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From Micro- to Macro-processes of Religious Change

The Holy Name of Jesus and Christocentric Devotion in the Long Fifteenth Century

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Abstract

The article discusses the Europe-wide late medieval phenomenon of the cult of the Holy Name, using it as a case study to discuss the relationship of micro-and macro-historical transformations by scrutinizing the enormous success of a religious innovation which managed to spread to many different local contexts and social groups. After pointing out contradictions in earlier explanations of this success, the article gives a detailed reading of several different realizations of this form of devotion, discussing authors like Richard Rolle, but also religious compilations and documentary evidence. This evidence suggests that the meaning and significance of devotion to the Holy Name remained open, malleable and unstable. It therefore appears necessary to engage with the whole range of its representations, and their transmission at different social levels, in order to understand its larger significance in the religious transformations of the long fifteenth century.

Keywords

medieval history – religion – Christocentric devotion – Holy Name – England – religious field

Bourdieu's concept of the "field" necessitates "situating particular entities, whether denominations or congregations, within a broader framework of struggle over the significance of religion. Local characteristics, Bourdieu contends, cannot be fully understood sociologically without situating them within

this broader perspective.”¹ The demands that such an imperative imposes on the historian of late medieval religion are daunting, but they are unavoidable if one is committed to exploring the relation “between the social structure and the structure of mythical or religious representations.”² As a doctoral student, my limited reading of Bourdieu shaped my research on orthodox and heterodox religion in England in the long fifteenth century.³ The outcome of that research was, if not a micro-study, a deliberately local one, focused as it was on the market town of Tenterden in the Weald of Kent. Such an approach was founded on the understanding that it is only through closeness of enquiry that we can explore, in necessary depth and detail, the social origins and dynamics of religious change. In this case it facilitated the identification of a relationship between upwards social mobility among middling townsfolk and new forms of piety. These changes appear to have been informed by, and to some extent overlapped with, lollardy, but they also included the emergence of devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus as the most distinctive new feature of religious life in Tenterden by the early sixteenth century. The Holy Name appears to have been the most obvious expression of a Christocentric “turn” in religious life, that appealed to the doctrinally orthodox and heterodox alike, and accorded with reformist agendas.⁴

If we are to judge the significance of these local religious changes within “the broader framework of struggle over the significance of religion” then we must situate them within the perspective of wider dynamics of lay piety across the long fifteenth century, of which the increasing prominence of devotion to the Holy Name was a notable aspect.⁵ The cult became a Europe-wide phenomenon, with its own particular national trajectories of development, and was one of the most important strands within a Christocentrism that emerged in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and that reached a new level of intensity in the fourteenth and fifteenth. In looking at the bigger picture we must not, however, lose the small-scale and particular; the challenge, as Bourdieu

1 David Swartz, “Bridging the Study of Culture and Religion: Pierre Bourdieu’s Political Economy of Symbolic Power,” *Sociology of Religion* 57.1 (1996), 71–85, there 83.

2 Pierre Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field,” *Comparative Social Research, A Religious Annual. Religious Institutions* 13 (1991), 1–44, there 11.

3 This was confined to Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1977), and idem, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge, 1990).

4 Robert Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: Reconstructing Piety* (Woodbridge, 2006).

5 A point that some reviewers of my book were quite correct to point out. See, for example, Ian Forrest in *History* 92, issue 308 (2007), 573, and Katherine Little in *Journal of British Studies* 46.4 (2007), 918–920.

recognised, is to establish the relationship between micro- and macro-changes in religious behaviour. As a new devotional form that vied for attention and was relatively successful, the Name of Jesus is an ideal case-study of religious change before the Reformation, but its significance has tended to be subsumed within wider dominant narratives of late medieval religion without due regard to the micro-processes of the cult's transmission and apprehension.⁶

These narratives and the significance of the Holy Name within them, are perplexingly contradictory. So, because of its Christocentric simplicity, and emphasis on the moral and spiritual reform of the individual devotee, as long ago as 1939 Eric Colledge claimed that, by the late fourteenth century, there was a particular lollard interest in the Name of Jesus. Colledge saw Wycliffism or "the early Lollard movement" as he called it, as a reformist development in parallel with the mysticism of writers such as Richard Rolle, England's foremost champion of the Holy Name. For Colledge, they were two complementary strands in a relatively harmonious fourteenth-century progressivism before the more schismatic religious divides of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁷ Similarly, Hope Emily Allen seized on the Name of Jesus as all that was best in Rolle and in English devotional culture after him. She interpreted both Rolle's writings and the subsequent flowering of the devotion in England as signalling a move away from the Virgin and the saints towards a simpler concentration on the person of Christ. As such, the Holy Name was forward-looking in its anticipation of a more austere and exclusive Christocentrism: not only did its presence in the liturgy survive the changes of the Reformation, but that survival helped effect the "simplification of devotion brought about when the cults of saints were swept away ..."⁸ This idea of the Name of Jesus representing broader changes in the field of religion across the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has been taken up more recently by Susan Wabuda and Christine Peters. Wabuda sees the rise of the cult of the Holy Name in fifteenth-century England as representing an important cultural shift towards a humanist-inspired Christocentrism that to some extent competed, or at least was not entirely in harmony, with late medieval Marianism. In particular, the cult became associated with

6 I am currently completing a monograph on the cult of the Holy Name in late medieval England.

7 Eric Colledge, "The Recluse. A Lollard Interpolated Version of Ancren Riwele," *Review of English Studies* 15 (1939), 1–15, 129–145.

8 Hope Emily Allen, *Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle Hermit of Hampole and Materials for his Biography* [Modern Language Association of America Monograph Series] 3 vols. (New York, 1927), 3:4 with other key statements at 72–77, 100–101. For comments on Allen's "concern for the 'Englishness' of British medieval spirituality" see the illuminating John C. Hirsch, *Hope Emily Allen: Medieval Scholarship and Feminism* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1988), 40–41.

the Bible and preaching and provided a bridge to more moderate Protestantism in the 1530s and '40s, although some of its elements offended evangelical reformers.⁹ Peters, less interested in the Holy Name per se, sees it as part of an increasing concentration on Christ as sole mediator, as the Virgin and other saints receded, which again appealed to early Protestants.¹⁰

Writing from the perspective of a different grand-narrative, early to mid-twentieth-century French and North-American Catholic scholarship frames the cult of the Holy Name as part of the continuous development of Western spirituality throughout the later middle ages and the counter-Reformation. For example, Richard Pfaff identified the Name as the most successful new devotion among a number of innovations that amounted to an enrichment and elaboration of the medieval English liturgy in the fifteenth century.¹¹ Others look backwards rather than forwards. So, the talismanic properties of the devotion and its association with the humanity and suffering of Christ have led Eamon Duffy to identify it as wholly, even ardently, traditional; likewise Elizabeth New, who sees it as “thoroughly orthodox” and “very Catholic.”¹² Such interpretations ignore the cult’s controversial aspects which, Denis Renevey argues, led to its marginalisation in the early fifteenth century and held back its liturgical development for several decades. They also disregard the evidence for its appeal to lollards and those interested in, if not committed to, lollard ideas.¹³

9 Susan Wabuda, *Preaching During the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2002), 147–177.

10 Christine Peters, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge, 2003).

11 Peter Regulatus Biasiotto, *History of the Development of Devotion to the Holy Name* (St Bonaventure, NY, 1943); André Cabassut, “La devotion au nom de Jésus dans l’église d’occident,” *La Vie Spirituelle* 86 (1952), 46–69; Richard William Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts in Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1970).

12 Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580* (New Haven, 1992), 234–238, 278, 283–285, but see below for his shrewd analysis of the cult’s social appeal; Elizabeth A. New, *The Cult of the Holy Name of Jesus in Late Medieval England, with Special Reference to the Fraternity of St Paul’s Cathedral, London, c. 1450–1558* (Ph.D. diss., Royal Holloway, 1999), 380, but for the possibility of early Protestant support for the St Paul’s fraternity before its dissolution in 1547 see *ibid.*, 167; H. Blake, G. Egan, J. Hurst, and E. New, “From Popular Devotion to Resistance and Revival in England: The Cult of the Holy Name of Jesus and the Reformation,” in *The Archaeology of Reformation, 1480–1580*, ed. D. Gaimster and R. Gilchrist (Leeds, 2003), 175–203, there 188.

13 D. Renevey, “Name Above Names: The Devotion to the Name of Jesus from Richard Rolle to Walter Hilton’s *Scale of Perfection 1*,” in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England, Ireland and Wales: Exeter Symposium VI*, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge, 1999), 103–121; *idem.*, “The Name Poured Out: Margins, Illuminations and Miniatures as Evidence for the Practice of Devotions to the Name of Jesus in Late Medieval England,” *Analecta Cartusiana*,

These contradictions in part arise from the ways scholars have co-opted the Holy Name to their own conceptualisations of large-scale religious change, without fully exploring the micro-mechanisms of transmission of the cult and their relationship to macro-processes of transformation in the religious field. They have also tended to focus on the doctrinal, or what we might term the intellectual, aspects of the devotion, to the detriment of consideration of its social and psychological dimensions. Its doctrinal features are, of course, important, but its malleability appears to have enabled it to leap across ideological fault lines to a degree that suggests that the seemingly contradictory accounts of the Holy Name's significance may not be entirely contradictory after all. Its appeal to so-called orthodox, lollards, and early evangelicals may be explicable, *mutatis mutandis*, in terms which have less to do with assent to particular ideas than to the acquisition of social and psychological benefits that amounted to macro-changes in the religious field over the long fifteenth century. One of the strengths of Bourdieu's field theory and its associated concepts, particularly those drawn from Weber, is that it provides productive ways of thinking about the appeal and significance of changes in religious belief and practice at both the micro- and the macro-level; of situating particular developments and dynamics within larger changes in religious life that transcended both doctrinal divisions and established boundaries of periodisation. As a result, this application of sociological theory to late medieval religion has the potential to question dominant narratives.¹⁴ It also involves a much needed commitment to an "epistemological break," described by Philip Gorski as "a break with the perspective of the social actors under investigation."¹⁵ This means that if we are to explain why a particular devotional form became popular, we must do more than state its benefits—moral and spiritual—as rehearsed within the primary sources. A sociology of the Holy Name involves a

130.9 (1996), 127–147, and see also Rob Lutton, "The Name of Jesus, Nicholas Love's *Mirror*, and Christocentric Devotion in Late Medieval England," in *The Pseudo-Bonaventuran Lives of Christ. Exploring the Middle English Tradition*, ed. Ian Johnson and Allan F. Westphall (Turnhout, 2013), 19–53. For the controversies surrounding San Bernardino of Siena's use of the Name see P. Ephrem Longpré, "S. Bernardin de Sienne et le Nom de Jésus (Suite)," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 28 (1935), 443–476; 29 (1936), 142–168, 443–477. For the Holy Name and lollardy see above and Michael Van Dussen, *From England to Bohemia. Heresy and Communication in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2012).

14 An aim of the COST Action IS1301: New Communities of Interpretation http://www.cost.eu/COST_Actions/isch/IS1301.

15 Philip S. Gorski, "Bourdieuian Theory and Historical Analysis. Maps, Mechanisms, and Methods," in *Pierre Bourdieu and Historical Analysis* (Durham, N.C., 2013), 327–366, there 352.

breaking free from the theological discourse through translation of “folk terms” into “scientific terms”¹⁶ or, as Sabrina Corbellini and Sita Steckel put it in the introduction to this theme section: a “meta-language” for historical study of the middle ages that is relevant to historians of other periods and understandable to other disciplines.¹⁷

I begin by discussing macro-mechanisms of the transmission of devotion to the Name of Jesus in the later middle ages—mainly preaching and the liturgy—before moving to consider micro-mechanisms of transmission in the form of devotional texts in religious miscellanies and anthologies, chiefly the works of Richard Rolle or adaptations of them. Throughout, I explore how Bourdieu’s concept of the religious field can inform our understanding of the relationship between these different mechanisms of religious transformation and macro-transformations in the significance of religion in the long fifteenth century. The essay also draws on anthropological theory on cultural transmission and ritual which can be productively employed within Bourdieu’s analytical framework.

1 Macro Mechanisms of Transmission of the Cult of the Holy Name

Holy Name practices and beliefs beyond the religious orders probably date from the late thirteenth century in England. Aspects of the dissemination of the devotion at this time have the character of macro-changes in religious practices, in the sense that they were widespread or even national in scope. These are relatively easy to identify but it is much harder to assess their impact.

In the second half of the thirteenth century there were initiatives within the western church to promote the cult of the Holy Name, which helped to stimulate dissemination of the devotion in England beyond the confines of monastic and anchoritic communities. This was partly through preaching and the production, predominantly by the mendicant orders, of collections of *exempla*, stories used by preachers which were also read for moral instruction and entertainment. We know that William of Savoy, Cardinal Bishop of Sabina, for example, preached the Holy Name when he came to England in 1247.¹⁸ A number of popular thirteenth-century collections of *exempla*, of which several were pro-

16 Gorski, “Bourdieuian Theory” (see above, n. 15), 354–357, 363.

17 Sabrina Corbellini and Sita Steckel, “The Religious Field during the Long Fifteenth Century. Framing Religious Change beyond Traditional Paradigms,” herein, pp. xx–xx#.

18 Biasiotto, *Holy Name* (St. Bonaventure, 1943), 41–45; J.A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 3 vols (London, 1910), 3: 477–478, 487 nos 96–97.

duced by the mendicants, contained Holy Name legends. These included the *Legenda Aurea* of the Dominican James of Voragine (d. 1298) and the *Speculum Laicorum*, which was probably written by a Franciscan.¹⁹ Chapter 57 of the *Speculum* is entitled “De Nomine Jhesu” and contains a number of stories that advocate invocation of the name of Jesus as a defence, either against temptation, demons, or pagan enemies. One is a purgatorial vision in which a boy is protected from being seized by demons by repeating “Jesus” on the advice of a Cistercian father.²⁰ This was a recurring motif in late medieval purgatorial visions and *exempla*.²¹ The name’s apotropaic qualities, its immediate coercive supernatural power to effect concrete and specific goals have the character of what Weber or Bourdieu would term magical or folk religion but they were derived from the New Testament and the Church Fathers and were a fundamental part of the Christian faith. There is no evidence of squeamishness about these qualities of the Name of Jesus in the later middle ages and indeed writers, including Richard Rolle himself, put great store on them. It was precisely because, unlike some other folk or magical beliefs and practices, the talismanic qualities of the name of Jesus were *not* constructed as profane by religious professionals, that they remained sacred within the late medieval church.²² In contrast, the aspects of the cult that were subject to distinction as profane were its tendencies to extreme emotional and embodied experience and exclusive salvific and visionary claims. I will come to these more charismatic aspects of the cult in due course. Preaching of the Holy Name did not focus solely on its apotropaic qualities but also on its use as a tool for moral and spiritual reform. However, the evidence for such preaching in England is scarce and it is impossible to gauge its impact at the level of the parish.²³

19 Biasiotto, *Holy Name* (see above, n. 18), 43–45; Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances* (see above, n. 18), 32; *Speculum Laicorum. Edition d'une collection d'exemple, composée en Angleterre à la fin du XIII^e siècle*, ed. J.Th. Welter (Paris, 1914), xxiii–xxiv, xli–xliii, 10 no. 30, 9 no. 29; Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols (Princeton, 1993), 1:142–143 and 353–354.

20 *Speculum Laicorum* (see above, n. 19), 81–82 nos 418–421.

21 See, for some examples, John Shinnars, *Medieval Popular Religion, 1000–1500. A Reader*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 2007), 245, 253, 254–255, 521, 525.

22 Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure” (see above, n. 2), 12–13, 30.

23 For discussion of a Latin sermon on the Name of Jesus in an English manuscript see Jennifer Depold, “Preaching the Name: the influence of a sermon on the Holy Name of Christ,” *Journal of Medieval History* 40.2 (2014), 195–208, and for a Holy Name sermon likely preached at the Bridgettine house of Syon and printed by Caxton see *Three Sermons for Nova Festa, together with the Hamus Caritatis Edited from Caxton's 1491 Edition of John Mirk's Festial*, ed. Susan Powell [Middle English Texts, 37] (Heidelberg, 2007), 10–18.

The other main mechanism of dissemination, that potentially went hand-in-hand with preaching, was the Western church's efforts to enhance the importance of the Holy Name in the liturgy. In 1274, Pope Gregory X's twenty-fifth constitution, *Decet Domum Dei Sanctitudo* of 1272, which ordered special reverence and, specifically, bowing of the head when the name of Jesus Christ was mentioned, especially during mass, was adopted by the second council of Lyons.²⁴ That same year Gregory wrote to the Master General of the Dominicans to enlist the Friars Preacher in the promulgation of his decree.²⁵ Some sense of its impact can be gained from William of Pagula's Latin pastoral manual *Oculus Sacerdotis* that dates from the early 1320s. This counsels: "Therefore, each and every person when he hears that glorious name of Jesus, especially during the celebration of the mass, should genuflect deep in his heart by striking his breast and bowing his head."²⁶ John Mirk's *Instructions for Parish Priests* written in English around 1400, and based on the *Oculus*, similarly counsels reverence of the Name in church.²⁷ It seems likely, therefore, that by the beginning of the fourteenth century the laity were routinely reminded of the sacred status of the Name of Jesus in their parish church.

The growth of the liturgical celebration of the Name of Jesus was fitful until the late fifteenth century when it gained national status and achieved widespread adoption. The earliest evidence of an English votive mass of the Name of Jesus dates from the 1380s and the mass gained private sponsorship from the English political and clerical elite by the early fifteenth century. This is a good example of the sort of "resource exchange" theorised by Bourdieu and discussed by Sita Steckel in relation to the later middle ages elsewhere in this thematic issue, whereby nobleman and their senior clerical kinsmen formed alliances in the investment of economic, social, and symbolic resources to promote a new devotional form for the purposes of individual and dynastic

24 *Constitutiones a Gregorio Papa Decimo in Concilio Lugdunensi*, c. 25, ed. J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova, et amplissima collectio*, vol. 24 (Venice: Antonius Zatta, 1780), col. 98–99; Charles-Joseph Hefele, *Histoire des conciles: d'après les documents originaux. Nouvelle traduction française faite sur la 2e édition allemande*, 11 vols. (Paris, 1907–1973), 6: Part 1, Book xxxviii, 203–204.

25 The Bull *Nuper in Concilio Lugdunensi*. J.D. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum* (see above, n. 24) 24: 134; Pietro Maria Campi, *Dell'Historia Ecclesiastica di Piacenza* (Piacenza: Bazachi, 1651), 2: 456, co. 1–2.

26 *Oculus Sacerdotis, Liber Secunda (Dextera pars oculi)*, chap. 1, translated in J. Shinnars and W.J. Dohar, *Pastors and the Care of Souls in Medieval England* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1998), 150.

27 *Instructions for Parish Priests*, ed. E. Peacock (ETS, London, 1902), ll: 289–301.

salvation, and by which they gained social and political capital.²⁸ The term “resource exchange” is helpful here, not so much for understanding the complexities of the particular acts of patronage and processes of transmission that led to the adoption of devotion to the Holy Name in the liturgy, but for the way it enables comparison with other sorts of alliances and exchanges between different agents and groups across the long fifteenth century. Moreover, it also facilitates consideration of the impact of such exchanges on the nature and scope of the religious field over the middle ages as a whole and into the modern era.

Within the specific context of the early fifteenth century, grants of indulgence were one such form of investment. Some of those found in service books attached to the votive mass offer as many as 3,000 years of remission from purgatory. The most credible is attributed to Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury, in 1411. Its relative modesty at forty days may have been intended to temper such extravagances and to give the devotion the stamp of official approval.²⁹ Hallum’s promotion of the mass of the Holy Name may have been part of a programme of reform at Salisbury which included the enhancement of the Cathedral’s liturgy and efforts to impose a liturgical standard across the province of Canterbury in the form of the use of Sarum but, nevertheless, it does not appear to have resulted in the wider dissemination of the devotion.³⁰ Hallum’s indulgence coincided with Archbishop Thomas Arundel’s initiatives to promote Christocentric devotion, in the form of meditation on the life and Passion of Christ, and preaching of the cross and the image of the crucifix, as spiritually beneficial orthodox practices in the fight against Wycliffism, but it is perhaps telling that Arundel does not appear to have promoted the Holy Name. This may have been because of the controversies that had become attached to the cult.³¹

28 Sita Steckel, “Historicizing the Religious Field,” herein.

29 R.N. Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2007), 265; Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts* (see above, n. 11), 62–66; Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 3: 350–351.

30 David Lepine, “Let Them Praise Him in Church: Orthodox Reform at Salisbury Cathedral in the First half of the Fifteenth Century,” in *After Arundel. Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh (Turnhout, 2011), 167–185; R.N. Swanson, “Hallum, Robert (d. 1417), bishop of Salisbury,” *ODNB*.

31 For controversies see below. For Arundel’s endorsement of Nicholas Love’s *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* in c. 1410 but seeming lack of support for the promotion of the Holy Name see Lutton, “The Name of Jesus, Nicholas Love’s *Mirror*” (see above, n. 13), 19–53, esp. p. 29; Nicholas Love, *The Mirror of The Blessed Life of Jesus Christ. A Full Critical Edition based on Cambridge University Library Additional Mss 6578 and 6686 with Introduction, Notes and Glossary*, ed. Michael G. Sargent (Exeter, 2005), 36–37, and for his

Early support for the Jesus mass appears to have been high-status and privately sponsored. The earliest extant text of the English votive mass of the Holy Name is found in a missal that was owned by Sir William Beauchamp, soldier and chamber knight to Richard II and close associate of fellow courtier and “Lollard Knight” William Neville.³² William was a member of the Nevilles of Raby, a leading Northern family who were patrons of Richard Rolle during his life and showed a subsequent interest in his works.³³ They may have been patrons also of the Jesus altar that was founded in Durham Cathedral, possibly in collaboration with Walter Skirlaw, Bishop of Durham, sometime before 1406.³⁴ William Beauchamp too appears to have been interested in Rolle and other literary statements about the Name.³⁵ His interest in the cult seems best understood as part of a general investment in the promotion of new devotional practices and pious literature most spectacularly exemplified in his likely patronage of the massive anthology of vernacular religious writing, the Vernon manuscript. In its self-declared purpose of “sowlehele,” or the salvation of souls, through the bringing together of a large body of vernacular religious literature, Wendy Scase has argued that the book represented an audaciously new type of religious patronage, born out of “anxieties about some of the traditional practices of religion.” One might see it also as an early sign of a wider shift in the “exchange rate” of specific capitals between the socio-political and religious fields around the turn of the fourteenth century.³⁶ Like the Nevilles, the

Constitutions of 1407/9 see David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, 4 vols (London: Gosling, 1737), 3: 317–318.

- 32 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Trinity College ms 8, fols 286r–287r; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285–1388*, 2 vols (London, 1986), 2: 166–167; Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts* (see above, n. 11), 66; Jeremy I. Catto, “Sir William Beauchamp between Chivalry and Lollardy,” in *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey, 3 vols. (Woodbridge, 1990), 3: 39–48, esp. 46–47.
- 33 Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 3: 108, 430, 444–449, 504–505, 279.
- 34 *Testamenta Eboracensia, or Wills Registered at York ... from the Year MCCC Downwards*, part 1, ed. James Raine and John William Clay [Surtees Society 4] (Durham: Andrews & Co., 1836), 323; *The Victoria History of the County of Durham*, ed. William Page, 4 vols. (London, 1928), 3: 118.
- 35 Catto, “Sir William Beauchamp” (see above, n. 32); idem., “Religion and the English Nobility in the Later Fourteenth Century,” in *History and Imagination*, ed. Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Valerie Pearl, and Blair Worden (London, 1981), 43–55, esp. 51–55; Richard Rolle, *Prose and Verse*, ed. S.J. Ogilvie-Thomson, EETS, O.S. 293 (1988), 3–25, esp. ll. 610–625.
- 36 Wendy Scase, “Patronage Symbolism and Sowlehele,” and “The Patronage of the Vernon Manuscript,” in *The Making of the Vernon Manuscript. The Production and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Eng. poet. a*, ed. idem. (Turnhout, 2013), 1: 231–245, 269–293. On “exchange rate” see Steckel, “Historicizing the Religious Field. Adapting Theories of the Religious Field for the Study of Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” herein, p. xx#, and

Scropes of Masham shared a strong and evangelical interest in Rolle's works,³⁷ and Henry Lord Scrope's son Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, founded a chantry to the Name of Jesus at the altar of the Holy Cross in Lichfield Cathedral during his episcopate there from 1386 to 1398.³⁸ Scrope's keen interest in the liturgy and attachment to the cult of the Five Wounds, placed him in the avant-garde of devotional fashion.³⁹ The household of Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, fifth surviving son of Edward III, also appears to have been host to the celebration of the mass of the Holy Name in the 1490s, and his wife Eleanor de Bohun and her mother, Countess Joan owned some of Rolle's works.⁴⁰ The earliest known guild dedicated to the Name of Jesus, recorded in the guild returns of 1388/9 for All Saints, Sheringham, Norfolk, may have owed something to Woodstock's family's local seigneurial influence.⁴¹

This early high-status patronage of devotion to the Holy Name did not immediately lead to its widespread liturgical dissemination however. Books of Hours and the wills of Northern families demonstrate ongoing practices of household devotion to the Name up to the 1440s and, as we will see, there is ample evidence of the proliferation of the devotional and contemplative literature of the Holy Name by the early fifteenth century, but the liturgical proliferation of the Jesus mass does not appear to have resumed until the late 1450s.⁴² One of the possible reasons for this inertia is explored below but what is clear is that from the late 1480s onwards the Tudor political and ecclesiasti-

Pierre Bourdieu and Loic J.D. Wacquant, "The Logic of Fields," in *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, ed. idem. (Chicago, 1992), 295–334 esp. 98–100.

- 37 Jonathan Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge, 1988), 91; Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 29–30, 48–50, 94–95, 98, 504–508.
- 38 *The Gentlemen's Magazine Library: Ecclesiology*, ed. George Laurence Gomme (London: Elliot Stock, 1894), 104.
- 39 P.J.P. Goldberg, "Introduction," in *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr*, ed. idem (Donington, 2007), 1–16, esp. 5–7.
- 40 Catto, "Religion" (see above, n. 35), 46, 49; idem, "Shaping the Mixed Life: Thomas Arundel's Reformation," in *Image, Text and Church, 1380–1600: Essays for Margaret Aston*, ed. Linda Clark, Maureen Jurkowski, and Colin Richmond (Toronto, 2009), 94–108, esp. 100, 102–103; idem, "Sir William Beauchamp" (see above, n. 32), 44; Viscount Dillon and W.H. St John Hope, "Inventory of the goods and chattels belonging to Thomas, Duke of Gloucester," *Archaeological Journal* 54 (1897), 275–308 (277, 292, 294).
- 41 Herbert Francis Westlake, *The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England* (London, 1919), 209; Francis Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, 2nd edn cont. by Rev. Charles Parkin, 11 vols (London: William Miller, 1805–1810), 8: 163–164.
- 42 New, "Cult of the Holy Name" (see above, n. 12), 36–50, 76–86; *Testamenta Eboracensia*, 2, Surtees Society, vol. 30 (1855), 23, 60, 109; Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries* (see above, n. 37), 266–268; Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion* (see above, n. 4), 69–70.

cal establishment invested heavily in the cult as “the sacredness of Jesus’s own Name was appropriated to bolster the power and prestige of the dynasty.”⁴³ The most obvious case in point was the active promotion of the Holy Name by Henry VII’s mother, Lady Margaret Beaufort. She and Thomas Rotherham, archbishop of York, worked together to establish a major double feast of the Name of Jesus for 7 August in both English provinces in 1488/89, and in 1494, at Lady Margaret’s request, Pope Alexander VI sanctioned the feast and granted an extravagant new indulgence attached to the votive mass.⁴⁴ This high-status and official endorsement gave added momentum to a new wave of Jesus guilds, chantries, and college foundations that had begun around 1460, whose prominence and prestige made the devotion an attractive proposition for investment by newly emergent social groups, especially well-to-do townfolk. As Eamon Duffy remarks, although “genuinely popular” the Jesus mass “was also emphatically an observance seized on by elites in every community as a convenient expression, and perhaps an instrument, of their social dominance.”⁴⁵

An important incentive for such investment was the prominent place that music and choral singing, including polyphony, took in the liturgical celebration of the cult; it offered opportunities for the patronage of striking new forms of artistic expression and symbolic display which had previously been confined to the nobility and gentry.⁴⁶ Such local initiatives were part of a larger reconfiguration at the macro-historical level from the middle of the fifteenth century,

43 Wabuda, *Preaching* (see above, n. 9), 157.

44 Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts* (see above, n. 11), 77, 82–83; Denis Renevey, “‘Syre, we neuer yet tasted ne haue not dronke of our best wyne’: Late Medieval Popular Religion and the Sermon for the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus,” in *Medieval and Early Modern Religious Cultures*, ed., Laura Ashe and Ralph Hanna (Cambridge, 2019), 167–183, esp. pp. 169–179; Wabuda, *Preaching* (see above, n. 9), 165; Michael K. Jones and Malcolm G. Underwood, *The King’s Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, 1992), 168–169, 174, 176–177, 182–183, 198–200, 212.

45 Duffy, *Stripping* (see above, n. 12), 115–116; Wabuda, *Preaching* (see above, n. 9), 163, 165–166; Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts* (see above, n. 11), 62–83; New, “Cult of the Holy Name” (see above, n. 12), *passim*; Judith Aveling, “The Holy Name of Jesus: A Literate Cult?,” in *Late Medieval Liturgies Enacted. The Experience of Worship in Cathedral and Parish Church*, ed. Sally Harper, P.S. Barnwell, and Magnus Williamson (Farnham, 2016), 191–204, there 201–203.

46 Aveling, “Holy Name” (see above, n. 45), 202–203; Magnus Williamson, “Quadring Cows: Resourcing Music in the Pre-Reformation Parish,” in *Late Medieval Liturgies*, 125–153, there 131–132 and 134–135, and idem, “Liturgical Polyphony in the Pre-Reformation English Parish Church: A Provisional List and Commentary,” *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 38 (2005), 1–43; David Mateer and Elizabeth New, “In Nomine Jesu: Robert Fayr-fax and the Fraternity of the Holy Name in St Paul’s Cathedral,” *Music and Letters* 81 (2000), 507–519.

which saw newly confident social groups engaging in exchange alliances with religious and cultural professionals for the purposes of individual and collective advancement. The widespread dissemination of the Jesus mass was also part of a realignment of political and social configurations and their bearing on the religious field that constituted an increasing integration of the localities into the power networks of the political and cultural establishment. As Magnus Williamson puts it: "... Jesus guilds show the early Tudor spread of the Jesus cult and, more generally, suggest how social networks encouraged the circulation of new ritual and devotional practices between court, metropolis, universities, towns, and, ultimately, villages."⁴⁷ There is more work to be done to assess the full significance of the Holy Name's liturgical dissemination. Large numbers of surviving wills together with church wardens' accounts and Books of Hours present the most obvious avenues for fruitful enquiry. They contain information on the sorts of individuals and social groups who disseminated and patronised the Jesus mass, the importance of the clergy as agents of cultural exchange, and the devotion's liturgical, musical, and visual forms.⁴⁸

2 Micro-mechanisms of Transmission of the Cult of the Holy Name

This eventual liturgical dissemination notwithstanding, it was more than a century before this that devotion to the Name of Jesus in England first began to be taken up by the laity to any significant degree. The foremost proponent of the Name of Jesus in England was the early fourteenth-century Yorkshire hermit and mystic Richard Rolle, son of a minor gentry family who, as reputed academic drop-out and idiosyncratic holy man, can be seen as a prophet in the classic Weberian mould, operating "at the uncertain border between the abnormal and the extraordinary." He is one of Bourdieu/Weber's "independent entrepreneurs exercising ... [his] ... office outside of any institution, and thus without institutional protection or security."⁴⁹ What placed him there was his claim to extraordinary mystical and ostensibly embodied experiences—his *fervor*, *dulcor* and *canor* or heat, sweetness, and song—and the way he

47 Williamson, "Resourcing Music" (see above, n. 46), 132.

48 For studies taking this approach see, for example, Lutton, *Lollardy* (see above, n. 4), esp. 69–80; New, "Cult of the Holy Name" (see above, n. 12), and idem, "Fraternities in the Cathedral: A Case Study of the Jesus Guild," in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604–2004*, ed. Derek Keene, R. Arthur Burns, and Andrew Saint (New Haven and London, 2004), 162–163.

49 Bourdieu, "Genesis and Structure" (see above, n. 2), 21, 24.

based his authority on these very experiences rather than the established institutions of the church.⁵⁰ In Bourdieu's terms, this put him in a different and highly distinctive position in the "division of religious labor(sic)."⁵¹ He was also idiosyncratic in his mode of living, defying established norms of the eremitic life by, for example, moving from place to place, failing to conform to traditional ascetic ideals, and associating closely with women. This awkwardness and the criticisms it drew are reflected in his writings.⁵² The term "independent entrepreneur" cannot do justice to the complexities of Rolle's eccentricities or his literary and theological achievements but, in the manner of Weber's ideal-types, it provides a working model which can be customised in its application to individual cases.⁵³ Its explanatory power lies in its applicability to a range of individual cases across time and space, in this case religious figures who operated outside or on the boundaries of norms and institutional structures. In the context of devotion to the Holy Name in the medieval West, obvious comparisons are Rolle's near-contemporaries San Bernardino of Siena and Henry Suso.⁵⁴

The intensely personal nature of Rolle's claims meant that his teachings often remained closely connected with him as a charismatic figure. This was true also of his statements on the Name of Jesus; the cult of Rolle and the cult of the Holy Name were mutually reinforcing.⁵⁵ But the charismatic appeal of his teachings on the name of Jesus did not rest wholly on his reputation as a holy figure. Indeed, there is manuscript evidence that some scribes sought to suppress the connection between Rolle's statements on the Holy Name and Rolle as an individual, probably because of controversies surrounding aspects

50 The best study of Rolle remains Nicholas Watson, *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority* (Cambridge, 1991). On the importance of Rolle's personal charisma for his authority see Ralph Hanna, "The Transmission of Richard Rolle's Latin Works," *The Library*, 14.3 (2013), 313–333, there 329.

51 Bourdieu, "Genesis and Structure," 24.

52 Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 430–526; *Richard Rolle: The English Writings*, trans. and intro. Rosamund S. Allen (London, 1989), 9–25; Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 31–53.

53 For a succinct discussion of the utility of Weber's concept of the ideal-type see David L. d'Avray, *Rationalities in History* (Cambridge, 2010), 4–5.

54 For a recent study that makes precisely these comparisons see Rob Lutton, "Devotion to the Holy Name in the Medieval West," in *Illuminating Jesus in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jane Beal [Commentaria, 12] (Leiden, 2019), 129–153.

55 *Richard Rolle, Emendatio Vitae; Orationes ad honorem nominis Ihesu edited from Cambridge University Library MSS Dd.v.64 and Kk.vi.20*, ed. Nicholas Watson (Toronto, 1995), 23–24; Malcolm Moyes, *Richard Rolle's Expositio super novem lectiones mortuorum: An Introduction and Contribution towards a Critical Edition*, 2 vols. (Salzburg, 1988), 1: 85–86.

of his teachings.⁵⁶ Moreover, as we shall see, some later works such as the *Pore Caitif*, that plundered his teaching on the Holy Name, make no reference to him. From this we may conclude that the charisma of his teaching on the Holy Name, while derived in part from his authority as a holy figure, also resided in the apparent novelty of its theological claims and the appeal of those claims to devout readers, not least the spiritually ambitious laity.

The Holy Name formed a central component in Rolle's mystical schema: he promoted meditative practices that were centred on the Name of Jesus as vital in his ascent to contemplation, and he wrote about these in an intensely autobiographical way. His key contribution to the English cult of the Holy Name, was his "vulgarization" (to employ Bourdieu's term) of an existing Latin and Anglo-Norman tradition that employed the name of Jesus as a devotional focus for affective piety. Rolle took what was old and made it seem new by writing in English as well as in Latin and by giving the Name of Jesus a readily apprehensible place within his works. This is what Bourdieu describes as the "prophetic discourse" which "contains almost nothing that is not part of prior tradition" but produces "the illusion of radical novelty ... by *vulgarizing* an esoteric message to new publics."⁵⁷

However, it is important to stress that Rolle did more than repackage what had gone before. He also innovated through his particular interpretation of prior tradition, by raising the status of the Name of Jesus, and thereby intensifying its symbolic importance and power.⁵⁸ Building on the Bernardine ecstatic tradition he explicitly linked the Holy Name to his categories or gifts of mystical experience: *fervor*, *dulcor*, and *canor*. *Fervor* describes the ardent love for God

56 For a recent discussion of one such example see Denis Renevey, "Northern Spirituality Travels South: Rolle's Middle English *Encomium Oleum Effusum Nomen Tuum* in Lincoln College Library, MS 91, and Dublin, Trinity College, MS 155," in *Revisiting the Medieval North of England: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, ed. Anita Auer, Denis Renevey, Camille Marshall, and Tino Oudesluijs (Cardiff, 2019), 13–24.

57 Bourdieu, "Genesis and Structure" (see above, n. 2), 35.

58 For the Latin and Anglo-Norman tradition upon which Rolle built and for discussion of his distinctive contribution to the English cult of the Name of Jesus see André Wilmart, *Le Jubilus' sur le nom de Jesus dit de Saint Bernard* [Ephemerides liturgicae, Anno. 57] (Vatican City, 1943); Moyes, *Richard Rolle's Expositio* (see above, n. 55), 1: 25–67, 83–86; Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 18–22, 55, 237, 243, 247, 302 n. 7, 302–303 n. 9; Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 4, 72–77, 100–101, and idem, "The Mystical Lyrics of the *Manuel Des Pechiez*," *Romanic Review* 9 (1918), 154–193; Catherine A. Carsley, "Devotion to the Holy Name: Late Medieval Piety in England," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 53.2 (1992), 156–172; Denis Renevey, "Name Above Names" (see above, n. 13), 103–121, and idem, "Anglo-Norman and Middle-English Translations and Adaptations of the Hymn *Dulcis Iesu Memoria*," *The Medieval Translator* 5, ed. R. Ellis and R. Tixier (Turnhout, 1995), 264–283.

that was granted to Rolle after a prolonged period of meditation and prayer, and *dulcor* the ecstatic sweetness of delight and “mixture of longing and fulfilment” to which this led. Surpassing these was *canor*, the ultimate earthly goal of the contemplative; transformation of the soul and participation in heavenly song.⁵⁹ Rolle linked special devotion to the name of Jesus closely with his own attainment of these gifts in chapter fifteen of *Incendium Amoris*:

From which I deduce that they are not given for merit, but freely to whosoever Christ wills. All the same I fancy that no one will receive them unless he has a special love for the name of Jesus, and so honours it that he never lets it out of his mind, except in sleep. Anyone to whom this is given will, I think, achieve this very thing.⁶⁰

He thus gave the Name a privileged and controversial place in his teaching, which he developed in later works. In *Emendatio Vitae* and *The Commandment*, continuous ardent meditation on the name is the means to ascend to “singular love” and the attainment of *canor*, but is distinct from this highest state and is strongly associated with *dulcor*.⁶¹ However, Rolle’s interpretation of the Holy Name changed according to his intended audience, and if there was an overall direction to his teaching on the subject, it was towards raising the status of the Name of Jesus to the highest level of contemplative experience. So, *The Form of Living*, whilst promoting a range of practices and experiences, appears to equate a mode of spiritual singing of the Name with *canor* itself.⁶² In this regard Rolle went further than any other writer in his enthusiasm for the Name of Jesus

59 Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 68–72, and *Emendatio Vitae*, ed. Watson (see above, n. 55), 14.

60 Richard Rolle, *The Fire of Love*, trans. Clifton Wolters (Harmondsworth, 1972), 93–94. “Proinde arbitror hoc nulli datum meritis, sed gratis cui uoluerit Christus. Puto tamen neminen illud accepturum, nisi specialiter nomen Ihesum diligit, et eciam in tantum honoret ut ab eius memoria numquam, excepto sompno, recedere permittat. Cui hoc facere datum est, estimo quod et illud assequetur”: *Incendium Amoris*, ed. Margaret Deanesly (Manchester, 1915), 190. Watson interprets this passage as amounting to the claim that devotion to the name of Jesus was “a prerequisite for experiencing *canor*”: idem, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 314 n. 8.

61 *Emendatio Vitae*, ed. Watson (see above, n. 55), chap. 11, ll. 46–53, 75–76; chap. 1, ll. 9–33, 136–179 and see Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 219–220, and Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 245. *The Commandment*, ll. 212–214, in *Richard Rolle: Prose*, ed. Ogilvie-Thomson (see above, n. 35), 39.

62 *The Form of Living*, ll. 549–625 in *Prose*, ed. Ogilvie-Thomson (see above, n. 35), 16–18 and see Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 252 and Moyes, *Richard Rolle’s Expositio* (see above, n. 55), 1: 62.

as mystical object and tool.⁶³ In terms of the devotion's frequent association with Rolle himself, the Name of Jesus became a short-hand for an accumulation of symbolic labour, a cultural "power resource" or form of capital, which his English writings and their subsequent dissemination made widely available and apprehensible to a lay audience.⁶⁴

Rolle also diverged from tradition through his singular emphasis on joy and ecstatic experience as opposed to penitence and asceticism, and in his writings' pointed lack of reference to the established structures and practices of the church; he rarely wrote about the sacraments or the liturgy. Rolle's mystical schema was focused on the individual and their relationship with God.⁶⁵ There was thus a considerable potential for heterodoxy within the cult of the Name of Jesus, something to which I shall return below.

It is productive to see the Holy Name, as popularised by Rolle, as a new species of cultural capital that provided new opportunities for alliances for "resource exchange." Rolle was one of a number of producers and propagators of new types of religious capital in the long fifteenth century that were suited to new types of consumers: these have been described in terms of the overlapping categories of affective piety, vernacular theology, the mixed life, interiority, self-reform, or what Sita Steckel helpfully calls "quasi-monastic ascetic practices for laypeople."⁶⁶ While it is useful to see Rolle's relationship with his northern gentry and noble patrons as a "resource exchange" or alliance in the terms outlined above, this relationship was highly unstable due to Rolle's personality and lifestyle, for which he drew criticism while alive.⁶⁷ Although Rolle's writings eventually achieved wide circulation, their dissemination was far from straightforward. To use Weberian terms, the routinization of Rollean charismatic Holy Name devotion took time to achieve, mainly because of the exigencies of a manuscript culture and the diffuse social and institutional networks across which copies of his works travelled. In addition, it is clear that the more controversial charismatic aspects of the cult of the Holy Name achieved some popularity despite attempts to dampen such enthusiasm.

Historians have grappled with these contradictions before now. The central argument of Jonathan Hughes's *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life In Late Medieval Yorkshire* is that the northern English clerical establish-

63 *Emendatio Vitae*, ed. Watson (see above, n. 55), 23–24; Moyes, *Richard Rolle's Expositio* (see above, n. 55), 1: 85–86; Hanna, "Transmission" (see above, n. 50), 313–333, there 329.

64 Swartz, "Bourdieu's Political Economy," 76.

65 Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 46, 52, 54–72.

66 Steckel, "Historicizing the Religious Field" (see above, n. 36).

67 Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 449–488; Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 40–53.

ment, in alliance with the political elite, engaged in concerted action from the late fourteenth century to harness and channel the charisma of Northern mystical writing, contemplation, and personal piety into an orthodox programme of pastoral reform and instruction for the laity and clergy alike.⁶⁸ Whilst Hughes's identification of different tendencies within religious life in the diocese of York is astute, his argument, reiterated by Jeremy Catto,⁶⁹ that the York clergy, in concert with the Carthusians, actively acquired exemplars of sought-after mystical works in order to have them copied for dissemination to lay and clerical readers has been seriously undermined.⁷⁰ Individual York clerics owned copies of Rolle's works from as early as the 1390s and this interest continued into the late fifteenth century, but there does not appear to have been any attempt by the Minster clergy to gather a set of exemplars for use by copyists. The Carthusians showed an undoubted interest in Rolle and in the Holy Name, and there were well established links between the York secular clergy and Mount Grace Charterhouse,⁷¹ but there is no evidence of any institutional coordination of the dissemination of Rolle or any other mystical writer. To quote Ralph Hanna: "the source materials for transmitting Rolle were dispersed, not centralized, and anyone who wanted genuine Rolle would be forced to find it among a range of book-owners, a mixed group of organisations and private individuals." For this reason "book producers ... engaged persistently in reinventing the wheel, generating collections piecemeal."⁷² Hanna terms this an "associational" model of dissemination.

The absence of any programmatic or coordinated dissemination of the devotional and contemplative literature of the Holy Name makes it even more necessary to attend to the micro-mechanisms of transmission of a range of different representations of the cult that bear some family resemblance,⁷³ and to consider their producers and consumers and the benefits that were accrued

68 See above, n. 37, for full reference.

69 Catto, "Shaping the Mixed Life" (see above, n. 40), 101.

70 See, in particular, Michael G. Sargent, "The Transmission by the English Carthusians of Some Late Medieval Spiritual Writings," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27 (1976), 225–240, there 233–234, Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 261, 331–332 n. 4 and, most recently, Hanna, "Transmission" (see above, n. 50).

71 Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries* (see above, n. 37), 203–208.

72 Hanna, "Transmission" (see above, n. 50), 324, 327.

73 Dan Sperber, *Explaining Culture. A Naturalistic Approach* (Oxford, 1996), 16–23, and see Rob Lutton, "Love this Name that is IHC: Vernacular Prayers, Hymns and Lyrics to the Holy Name of Jesus in Pre-Reformation England," in *Vernacularity in England and Wales c. 1350–1550*, ed. Elizabeth Salter and Helen Wicker [Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy] (Turnhout, 2011), 115–141 esp. 121.

through such exchanges. This haphazard and serendipitous transmission was subject to the operations of a diverse range of agents that included professional scribes and stationers as well as more informal clerical and lay copyists and their relationships with those who patronised, commissioned, and purchased religious works. The diffusion of this literature had a number of characteristics, including the copying, compilation, and translation of short excerpts that formed the key statements on the devotion. These statements are relatively short and devoid of any esoteric theological content. They contain readily apprehensible and assimilable claims about the Name's moral and spiritual benefits and representations of ecstatic outpourings of praise that invite performance. There are relatively few: a handful of biblical texts, Anselm's *Meditation to Stir Up Fear*, re-workings of Bernard of Clairvaux's commentary on the Song of Songs, and of the twelfth-century *Dulcis Jesu Memoria*, and John of Howden's late thirteenth-century *Philomena*, together with Rolle's *Oleum effusum*, some of his lyrics, and relevant passages from his *Incendium amoris*, and English epistles. The excerpting of short statements on the Holy Name from longer works by Rolle and other writers represents a popularisation or "vulgarisation," which illustrates the "demand-led" dynamics of the formation of a cult around the Name and the way in which it could "become an end in itself."⁷⁴

The emergence of a reasonably stable and relatively small body of statements that provided the textual material of the English cult accords with what Ralph Hanna has described as "procedures of canonization, or creating literary tradition by providing (groups of) 'accepted works,'"⁷⁵ but this did not happen by means of centralised authorisation but through micro-processes of transmission over time between various agents. The manuscript books themselves demonstrate that these processes of gathering were piecemeal and contingent and that compilers were restricted in what they could get their hands on at any one time. Hanna's observation about manuscript copies of Rolle's works in general can be equally applied to the body of Holy Name textual material: there appears to have been "a sense that there was an oeuvre out there to be found, accompanied simultaneously by an absence of any particularly clear sense of its exact extent."⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the stability of this unofficially recognised "canon" of material by the early fifteenth century is demonstrated by the

74 The phrases are Denis Renevey's from his "Name above Names" (see above, n. 13), 118, and "Name Poured Out" (see above, n. 13), 131. See also Moyes, *Expositio* (see above, n. 55), 1: 86.

75 Ralph Hanna, "The Origins and Production of Westminster School MS. 3," *Studies in Bibliography* 41 (1988), 197–218, there 207.

76 Hanna, "Transmission" (see above, n. 50), 325.

ways in which the same works and short statements recur in various different combinations across a large number of manuscripts. One finds gatherings or clusters of identified Holy Name material in single devotional miscellanies or anthologies where the Name of Jesus acts as an organising principle of composition.⁷⁷ The processes involved in the identification and gathering of this Holy Name material were subject to demand and supply and exchanges and alliances between clergy, religious and laypeople, which can be reconstructed or at least guessed at in many cases.

A few examples will help to illustrate some of their wider characteristics. The copying of Holy Name texts by Rolle (including the *Oleum effusum*) and Walter Hilton by the early fifteenth-century Yorkshire gentleman Robert Thornton into what is now Lincoln Cathedral MS 91, suggests the involvement of at least one clerical spiritual advisor and interaction with local religious houses.⁷⁸ A similar lay-clerical alliance may have given rise to Oxford, University College MS 97, which was compiled by the London and Worcestershire priest William Counter who served as clerk to Sir William Beauchamp who, as we have seen, owned an early copy of the votive mass of the Name of Jesus. University College MS 97 contained a consecutive cluster of Holy Name texts, namely “Meditation to Say Alone” (advocating verbal or mental repetition of the phrase “Lord Jesus Christ”), Anselm’s *Meditation to Stir Up Fear*, and Rolle’s *Form of Living*.⁷⁹ “Meditation Alone” and the Anselm are found copied together in the same order in another six religious miscellanies or anthologies, some of which appear to have been produced for lay readers and also contained some Rolle.⁸⁰ On the recur-

77 A particularly rich example is discussed in Ralph Hanna, “The History of a Book: Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C.285,” in *Introducing English Medieval Book History*, ed. Ralph Hanna (Liverpool, 2013), 59–95.

78 The best introduction to Thornton and his books is now Susanna Fein and Michael Johnston, *Robert Thornton and his Books. Essays on the Lincoln and London Thornton Manuscripts* (Woodbridge, 2014), and see also John J. Thompson, “Another Look at the Religious Texts in Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91,” in *Late-Medieval Religious Texts and their Transmission: Essays in Honour of A.I. Doyle*, ed. A.J. Minnis (Woodbridge, 1994), 169–187, and Patirck J. Murphy and Fred Porcheddu, “Robert Thornton, the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*, and Cambridge University Library MS Dd.11.45,” *Notes and Documents* 114.1 (2016), 130–147. I owe my knowledge of this last reference to Ryan Perry.

79 Oxford, University College Library, MS 97, fols 133v–153, 153–155v, 155v–158v.

80 London, British Library, Add. MS 22283 (Simeon) closely related to the Vernon MS also contained Rolle’s English epistles and was possibly made for Joan Bohun, Countess of Hereford, Archbishop Arundel’s sister and wife of Thomas Woodstock mentioned above, through an alliance of West Midlands lay patronage and clerical expertise (Scase, “Patronage” (Turnhout, 2013), 270–273). Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepys MS 2125, discussed further below, contains the same Holy Name materials as Simeon as well as a devotional

ring items in this group of manuscripts Ian Doyle comments: "It must be that these are the relics of constant reproduction from certain stock exemplars of common constituents probably in the hands of London stationers ..."⁸¹ Here then we glimpse one possible, commercially driven, mechanism for the wide dissemination of groups of Holy Name texts to meet popular demand.

Other types of networks involved religious houses. William Carent of Toomer in Henstridge, Somerset, gentleman lawyer, book collector and MP, acquired a copy of Rolle's *Oleum effusum* together with Hilton's *Scale* in a volume that had been owned by local secular clergy in the late fifteenth century. Carent passed it to Shaftesbury nunnery in Dorset where he was steward and where his first wife's aunt had been abbess earlier in the century.⁸² Dame Joan Mouresleygh, nun of the same house from the 1440s to the 1460s, owned a volume that contained a version of Rolle's *Commandment*, which itself finishes with an exhortation on the Name of Jesus and to which was appended one of the hermit's most pointed statements on the devotion, excerpted from *The Form of Living*.⁸³ Another devotional miscellany initially compiled by two different scribes in Northwest Yorkshire very late in the fourteenth century, contains material from the same excerpt from the *Form*, but in this case combined with lines on the Name of Jesus from Rolle's *Oleum effusum*, the end of the *Commandment* and Philippians 2: 9–10. The other contents of the book and its marginalia and colophons display sustained interest in the devotion. The original owner was probably one "Cecily," perhaps a nun or anchoress or else a devout laywoman, but the book has a very complex history, travelling from Yorkshire to Norfolk

apparatus to the Name. It was perhaps produced for a male recluse but could equally have belonged to a spiritually ambitious lay household. See the description by Ryan Perry at <http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/resources/?section=corpus&id=13>. Edinburgh, University Library, MS 93 also contained the Middle English version 4 of Rolle's *Emendatio Vitae* and was probably a compendium for a lay person (Allen, *Writings Ascribed* (see above, n. 8), 242).

- 81 A.I. Doyle, *A Survey of the Origins and Circulation of Theological Writings in English in the 14th, 15th, and Early 16th Centuries with Special Consideration of the Part of the Clergy therein* (Ph.D. diss, University of Cambridge, 1953), 2 vols, 1: 168.
- 82 London, British Library, Add. MS 11748. A.S.G. Edwards, "Manuscripts and Readers," in *A Companion to Medieval English Literature and Culture*, ed. Peter Brown (Malden, 2007), 93–106, there 103–104; A.I. Doyle, "English Books In and Out of Court from Edward III to Henry VII," in *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983), 163–181, there 174.
- 83 Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS li.vi.40, fols 207r–v; Ralph Hanna, *The English Manuscripts of Richard Rolle. A Descriptive Catalogue* (Exeter, 2010), 37–38; Andrew G. Watson, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: Supplement to the Second Edition* [RHS Guides and Handbooks 15] (London, 1987), 62, 109.

in the fifteenth century, where a John Marshall, priest, was connected with it or its owners. In the end four scribes had a hand in its compilation and it was used twice in its travels as an exemplar for two other manuscripts that display pointed interest in the Name of Jesus. It also at some point lost a quire containing other important Holy Name texts, including *Of Angels' Song*, attributed to Hilton. The lost quire may have provided the source text for a number of London manuscripts that contain the same work, which were either produced or owned by the English Carthusians.⁸⁴

The circulation of a relatively stable body of texts is extremely useful for informing our understanding of the cult—how it was practised and what it meant to devotees—but the archetypal nature of the devotion rendered it particularly malleable to interpretation. Devotion to the Holy Name was highly portable—the devotee needed nothing more than the name “Jesus” to practice it—and at its most basic level involved simple verbal/mental repetition and meditation. But, more fundamentally, as *ritual action* it was archetypal in the sense defined by the social anthropologists Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw.⁸⁵ So, when the individual performed devotion to the Name of Jesus, in whatever shape or form, they understand their own performance to be merely one version of something that was larger, prior to and more mysterious than their own. This means that each instance of ritual action involved meaning-making or interpretation. One brought one’s own meaning to it. These instances of interpretation are what Dan Sperber calls “micro-mechanisms of cognition and communication” and it is to these micro-mechanisms that we must attend if we want to understand the significance of the Holy Name in the later middle ages for the religious field, charting their diversity and identifying their social distribution as much as possible.⁸⁶

The dissemination of the cult to the laity at a popular level opened up the possibility of interpretation and so the dispersal of religious capital. Moreover, the malleability of the Holy Name made it impossible to control its interpretation, notwithstanding clerical intervention or mediation. The most remarkable instance of such an attempt to impose an orthodox interpretation of the Holy Name can be found in the works of Walter Hilton, Augustinian canon of

84 MS Rawlinson C.285, fol. 59r–v. The composite passage is printed in full in *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and his Followers*, ed. C. Horstman, 2 vols (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1896), 1:106. And for a full discussion of the MS see Hanna, “The History of a Book” (see above, n. 77), 59–95.

85 Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw, *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship* (Oxford, 1994).

86 Dan Sperber, “Anthropology and Psychology: Towards an Epidemiology of Representations,” *Man*, n.s 20:1 (1985), 73–89, there 78–79.

Thurgarton, Nottinghamshire, in the late fourteenth century. Hilton addressed devotion to the Holy Name in both Book 1 of his *Scale of Perfection* and in *Of Angels' Song* and seems to have done so in response to the concerns of particular individuals and potential audiences for whom he wrote, even returning to the *Scale* to add additional comment on the subject after this work had first begun to circulate. These interventions provide evidence of Rollean Holy-Name enthusiasm by the 1380s and address three main areas of disquiet. First, the potentially idolatrous and mechanistic use of the Name of Jesus as a focus for devotion and the potential pitfalls of those who arrogantly rely on its efficacy as a route to contemplation. Second, literal interpretations of Rolle's categories of heat, sweetness, and song; in other words claims of actual physical bodily experience and, third, the assertion that salvation would only be attained by those who had a special attachment to the Name of Jesus, and that the evidence for such a love was experience of "goostli joie" and "wondirful swettenesse" in its use. Hilton's answer to such teaching was that many who repent of their former sins and keep God's commandments will be saved without ever feeling "goostli swettenesse ne inly savoure in the name of Jhesu or in the love of Jhesu." He rejected the exclusive claims of Holy Name enthusiasm through exposition of the etymological meaning of the name "Jesus" as "goostli hele" or healing, in other words salvation. So, to love Jesus and his Name is to love one's salvation by living a Christian life. Even those who live and die in the lowest degree of charity "schal be saaf and have ful mede in the sight of God ..." provided they keep his commandments.⁸⁷

Hilton's pastoral efforts to direct his readers to the correct sort of devotion to the Name of Jesus sought to explain away the Name as a mere metaphor for love of the person of Jesus and of one's salvation; a wholly safe interpretation. He sought to routinize Rollean charismatic Holy Name devotion in the Weberian sense by bringing it back down to earth, to the realities of everyday devotion within the institutionalised structures and practices of the late medieval church. Frustratingly, there is no evidence of just how much of a following more charismatic Holy Name devotion had gathered by the end of the

87 Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection* (Kalamazoo, 2000), bk. 1, ll. 128–145, 1213–1276, 1307–1351 at ll. 1215–1216, 1220–1221, 1233, 1256; "Of Angels' Song" in *English Mystics of the Middle Ages*, ed. Barry Windeatt (Cambridge, 1994), 131–136. In addition, Thomas Basset's *Defensorium contra Oblectatores* is addressed at an English Carthusian's criticisms of Rollean charismatic enthusiasm: Allen, *Writings* (see above, n. 8), 527–537; Michael G. Sargent, "Contemporary Criticism of Richard Rolle," *Analecta Cartusiana* 55.1 (Kartäusermystik und -mystiker), ed. James Hogg (Salzburg, 1981), 160–205, esp. 182–205; Watson, *Invention* (see above, n. 50), 261–264, 333 n. 12; Renevey, "Name Above Names" (see above, n. 13), 113–121.

fourteenth century, but the sheer abundance of fifteenth-century representations of the Name as a devotional and contemplative tool suggest that Hilton and others failed to control its meanings and that it retained its charismatic dynamic. It continued to be perceived as more than a metaphor and formed a devotional focus in its own right. The wide circulation of Rolle's works among the clergy, laity, and religious orders are evidence enough of this continuing appetite for the Name of Jesus as a devotional and contemplative tool, and other works explicitly written for lay readers drew on Rolle to position the Holy Name as a vital element in the ascent to contemplation.

One of the best examples is *The Pore Caitif*, which, judging by the number of surviving copies, was ostensibly the most successful late medieval religious compilation in English prose.⁸⁸ Probably compiled in the 1380s, it was explicitly aimed at the laity, its declared purpose being to “teche simple men and wymmen of gode wille the right way to hevене yf thei wille besye hem to have it in mynde and to worche thereafter, withouten multiplicacion of many bokes.”⁸⁹ *Pore Caitif's* compiler omitted almost all references in his sources to the solitary or religious life in his attempt to provide a full instructional and devotional programme for ascent to contemplation for the laity. In borrowing heavily from Rolle, its programme for spiritual ascent “as bi a laddir of dyuerse rongis” positions meditation on the Name of Jesus as more advanced than meditation on the Passion and on “last things.” The material on the Name of Jesus is all from Rolle's *Oleum effusum* and its position in the work as a whole advocates the Name as the gateway to “higher spiritual states,” the lower and then higher degrees of contemplation.⁹⁰ *Pore Caitif* provides evidence of attachment to the Name of Jesus as a relatively advanced meditative practice and preliminary to contemplation among certain social groups. Ian Doyle's meticulous inspection of many of the manuscripts demonstrates that it enjoyed extensive ownership and circulation among “citizens, gentlemen, their wives and relations, clerks and religious” mainly in London and adjoining counties. Many of these copies appear to have been professional productions made in the capital and designed for private household reading rather than public teaching. They frequently passed between lay and clerical owners and readers and vice versa. If

88 Sister Mary Teresa Brady, *The Pore Caitif*, Edited from Ms. Harley 2336 with Introduction and Notes (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 1954), ix–xlii; idem, “Rolle's *Form of Living* and *The Pore Caitif*,” *Traditio*, 36 (1980), 426–435; idem, “Rolle and the Pattern of Tracts in *The Pore Caitif*,” *Traditio*, 39 (1983), 456–465; *MWME*, vol. 9, xxiii: 3470.

89 *The Idea of the Vernacular. An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280–1520*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans [Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies] (Exeter, 1999), 240.

90 Brady, “Rolle and the Pattern of Tracts” (see above, n. 88), 457.

Pore Caitif failed to achieve truly national circulation, this was perhaps because it was best suited to the relatively more advanced and household-centred literary and devotional practices of its socially elevated metropolitan readership, for whom more advanced spiritual subjects were increasingly sought-after, and served as markers of fashionable piety and social status.⁹¹

Pore Caitif's promotion of the Holy Name might be construed as evidence of the continuing success of a clerical monopoly over the production of religious capital but, in fact, it suggests that any such notion of clerical monopoly is misconstrued; the use of the Name of Jesus as a readily apprehensible and wholly portable method for such advancement was central to the *Pore Caitif's* rationale as a self-contained household-centred manual of spiritual instruction. Nicholas Watson is surely right to see the work as “democratizing the spiritual life.”⁹² Also, the manner of its circulation points to lay as well as clerical agency in its dissemination. *Pore Caitif* is one of a large number of vernacular works of religious instruction that indicate a significant “loss of ‘hierarchy’ of the religious field.”⁹³ As well as a flattening out of hierarchy, these also signal the expansion of the religious field through the fostering of pious and devotional dispositions—what Bourdieu would call new types of habitus⁹⁴—among elements of the laity. Dissemination of the Holy Name was an important element in that expansion through its enhancement of lay spiritual aspiration and competence. Moreover, as a “vulgarization” of monastic practice it also expanded the religious field by democratizing the very criteria of competency. So, Rollean advocacy of the Name of Jesus as a reliable and readily attainable meditative method opened up previously unattainable types of religious practice to new social groups as well as giving access to new types of ecstatic experience, which allowed those new social groups to make their own novel claims to religious competence and achievement.

91 Doyle, “A Survey” (see above, n. 81), 1: 48–56, there 50, 55. See, for example: London, British Library, MS Harley 2336 and MS Stowe 38, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 938. Copies of *Pore Caitif* owned by Dartford Priory, the Minorites of Aldgate and Shaftesbury Abbey, Dorset, illustrate its circulation among communities of nuns: Paul Lee, *Nunneries, Learning and Spirituality in Late Medieval English Society: The Dominican Priory of Dartford* (Woodbridge, 2001), 142, 188–193.

92 Nicholas Watson, “Conceptions of the Word: The Mother Tongue and the Incarnation of God,” *New Medieval Literatures* 1 (1997), 85–124, esp. 108, and “Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel’s Constitutions of 14092,” *Speculum* 70 (1995), 822–864, esp. 849.

93 Steckel, “Historicizing the Religious Field” herein, 360, 364.

94 Gorski, “Bourdieuian Theory” (see above, n. 15), 348, and see also Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure” (see above, n. 2), 5, 23–24.

The readily accessible self-sufficiency of Holy Name practices may have been as important a factor as any in the continuity of their appeal across Catholic and Protestant devotional regimes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Indeed the cult offers a very good case-study for exploring how lay religiosity shifted, perhaps in a single direction, perhaps to-and-fro, between the extreme poles of the religious monopoly of the church and the religious self-sufficiency of the laity.⁹⁵ Different representations of the cult suggest that clerical monopoly and lay self-sufficiency co-existed. So, given the liturgical growth of the Jesus cult, the mass was probably an increasingly important locus for its practice, and yet many Holy Name texts make no reference to the sacraments or liturgy and some were explicitly designed for wholly private personal devotion. The abovementioned Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2125, for example, contains a devotional apparatus focused on the “Ihs” Holy Monogram designed for use during the mass of the Name of Jesus, together with the Holy Name tract “Meditation to Say Alone” for use at “a certeyn tyme ny3t by ny3t or day by day contynuyng ... in some pryue place by pi-self.”⁹⁶ Such devotional miscellanies often contain multiple items positioned at different points along the scale between control and improvisation, but even single items allowed the devout layperson to move between different levels of improvisation depending on their competency and the context of their devotions.

For Bourdieu, the production of canonical writings, or what he calls “‘vulgarized’ instruments of religious practice,” accelerates when the priestly monopoly is under threat from “prophecy (or heresy)” and “lay intellectualism.” However, although we might view Hilton’s works in this mould, the other “vulgarized” instruments that we have been examining here hardly fit this category. In the long fifteenth century the material conditions of a manuscript culture meant that the emergence of a Holy Name canon occurred unofficially, haphazardly, and associationally, and is observable only at the micro-level. If there was a bureaucratic “casuistico-rational systemization” of the cult it was probably achieved through its popular liturgical dissemination which, as discussed, lagged significantly behind the development of a textual canon. It is also telling that it is not until the early sixteenth century that we see the production of a truly systematizing Holy Name text, namely the Bridgettine monk Richard Whitford’s *Jesus Psalter*, first printed in 1529, that belongs to that class of “prac-

95 Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure” (see above, n. 2), 10.

96 Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2125, fols 117r–v, 118r. “Meditation to Say Alone” is printed, from the copy in Oxford, University College, MS 97 in Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers* (see above, n. 84), 2: 441–443.

tical instruments” that perform the function of *garde fou* (guardrail), intended to guarantee the economy of improvisation at the same time that they prohibit it.”⁹⁷ In fact, as Bourdieu recognised, instruments such as the *Jesus Psalter* and the mass and feast of the Name of Jesus only give the appearance of unity and work to conceal the great diversity of practice, experience, and interpretation that is only identifiable in “micro-mechanisms of cognition and communication.”⁹⁸ It is to these that we must look if we are to begin to appreciate the social, as well as the doctrinal, significance of such religious transformations.

Equally, if we are to write a sociology of the Holy Name, then we must pay due consideration to how “radically opposed social experiences” give rise to the production of “contrary meanings” from ostensibly similar rituals and beliefs.⁹⁹ So, the circulation of works such as *The Pore Caitif*, points to the appeal of the devotion among new bourgeois social groups, not least but not only the expanding artisanal and mercantile classes of London, where new forms of lifestyle gave rise to new types of capital and habitus: literacy, education, respectability, and the devotional and contemplative regimes of lay piety. One feature of the devotion which may have been important in this regard is its emphasis on personal intensity of religious experience, something which Bourdieu identifies as a development largely of the urban bourgeoisie as opposed to “belonging to the essence of all religious experience.” Equally, a devotion focused on Christ’s name as opposed to his suffering body may have been more psychologically relevant to those comfortable classes who enjoyed a relative degree of control over their material conditions of existence and so suffered less themselves.¹⁰⁰ For the more economically precarious husbandman or rural artisan, with more limited literate competency and access to religious texts, their only encounter with the cult might have been in the weekly celebration of the Jesus mass and the visual representation of the “Ihs” monogram in their parish church. Although we should not limit the possibility of more inward and intense religious practices and experiences to any particular social group, lower down the social scale the Name’s power to protect from spiritual and physical catastrophe is likely to have been more important. This notwithstanding, its meaning and significance remained open, malleable, and unstable and it is

97 Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure” (see above, n. 2), 30–31. Whitford did not compose the *Jesus Psalter*, it pre-dating his adult life, but he was the first to print it: Lutton, “Love this Name that is IHC” (see above, n. 73), 140–143, esp. p. 141 n. 80.

98 Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure” (see above, n. 2), 29.

99 *Ibid.*, 19–20.

100 *Ibid.*, 16–17, there 16.

necessary to engage with the whole range of its representations, and their transmission at different social levels, in order to understand its larger significance in the religious transformations of the long fifteenth century.

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