, though by examining some of their physical characteristics and the nature of their contents, a few educated guesses can be made as to their general audience.[10]

The five manuscripts that are (or once were) complete Latin *Mirrors* all point, unsurprisingly, to readers interested in contemplation and mysticism, and more specifically instruction and guidance in these two categories. Those who read these copies of the *Mirror* collected works which not only discussed contemplation and mystical union, but which were also meant to guide the reader towards advancement in both. They built these guides by binding the *Mirror* with both traditional, well-established works—such as Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin Minor* and extracts from Pseudo-Dionysius—as well as with newer, more daring mystics such as the Catalan mystic and theologian Ramon Lull and the Italian mystic Angela of Foligno.[11] But next to these sophisticated mystical texts there are also more

[9] Chigianus C IV 85, f. 140v. Described in Paul Verdeyen, introduction to *Le Mirouer des Simples Ames/Speculum Simplicium Animarum*, by Marguerite Porete, ed. Romana Guarnieri and Paul Verdeyen, in *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), XI, [Hereafter *Speculum* CCCM], XI.

[10] Paolo Mariani has suggested, based upon its contents and geographical origins, that the Laud codex may have been owned by a congregation of the *Devotio Moderna*, a lay-devotional movement active in the Netherlands and in Germany in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. See Paolo Mariani, '*Liber* e contesto: Codici miscellanei a confronto,' in Giulia Barone and Jacques Delarun (eds.), *Angele de Foligno: Le dossier* (Rome, 199), 71-144, at 85. On the *Devotio Moderna* in general, see John van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2008).

[11] These works are found, respectively, in Chigianus B IV 41, Rossianus 4, and Laud Latin 46. The original textual context of the Subiaco *Mirror* is unclear, since it is a single *libellus* that was bound up

practical and simpler works, such as an Easter table, a collection of Pseudo-Augustinian epistles, and Martin of Braga's *De quattuor virtutibus*, works which on the whole are meant to guide the reader in more down-to-earth, day-to-day matters of virtuous spiritual living.

The common theme of mysticism, however, did not *de facto* mean a uniformity of audience in other aspects. Indeed, the *Mirror* seems to have travelled across multiple boundaries of wealth and education, and was copied for varying uses. Four of the five codices—Vat. lat. 4355, Chigianus B IV 41, Chigianus C IV 85, and Rossianus 4—are quite small, with the largest (Vat. lat. 4355) measuring only 21.3 x 14.8 cm. This suggests a desire for easy portability, or perhaps for easy concealment of a text that may have been considered less than orthodox.

The *Mirror* also seems to have interested people of varying financial means. Two of the codices—Vat. lat. 4355 and Chigianus B IV 41—give the impression of moderate wealth, as they are copied on heavy, high quality paper, and their texts are carefully and neatly laid out. While certainly not luxurious, someone expended a respectable amount of money on their construction. Rossianus 4, by comparison, has a much shabbier appearance, written on thick, rough parchment which is often uneven around the edges, and the attempts at decoration in red and blue on its first folio are slightly messy and inelegant, indicating less precision and therefore

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with a number of other works from various different time periods, some of which were written as late as the eighteenth century. There is, however, a medieval copy of Nicholas of Cusa's *De docta ignorantia* which immediately follows the *Mirror* in this manuscript.

perhaps less investment in its construction. The same can be said for Laud Latin 46, which is constructed of mixed parchment and paper, both of middling quality. All of the manuscripts are very plain in appearance; none contain illumination or decoration of any kind, save for the occasional pen flourish, red and blue initials, or a few decorative lines in red and blue, as in Rossianus 4. They were clearly made for practical use and not for display.

Though composition of a text in Latin often evokes images of the educated elite, the *Mirror*'s audience was probably more varied. Some codices—such as Vat. lat. 4355 and Chigianus B IV 41—have scripts which are small and heavily abbreviated, with very few breaks in the text, indicating that their readers were expected to be highly literate.[12] Another—Rossianus 4—is written in a very large, highly legible script which is hardly abbreviated at all. Additionally, this text provides the reader with character designations, written in red, before each voice in the *Mirror*, providing clear distinction between the different speakers.[13] This gives a much more open and accessible aspect to the text, seeming to guide the reader along and signposting shifts in the text with red paragraph marks. At the end of this manuscript is a fragment of Pseudo-Dionysius written in the Italian vernacular. All of these features indicate this book was probably meant for someone of lesser Latin literacy.[14]

[12] I thank Elizabeth A. R. Brown for this observation. Vat. lat. 4355 also contains marginalia, which has yet to be examined, a project which Pablo García-Acosta is currently undertaking.
[13] This convention is also used in the French Chantilly MS.
[14] The observation regarding Rossianus's handwriting is also Brown's.

Thus the *Mirror* seems to have had a relatively diverse readership in its Latin tradition, and was not merely of interest to one particular social group. This diversity also becomes evident in the history of its Northern Italian circulation, discussed later in this chapter.

The Latin in Relation to the Vernacular Traditions

The Latin is closely related to the French of the Chantilly manuscript and the Italian translations, as the Latin was probably made from an ancestor of the former, and the latter were originally made from the Latin.[15] Though there are many textual and structural variations between the Latin and the French, English, and Italian versions of the *Mirror,* they are not so significantly different that they alter the overall content. The Latin does contain four chapters (the latter half of 134, chapters 135, 136, and first half of 137), which are missing in the French, but this is due to the physical loss of two folios in the Chantilly manuscript, rather than deliberate

[15] This similarity between the Chantilly and the Latin has been noted by Povl Skårup, "La langue du *Miroir des simples âmes* attribué à Marguerite Porete", *Studia Neophilologica* 60.2 (1988): 231-236; Genvieve Hasenohr, "La tradition du *Miroir des simples âmes* au XVe siècle: de Marguerite Porète (†1310) à Marguerite de Navarre", in *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 4 (1999): 1347-1366, at 1358; Suzanne Kocher, *Allegories of Love in Marguerite Porete's Mirror of Simple Souls* (Turnhout, 2008), 50; and Robert Lerner, "New Light on *The Mirror of Simple Souls*" *Speculum* 85 (2010): 91-116, at 114-115.. The relationship between the French tradition and the Latin is discussed further below. That the Italian was made from the Latin tradition was first noted by Florio Banfi (the pseudonym of Hungarian scholar Ladislao Holik-Barabàs) in "*Lo Specchio delle anime semplici* dalla B. Margarita d'Ungaria scripto", *Memorie Domenicane* 57 (1940): 3-10, 133-139, at 137.

omission.[16] The Latin also preserves at the end of its text the appraisals from John of Quérénaing, Franc of Villiers, and Godfrey of Fontaines which are not present in the French manuscript but appear in both the Middle English and Italian.[17] Unlike both Chantilly and the Middle English, the majority of Latin manuscripts do not contain chapter divisions—only Chigianus B IV 41 and Laud Latin 46 have them, and Chigianus the only one to have titles for its chapters.[18] No one manuscript's chapter divisions are the same as another, both within the Latin tradition and the *Mirror* manuscript tradition as a whole. This variation suggests that chapter divisions were later interpolations in the text, additions by readers who may have felt that the *Mirror*'s complicated contents needed a more structured layout in order to be more easily understood. In a similar vein, one manuscript, Rossianus 4, contains the character labels of Love, the Soul, and Reason, which also appear in the Chantilly version, the only other manuscript in the entire *Mirror* corpus to do so. Again, these labels were probably added later, to provide noticeable breaks in the text and to signpost each statement, making the text easier to follow.

Along with these additions, there are also omissions in the main body of the Latin texts, omissions which may be examples of deliberate censorship, carried out

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[16] Noted in *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, trans. and ed. Edmund Colledge, Judith Grant, and J. C. Marler , (Indiana, 1999), 171. The titles for these chapters are present in the Chantilly manuscript's table of contents, so were intended to appear in the codex. This section is also present in the Middle English and Italian translations. All subsequent references to *Mirror* chapters are based upon the Chantilly chapter forms unless otherwise specified.

[17] In the Middle English the appraisals appear at the beginning, as part of the prologue to the main text.

[18] A chapter table comprises ff. 39r-40r in Chigianus B IV 41, and "c. 2" is written in the margins next to the second paragraph of the Laud Latin 46 fragment (f. 70v).

due to the controversial nature of their content.[19] For example, the third stanza of the poem from chapter 121, and the long "song" of the Annihilated Soul that comprises chapter 122—in which Marguerite mentions the disapproval of her work by beguines and the four Mendicant Orders—are entirely absent from the Latin.[20] The majority of chapter 15, which discusses pounding the Eucharist in a mortar as a way of discussing the humanity of Christ, is also missing. It is possible, though, that these omissions are mere lacunae in transmission, since there are several other passages within the *Mirror* which, if one were looking to edit particular statements in order to avoid controversy, would have been much more contentious than the chapter on the Eucharist, and all of these passages have survived intact in the Latin.[21] This is particularly evident in Vat. lat. 4953, with its thirty passages from a Latin *Mirror* which are marked as errors. Furthermore, this general section of the *Mirror*—namely chapters 122-137—seems to have been problematic in its transmission in general for most of the linguistic traditions; in addition to Chantilly's missing folios,

[19] Lerner, "New Light", 111. The chapter in question can be found in *Speculum* CCCM, 63-65.
[20] The last section of chapter 121 is also missing from the Latin. See *Speculum* CCCM, 339-349.
[21] For example, the Latin noticeably retains the provocative passage (not present in the Chantilly MS) at the end of chapter 117, where the Annihilated Soul states that she is the salvation of every creature and the glory of God, by reason of her wretchedness. (*Speculum* CCCM, 313-314) This passage is quoted as an error in Vat. lat. 4953. See Romana Guarnieri, "Il movimento del libero spirito: testi e documenti" in *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà* 4 (1965): 350-708, at 660. This manuscript is discussed in more detail below. Michael Sargent has noted that the passage about the Eucharist is not heterodox, but may have been considered "irreverent." See "Medieval and Modern Readership of Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simples âmes:* The Old French and Middle English Traditions," in Nicole Rice (ed.) *Middle English Religious Writing in Practice: Texts, Readers, and Transformations* (Turnhout, 2013), 56. I thank the author for allowing me pre-publication access to this article.

the Middle English also lacks the latter half of chapter 122 as well as chapters 123-125 and the first part of 126.[22]

Within the Latin tradition itself, every manuscript shares relatively the same reading as all the others; no one vastly differs from another in terms of content. Though a detailed analysis of the textual variants between the Latin manuscripts has yet to be undertaken, preliminary examinations show that, though there are no major differences between the various Latin codices, there are certain "pockets" of manuscripts that match more closely in their variants than with others. The most readily apparent difference is between the readings of Vat. lat 4355—which Verdeyen used as his main text for his modern printed version of the Latin—and those of Rossianus 4, Chigianus B IV 41, and Chigianus C IV 85, to which can also be added the fragments found in Laud Latin 46 and Vat. lat. 4953, which consistently agree with these three manuscripts, making this general version of the Latin the one with the widest dissemination, in terms of both numbers of manuscripts and geographic spread, given Laud Latin 46's German origins.[23] Within this general divide, there seem to be certain sub-groups: Chigianus B IV 41 more often agrees with Vat. lat. 4355, and Rossianus 4, Vat. lat. 4953, and Chigianus C IV 85 seem to match each other more frequently than with Chigianus B IV 41.[24] Outside all of this

[22] This lacuna in the English is noted by Lerner, "New Light," 100, and in *Speculum* CCCM, 342.
[23] Robert Lerner has also pointed out Vat. lat. 4355's frequent divergence in its readings. See "New Light", 114.
[24] There is not enough of Laud Latin 46's text to be able to gauge which "sub group" it belonged to.

is Chigianus C IV 85, whose grammar and vocabulary has in many places been simplified in order to make it more understandable.[25]

Vat. lat. 4355 has been described as bolder than the other Latin *Mirrors*, as it contains a daring sentence—in which the Soul says that contemplatives should not wish to increase in divine knowledge—which is not present in Chantilly, but is present in the Middle English.[26] But there are also additions—or omissions—in some of the other Latin codices which may also be considered bold. For example, in chapter 28, in which Love describes how the Soul "is submerged in the sea of joy" (*submergitur in mari gaudiorum*) and how she feels no joy and is transformed into joy itself, there is a following explanatory sentence which attempts to clarify the preceding passage: "Likewise, she says that she rejoices more concerning that which can be communicated to no one, than in that which is able to be communicated, because that is small and momentary, and the former is infinite and unending."[27] This clarifying statement, however, is not present in Rossianus 4 or Chigianus C IV 85. The passage concerning the "sea of joy" is the eleventh error in Vat. lat. 4953, demonstrating that this section was controversial to some, and thus the lack of the explanatory sentence may be seen as a boldness similar to the inclusion of the

[25] This is an observation made by both Elizabeth A. R. Brown (private correspondence) and Michael Sargent, who states that Chigianus C IV 85 is "ever idiosyncratic." See "Medieval and Modern Readership: the Continental Latin and Italian Tradition," 92, n. 25.

[26] Lerner, "New Light", 114. Lerner also notes that certain similarities in reading between Vat. lat. 4355 and the Middle English translation suggests that whoever made the archetype of Vat. lat. 4355 may have consulted a version of the *Mirror* closer to that which was used for the Middle English version. See Lerner, "New Light", 114-115.

[27] *Speculum* CCCM, 97. "Item dicit quod plus gaudet de illo quod communicari nulli potest, quam quod communicari potest, quia istud est modicum et punctuale, et infinitum et interminabile." All Latin translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

contemplatives/divine knowledge passage found in Vat. lat. 4355, mentioned above. Another example can be found in chapter 21, where Love states that "It is true that this [Soul] has taken freedom from the Virtues," which, in Vat. lat. 4355, is followed by the qualifying statement "so far as concerns their use, and as concerns the desire of that which the Virtues seek or require. But the Virtues have not taken freedom from these [Souls], and are continuously with them."[28] The second, explanatory part of this sentence is missing from Rossianus 4, Chigianus B IV 41, and Chigianus C IV 85.[29] Thus one Latin copy is not necessarily more daring than any of the other Latin manuscripts, but rather they vary in what bold or explanatory statements they contain or omit.

Reactions to the Latin: The Manuscript Evidence

While these daring passages did not deter the compilers of these manuscripts, as most of them clearly believed the *Mirror* had a place in a distinguished tradition of great contemplatives and apophatic thinkers, these codices also reflect a troubled tradition, where some of the copyists and/or readers of the *Mirror* were uncomfortable with—or, in some cases, outright opposed to—this daring mystical text. A certain uneasiness with the Latin *Mirror*'s contents is shown in the incipit and explicit of Chigianus B IV 41, where the *Mirror* is labelled as *speculatissimus*, a

[28] "Verum est quod ista licentiam accepit a virtutibus, quantum ad earum usum et quantum ad desiderium illius quod virtutes appetunt sive requirunt. Sed virtutes non accipiunt licentiam ab istis et continue sunt cum eis." *Speculum* CCCM, 81.
[29] See *Speculum* CCCM, 81.

superlative implying that this work is extremely speculative, or not very clear.[30] A note in the sixteenth-century manuscript Chigianus C IV 85, written at the *Sacro Speco* monastery in Subiaco, mentions that the book was not appropriate for printing, since it is too high for "the simple" (*simplicioribus*) and is "*quasi scandalosus*."[31] On the top of folio 130r, in the same notating hand, there is another comment, pointing to the passage wherein the character of Truth is explaining how the just man falls seven times each day, which states that "This statement seems to be against all the Doctors [of the Church]" (*Videtur haec expositio esse contra omnes Doctores*).[32]

This kind of uneasiness with the *Mirror*'s contents is not unusual; similar discomfort appears in the Middle English and French traditions. The prime example of this is the translator M.N.'s prologue to the Middle English, where M.N. relates how some of the *Mirror*'s words were taken amiss by some readers, and confesses feelings of "great drede" at translating such a complicated and unusual work.[33] M.N.'s explanatory glosses also demonstrate a desire to clarify and explain points that may appear to be doctrinally questionable. In the French tradition, Geneviève Hasenohr and Zan Kocher have noted a fifteenth-century French

[30] This is also noted by Paul Verdeyen in his introduction to *Speculum* CCCM, X, and Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion: Censorship and Tolerance of Revelatory Writing in Late Medieval England,* (Notre Dame, 2006), 276. The word *speculatissimus* is also used in the chapter table that comes immediately before the text of the *Mirror*, on f. 39r of Chigianus B IV 41, and again at the conclusion of the text, on f. 102r.

[31] fol. 129v in Chigianus C IV 85. Noted by Verdeyen, Introduction to *Speculum* CCCM, XI, and Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 276.

[32] fol. 130r in Chigianus C IV 85. See *Speculum* CCCM, 287, for the passage upon which it is commenting.

[33] Marguerite Porete, *The Mirror of Simple Souls: A Middle English Translation*, ed. Marilyn Doiron, *Estratto dall'Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà*, vol. 5 (1968), 247. For more on M.N.'s treatment of the *Mirror*, see Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 272-296.

composition, written by an anonymous monk of the Celestine monastery of Ambert and entitled *La discipline d'amour divine*, which criticizes some aspects of the *Mirror*, but which does not wholly reject the work as erroneous.[34]

It is clear that in both of these cases there is nothing of the inquisitorial or condemnatory. Unease and suspicion are present, but there is a desire to correct and explain rather than condemn and destroy. What appears in the Latin tradition, however, in both the manuscripts and in contemporary references to the *Mirror* in Italy, are negative attitudes toward the *Mirror of Simple Souls* that cross over from mere suspicion into rejection and condemnation.

To begin with the manuscript evidence, the most readily apparent example of strong opposition to the Latin *Mirror* is the manuscript Vat. lat. 4953, written sometime in the first half of 1439, judging by its contents.[35] The codex is almost entirely made up of documents relating to theological disputes between the Latin Church and the Greek Church, assembled in the context of the Council of Florence (1438-1439), which, led by the initiative of Pope Eugenius IV, sought union between

[34] Zan Kocher, "The Apothecary's *Mirror of Simple Souls*: Circulation and Reception of Marguerite Porete's Book in Fifteenth-Century France", *Modern Philology* 111.1 (2013: 23-47. Geneviève Hasenohr has printed extracts of this work in "La tradition," 1365. See also Hasenohr, "La seconde vie du *Miroir des Simples Ames* en France: Le Livre de la Discipline d'Amour Divine," in *Marguerite et le Miroir*, 263-217.

[35] This date is supplied by the presence of *De grecis errantibus et ipsorum erroribus*, a work written by Andrea Ispano d'Escobar, bishop of Megara, master of theology and chaplain to Pope Eugenius IV and which was finished in 1437. Emmanuel Candal, who edited this treatise in 1952, argues that this particular copy of *De grecis* contains a section which d'Escobar added shortly after the Council was transferred from Ferrara to Florence, which occurred in January 1439. See Emmanuel Candal, Introduction to *Tractatus Polemico-Theologicus de Graecis Errantibus*, vol. 1 (Rome, 1952), CXVII.

the two Churches.[36] On folios 29r-32r, however, there is a list of thirty direct quotations taken from a Latin *Mirror* copy which are presented as errors and are followed by refutations which use Scripture and theological/legal authorities to point out precisely why the extracts are erroneous. Though the list is incomplete—it starts immediately with a *Mirror* quote, with no formal incipit, and abruptly stops midsentence in another quote—it is a very clear case of someone who read the *Mirror* and, rather than glossing its passages to explain away any perceived difficulties, instead made sure that such difficulties were known as errors. It was almost certainly compiled by a theologian, or perhaps a group of theologians, judging by some of the vocabulary used and the sources it uses in its refutations, and its format and style are similar to those of formal academic assessments of errors and questionable propositions.[37] This list's origins can possibly be located in an assessment of the *Mirror* which took place in 1437, during the course of an inquisition against the *Mirror* conducted by Giovanni da Capestrano and commissioned by Eugenius IV.[38] The *vicarius* of Padua, Antonio Zeno, wrote in a

[36] Both Guarnieri and Verdeyen contextualize all of the documents in the codex as stemming from the Council of Ferrara, though this is slightly misleading, as it gives the impression that the codex is a record of events. But it seems more of a reference text for Council participants—some of the documents are actually copies of earlier dealings between the Greek and Latin churches, such as letters between Pope Gregory X and Michael Paleologus from the thirteenth century. It is the presence of d'Escobar's *De grecis errantibus* that places the context of the document in the Council of Ferrara-Florence. See Guarnieri, 'Il movimento,' 649, and Verdeyen, Introduction to *Speculum* CCCM, XI.
[37] Guarnieri noted that the sources used in the list indicate a Franciscan/Augustinian school of thought, judging by its references to St Bonaventure and other Franciscan thinkers such as Richard of Middleton and Alexander of Hales. See Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 650. On theological error lists, see Josef Koch, "Philosophische und Theologische Irrtumslisten von 1270-1329. Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklung der Theologische Zensuren," in Koch, *Kleine Schriften* (Rome, 1973), 423-450.
[38] This inquisition is discussed in more detail below.

letter he sent to the inquisitor Giovanni da Capestrano that, finding the *Mirror* in Padua, he extracted several articles from it which he sent, along with a copy of the entire work, to the theologians at the University of Padua for assessment.[39] It is possible that the list in Vat. lat. 4953 is a partial copy of the Paduan theologians' assessment.[40]

The list's appearance in Vat. lat. 4953 is mysterious, as its contents have nothing to do with Latin-Greek relations, but it is not entirely unprecedented. Many of the other documents are also concerned with the refutation of errors, though errors which are attributed to the Greek Church instead of the errors of any single work. Whoever assembled this manuscript probably mistook the *Mirror* list to also be concerned with Greek theological errors, since it has no title, incipit, or explicit which mentions the title of the book or explains its purpose. There are two main avenues through which the list could have made its way into this codex. The first is that, since Eugenius IV himself commissioned an investigation of the *Mirror*, then a copy of the Paduan theologians' examination of it could have been sent to him, and it could then have made its way into the company of other documents relating to papal business at the time, that is, negotiation of the union between the Greek and Latin churches at the Council of Florence. At some point losing its incipit and explicit, it could then have been mistaken for a list of Greek errors. The second

[39] See Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 647. This incident occurred within the larger context of an inquisition against the *Mirror* carried out in Venice by Giovanni da Capestrano, discussed below.
[40] This theory is put forth by Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 649-650.

avenue comes through a historical connection of the *Mirror* to events surrounding the Council of Basel, the rival council to that of Florence. At the exact same time as the Council of Florence was negotiating a union with the Greeks—in the summer of 1439—the *Mirror* was used to accuse Eugenius IV of heresy at the Council of Basel, with allegations that he supported the book and its errors. These errors had been extracted and presented to the council, which Guarnieri hypothesized to be a copy of the list drawn up by the Paduan theologians.[41] Again, if the list were associated with Eugenius in some way, then it could have fallen in with other documents connected to him at the time. Thus this document represents a persecutory context of the Latin *Mirror* in terms of both its contents and in the context of its potential origins.

Possibly related to Vat. lat. 4953 are certain marginal marks found in the fourteenth-century codex Rossianus 4. There are nineteen passages within this codex's *Mirror* copy that are each marked with a single cross drawn in the margin. Normally this would not indicate anything suspicious, since crosses were frequently used in the margins of manuscripts to highlight certain passages or to indicate insertions into the text, but in the case of Rossianus 4, fifteen out of the nineteen marked passages are cited as errors in Vat. lat. 4953. This could be explained away as coincidence, if it were not for the word *"error"* written in the margin on folio 23r, next to a passage which begins *"Ista filia Syon …,"* where it states that the annihilated Soul has no care for masses, sermons, prayers, or fasts, and which also appears in

[41] Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 650. This incident is discussed in further detail below.

Vat. lat. 4953.[42] Another marginal note on folio 29r appears to read "*Nota er[rorem].*" This means that, out of twenty-one marginal marks or words, sixteen match up exactly with passages which are cited as errors in the Vatican list. It appears, then, that these crosses and comments are not merely drawing the reader's attention to these passages, but are evidence of someone who went through this book and marked the passages that they found either questionable or, as in the two notes, outright errors.[43]

While Rossianus 4 survived to be read another day, there is one fifteenth-century Latin *Mirror*—Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Latin 46—which was less fortunate. This manuscript once contained an entire copy of the Latin *Mirror*, but which now only holds its first page, six stubs, and the closing paragraph; the rest of the work was purposefully cut out and unbound from the codex. The existence of the last paragraph has previously gone unnoticed, due to the fact that the page which immediately follows the one-page *Mirror* fragment—containing some of the Pseudo-Augustinian epistles which begin a few folios later—was misplaced when the codex was bound, thus giving the appearance that the epistles started several folios earlier, and that their initial page was taken out along with the rest of the Latin *Mirror*.

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[42] For the passage in question see *Speculum* CCCM, 69.

[43] The "crucifying" of passages with crosses does have some precedent in the examination of suspect works. When Peter Olivi's works were assessed in 1283, in his response to how the excerpts from his works were dealt with by his examiners, Olivi wrote that some of the excerpts were "condemned to be crucified or marked with the sign of the cross." (J.M.M.H Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris, 1200-1400* [Philadelphia, 1998], 25. See also Josef Koch, 'Irrtumslisten,' 437). Though this may not necessarily be what is taking place here, it was one way in which suspect statements were marked.

Though it is possible that this *Mirror* copy could have been cut out by someone who valued the work and wanted to have it for him-or-herself, there are a number of factors pointing to a more destructive impulse. If personal acquisition lay behind the work's removal, one would assume that, having already cut through six of its folios and then having unbound the entire codex to remove the remaining folios, the person removing the work would have also taken the trouble to take the first page as well. Additionally, this manuscript was circulating at a time when the *Mirror* itself was attracting a wealth of negative attention. While much of this attention was situated in Italy, there were also German instances of opposition.[44] This particular *Mirror* copy was bound up with two other works that were also subject to suspicion or attacks from churchmen in the past, giving the impression that the whole codex may have attracted negative attention and scrutiny. Thus there is a strong possibility that the *Mirror*'s removal from this manuscript came from a desire to destroy and not from a covetous impulse.[45]

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[44] For negative reactions in Italy, see below. A German example comes from the work of Johannes Wenck , a theologian at the University of Heidelberg. Wenck acquired an anonymous treatise which attacked the "errors of the beghards", errors which the anonymous author believed came from a book entitled *De simplici anima* (*On the Simple Soul*). Wenck appears to have been familiar with the *Mirror*, as in the margin next to this passage he has written *Ecce librum de simplici anima*. See Vatican, *Biblioteca apostolica vaticana*, MS Pal. lat. 600, f. 229v, cited inRudolf Haubst, *Studien zu Nikolaus von Kues und Johannes Wenck aus Handschriften der Vatikanischen Bibliothek* (Münster, 1955), 119. Also noted by Lerner (citing Haubst), *Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 170. Haubst also notes that this same passage concerning the *Mirror* states that a copy of it was owned by the Carthusians of Strassburg, indicating the possible existence of another Latin copy. (Haubst, ibid.) Verdeyen's suggestion that the Carthusian copy may be Laud Latin 46 seems unlikely, as there is no evidence to suggest a connection between the two. See Verdeyen, Introduction to *Speculum* CCCM, XI-XII.

[45] The two other works, Ramon Lull's Commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and the beginning of Angela of Foligno's *Memorial*, both faced uncertainty or, in Lull's case, rejection in later circulations. In the case of Angela, some copies of her work survive with a description (present in the Laud MS) of how her work was examined and approved by several churchmen, two of whom were

Intriguingly, the Bodleian *Mirror* also contains a ghost of Marguerite Porete herself. The formal title of *Speculum Animarum Simplicium* in the incipit is followed by "*Aliter vocatur Margarita*" ("Otherwise it is called 'the Pearl [or Marguerite]'").[46] This is not the only occurrence of *margarita* in the Latin tradition. In Chigianus B IV 41—which has descriptive titles for each of its chapters, the only other *Mirror* outside the Chantilly codex to do so—there are four chapter titles where *margarita* appears.[47] For example, in the heading for what in the Chigianus manuscript is chapter two (five in Chantilly), where "nine points" regarding the annihilated Soul are first mentioned, instead of "points" the Soul is said to be adorned with "*novem spiritualibus margaritis*" ("nine spiritual pearls").[48] Chapter three's title (Chantilly chapter seven) refers to the "*multis aliis margaritis*" ("many other pearls") with which

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inquisitors and one of whom was Cardinal Giacomo da Colonna, an approval which itself became suspect after the excommunication of Colonna by Boniface VIII in 1297. Her possible associations with the controversial Spiritual Franciscans also may have hindered dissemination of her book. See the Introduction to *Angela of Foligno's Memorial*, ed. and trans. Cristina Mazzoni (Cambridge: 1999), 17. Lull was a controversial figure both during his life and after, and, while highly popular with many, he also faced criticism from several later medieval figures such as Jean Gerson, Augustinus Triumphus, and the inquisitor Nicholaus Eymerich. Lull's *Sentences* Commentary was actually explicitly condemned by Eymerich in his *Directorium Inquisitorum* of 1376. See Alois Madre, *Die Theologische Polemik gegen Raimundus Lullus: Eine Untersuchung zu den Elenchi Auctorum de Raimundo Male Sentientium* (Münster: 1973), 74 and J. N. Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1971), 56, 213, and 286. It is clear, then, that whoever originally compiled the texts in Laud Latin 46 had a taste for texts that occupied grey areas of acceptability.

[46] Previous transcriptions have written ***alias*** *uocatur*. This is what appears in Verdeyen, Introduction to *Speculum* CCCM, XII, which is followed by Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 277, and Sargent, "Medieval and Modern Readership: The Continental Latin and Italian Tradition," 88. The abbreviation which appears in the Laud codex, however, actually reads *Al'r*, signifying *aliter*. The use of the 2-shaped round 'r' may have been mistaken for an 's'.

[47] These are chapters 2, 3, 4, and 6 in the Chigianus MS, chapters 5, 7, 10, and 13 in the Chantilly reckoning.

[48] Chigianus B IV 41, f. 41v, and *Speculum* CCCM, 19.

the Soul is adorned.[49] Though it is still a mystery how and why these "pearls" appear, they are perhaps cryptic references to Marguerite herself.[50] In no other manuscript are these points described as "pearls," nor is there really a precedent for them to be called as such. The word *margarita* appears only once in the main text of the *Mirror*, in chapter fifty-two, in which Love, speaking of the annihilated Soul, says "*O optime Nata, dicit Amor huic pretiosae margaritae* (O nobly born one, says Love to this precious pearl)."[51] Furthermore, though the soul being adorned with "*spiritualibus margaritis"* is a phrase that was used in other spiritual texts, it seems too much of a coincidence that *margarita* should appear both in this manuscript and in Laud Latin 46. The presence of these pearls suggest that, though knowledge of Marguerite's identity may have become divorced from her work, her name at least may have remained with it in some copies.

Origins

In considering how such a shadow of Marguerite was able to live on in the Latin tradition, one must inevitably ask how this tradition came to be in the first place, how it managed to rise—quite literally—from the ashes of its French predecessor.

[49] Chigianus B IV 41, f. 42v, and *Speculum* CCCM, 25.
[50] The name "Marguerite" (or "Margherita") also appears in the Italian tradition, where in three manuscripts the work is attributed to "Saint" Marguerite of Hungary. See the chapter in this volume by Dávid Falvay.
[51] *Speculum* CCCM, 153.

At the moment, this is impossible to answer; though some textual and contextual evidence offers glimpses into the Latin translation's composition, there simply isn't enough concrete evidence to point to one particular person, time, or place. However, certain aspects of the *Mirror* and its early circulation can be examined and tested as potential avenues for translation.

The Latin was certainly made from the French, as there are many words in the text that seem to be French borrowings, and not Latin words of French origin.[52] Whether or not this initial translation occurred within France itself has been questioned by some scholars. There are no known existing Latin *Mirror* manuscripts that are French in origin or can be placed in France in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.[53] The evidence of the manuscripts may point to fourteenth-century Italy as the initial place of translation, and several difficulties in translation, where the translator seems to have misunderstood or struggled with the sense of a word, suggests that the translator was probably not familiar with the original northern French dialect in which the *Mirror* was composed.[54] While further linguistic analysis

[52] Kocher, *Allegories of Love,* 50, and Hasenohr "La tradition du *Miroir,*" 1358.
[53] Romana Guarnieri commented that the handwriting of Rossianus 4 resembles a fourteenth-century French hand, but acknowledged that the presence of an Italian language fragment of Pseudo-Dionysius the Aeropagite at the end of this manuscript discounts its origins as French. See Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 643.
[54] Sylvain Piron, "Marguerite, Entre les béguines et le maîtres," in Sean L. Field, Robert E. Lerner, and Sylvain Piron (eds.), *Marguerite Porete et le Miroir des simples âmes: Perspectives historiques, philosophique, et littéraires* (Paris, 2013), 88; Edmund Colledge also notes some translation difficulties in "The Latin Mirror of Simple Souls: Margaret Porette's '*ultimate accolade*'?", in Helen Philips (ed.) *Langland, The Mystics and the Medieval English Religious Tradition: Essays in Honour of S.S. Hussey*, (Bury St. Edmonds, 1990), 180-183. An Italian origin for the Latin has been suggested by Michael Sargent, "Medieval and Modern Readership: The Continental Latin and Italian Tradition," 86.

is needed to test these theories, Sylvain Piron has recently noted another linguistic characteristic in the Latin which provides a more specific context. Piron has noted the use of the word *philocapta* in the *Mirror*, a word which was created by Ramon Lull between 1276 and 1283.[55] This term became current mostly in the south of France and in Italy between the years 1310 and 1330.[56] Using this evidence, Piron has theorised that the Latin *Mirror* could have been generated in the Rhône Valley, in the context of the Council of Vienne, where the decree *Ad nostrum*—with its *Mirror*-like errors—had been constructed.[57] Piron notes that the translator was probably a cleric, since the Latin used is more theologically explicit in its descriptions of certain concepts which are vague in the French.[58] A translation in the Rhône Valley would help to explain both the translator's difficulty with Marguerite's northern dialect, and its relatively rapid appearance in Italy by the mid-fourteenth century.[59] Another indicator of an origin more removed from the Paris and Valenciennes regions can be located in chapter 82 of the *Mirror*. In this chapter Marguerite likens the annihilated Soul to a river which loses itself once it joins the sea. In the Middle French and Middle English texts, the rivers of the Oise and the Seine (Middle French) or the Oise and the Meuse (Middle English) are given as examples of such a river.[60] In the Latin translation, however, there is no mention of any specific river, merely "a course of

[55] Piron, "Marguerite, Entre les béguines et le maîtres," 87.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 88.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] See Doiron (ed)., *The Mirror of Simple Souls: A Middle English Translation*, 316, and *Speculum* CCCM, 234-235.

water" or "the water of a river" (*una aqua/aqua fluminis*).[61] This could indicate that wherever this translation was made, the translator might have felt that his audience would not be familiar with the names of the Oise, Meuse, Aisne, or Seine, and therefore omitted any river name altogether.[62]

As mentioned above, the readings of the Latin versions tend to match with the reading of the Chantilly manuscript, and thus the Latin is likely descended from an Old French copy similar to that which was the ancestor of Chantilly.[63] Some have suggested that the tradition from which the Latin was made to be doctrinally tamer than that of the Middle English tradition, as some of the more daring statements Marguerite makes are "toned down" with qualifying statements. This has led Robert Lerner to theorize that the Chantilly and Latin traditions are perhaps not entirely accurate witnesses to Marguerite's original work, as he does not believe she would have modified her work to make it more acceptable.[64] Michael Sargent, on the other hand, has argued that, due to the sheer amount of textual variations present in all four linguistic traditions—French, Latin, Middle English, and Italian—no one linguistic tradition of the *Mirror* should be considered superior to another in representing the original *Mirror*.[65] I am inclined more towards the latter argument. There is both historical and textual evidence in the *Mirror* itself that suggests there

[61] *Speculum* CCCM, 235. The *aqua fluminis* reading is from Chigianus C IV 85.
[62] Piron also makes this point, "Marguerite, entre les béguines", 88.
[63] Hasenohr, "La tradition du *Miroir*," 1358, and Lerner, "New Light", 114-115.
[64] Lerner, "New Light", 101-103.
[65] Michael Sargent, "Medieval and Modern Readership of Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simples âmes:* The Old French and Middle English Traditions," 82.

were multiple versions of the *Mirror* already circulating during Marguerite's lifetime, edited by her own hand as a result of her efforts to justify her work to those who found it objectionable.[66] With so many copies circulating, it is difficult to point to any one manuscript or tradition, or any one theoretical ancestor of a tradition, that exemplifies what an original *Mirror* would have looked like, and indeed the idea of a single model of "the" original *Mirror* may not be viable.[67]

Keeping this in mind, we turn to the question of *when* the Latin translation originated. As noted above, Sylvain Piron has suggested sometime between the years 1310-1330, and it is possible that a Latin *Mirror* could even have circulated during Marguerite's lifetime.[68] If, as her book and trial documents suggest, Marguerite sent individual copies of her work to the three assessors mentioned at the end of the *Mirror* and the bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, as well as having imparted her book to beghards and "others," this indicates a fairly large number of *Mirror* copies in circulation at a very early stage, which would have given it ample opportunity to have found a Latin translator early on.[69] Furthermore, since the

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[66] This point is made by Sean L. Field, *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor: The Trials of Marguerite Porete and Guiard of Cressonessart* (Indiana, 2012), 55. Kocher also suggests the existence of multiple versions in *Allegories of Love*, 32.

[67] Zan Kocher has pointed out the sheer vastness of variation and the complicated, incomplete relationships between the surviving *Mirror* codices, which break down the idea of a single, monolithic *Mirror*. Personal correspondence; I thank the author for sharing his opinions with me.

[68] Piron, "Marguerite, entre les béguines," 88. New evidence has now come to light which suggests that the Latin translation could have been made before 1317. See Trombley, "New Evidence on the Origins of the Latin *Mirror of Simple Souls*", forthcoming. Kocher believes that French and Latin versions were circulating simultaneously in the years leading up to Marguerite's second clash with ecclesiastical authorities. See *Allegories of Love*, 49.

[69] For the theory of multiple *Mirror* copies circulating during Marguerite's lifetime, see Marie Bertho, *Le miroir des âmes simples et anéanties de Marguerite Porète: une vie blessée d'amour* (Paris, 1993), 29-32,

existence of so many *Mirror* copies implies that Marguerite was a woman of considerable financial means, she may also have been able to commission a Latin translation herself, in an attempt to reach as broad an audience as possible, though this argument is weakened by the fact that a French copy would have sufficed for both Latinate and non-Latinate audiences around Marguerite's home region of Hainaut.[70] The translator's possible unfamiliarity with Marguerite's dialect also detracts from this argument.

If not made by Marguerite herself, some have suggested that the Latin version came from her persecutors. Paul Verdeyen theorized that the first Latin translation was commissioned by William of Paris in order that he might present extracts from it to the Parisian theologians for examination.[71] While William certainly possessed a copy of the *Mirror*, as the trial documents note that he showed a copy of it to the theologians when consulting them on its orthodoxy, William would have been capable of extracting and translating the excerpts himself without needing to translate the entire work. This was the practice for other vernacular works of the time which were subject to judgement.[72] Given William's explicit statement at Marguerite's sentencing that he wanted to exterminate and burn her book, it is

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and also Field, *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor*, 55, and Kocher, *Allegories of Love*, 32-33. Lerner speculates that there may have been no fewer than four or five copies of the *Mirror* in existence before Marguerite's arrest in 1308. See Lerner, "New Light," 108.

[70] Kocher makes a similar point about Marguerite seeking a wide audience, and possibly sending out both Latin and French copies, in *Allegories of Love*, 49.

[71] Paul Verdeyen, Introduction to *Speculum* CCCM, VII, and Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 389, n. 4.

[72] This point is made in Lerner, "New Light," 111, Colledge, "The Latin *Mirror of Simple Souls*: Margaret Porette's 'Ultimate Accolade'?," 182, and Field, *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor*, 321, n. 13.

unlikely that any copy William possessed would have survived and circulated to a wider audience.

It has also been suggested that the Dominican convent of St. Jacques in Paris could have held at least one or two copies of the *Mirror*, turned in as a result of William's command and perhaps, having been turned in at a later date, more likely to have escaped destruction than William's copy. These could then have been accessed by any who resided there.[73] Winfried Trusen has argued that Berengar of Landora, one of the theologians consulted on Marguerite's book and who became the Dominican Master General in 1317, may have given copies of the *Mirror* to some of his provincials, as a way of familiarizing them with the threat of so-called "free spirit" ideas so that they could more effectively combat them in their jurisdictions.[74] While it is not impossible that Berengar could have in some way made his provincials aware of the *Mirror of Simple Souls*, this is an unlikely avenue for the first Latin translation. If the copies Berengar distributed to his provincials were Latin translations he commissioned, this would mean that the initial Latin translation of the *Mirror* would have been done in a persecutory context. Yet the surviving Latin

[73] Herbert Grundmann, "Ketzerverhöre des Spätmittelalters als quellenkritisches Problem," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 21 (1965): 519-575, at 529, and Winfried Trusen, *Der Prozess gegen Meister Eckhart: Vorgeschichte, Verlauf, und Folgen* (Paderborn, 1988), 41.

[74] Trusen, *Der Prozess gegen Meister Eckhart*, 41. This theory is presented by Trusen as one way in which Meister Eckhart could have come into contact with Marguerite Porete's ideas. Berengar's potential use of the *Mirror* is also discussed in Justine L. Trombley, "The Master and the Mirror: The Influence of Marguerite Porete on Meister Eckhart," *Magistra: A Journal of Women's Spirituality in History* 16.1 (2010): 60-102, at 70-73.

manuscripts were all written within spiritual/devotional contexts, as most are bound up with other orthodox religious works.[75]

In considering Berengar, we come to the question of *who*: Who might have made the first Latin translation? A likely milieu is the beghards and "others" to whom Marguerite imparted her book. Some that may have encountered Marguerite's book, particularly those of the beghards, were very likely literate in Latin.[76] Even if those to whom she imparted the book were not Latin educated, both beghards and beguines were known to have close connections with the Franciscan and Dominican orders, particularly in the early fourteenth century, as is shown by a number of beghards becoming Franciscan tertiaries when they fell under suspicion from ecclesiastical authorities.[77] It is very possible that the *Mirror* made its way, either directly or through a series of transmissions, into the hands of an interested Latin translator by circulating through this group.

Copies of the *Mirror* could also have been in the hands of the university theologian Godfrey of Fontaines, the Franciscan John of Quérénaing, and the monk Franc, cantor of the Abbey of Villers, the men whose appraisals—and praise—of the *Mirror* appear within its pages. Both John and Godfrey cautioned that the *Mirror*

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[75] Field also makes this point in *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor*, 206.
[76] A relevant example is Marguerite's defender Guiard of Cressonessart (described as a *beguinus* in the trial documents), who had very likely taken minor orders and was literate in Latin. See Field, *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor*, 34, and Robert E. Lerner, "Addenda on an Angel," in Field, Lerner, and Piron (eds.), *Marguerite et le Miroir*, 204-205.
[77] Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, trans. Steven Rowan (Indiana: 1995), 60, and Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries 1200-1500* (Philadelphia, 2003), 116.

should not be broadly circulated, so it is difficult to see them translating or commissioning a translation against their own counsel.[78] Franc of Villers appended no such qualification to his praise of Marguerite's work, merely saying that the book "was proved well by the Scriptures, that it is all truth that this book says."[79] But it is unlikely that Franc was the initial Latin translator. His praise for Marguerite's book is short—one could even say terse—and there does not seem to be a strong enough link between Franc, or even the Abbey of Villers, and the Latin text to support such a theory. What the presence of these three men *do* demonstrate, however, is the movement of a physical copy of the *Mirror of Simple Souls* into an at least quasi-sympathetic and learned, Latin-literate level of society. If each man possessed his own copy of the *Mirror*, then unless they were at some point destroyed, these copies were still available in Latin circles; where they may have ended up after their possession by Godfrey, John, and Franc is not documented. Until further evidence comes to light, whoever made the initial decision to bring the *Mirror* onto the broader international stage of the Latin language will, for now, remain a mystery.

Controversies Over the Mirror in Fifteenth-Century Italy

At some point in the fourteenth century the Latin *Mirror* arrived in Northern Italy. There are no known mentions of the *Mirror of Simple Souls* in fourteenth-

[78] The counsel that few should see the *Mirror* is found in *Speculum* CCCM, 405-407.
[79] Though Sean Field points out that Marguerite may have left out other aspects of Franc's appraisal (Field, *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor,* 52), if he had cautioned against its circulation as did John and Godfrey, one would expect her to have included it as she did in the other testimonies. The English translation I use here is also taken from Field, 52.

century Italian sources, but by the fifteenth century numerous references to it appear in contemporary sermons, letters, and, in one instance, an account of the Council of Basel. These references show that in fifteenth-century Italy the *Mirror* seems to have had its most popular—and controversial—circulation.[80] The attacks and controversies over the *Mirror* in Italy, which this section will examine, demonstrate a contemporary context for the negative treatment of the *Mirror* already exhibited by the manuscript evidence.

The first recorded reaction to the *Mirror of Simple Souls* in Italy comes from the famous Franciscan preacher Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444). In the third sermon of his *Quadragesimale de christiana religione*, composed between 1417 and 1429, he first remarked that "the doctrine of a book which is called *On the Simple Soul* is condemned in *Extra, De haereticis*, a single chapter in the Clementines, where many errors of that book are set forth."[81] In a Lenten sermon, entitled *De fide et mortua,*

[80] Though in many of these instances it is difficult to tell whether it is the Latin *Mirror* or the Italian *Mirror* which is referenced, I still include them in relation to the Latin tradition because it reflects the climate in which the surviving Latin manuscripts would have circulated and thus has bearing on how the Latin circulation in Italy may have been received. Michael Sargent raises a similar point in his "Medieval and Modern Readership of Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simple âmes*: The Continental Latin and Italian Tradition," 90, n. 19. Sargent's article also gives a brief overview of the events discussed in this section.

[81] From *Sancti Bernardini Senensis, Opera omnia : synopsibus ornata, postillis illustrata, necnon variis tractatibus, praecipuè eximiis in Apocalypsim commentariis locupletata*, Johannes de la Haye (ed.), vol. 1, (Venice, 1755), 14. Cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 467. "Extra, De haereticis, cap. unico, in Clementinis, condemnatur doctrina libri qui *De anima simplici* nuncupatur, ubi explicantur plurimi illius libri errores." The chapter Bernardino is referencing is the decree *Ad nostrum*. For a study of Bernardino's broader preaching concerning heresy, witchcraft, sodomy, and Jews, see Franco Mormondo, *The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino of Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 1999).

Bernardino explicitly presents the *Mirror* as the "doctrine" of free spirit heretics. He writes that there are those who:

> if they showed outwardly that which they believe within their hearts, would be justly burned. Among these [people] are counted those who are lapsed into the damned heresy of the free spirit, whose doctrine is set down in the book which is usually entitled *On the Simple Soul*. Whoever makes use of it together falls into this heresy, although these people, when they are infected with this pestilential sickness, *to make excuses in sins* [Psalms 141:4], and to attack the spirit of truth, may say [that] this book and status is not understood by their attackers; and thus they judge and condemn the Church, which condemned this doctrine in sacred council, as is clear in *Extra*, *de haereticis*, a single chapter in the Clementines, where many condemned articles of this heresy and of this book are enumerated.[82]

In the same cycle of sermons, Bernardino describes those who claim to arrive at "remarkable annihilation" (*admirabilem annihilationem*) without needing anything else, and declares that this is described in the book *Simplicium Animarum*.[83] In a treatise on the Blessed Virgin, written between 1430-1440, Bernardino, in describing the tranquillity of the Virgin and of "the just", he writes that those who are in rapture can control their feelings so that nothing can move them, and notes that

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[82] Bernardino of Siena, *Opera Omnia,* Pacifico Perantoni and Augustino Sepinski (eds.), vol. 3, (Florence, 1952), 109: "si extra ostenderent quod intus in corde credunt, iuste comburerentur. Inter quos numerandi sunt quidam qui lapsi sunt in damnatam haeresim de spiritu libertatis, quae doctrina ponitur in libro qui *De anima simplici* intitulari solet; quo qui utuntur in illam haeresim communiter prolabuntur, licet tales, quando tali pestifero morbo infecti sunt, *ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis* et ad impugnandum spiritum veritatis, dicant talem librum et statum non intelligi ab impugnatoribus suis; et sic iudicant et damnant Ecclesiam, quae talem doctrinam in sacro concilio condemnavit, sicut patet *Extra*, *de haereticis*, unico capitulo in *Clementinis*, ubi illius haeresis atque libri plures condemnati articuli numerantur." In the following paragraph Bernardino listed 'free spirit' heretics along with others whom he believed presented a falsely pious face to the world, along with sodomites, witches, and converted Jews.

[83] Cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 468. From Bernardino of Siena, "Est de duodecim admirandis: Articulus III, Caput III", in de la Haye, *Opera Omnia*, 374. Bernardino in this sermon also claims to have personally encountered these errors.

"the book *de anima simplici atque de anima libera* refers to this state and time, although many useless, dangerous, and wrong things, able to deceive many, are contained in that book."[84] In each of these attacks on the *Mirror*, Bernardino links it to *Ad nostrum* in the Clementine decrees, and thus made it repeatedly clear that the *Mirror of Simple Souls* had been definitively condemned by church authorities and was a dangerous "carrier" of heresy.[85]

At about the same time, 29 April 1433 in Padua, at the general chapter of the Reformed Benedictine Congregation of Sta. Giustina, it was declared that:

> He who is presiding over the government [of the monasteries] ought to inquire throughout the entire congregation concerning a book which is called *Of the Simple Souls*, and wherever he discovers these sorts of books seize [it] himself, and let him prohibit it lest our brothers make use of it. [86]

While it is unknown where specifically the order came from, the head of the Order at this time was Ludovico Barbo (1381-1443), a Venetian who, through his close ties with Pope Eugenius IV, also had ties to Bernardino of Siena and other

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[84] Bernardino of Siena, "De Immaculata Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis," in *Sancti Bernardini Senensis Ordinis Seraphici Minorum Sermones eximii de Christo Domino, augustissimo Eucharistiae Sacramento deipara Virgine, de tempore necnon de sanctis*, vol. 4, Johannes de la Haye (ed.) (Venice, 1745). "Et de hoc statu et de illo tempore loquitur libro *de anima simplici atque de anima libera*, licet in illo libro multa nugatoria et plurium deceptiva atque periculosa et erronea contineantur."
English translation by Campion Murray OFM, at the Yarra Theological Institute, Australia. Published online at http://esvc001262.wic011tu.server-web.com/spirituality/campion/Bernardine%20-%20sermons%20BVM/Sermon1-4.htm (Accessed November 2013).

[85] Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 467-468.

[86] "presidens regiminis debeat inquirere per totam congregacionem de libro qui dicitur *Simplicium Animarum*, et ubicumque reperit huiusmodi libros capiet apud se, et prohibeat ne fratres nostri eo utantur." T. Leccisotti (ed.), *Congregationis S. Iustinae de Padua O.S.B. ordinationes capitulorum generalium,* parte I (1424-1474), vol. I (Montecassino: 1939), 36, also cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 468-469, Gregorio Penco, "Lo *Speculum Simplicium Animarum* al S. Speco di Subiaco" *Benedictina* 34 (1987): 529-530, at 530, though gives the date as "1443," which is incorrect. This incident is also noted in Ildefonso Tassi, *Ludovico Barbo (1381-1443)* (Roma, 1952), 124.

figures in Eugenius's circle who were involved with the *Mirror*, discussed below.[87] Two years after Sta. Giustina's ban, in Florence in 1435, the protonotary Gregorio Correr, nephew of Antonio Correr, a cousin and another close friend of Pope Eugenius IV, sent a letter to Cecilia Gonzaga, warning her against delusions and dreams, "like that book by an I-don't-know-who little woman, which is called the *Mirror of Simple Souls*."[88]

Autumn 1437 saw a succession of events in Venice in which the *Mirror* once again faced an inquisitorial challenge. It began on 9 August, when Pope Eugenius IV—himself a Venetian—wrote a letter to Giovanni da Capestrano, another prominent Observant Franciscan (and close associate of Bernardino of Siena), and Lorenzo Giustiniani, at the time bishop of Castello in Venice, but who would later become the Patriarch of Venice (in 1451). Eugenius commissioned Giovanni and Lorenzo to investigate rumours of heresy which had sprung up in Lorenzo's home diocese of Castello.[89] The precise impetus behind Eugenius's order is unclear. The

[87] See Tassi, *Ludovico Barbo*, 12 and 138. Pesce notes that at the time the ban was issued, Barbo was absent from Sta. Giustina. See Luigi Pesce, *Ludovico Barbo, Vescovo di Treviso (1437-1443)* vol. 1 (Padova, 1969), 159.

[88] From 'Opuscula G. Corrarii', in Giovanni B. Cantarini (ed.), *Anecdota Veneta*, vol. 1, (Venice, 1777), 42, cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 469. "sicut libellum illum nescio cuius mulierculae, qui *Speculum Simplicium Animarum* intitulatur." It is unclear how Correr knew that the book was written by a woman, but it is possible that he had encountered a Latin manuscript similar to Laud Latin 46, which may have contained the name "Margarita." See above. I thank Zan Kocher for suggesting this point.

[89] Letter of Eugenius IV to Lorenzo Giustiniani and Giovanni da Capestrano, in *Bullarium Franciscanum*: *Eugenii IV et Nicolai V, ad tres ordines S.P.N. Francisci spectantia : 1431-1455* 1, Ulricus Hüntemann (ed.), (Florence, 1929), 145-146. This letter is also in Luke Wadding, *Annales Minorum seu Trium Ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, vol. 11, ed. Rocco Bernabo and José María Fonseca y Ebora (Rome, 1734), 13 and 14. Accessed via the Hathi Trust, http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=ucm.5319085016;view=1up;seq=33 [September 2013].

primary source evidence for this episode comes mainly from the work of the seventeenth-century Irish Franciscan Luke Wadding (1588-1657), who collected and printed copies of the letters pertaining to this inquisition.[90] Above his printed edition of the letter from Eugenius IV to Giovanni and Lorenzo, Wadding wrote that the pope had commissioned them specifically to investigate the order of the *Gesuati*—a religious congregation founded by the merchant Giovanni Colombini in 1360—and the book *Speculum simplicium animarum*, though neither of these things are mentioned in Eugenius's letter.[91] This was followed by Guarnieri, who even supplied a Latin quote, saying that Eugenius commissioned Giovanni and Lorenzo to conduct an inquisition *circa materiam libelli fatui et erronei, qui dicitur Liber simplicium animarum*.[92] Use of this quote, however, is misleading, as it does not appear in Eugenius's letter to Giovanni and Lorenzo, but rather is mentioned in a separate, later letter from the Venetian cardinal Antonio Correr—close friend and cousin to Eugenius IV—sent to Giovanni da Capestrano.[93] Nonetheless, it is this letter from Correr which may demonstrate a specific interest in the *Mirror* by Eugenius IV. The full version of the sentence mentioned above reads *Intelleximus dominum nostrum commisisse vobis inquisitione circa materiam libelli fatui et erronei, qui dicitur Liber simplicium animarum*. ("We have understood our lord to have entrusted

[90] Wadding, *Annales Minorum seu Trium Ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, 13 and 14.
[91] Wadding, Introductory note to *Ad ea que pacem* (August 1437), in ibid., 13. On the *Gesuati* see Georg Dufner, *Geschichte der Jesuaten* (Rome, 1975); also Isabella Gagliardi, "L'eremo nell'anima: i gesuati nell Quattrocento" in André Vauchez (ed.), *Ermites de France et d'Italie (XI^e-XV^e siècle)* (Rome, 2003), 439-459, and Gagliardi, *I Pauperes Yesuati: Tra Esperienze Religiose e Conflitti Istituzionali* (Rome, 2004).
[92] Guarnieri, 'Il movimento', 472.
[93] See Guarnieri's transcription of this letter, dated 13 September 1437, in "Il movimento", 647.

to you an inquisition on the matter of a foolish and erroneous little book which is called *The Mirror of Simple Souls*").[94] "Our lord" here is a reference to Eugenius IV.[95] However, this does not necessarily mean that Eugenius's initial commission to Giovanni and Lorenzo concerned the *Mirror*; as this letter was sent after discovery of the *Mirror* in Venice by Giovanni, it is possible that Eugenius had commissioned Giovanni to look into it after the broader inquisition was already under way. It is unclear, then, if the *Mirror* and the *Gesuati* were singled out by Eugenius from the beginning, as they are not mentioned in any of the available primary documents until after the inquisition had begun.

Though the *Mirror* may not have been an initial focal point of the inquisition, it rapidly became one. Giovanni and Lorenzo discovered the *Mirror* circulating in Venice, and Giovanni was no more positively impressed by it than was his confrere Bernardino of Siena. In a letter (now lost) of 9 September 1437 to Eugenius IV, Giovanni apparently informed the pope of the many errors which he had found in the *Mirror*. We know of this letter's existence and contents due to a follow-up letter written by Giovanni the next day, where he begins by mentioning his previous letter concerning the *Mirror* and its "*multi patentes errores, ab Ecclesiam iam damnati*" ("many open errors, already condemned by the Church") before going on to describe further results from his and bishop Lorenzo's inquisition.[96] Additional

[94] In Guarnieri, "Il movimento", 647.
[95] This letter is discussed in more detail below.
[96] The reference to the letter is: "Pridie Vestrae Sanctitati succincto sermone scribebam de *Speculo simplicium animarum*" "Yesterday, having prepared a sermon, I wrote to Your Holiness concerning the

investigation into the heresy allegations had revealed other books, which were "written from the dictation of a certain lady Mina, in which the deceits of demons and revelations of the imagination are clearly accessible."[97]

Though the ideas of this mysterious "Mina" (already deceased at the time of this investigation) seem to have had little in common with the *Mirror*'s contents, her case still merits brief comment, as her writings were circulating in the same milieu as the *Mirror*, and her appearance in this case has not previously been mentioned. Giovanni describes Mina's works as "ravings" (*debachata*). She claimed to have in her womb two children: the male, Mina purportedly claimed, would someday become Pope, and the female would "defend the faith of women" (*mulierum fidem defendet*). Mina also apparently claimed that she had been given the keys to the kingdom of heaven, which caused some of those around her to make shows of obedience, such as kneeling and kissing her hand (*reverentia genuflectionis et cum osculo manus*).[98] Giovanni went on to say that there are many more "immense and

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Mirror of Simple Souls..." Capestrano's letter of September 10 is reproduced in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 645. The missing letter of 9 September is mentioned in Gedeon Gál and Jason M. Miskuly (eds.) "A Provisional Calendar of St. John Capistran's Correspondence", in *Franciscan Studies* 49 (1989): 255-345, at 290.

[97] Guarnieri, "Il movimento", 645. "conscriptos ex dictatu cuiusdam dominae Minae, in quibus expressissime patent daemonum illusiones et revelationes phantasticae."

[98] Letter of Capestrano to Eugenius IV, cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 646. Though Mina's pregnancy claim is unique, other aspects of her brief story—receiving the keys to the kingdom of heaven, others making signs of obedience to her—are similar in nature to the stories of early fourteenth century female "heretics" such as the Languedoc Béguin Na Prous Boneta or the Milanese Guglielmite Maifreda da Pirovano. On Na Prous Boneta see Louisa Burnham, *So Great a Light, So Great a Smoke: The Beguin Heretics of Languedoc* (Ithaca, New York, 2008), 140-161. For the testimony of Maifreda da Pirovano, see Felice Tocco, "Il processo dei guglielmiti," *Rendiconti dell'Academia Real dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiches,* 5th ser. 8 (1899), 310-342. The "Mina" referred to here may even be a garbled reference to the Guglielmite "founder" Guglielma of Milan.

wicked [things]" (*multa enormi et nefandissima*) contained in her books, which he could not lay out in full in a letter. Based upon the contents of her books, her body should be exhumed and publicly burned, according to canonical sanctions, and her books publicly condemned in the city.[99] There is no record of whether this was actually carried out, and, if her works were in fact burned, whether or not the *Mirror* and some of the other objectionable works uncovered by Lorenzo and Giovanni joined them in the flames.

Seven days before Giovanni da Capestrano sent his letter on Mina and the *Mirror*, Giovanni Tavelli Tossignano, the bishop of Ferrara, wrote to Giovanni protesting against the inquisitor's investigation of the *Gesuati* during the course of their inquisition in Venice. It has been noted that, according to the letter, part of the suspicion aimed at the *Gesuati* stemmed from their possession of the *Mirror of Simple Souls*. The letter in question is a fragment, whose incipit is apparently missing but which begins with Tavelli's remark that he was "greatly astonished" (*miror valde*) concerning "the book" (*de libro*) and the allegation that it contained errors, since it had been read "by many servants of God" (*per plures servos Dei legatur*) who had not perceived any errors within its pages. He then immediately

[99] Letter of Capestrano to Eugenius IV, cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 646. "Et multa enormia et nefandissima continentur in his libris, quae brevi calamo nequeunt explicari, ex quibus, iuxta canonicas sanctiones, corpus exhumari deberet et publice concremari."

went on to defend the reputations of the *Gesuati*, of whom he had been a member for twenty-five years.[100]

The *Mirror*, however, is not mentioned by name anywhere in this letter; there is merely a single mention of an unidentified book. Thus it is not certain that the book Tavelli was defending here was in fact the *Mirror of Simple Souls*. In addition to the books of the woman Mina, Giovanni and Lorenzo also found works entitled *Lucidario* and *De infantia salvatoris*, two works that, in Giovanni's view, were also erroneous.[101] Thus it could have been these or any number of other books that Tavelli was defending.[102] The insertion of the *Mirror* into this letter also seems to have led to the repeated statement that the *Mirror* was a favored book of the *Gesuati*.[103] However, though the *Gesuati* were investigated in the course of the

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[100] "de libro miror valde, quod si in illo sunt errores de quibus dicitur, quod per plures servos Dei legatur, nec percipiant tam manifestos errores." Part of this letter is reprinted in Guarnieri, "Il movimento", 473, where Guarnieri designates the book Tavelli is referring to as the *Mirror*. Michael Sargent follows Guarnieri on this in "Medieval and Modern Readership: The Continental Latin and Italian Tradition," 94-95. For the full printed transcription of Tavelli's letter fragment, see Wadding, *Annales minorum seu Trium Ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, 14, and also Dufner, *Geschichte der Jesuaten*, 151-152.

[101] Letter of Giovanni da Capestrano to Eugenius IV, printed in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 646. Gagliardi makes the same point about the uncertainty of the *Mirror*'s presence in this letter in *I Pauperes Yesuati*, 326. Gagliardi has located a copy of *Lucidario* in a fifteenth-century manuscript found in the *Biblioteca Riccardiana* in Florence. The text is a dialogue between a master and his disciple, and the pupil expresses a desire for "hidden truths" (Gagliardi, 327, n. 135). The *De infantia salvatoris* was probably one of the many versions of apocryphal stories of Jesus's childhood that circulated widely throughout the Middle Ages, and which, like the *Mirror*, had a tradition of being simultaneously condemned and accepted by churchmen. See Mary Dzon, "Cecily Neville and the Apocryphal *Infantia salvatoris* in the Middle Ages," *Mediaeval Studies* 71 (2009), 235-300. *De infantia salvatoris* is condemned in the fifteenth distinction of Gratian, citing the Gelasian decree of the sixth century, which lists apocryphal works not accepted by the Church. See *Decretum magistri Gratiani*, ed. Emil Friedberg, (Leipzig, 1879), 36.

[102] Also noted by Gagliardi, *I Pauperes Yesuati*, 326.

[103] This association with the *Gesuati* has appeared in Denis Hay, *The Church in Italy in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: 1977), 70; Emilie Zum Brunn and Georgette Epiney-Burgard, *Women Mystics in*

Venice inquisition, at no point during the case at Venice is the *Mirror of Simple Souls* directly connected to them. This is not to say that they had no contact with the *Mirror* whatsoever. But it may not have been associated with them in the course of the Venetian inquisition, and Giovanni Tavelli may not have defended it. This also calls into question Guarnieri's suggestion that Tavelli, as a former *Gesuati* member and defender of the *Mirror*, may have been the person who made the first Italian translation of the *Mirror*.[104]

Even without a definitive mention of the *Mirror* by bishop Tavelli, it still managed to cause a stir during the Venice inquisition. The next documentary evidence comes from the letter written by Cardinal Antonio Correr in Verona to Giovanni da Capestrano dated 13 September 1437, mentioned above. Correr wrote that he was sending a messenger, Marco Donato, to speak to Giovanni concerning the book.[105] When (or even whether) this meeting actually took place and what Donato had to tell Giovanni regarding the *Mirror* is entirely obscure—if there ever was a record of this meeting, it either has not survived or has yet to come to the attention of *Mirror* scholars.

Five days later, Giovanni received another letter, this time from the *vicarius* Antonio Zeno in Padua, mentioned above, who was apparently responding to an earlier letter which Giovanni had sent to him. Guarnieri and Gál and Miskuly

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Medieval Europe, trans. Sheila Hughes (New York: 1989), 148; and Michael Sargent, "Medieval and Modern Readership: The Continental Latin and Italian Tradition", 94-95.

[104] Gagliardi also questions this attribution. See *I Pauperes Yesuati*, 326.

[105] This letter is printed in Guarnieri, "Il movimento", 647.

describe this letter as mostly illegible and therefore several sections are unclear, but what can be gleaned from it reveals that Zeno had dealt with a *conventicula* of people in Padua who were caught fleeing Venice, and who had in their possession the *Mirror* and other books. He had commanded these texts to be turned over to himself or his associates on pain of excommunication.[106] Zeno then relates how he had drawn up a list of propositions from the *Mirror,* which he sent, along with a copy of the book, to the theologians at the University of Padua for assessment.[107] Though the error list found in Vat. lat. 4953 could potentially be a copy of the theologians' opinions, there is no further record of this theological consultation, nor does there seem to be a response to Zeno from Giovanni. The inquisition at Venice finished on 2 October, with the *Gesuati* cleared of heresy charges by Giovanni and Lorenzo, but there is no further mention of the *Mirror* or what fate it met at the conclusion of this investigation. There is, however, a footnote to this incident which has been previously overlooked. This appears in a *vita* of Giovanni da Capestrano, written by one of his companions, Nicolao of Fara (d. 1477). In a section where he describes some of Giovanni's deeds, Nicolao writes "As a witness all the people of Venice where, by the command of Eugenius the pope, he rooted out with great effort the pestiferous *heresy of the simple soul*, [which] had appeared [there].'[108] Not

[106] Letter of Antonio Zeno to Lorenzo Giustiniani and Giovanni Capestrano, cited in Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 647.
[107] Ibid.
[108] My emphasis. "Testis est omnis Venetorum populus, ubi animae simplicis exortam pestiferam haeresim, Eugenio papae mandante, grandi labore extirpavit." Nicolae de Fara, *Vita Clarissimi Viri*

only does this reinforce the impression that the *Mirror* became one of the major issues in the Venice inquisition, as here the *Mirror* becomes an entire heresy unto itself, but it also suggests that the *Mirror* was in fact officially condemned in some way.

Two years later in July of 1439 at the Council of Basel, the council with which Pope Eugenius IV had been locked in a power struggle for eight years, the *Mirror* made what was perhaps its most unusual appearance.[109] John of Segovia, council historian and conciliarist, related a story in which the *Mirror* was used in an attempt to discredit Eugenius as a heretic. On 31 July a certain "James" (the surname is omitted in Birk and Palacky's edition, perhaps because it is illegible), master in arts and medicine, appeared before the council, dressed in the manner of a hermit. James relates how he had drawn up for the council thirty errors extracted from the book *Simplicium animarum*, a work which he declared was favoured by Eugenius .[110] According to James, Eugenius had appointed a secret commission of three bishops to pass judgment on the *Mirror*, but who then without warning imprisoned many people who had worked against "those holding the errors of the said book" (*tenentes errores dicti libri*).[111] James himself felt that he may have been at

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Fratris Joannis de Capistrano, ed. Johannes Bolland, Godefridus Henschenius, Daniel Papebrochius, Joseph Hecke, Joseph Vandermoere, and Cornelius By, *Acta Sanctorum* vol. 10 (Brussels, 1861), 449.

[109] On Eugenius and the Council of Basel, see mainly Joachim Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV, the Council of Basel and the Secular and Ecclesiastical Authorities in the Empire: The Conflict Over Supreme Authority and Power in the Church* (Leiden, 1978).

[110] John of Segovia, *Monumenta conciliorum generalium seculi decimi quinti: Concilium Basiliense*, ed. Ernst von Birk and František Palacky, vol. 3 part 3 (Vienna, 1873), 341.

[111] Ibid., 341.

risk of imprisonment (presumably because of his composition of the error list), and his relatives and neighbours had petitioned for his safe conduct in order to explain himself. This, however, was refused, and so, fearing for the lives of those already imprisoned, James, in disguise, infiltrated the prison and led out those locked inside.[112] He also claimed that he had more evidence of Eugenius's support for the *Mirror*, and that thirty-six copies of it had been brought to the council to be burned.[113]

There have been differing views on this incident's authenticity; Edmund Colledge believed much of the story to be a fabrication by John of Segovia, pointing out that the tale of James sneaking into the prison and leading the prisoners out is an adaptation of events from Acts chapters 5 and 12.[114] Guarnieri believed the story to be a genuine account, and thought the mysterious "James" to be a real figure.[115] The truth perhaps lies somewhere in the middle; it is likely that whoever created the story of the "secret commission" (whether it be John of Segovia or James the hermit) took the events which occurred during the Venice inquisition of 1437 and manipulated them as a way of attacking Eugenius IV; thus, the accusation may have been based in fact, but the details were twisted in order to serve the purpose of discrediting Eugenius. Unfortunately, there is no further record of the *Mirror* in the council's history, and so we have no idea what the council's ruling was on the

[112] Ibid., 342.
[113] Ibid.
[114] See Edmund Colledge, "Introductory Interpretive Essay" in *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, lxiv.
[115] Guarnieri, "Il movimento," 474-476.

matter, if they even made one. There is no record of the result of James's testimony nor a formal condemnation of the *Mirror* by the council, and its name is not again mentioned in connection with Eugenius IV, either at the council or elsewhere.[116]

Whether the above references concerned the Latin *Mirror* tradition or the Italian, it is still clear that the climate in which most of the surviving Latin manuscripts were circulating was less than welcoming. As the sermons by Bernardino of Siena and the incident at the Council of Basel demonstrate, the *Mirror of Simple Souls* was often explicitly linked with heresy; that is, anyone who read or supported the *Mirror* would either be dragged down into its heresies (in Bernardino's view) or was already a heretic who promoted the ideas contained within its pages (as is implied by the accusation against Eugenius IV). What is particularly striking is how the *Mirror* continuously ran afoul of "the great and the good" of the fifteenth-century Italian church, and not merely once or twice. Bernardino of Siena alone explicitly *condemns* the *Mirror* multiple times, holding it up as essentially the "Bible" of free-spirit heretics. Bernardino's treatment of the *Mirror* was surely influential; he was the "rock star" preacher of his age, a man who drew crowds in the thousands wherever he spoke and who wielded enormous influence over both ecclesiastics and lay people alike.[117] His repeated condemnation of a book he considered to be dangerous and erroneous would not have been taken lightly. The opinions of his

[116] As mentioned above, it is possible that the error list found in Vat. lat. 4953 is related to this incident, as the documents in this manuscript are related to events at the Council of Florence, Eugenius IV's rival council to Basel, which took place roughly around the same time as this accusation was made. See above.

[117] Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons*, 3-7.

associate, Giovanni da Capestrano, would have been no less important. Both Giovanni and Bernardino were two of the most prominent figures of the Observant Franciscan movement in the fifteenth century. They had broad influence not only in Italy but also in Germany and parts of Eastern Europe, and were well respected within the papal court of Eugenius IV, their personal friend. Again, Giovanni declaring that the *Mirror* was full of errors would not have gone unnoticed.

The Congregation of Sta. Giustina of Padua, in decline when it was taken over in 1409 by the young reformer Ludovico Barbo—another personal friend of the future Eugenius IV—was quickly turned by Barbo into one of the most powerful and influential Benedictine Reform movements in Northern Italy.[118] It is unclear if the proscription against the *Mirror* meant that the work was actually circulating within the Congregation, or whether it was merely a preventative measure based upon rumors of the text's heresy, which perhaps had reached Barbo through Bernardino, whom he certainly would have known. It shows a high level of concern over the work and the strength of its influence, as it is not "the simple" which are the subjects of concern here, but learned monks of a very distinguished ecclesiastical organization. They were not exempt from what some saw as the dangerous influence of the *Mirror*.

[118] On the reform movement of Sta. Giustina see Barry Collett, *Italian Benedictine Scholars and The Reformation: The Congregation of Sta. Giustina* (Oxford, 1985), James G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, UK: 2011), 298-304, and Tassi, *Ludovico Barbo* 27-94.

Finally, use of the *Mirror* in attacking Eugenius IV reinforces what is seen in Bernardino: that connection to the *Mirror* carried with it the explicit association with heresy. Whoever engineered the accusation against Eugenius obviously knew that in choosing the *Mirror* as the crux of their attack against him they were using a work that had a notorious heretical reputation; otherwise such an accusation could not have been expected to have much effect.

While these incidents show a great amount of opposition to the *Mirror of Simple Souls* in Italy, they are also a testament to its great popularity. The surviving *Mirror* manuscripts themselves are a testament to this. Whatever marks of persecution or suspicion may appear in them, their mere existence shows that several people, over the span of several decades and in two different geographical areas, believed the *Mirror* to be worth reproducing and circulating. Though there are no known specific contemporary references relating how the *Mirror* was valued as a spiritual text by any particular group (with the possible but unlikely exception of Giovanni Tavelli's letter to Giovanni), the mere fact that so many churchmen felt the need repeatedly to denounce it suggests that the *Mirror* must have been popular and widely copied, in both lay and ecclesiastical circles. Some hint of this popularity may be seen in Antonio Zeno's consultation of the Paduan theologians on the *Mirror*. Even in the midst of Bernardino's condemnations, Sta. Giustina's prohibitions, and Giovanni da Capestrano's inquisition, Zeno apparently still felt the need to elicit professional theological judgment on the *Mirror of Simple Souls*, indicating uncertainty over its

perceived heterodoxy, perhaps due to support this work had found from other religious individuals or circles. This is also an intriguing echo of the *Mirror*'s original examination over a century earlier, and demonstrates that the *Mirror* continued to receive a high level of intellectual respect.

Thus the Latin tradition is a two-sided *Mirror*, which reflects an intriguing dual reception within religious circles in the later Middle Ages. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Latin manuscripts themselves, which by their sheer existence attest to the value and respect accorded to the *Mirror* by many, but which also bear the scars of a climate hostile to its teachings. A great amount of effort was expended on the *Mirror* on both sides of this circulation, whether it was to preserve and disseminate, or to lash out against and destroy. It is the Latin tradition, more so than any other *Mirror* linguistic transmission, that in some sense continues over a century later Marguerite's original conflicted relationship with the Church, finding respect and praise amongst some, and fear, rejection, and condemnation from others.