RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND EVERYDAY LIFE
IN THE LONG FIFTEENTH CENTURY
(1350–1570)

NEW COMMUNITIES OF INTERPRETATION

CONTEXTS, STRATEGIES, AND PROCESSES OF RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

VOLUME 2

General Editors
Sabrina Corbellini, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
John Thompson, Queen's University Belfast

Editorial Board
Pavlína Rychterová, Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
Ian Johnson, University of St Andrews
Géraldine Veysseyre, Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes (CNRS), Université Paris IV-Sorbonne
Chiara Lastraioli, Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance (CNRS), Université François Rabelais, Tours
Pawel Kras, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin / Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II
Marina Gazzini, Università degli Studi di Milano Statale
Marco Mostert, Universiteit Utrecht
Rafael M. Pérez García, Universidad de Sevilla

Religious Practices and Everyday Life in the Long Fifteenth Century (1350–1570)

Interpreting Changes and Changes of Interpretation

Edited by
IAN JOHNSON *and*
ANA MARIA S. A. RODRIGUES

BREPOLS

This work is financed by national funds through FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P, in the scope of the projects UIDB/04311/2020 and UIDP/04311/2020.

UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

FACULDADE DE LETRAS

CENTRO DE HISTÓRIA
UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA

© 2021, Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium.

This is an open access publication made available under a CC BY-NC 4.0 International License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. Some rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, for commercial purposes, without the prior permission of the publisher, or as expressly permitted by law, by license or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics rights organization.

D/2021/0095/75
ISBN 978-2-503-59355-5
eISBN 978-2-503-59356-2
DOI 10.1484/M.NCI-EB.5.122657

Printed in the EU on acid-free paper.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations 9

Introduction: Interpreting Changes in Daily Religious Practice and Changes of Interpretation in the 'Long Fifteenth Century'
Ian Johnson and Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues 13

Religious Practices and Everyday Life: The Monastic Experience

Religious Practices of the Canons Regular of St Augustine in the Czech Lands: The Statutes of Roudnice
Adéla Ebersonová 23

The Devotional Book in Context and Use: Catalan Poor Clares and English Birgittines: Spaces, Performance, and Memory
David Carrillo-Rangel, Blanca Garí, and Núria Jornet-Benito 49

Literacy, Books, and the Community: Textual Evidence from a Portuguese Dominican Nunnery
Gilberto Coralejo Moiteiro 77

Religious Practices and Everyday Life: The Laity

Change and Continuity in Lay Devotion as Evidenced by Prayer Beads in Medieval Poland and Central Europe
Monika Saczyńska-Vercamer 101

A Daily Devotion of the Long Fifteenth Century: Italian Literature on the Rosary
Erminia Ardissino 129

The Prayer Book of George of Poděbrady and Books of Private Devotion in Post-Hussite Bohemia
Jan Dienstbier 151

The 'Goostly Chaffare' of Reginald Pecock: Everyday Craft, Commerce, and Custom Meet Syllogistic Polemic in Fifteenth-Century London
Ian Johnson 175

The Reformation and the First Book in the Lithuanian Language
Dalia Marija Stančiene 201

Preparing for Death and the Afterlife

'The Kingdom of Heaven cannot be denied to you justly because you have fought correctly': Tracing the Evolution of *Ars moriendi* Literature in the Fifteenth Century
Joost Robbe 217

Caxton and the Reception of the *Artes moriendi*
Delphine Mercuzot 241

Death Multiplied: The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Bohemian Art in the Context of Late Medieval Religious Practice
Daniela Rywiková 273

De praeparatione ad mortem: The Dying and Death of Charles V (1500–1558)
Nikola Samardžić 305

Continuity and Change in Religious Practices: Christianity and Islam

The Phenomenon of Crypto-Christianity in the Balkans during the Sixteenth Century
Vladimir Abramović and Haris Dajč 323

Traditions and Transitions: Examples of Parallel Practices in a Sixteenth-Century Central European Region
Marcell Sebők 335

Continuity and Discontinuity in Everyday Religious Life in Southern Hungary before 1526 in the Light of Supplications to the Holy See
Melina Rokai 355

Conclusion

Books and Objects Supporting Quotidian Devotion: Conclusions and Prospects for Investigating Daily Religious Practices during the 'Long Fifteenth Century'
Géraldine Veysseyre 377

Index 403

List of Illustrations

Adéla Ebersonová

Figure 1.1. Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, MS XIX B 3, fol. 202^{v}. Photo: National Library of the Czech Republic. Reproduced with permission. 26

Figure 1.2. Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, MS XIX B 3, fol. 12^{r}. Photo: National Library of the Czech Republic. Reproduced with permission. 32

Figure 1.3. Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, MS XIX B 3, fol. 12^{v}. Photo: National Library of the Czech Republic. Reproduced with permission. 33

David Carrillo-Rangel, Blanca Gari, and Nuria Jornet-Benito

Figure 2.1. *Ordenaciones* (constitutions) of the monastery of Sant Antoni i Santa Clara of Barcelona. Montserrat, Arxiu del Monestir de Sant Benet de Montserrat, Fons del Monestir de Santa Clara de Barcelona (AMSBM/MSCB), Ordenaciones religiosas de la provincia de Tarragona (1617). Reproduced with permission. Photo: Blanca Gari and Núria Jornet. 55

Figure 2.2. Diurnal of the monastery of Sant Antoni i Santa Clara of Barcelona. Montserrat, Biblioteca de l'Abadia de Montserrat (BAM), Ms. 13. Diurnal, Original binding. Reproduced with permission. Photo: Blanca Gari and Núria Jornet. 56

Monika Saczyńska-Vercamer

Figure 4.1. The tombstone of Bolko II, Duke of Ziębice and his wife Duchess Jutta, mid-fourteenth century, Henryków, Silesia, Poland, the post-Cistercian church, a Silesian sculptor. Photo: Michał Kurzej. 104

Figure 4.2. Hedwig Codex, Silesia, Poland: Hedwig praying to Saints Lawrence and Bartholomew and blessing the sick with a statute of the Virgin Mary. Los Angeles, Collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, file no. 83. MN.126, MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 46^{v}. 1353. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. 106

Figure 4.3. The breviary of Jan of Středa, Bishop of Litomyšl, the second half of the fourteenth century, folio 69v: the initial G the scene of the Annunciation; Prague National Museum, file XIII A 12. After Brodský, Katalog Iluminovaných rukopisů Knihovny Národního Muzea v Praze, fig. XXVI. 114
Figure 4.4. Ecce Homo, *c.* 1500, Gdańsk, St Mary's Church, an unknown painter from Gdańsk; Warsaw, National Museum, inventory Śr. no. 77. Photo: Teresa Żółtowska-Huszcza / Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie. 116
Figure 4.5. The Third Commandment 'Remember the Sabbath day, keep it holy' from The Ten Commandments Tablet, 1480–1490, Gdańsk, St Mary's Church, an unknown painter from Gdańsk; Warsaw, National Museum, inventory Śr.36. Photo: Teresa Żółtowska-Huszcza / Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie. 120
Figure 4.6. *Hornig Codex*, Silesia, Poland, 1451, fol. 58v: Pilgrims going to Saint Hedwig's grave in Trebnitz, Wrocław, Wrocław University Library, file No. IV F 192 (after Legenda o św. Jadwidze / Legende der hl. Hedwig). 121

Jan Dienstbier

Figure 6.1. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 12r, Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.92. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 155
Figure 6.2. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 12r (detail), Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.921. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 157
Figure 6.3. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 3r, Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.921. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 158
Figure 6.4. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 33r, Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.921. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 160

Daniela Rywiková

Figure 11.1. The Last Judgement, the Parable of Wise and Foolish Virgins, the Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead, and Triumph of Death. Broumov, former Charnel House, front wall, *c.* 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 278

Figure 11.2. The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Broumov, former Charnel House, *c.* 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 279
Figure 11.3. The Triumph of Death. Broumov, former Charnel House, *c.* 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 280
Figure 11.4. Christ the Judge. Broumov, former Charnel House, right side wall, *c.* 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 281
Figure 11.5. The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead. České Budějovice, Dominican Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, southern wall, after 1381. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 289
Figure 11.6. Jean de Noir, The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Psalter and Prayer Book of Bonne of Luxemburg, before 1349. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloister Collection, MS 69.86, fol. 320v –321r. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image in the Public Domain. 291
Figure 11.7. The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead and Triumph of Death. Pisa, Campo Santo, after 1336. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 292
Figure 11.8. Pietà, St George fighting the dragon, the Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead (the side wall); and St Christopher (the front wall). České Budějovice, Dominican Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, after 1381. Photo: Daniela Rywiková. 294

Nikola Samardžić
Figure 12.1. Nicolaas Hogenberg, Funeral Procession in Brussels on the Occasion of the Death of Emperor Charles V. Sheet 24-25. 1559. © The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg. Reproduced with permission. 315
Figure 12.2. The mummified body of the Emperor Charles V in the Escorial. Photograph of a painting by V. Palmaroli y González. Wellcome Collection. Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0). 315

IAN JOHNSON

The ‘Goostly Chaffare’ of Reginald Pecock

Everyday Craft, Commerce, and Custom Meet Syllogistic Polemic in Fifteenth-Century London

In mid-fifteenth-century England, Reginald Pecock, Bishop of Chichester, attempted, in a universalizing array of some thirty or so interlinked vernacular tracts and manuals (of which only half a dozen survive to the present day), to recodify the entirety of Christian doctrine and catechesis in his own new multi-textual system of seven ‘matters’ and four ‘tables’. This somewhat megalomanic recodification aimed to cater to the diverse capacities and situations of all Christians in England, whatever their education.[1] Pecock’s prime political, rather than general, purpose, however, was to confound the

1 For general studies on Pecock, see Scase, *Reginald Pecock*; Green, *Bishop Reginald Pecock*; Brockwell, *Bishop Reginald Pecock and the Lancastrian Church*, and Campbell, *The Call to Read*. For developments in the fifteenth-century English Church as a context for the religious literary culture of the time, see Gillespie, ‘Chichele’s Church’. Campbell’s monograph as a whole, covering the construction of Pecock’s audience and the expectation that it should be able to exercise reason in educating itself, often provides useful context and parallels for this essay.

Ian Johnson • is Professor of Medieval Literature and Head of the School of English at the University of St Andrews. He was Co-Director of the Queen’s Belfast-St Andrews AHRC-funded project *Geographies of Orthodoxy: Mapping English Pseudo-Bonaventuran Lives of Christ, 1350–1550* (2007–2011). With Alastair Minnis he edited *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume II. The Middle Ages* (2005). He is founding General Editor of *The Mediaeval Journal* and was for many years General Editor of *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. His latest books are *The Middle English Life of Christ: Academic Discourse, Translation and Vernacular Theology* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); *The Pseudo-Bonaventuran Lives of Christ: Exploring the Middle English Tradition*, edited with Allan Westphall (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); *The Impact of Latin Culture on Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, edited with Alessandra Petrina (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2018), and *Geoffrey Chaucer in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). He was a Working Group Coordinator and Management Committee member of the COST Action *New Communities of Interpretation: Contexts, Strategies and Processes of Religious Transformation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (2013–2017).

Religious Practices and Everyday Life in the Long Fifteenth Century (1350–1570): Interpreting Changes and Changes of Interpretation, ed. by Ian Johnson and Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues, New Communities of Interpretation, 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), pp. 175–199
© BREPOLS PUBLISHERS
10.1484/M.NCI.5.123212

Lollards and to win them back from their errors by reasoning with them in the vernacular. Aware of his audience, be it heterodox or the mainstream majority, Pecock appealed to their common social and occupational experience to win them over and to teach them the rudimentary vernacular theology that he wished them to master and obey. Parallels with the world of work and social and economic transactions — which are the focus of this essay — festoon his texts. Indeed, Pecock was keen to characterize his entire programme as a form of spiritual merchandise, 'goostly chaffare', for the profit and ease of the people of England:

> [H]ow schulde a man bring people of englonde into wil forto bye or to freely receyue and haue preciouse and profitable chaffre, which he had fett fer from oþire cuntrees biȝonde þe see for her profite and eese, but if he wolde denounce and proclame þat he had such chaffre, and which were þe preciosite and þe profitablenes of hit, for loue and ȝeel which he had into her good and availe; And ȝit herbi and herfore ouȝte not þis man be holde a proud avaunter of him silf or of his chaffare. Wherfore, if y be in like caas of my goostly chaffare, no man putte me so liȝtli in þe defaute of which, god, þou knowist, y canne not in no wise fynde my silf gilti.[2]
>
> > (How should a man bring people of England into wanting to buy or freely to receive and have precious and profitable merchandise which he had fetched far from other countries beyond the sea for their profit and ease, unless he would announce and proclaim that he had such merchandise, and what the preciousness/value and advantageous usefulness/profitability of it might be, on account of the love and zeal which he had towards their good and advantage/avail? And yet hereby and herefore this man ought not to be held a proud vaunter of himself or of his merchandise. Wherefore, if I may be held to be such concerning my spiritual merchandise, no man should so lightly put me at fault for that of which, God, you know, I cannot in any way find myself guilty.)

Just because Pecock uses this mercantile image so hyperbolically, this does not mean that the ideology of the mercantile should be taken as a universal prism through which to understand his overall works. It is nevertheless relevant, however, to observe and interpret the occasions on which he makes use of occupational parallels and everyday experience to teach the laity not only the contents of doctrine but also its methodology. On this particular occasion, Reginald allows himself to vaunt his wares, because the benefits of his 'goostly chaffare' (spiritual merchandise) are so great, and also because his motivation for advertising it is not his own profit but the 'loue and ȝeel' (love

2 Pecock, *The Donet*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 83. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 237–43 not only for discussion of this passage but also for Pecock's endeavour to cultivate social, educational, and amicable relations between clergy and laity. For the latter, see also pp. 223–31.

and zeal) that he has for the 'good and availe' (good and advantageousness/avail) of his congregation of spiritual customers. This 'goostly chaffare' is of such great value that no amount of hyperbole spent in advertising it is false. In a sense, Pecock is protected from his own personal bumptiousness by the value and profitability of everything that he wishes to communicate throughout his oeuvre. It is appropriate too that he should declare before his God that he cannot find himself guilty of inappropriate vaunting, simply because his merchandise is so valuable. This declaration must be taken at face value, simply because it is unthinkable that Pecock would knowingly have committed blasphemy in uttering it.

Tragically, however, for all his ambition and optimism, Pecock's project backfired spectacularly: he found himself accused of heresy; his works were consigned to public burning; he lost his bishopric, and he died imprisoned in Thorney Abbey in the Fens of East Anglia soon afterwards.[3] Why did things go so badly wrong? Pecock had undoubtedly made more than his fair share of enemies in the Church establishment. It certainly did not help him that in 1447 in London he had delivered a scandalously received sermon proclaiming that bishops were not required to preach and had other priorities in their working duties. What seems finally to have undone him, however, was a measure of political bad luck — being caught on the wrong side at the wrong time during a civil war (the War of the Roses, in which the Houses of Lancaster and York competed murderously for the throne). He managed to alienate the Mayor of London, who complained formally to Henry VI of his alleged doctrinal transgressions. A leading magnate, Viscount Beaumont, also took steps to see him put on trial. In late 1457, Pecock endured examination and condemnation on a number of charges (several of which were grotesque exaggerations or outright falsehoods) of bringing the Doctors and Church decrees into question and of writing to the laity in the vernacular on ecclesiastical matters. Only a humiliating public recantation saved him from the flames.

One key factor in Pecock's demise was, of course, that, despite his arguing for orthodoxy and the authority of the Church, he wished to share theology in the vernacular with the laity, albeit from a position of pedagogic dominance. Pecock believed that layfolk were well capable of following theological reason, and he had every confidence that they would understand his arguments, make up their own minds, and, undoubtedly, agree with him.[4] This approach proved to be perilously over-optimistic. Moreover, Pecock's wholesale rejection, deconstruction, and repackaging into his Tables of Virtues of common doctrinal formats, such as the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Works of Mercy,

3 For the biographical information cited in this essay (and more), see generally Scase, *Reginald Pecock*. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 148–80, 198–216 for the place of reason and how it relates to Scripture in Pecock's theological and socio-educational scheme.

4 For discussion of Pecock's attitude to managing a potentially critical and lively laity, see Westphall, 'Reconstructing the Mixed Life', esp. pp. 267–70.

and so on, was profoundly alienating, especially to the Church establishment he sought to defend. This alienation was doubtless sharpened, not only by the brash neologizing, the self-advertisingly complicated syntax, the learned jargon, and the relentlessly scholastic methodology of his writings, but also by the endless confidence with which Pecock brashly announced that his works, and the powers of human reason that they glorified, offered greater grounding in divinity and moral law than Holy Scripture itself. Reason, for him, came before the Bible. Reason was all. God never did anything against reason. The Bible embodied and followed divine reason and never opposed it; therefore reason — something all humans could exercise — was greater than the Bible. It is not difficult to see that Pecock was inviting trouble with what he said and how he said it.

In two of his works in particular, the *Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy* and the *Reule of Crysten Religioun*, Pecock inserts into his hyper-rationalistic theologizing some intriguing arguments invoking the occupational and social behaviours and the common experience of his intended lay audience, whom he sought to turn into rudimentary vernacular theologians and philosophers. As we shall see, homely parallels of carting, butchery, goldsmithing, cutlercraft, falcon-catching, horse mills, shoe leather, and even of the London Midsummer's Eve custom of bringing branches and flowers into the city are worked by Pecock into the flow of his densely technical syllogistic prose in order to service his ongoing argument for the primacy of reason over Scripture and for the accompanying separation of philosophy from divinity.

For Pecock, reason was the defining characteristic of the human soul created in the image of God. This is why, in the *Reule of Crysten Religioun*, he chose to focus his prayer on the reason within the soul rather than on the *affectus*. Addressing the Almighty, Pecock implores him, on behalf of all who would read and hear his work, specifically for the illumination of reason:

> PReisable lord and þankeable god aboue alle þingis, siþen þou hast vouched saaf of þyn infinite mercy and pitee, loue and desijr to illumyne and enform vs, and so cleerli and so plenteuousely bi liȝt of natural resoun in knowing of vs silf in oure soule side and of þee, ffirst þat þou art and aftir what þou art, what þou art in þi noble dignitees and worþinessis, and þat þou art and schalt be to vs in maner of oure eende and final blis, contynue now ferþer, lord, þin illumynacioun, informacioun and techyng, we bisechen þee.[5]
>
> > (Praiseworthy Lord and God thankable above all things, since you, of your infinite mercy and pity, have vouched safe a love and desire to illuminate and inform/instruct/direct/inspire us (and so clearly and so plenteously by the light of natural reason) in the knowing of ourselves on the part of our soul and in the knowing of you — first

5 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, pp. 223–24.

that you are, and, after what you are, what you are in your noble dignities and worthinesses, and that you are and shall be to us in the manner of our end and final bliss: continue now further, Lord, your illumination, informing/instruction/direction/inspiration, and teaching, we beseech you.)

The knowledge that reason bestows is knowledge of the self and knowledge of God, his attributes, and his providential, salvific plan for mankind. Reason, however, is not quite all: Pecock acknowledges that some truths may only be disclosed by revelation and not by reason alone, although these truths are nearly always amenable to reason. Most truths are nevertheless accessible through reason, such as the law of nature ('lawe of kynde') which God asks humanity to keep, and from which other laws and truths derive. Truth after truth and the whole law of nature are accessible to the natural light which God has set in souls as the defining quality of their humanity:

> In proceding vpon þis mater forto schewe how bi strengþe and liȝt of natural resoun men myȝte come into knowing, lord, of þi lawe of kynde which þou askist to be kept of men, and into what treuþis of þilk law þey myȝt and schulde firste come forto hem knowe, and into what oþere trouþis next, and so in what ordre and processe þey myȝt and schulde, if þei wolde, fynde treuþe aftir treuþe into tyme þei schulde fynde out al þi lawe of kinde bi natural witt and natural liȝt which þou lord god hast sett in her soulis, þus y bigynne.[6]
>
> > (In proceeding on this matter in order to show how, by the strength and light of natural reason, men might come to the knowing, Lord, of your law of nature, which you ask to be kept by men, and to what truths of this law they might and should first come in order to know them, and into what other truths next, and so in what order and process they might and should, if they would, find truth after truth, until which time they should find out all your law of nature by natural intelligence and natural light which you, Lord God, have set in their souls, thus I begin.)

Where other religious writers would present progress in divine understanding as a penitential or affective process of ascent, Pecock's ladder of ascent has rungs of reason. God has accordingly placed a book of the judgement ('doom') of reason in the human soul. This book supersedes and precedes the Bible itself, so much so that it may be called 'inward scripture', prior and superior to the mere 'outward Bible':

> And ferther thus: If eny man be feerd lest he trespace to God if he make ouer litle of Holi Scripture, which is the outward writing of the Oold

6 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, pp. 224–25.

> Testament and of the Newe, y aske whi is he not afeerd lest he make ouer litle and apprise ouer little the inward Scripture of the bifore spoken lawe of kinde writen bi God him silf in mannis soule, whanne he made mannis soule to his ymage and liknes? [...] For certis this inward book or Scripture of lawe of kinde is more necessarie to Cristen men, and is more worthi than is the outward Bible and the kunnyng ther of.[7]
>
> > (And further thus: if any man is afraid that he may sin against God if he makes too little of Holy Scripture, which is the outward writing of the Old Testament and of the New, I ask why is he not afraid that he may make too little and appreciate too little the inward Scripture of the aforementioned law of nature written by God himself in man's soul when he made man's soul in his image and likeness? [...] For certainly, this inward book or Scripture of the law of nature is more necessary to Christian men, and is more worthy than is the outward Bible and the knowing thereof.)

All humans, as a consequence of carrying this divine book inside themselves and reading, understanding, and interpretatively (re)articulating it, are potential metascriptural (self-) exegetes and theologians simply by exercising their God-given abilities. Interiority itself, in this so-called age of affective piety, is, for Pecock, reason-based. For him, the workings of the soul and the workings of God may be articulated in a divine yet totally human language of reason. Pecock thereby accords a human discourse of reason equivalence with, and even priority over, what may be articulated by or through Scripture.

Such discourse and reason are highly portable and generative. For Pecock, the reason that produces a theological treatise or even a full-blown *summa* in no way differs significantly from the reason exercised daily in the business lives of lawyers and merchants. Given that basic theology is no more difficult than technical issues of law or commerce, the socio-religious domain is opened up to the profound translational effect of theological thought becoming the province of the intelligent layman — or as Pecock puts it:

> [Y] haue fonde gentil men of þe layfe to conceive, vndirstonde, reporte and comune þe same maters wiþ ful litil þerto ȝouen to hem enformacioun of þe termes or wordis; [...] and weel y wote þat so myche sotlilte and heiȝte of witt muste ech weel leerned man in þe kyngis lawe of ynglond, and ech wijs greet mercer, in hise rekenyngis and bargeyns making, haue, howe grete, hiȝe and sutel witt he muste bisette vpon þe hiȝest maters whiche y write, after þat þe signifiyng of þe wordis ben to hem knowun.[8]
>
> > (I have found gentlemen of the laity to conceive, understand, report, and share the same matters [i.e. the same matters that Peacock is

7 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 51–52.

8 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, p. 21.

> addressing] with very little information about the terms or words having been given to them; [...] and I know well that each man well learned in the laws of the King of England and each wise great merchant, in making his reckonings/calculations and bargains/deals, must have so much subtlety and such high intelligence, and how great, high, and subtle intelligence he must apply to the highest matters which I write, once the meaning of the words is known to them.)

Such a man of law has the natural intelligence, despite lack of formal education, to understand points of theology, even if their context is lacking; indeed, he can 'conceive, vndirstonde, reporte and comune' (conceive, understand, report, and share) such matters. In careful sequence, the actions expressed in these four verbs progress in stages from identifying reception of texts/ideas to focusing on socially productive discursive action. First of all, 'conceive': conception — productive concept-making; secondly, 'vndirstonde' — deeper comprehension/ingestion; thirdly, 'reporte' — faithful replication of texts/argument/words without interference or distortion in the manner of scholastic *reportatio*; and, fourthly and finally, 'comune' — 'share' — something beyond mere faithful reporting: in other words, the hermeneutic, social, and empowering act of making theological capital communal. This sharing-out is a form of internal brokerage that not only informs but also performatively creates the dynamic of a community of interpretation. And it is all done with tell-tale subtlety, 'sotlilte', normally a stereotypical scholastic quality exclusively reserved to clerks.

Pecock refers to 'ech wijs greet mercer, in hise rekenyngis and bargeyns making' (each wise great merchant, in making his reckonings/calculations and bargains/deals): the adjective 'wijs' (wise) suggests not just know-how but nods towards wisdom, towards *sapientia*. As for 'rekenyngis' (reckonings/calculations), they are analytical, hermeneutic, expert, and require specialist judgement demonstrated by arithmetic. What could be a better model of emotion-free reason than the neutrally deterministic processes, and the psychically numb yet perfect rationality of numerical calculation? Just as the lawyer was portrayed as being able to move (through the staged actions of four verbs) from a readerly interiority of conceiving and understanding to an outward articulating, social communing, and community-making, so too the mercer follows, in his turn, a similar trajectory of action. He moves from lone individual reckoning to socially dynamic bargain-making, a transactional activity of *translatio* in which either goods and other goods, or goods and money, or money and other kinds of money, are valued/priced (that is, interpreted and valorized), converted, made current, and traded by means of an arithmetically rational discourse of exchangeability. The 'witt' necessary to such transactions of 'bargeyns making' (making bargains/deals) is that of the negotiator, requiring linguistic as well as intellectual agility. It is perhaps worth recalling at this point that, in his

Didascalicon, Hugh of St Victor categorizes merchants as practitioners of the art of rhetoric:

> Commerce […] is beyond all doubt a peculiar sort of rhetoric — strictly of its own kind — for eloquence is in the highest degree necessary to it. Thus the man who excels others in fluency of speech is called a *Mercurius*, as being a *mercatorum kirrius* (= *kyrios*) — a very lord among merchants.[9]

The rhetoric of bargain-making entails juggling the terms of a deal with high subtlety and wit. Both the lawyer and the merchant move from actions of personal understanding conceived through reason to actions of social engagement also based on reason. All in all, the skills of lawyers and merchants are conceived by Pecock as requiring some of the same intelligence as clerkly disciplines. This compatibility has no little valorizing effect on such laity as credible potential practitioners of rudimentary vernacular theology. In recognizing the rational competence of laypeople in their expert occupational behaviours — behaviours of real social and institutional power and authority — Pecock would broker and empower a measure of divine learning and theologizing within and into a lay community of interpretation, albeit a sacerdotally monitored one.

Let it not be forgotten that, as far as Pecock was concerned, there was God-given virtue in human crafts, because crafts, like the sciences, riches, and institutional offices, constituted so-called 'under-gracious benefits' — the lowest and most fundamental category of gifts bestowed upon humanity by the Almighty in the form of natural skills to be exercised through our wits and labour:

> His ȝift to vs of goodis y-gete or maad bi labour of oure natural witt and wil, and of oþire powers of þe soule subseruing or vndirseruing to oure witt and to oure wil: which goodis ben sciencis, craftys, housis, cloþis, ricchessis, worschipis, dignitees, officis, fauouris and fames.[10]
>
> > (His gift to us of goods acquired or made by the labour of our natural intelligence and will, and through other powers of the soul subserving or under-serving our intelligence and our will: which goods are sciences, crafts, houses, clothes, riches, honours, dignities, offices, favours and fames/types of fame/reputation.)

In addition to keeping such company, crafts, in Pecock's tables, also extend their repertoire so far as to sit alongside such exalted virtues as faith and prudence:

> And so feiþ and prudence and also craft mowe be conteynyd in þis now seid maner, and ben so conteynyd withynne þe first poynt of þe first table materialy, wiþ þis þat þei ben also intellectual vertues formaly.[11]

---

9 Hugh of St Victor *The Didascalicon*, trans. by Taylor, pp. 76–77.

10 Pecock, *The Donet*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 87.

11 Pecock, *The Donet*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 111.

> (And so faith and prudence and also craft may be contained in this now said manner, and are so contained within the first point of the first table materially with this that they are also intellectual virtues formally.)

The first point of the First Table, being 'to live learningly', clearly means that faith, prudence, and, of course, craft have both an intellectual and a moral dimension of virtue to them. Reginald's readership would doubtless have taken encouragement from the definitional particularity with which he identifies the very learning of 'eny craft, as masonrye, carpentrye, or eny such oþire' (any craft, such as masonry, or any such other) to be a virtue in itself.[12] Part of the virtuousness of crafts is also to be located in their being instrumental in leading to the exercise of further virtues and thereby the service of God:

> Sone […] to fynde, leerne and to remembre eny craft, for þat it is a meene into eny oþire wel knowun vertu and seruice of god, is a vertu in þe first poynt of þe first table.[13]
>
> > (Son […] to find, learn, and to remember any craft, because it is a means for any other well-known virtue and service of God, is a virtue in the first point of the First Table.)

For sure, in that crafts are virtuous in enabling the community to serve God, they may truly be called a benefit of God:

> [S]o it is þat ech leeful and necessarye craft of a comounte, which is for þe profite of þe comounte, and which þe comounte may not wel lack withoute hurte into sum oþire seruice of god þerbi þe bettir to be doon, is a benefete of god.[14]
>
> > (So it is that each permissible and necessary craft of a community, which is for the profit of the community, and which the community may not well lack without hurt to some other service of God which would be better done thereby, is a benefit of God.)

Pecock's valorization of craft as intrinsic to his Tables puts the occupational virtues exercised by his lay readers into the same system as those virtues exercised by the clergy. For his secular clientele, to know and to exercise one's craft has now become part of the understanding and of the performance of intellectual and moral virtue itself. At the same time, and in the same intellectual motion, Pecock subsumes and recruits the virtuous crafts — and the potentially virtuous craftspeople who would practise them — into his system of Tables. Reginald was clearly confident that right-thinking layfolk would be pleased to consent to their place in his scheme, in which virtue and

12 Pecock, *The Donet*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 112.
13 Pecock, *The Donet*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 112.
14 Pecock, *The Donet*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 112.

occupation combine, and that they would subsequently, of their own free will, be all the more receptive to his teachings.

In his written works, Pecock therefore sets about producing improvements and changes in laypeople's understanding of doctrine and its ways that require their free assent. Intriguingly, he believes that, by over-delivering to the laity intellectually, he will cause them to realize that they cannot compete in matters of wit and learning with the clerks dispensing their doctrine, and that they will as a consequence accept that they need the guidance of clerks and thus absorb their teachings more readily. Pecock optimistically envisages that layfolk, instead of relying exclusively on their own wits, their own books, or (as the Lollards were accused of doing) on Holy Writ, will be willing to be directed in their thinking by 'substancial clerkis' (substantial clerks) whom, significantly, they will also befriend:

> Ferthermore, thouȝ in writyng this present book y teche and sette forth mo maters and trouthis of feith than ben nedis necessarie to this now bifore spokun entent and purpos, ȝitt therwith no clerk ouȝte be displesid, sithen good schal come therbi, and as y hope no greet harme. Forwhi, therbi the seid lay persoonys schulen wel wite and knowe that larger, hiȝer, and profitabler leernyng and kunning of feith is ȝovun and mynystrid to hem bi this present book, than thei couthen or myȝten come forto leerne and fynde bi her owne studiyng in her wittis, or in her owne bokis, whiche thei han in grete noumbre, or in the Bible, wherynne thei pretenden forto fynde al thing. Also, therbi thei schulen se how fer the wittis of substancial clerkis passen her wittis in mater of feith, and in ech other mater longing to the lawe of God, or to Cristen religioun. Also, therbi thei schulen fele hou necessarie and nedeful it is to hem, that substancial clerkis be in scole of logik, philsophie, and dyvynyte, and that thei have frendschip and aqueyntaunce with substancial clerkis, to be enfoormed and directid bi tho clerkis, and that ellis thei schulen ful ofte and myche wandre a side fro the eeven riȝt wey of trouthe. Therfore it is wel doon that sumwhat more and hiȝer treting be maad to the seid lay persoonys […].[15]
>
> > (Furthermore, though in writing this present book I teach and set forth more matters and truths of the faith than are needfully necessary to this aforespoken intent and purpose, yet no clerk ought to be displeased with it, since good shall come thereby, and, as I hope/suppose, no great harm. Wherefore, by this the said laypersons should understand and know well that larger, higher, and more profitable learning and knowledge of the faith are given and administered to them by this present book than they could or might come to learn and find by studying according to their wits, or in their own books (which they have in great number), or in the Bible, in which they claim to find all

15 Pecock, *Reginald Pecock's Book of Faith*, ed. by Morison, pp. 118–19.

> things. Also, they should see by this how far the wits of substantial clerks surpass their wits in the matter of faith and in every other matter belonging to the law of God or to the Christian religion. Also, they should thereby feel how necessary and needful it is to them that substantial clerks should be schooled in logic, philosophy, and divinity, and that they should have friendship and acquaintance with substantial clerks, so as to be informed and directed by those clerks, and that otherwise they should very often and very much wander astray from the smooth/uniform/straight right way of truth. Therefore it is well done that a somewhat greater and higher mode of treatment should be made for the said laypersons […].)

Not only will there be, then, a desirable dependency of the laity on clerks, there will also be inculcated in the laity an invincible knowledge of what may be known and what may not be known by them through their own powers, assisted or unassisted by clergy. Such intellectual intimidation and circumscription of lay discretion through the firm but friendly mastery of the clergy does not mean that Pecock was insincere in promoting bonds of affection between the two groups, or that he would deny the laity a decisive say in the appointment and monitoring of the clergy ministering to them. In fact, Pecock advised the laity to keep a critical eye on their preachers, telling them that they were excused of any faults due to mis-preaching, and that they were also excused from following the teachings of an unsound cleric, once they had realized his errors.[16] For all the academic relentlessness and self-regarding clutter of his prose, his works are suffused with a genuinely unpatronizing warmth, personal care, and fundamental respect for non-clerics. His enthusiastic confidence in the laity's abilities is typical of him.

Such confidence was well placed: we should not underestimate the capacities of the well-to-do urban laity with whom Pecock had mixed for many years. As Master of Whittington College, he had been involved with common-profit book schemes, and was therefore used to engaging with self-assured and well-resourced layfolk with intelligent pastoral demands and no little spiritual ambition.[17] Indeed, one of the most distinctive features of fifteenth-century London religious life was the Church's policy of appointing university-educated 'learned rectors' to parishes so as to meet the needs and expectations of such parishioners.[18] Although these rectors were fiercely orthodox and among the leading figures extirpating dissent from the 1430s

---

16 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 91–92.

17 See Scase, 'Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's Common-Profit Books'. For a study of mainstream lay spiritual ambition in late medieval England, see Rice, *Lay Piety and Religious Discipline*. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 27–60 for discussion of the construction and likely capacities of Pecock's historical and implied audiences.

18 See Lindenbaum, 'London after Arundel' for the information here (and for much more) on the learned London rectors and their broader cultural and ecclesiastical context.

onwards, they nevertheless raised the tone and prestige of the capital's religious life through their preaching, their activities as public intellectuals and social critics, and through their mingling with the civic elite. Unlike Pecock, they did not, however, go anywhere near teaching the rudiments of theology in the vernacular, let alone imparting the ways of syllogistic thinking. Unlike Pecock, they preferred, for doctrinal purposes, the orality of sermons to the provision of textbooks or written treatises. They were, as a rule, not interested in leaving a large legacy of edifying texts for their parishioners or for the wider Church. The writings that were left by them, in the words of Sheila Lindenbaum, 'promoted a distinctive theology: patristic in orientation, free of speculation and doubt, relentlessly focused on the moral life, but cautiously open to affective spirituality'.[19] In general, then, the London rectors were severely out of sympathy with what Reginald Pecock was attempting to do. Several of them were in fact his outright enemies, happy to see him come crashing down.[20]

These learned rectors were, then, precisely the kind of clerks who would have disapproved of Pecock's recommendation to over-deliver intellectually. Pecock knew all too well about the well-established opposition he faced, and this shows up in his plea to fellow-clerks that they should in their preaching and teaching of the laity demonstrate articles of faith by reason rather than merely repeat prooflessly at second-hand:[21]

> And ferthermore, y wole clerkis to have in consideracioun, that not for a thing is famed to be an article of feith, therfore it is an article of feith, but aȝenward for that it is an article of feith, and proved sufficientli to be such, therfore it is to be bileeved bi feith.[22]
>
> > (And furthermore, I would wish clerks to bear in mind that it is not because a thing is reputed to be an article of faith that it is therefore an article of faith, but on the contrary, because it is an article of faith, and proved sufficiently to be such, therefore it is to be believed by faith.)

Pecock's advocacy of reason here is not about being nice to the laity by giving them religious freedom. It is about recognizing that articles of faith have to be shown to be rationally demonstrable. It is also about recognizing that, for consent to be meaningful, the laity must be won over freely, and certainly not by violent repression or judicial punishment. Hence his dire warning to the clergy that they must maintain the faith through reason and consent:

> [L]ete al the clergie of divinite bese hem silf wiseli in this mater, and kepe her charge and enteresse, leste her necligence schal accuse hem in tyme to

19 Lindenbaum, 'London after Arundel', p. 195.

20 Lindenbaum, 'London after Arundel', pp. 196–97, 203. See also Ball, 'The Opponents of Bishop Pecock'.

21 See Lindenbaum, 'London after Arundel', p. 196.

22 Pecock, *Reginald Pecock's Book of Faith*, ed. by Morison, p. 138.

come, that bi her neccligence trewe feith was overthrowe, and men fro it pervertid, and that trewe feith was not sufficientli proved and meyntened bi hem, and bi meenys whiche thei leeven in writyng aftir hem, for to bi cleer witt drawe men into consente of trewe feith otherwise than bi fier and swerd or hangement.[23]

([L]et all the clergy of divinity busy themselves wisely in this matter, and safeguard their charge/responsibility and concern, lest their negligence shall accuse them in time to come, that by their negligence true faith was overthrown and men perverted from it, and that true faith was not sufficiently proved and maintained by them and by means which they leave in writing after them, in order to draw men by clear intelligence into consenting to the true faith by means other than fire and sword or hanging.)

Face-to-face persuasion and persuasion through written texts are, so Pecock argues, both effective means of proving and sustaining true faith. When Pecock uses the term 'trewe feith' (true faith), it has an added bite, for the 'feith' communicated is 'trewe' not merely for its fidelity or for its veracity, but because it has been palpably demonstrated to be 'trewe', validated through reason. In similar vein, the collocation 'cleer witt' ('cleer' can mean 'bright' and 'shining' as well as 'clear') has a particularly Pecockian flavour to it when one bears in mind his belief, discussed earlier, in the 'natural witt and natural liȝt which þou lord god hast sett in her soulis' (natural wits/intelligence and natural light which you, Lord God, have set in their souls).[24] In other words, the capabilities of the laity have to be recognized, alongside a prioritizing, above the powers of Scripture, of the powers of reason and of philosophizing intrinsic to the human soul.

Such a prioritization would have offended mainstream ecclesiastic and Lollard alike. To deny the primacy of the Word of God in Holy Writ was, at this time, to court trouble. Pecock, doubtless aware of the risks he was taking (even though he managed to get away with expressing his views for two decades before his eventual demise), aimed to defeat the Lollards by arguing for the separateness of 'Holi Scripture' on one side and 'moral philsophie [*sic*]' on the other — the latter being a matter of reason and therefore prior and superior to Scripture.[25] By means of a witty, if laboured, simile, Pecock argues for this separateness by invoking the essential differences between trades — an idea bound to appeal to the fiercely guild-ridden homosocial world of the medieval urban bourgeoisie (in other words, many of Pecock's intended audience), who would gladly have consented to being described as multi-skilled professionals firmly convinced, as a matter of belief and self-identity, of the

23 Pecock, *Reginald Pecock's Book of Faith*, ed. by Morison, p. 139.
24 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, p. 225.
25 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 49.

distinctiveness, separateness, mysteries, and independence of their crafts. In the passage below, Pecock plays extravagantly with the hermeneutic and rhetorical cliché of 'grounding' — a favourite term stereotypically wheeled out by Lollards habitually obsessed with requiring each and every truth and imperative to be explicitly 'grounded' in the text of Holy Writ. Here, Pecock is making a joke at the expense of all those who would ground a truth or a conclusion in Scripture when it is has already been sufficiently grounded in the prior law of nature and moral philosophy, in other words in the supremely generative law of reason:

> Thei that wolen aske and seie, thus, 'Where fyndist thou it groundid in Holi Scripture?' as thouȝ ellis it is not worthi to be take for trewe, whanne euere eny gouernance or trouthe sufficientli grondid in lawe of kinde and in moral philsophi [*sic*] is affermed and mynystrid to hem, […] asken tho whilis in lijk maner vnresonabili and lijk vnskilfulli and lijk reprouabili, as if thei wolden aske and seie thus, 'Where findist thou it grondid in Holi Scripture?' whanne a treuth and a conclusioun of grammer is affermed and seid to hem: or ellis thus, 'Where findist thou it groundid in tailour craft?' whanne that a point or a treuthe and a conclusioun of sadeler craft is affermed, seid, and mynistrid to hem: or ellis thus, 'Where fyndist thou it groundid in bocheri?' whanne a point or a treuthe and conclusioun of masonrie is affermed and seid and mynystrid to hem.[26]
>
> > (They who would wish to ask, and say, thus, 'where do you find it grounded in Holy Scripture?', as if otherwise it is not worthy to be taken as true whenever any governance or truth sufficiently grounded in the law of nature and in moral philosophy is confirmed and administered to them, […] ask at the same time unreasonably in a similar manner and with similar wrongfulness and with similar blameworthiness, as if they would ask and say thus, 'where do you find it grounded in Holy Scripture?' when a truth and a conclusion of grammar is affirmed and said to them; or else thus, 'where do you find it grounded in the craft of the tailor?' when a part/principle or a truth and a conclusion of saddlery is affirmed, said, and administered to them; or else thus, 'where do you find it grounded in butchery?' when a part/principle or a truth and conclusion of masonry is affirmed and said and administered to them.)

The territory of pastiche is entered when academic jargon and method are deployed with reference to trades, such as 'whanne a point or a treuthe and conclusioun of masonrie is affermed and seid and mynystrid to hem' (when a part/principle or a truth and conclusion of masonry is affirmed and said and administered to them). That conclusions of such frosty-faced

26 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 48–49.

mock-seriousness are entertained as being ‘groundid’ bathetically ‘in tailour craft’ (in the craft of the tailor) or ‘in bocheri’ (in butchery) is, of course, geared to raising a knowing smirk — a smirk to be held and broadened thanks to the extended sequence of predictable question-and-answer cadences that set up a rhythmic alternation of interrogative comic suspense and ever more ludicrous conclusions. Here, Pecock would disarm opponents, making them look uncommonly silly by drawing on false scholarly process, on learned discourse laid on with a (suitably masonic) trowel, and on sheer nonsense. Yet, for all the comic exaggeration, a serious point is being made. For Pecock to cite masonry, butchery, saddlery, and the skill of the tailor in scholastic terms invites such skilled laity into the theological arena on something of their own terms, encouraging them to judge, however light-heartedly, from their own occupational perspective and zone of comfort. It also licenses them to put themselves in a zone previously outside their field of competence. Their religious and doctrinal awareness is now provisionally relocated, albeit by whimsical suggestion with a serious polemical and theological edge, within the personal confidence of their professional *amour propre*.

Pecock further advances his argument concerning the relationship between divinity and philosophy with subtler distinctions, drawing homely attention to procedures shared between crafts which are nevertheless separate. This distinction, witty rather than outright humorous, is intended to illuminate and support Pecock’s separation of ‘moral philsophie [*sic*] and the faculte of pure dyvynite or the Holi Scripture’ (moral philosophy and the faculty of pure Divinity or Holy Scripture):[27]

> For certis thouȝ the sporier and the cuteler be leerned in thilk point of goldsmyth craft which is gilding, and therefore thei vsen thilk point and deede and trouthe of goldsmyth craft, ȝit thilk point of gilding is not of her craft, but oonli of goldsmyth craft: and so the craftis ben vnmedlid, thouȝ oon werkman be leerned in hem bothe and vse hem bothe.[28]
>
> > (For certain, although the spurrier/spur-maker and cutler/knife-maker may be learned in this same part/principle of goldsmith craft, that is gilding, and therefore they practise this same part/principle and deed and truth of goldsmith craft, yet the same part/principle of gilding is not of their craft, but only of goldsmith craft: and so the crafts are unmixed, though one workman may be learned in them both and use them both.)

Again, Pecock dissects and orders in scholastic fashion, valorizingly assigning learned terms to crafts: ‘leerned’, ‘point’, ‘trouthe’, and the like. The conclusion drawn here is that, just as it is impossible for crafts to share a defining function

27 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 49.

28 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 50.

and form — even though they may share practices and practitioners — so too is it impossible for 'moral philsophie and the faculte of pure dyvynite' (moral philosophy and the faculty of pure divinity), on the one hand, and 'Holi Scripture', on the other, to share a defining function and form — even though both may share practices and practitioners.

Sometimes Pecock resorts to everyday experience, not to teach theological understanding or skills, but to impart advice on personal spiritual conduct. Having, in the *Reule of Crysten Religioun*, made it very clear that we should all look after our God-given bodies, he adds a qualification: in certain circumstances, each one of us should be prepared to sacrifice bodily health or shorten our lives if there is no other way to serve God. To edify and encourage his audience, Pecock presents a series of homely parallels. For example, a man may walk from London to St Albans 'ouer heggis and stilis and þornys, boisschis and breris a long tyme' (over hedges and stiles and thorns, bushes and briars for a long time) and not on the highway, if his overriding motivation on the journey is to chase and catch a falcon worth the massive sum of twenty pounds.[29] Bystanders might think him foolish for not taking the main road, failing to realize that he is in fact pursuing a higher goal — a falcon, allegorically representing God's moral service.

Another example, hard-hearted in its commercial brutality but apt in its entertainment of disagreeable choice, serves to justify a course of spiritual action that may shorten our physical lives. If a man buys a horse for his horse mill and knows that wearing the horse out over ten years rather than cherishing it for twenty would yield much greater returns, then there would be 'no discrecioun at al' (no discretion at all) in 'grettir cherisching' (greater cherishing).[30] And so, poor Dobbin should rightfully go to the knacker's yard a decade early — for sound spiritual reasons of course: 'so it is in þis present purpos forto likene oure fleisch or oure bodily lijf to oure mylle hors, and oure vertuouse wirching to oure corn grinding' (so it is, by this present purpose, to liken our flesh and our bodily life to our mill horse, and our virtuous works/working to grinding our corn).[31] A less troubling choice is illustrated in Pecock's subsequent exemplum, which is couched in the spirit of the gamesome wagers and ludic bargains characteristic of medieval popular and literary culture. If a man can win one hundred pounds of gold by walking so much over twenty days that he would wear out a new pair of shoes otherwise lasting sixty days, he would show 'greet indiscrecioun' (great indiscretion) by cherishing his shoes (in other words, our fleshly body or our bodily life) so much that he loses the one hundred pounds — in other words forgoing 'a certeyn perfeccioun of good livyng' (a certain perfection

29 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, p. 267.
30 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, p. 268.
31 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, p. 268.

of good living) that we have already chosen that cannot be won without such bodily sacrifice.[32]

Easy recourse to common experience and common commercial sense also characterizes Pecock's defence, in the *Repressor*, of the diversity of religious orders, which might have seemed to ordinary people like lavish over-provision, when fewer orders would have served just as well. Pecock meets this issue energetically through a simile of market-making in the hospitality industry. For him, a broader diversity of orders encourages a greater range of different types of people into the religious life than would otherwise be the case, just as a town with a greater range of hostelries, diversely catering to the needs and pleasures of a greater range of potential guests, will end up with more customers overall than a town with less choice in fewer inns:

> Forwhi what point in chaumbring, stabiling, gardeins, beddis, seruicis of the ostiler (and so in othere thingis) plesith oon gist, plesith not an other; and what point in these thingis offendith oon, plesith weel an other; and therfore where that the more such dyuersyte is had and founde, the more stiring therbi is had to plese manye gistis; and therbi folewingli the mo gistis wolen haue wil forto logge hem in thilk town, more than if ther were fewer dyuersytees, whiche schulde needis be in fewer ynnes. Thanne if this be trewe, and if thou answere to me thus; y answere to thee bi lijk skile, that therfore God purueied manye dyuerse religiouns to be in the chirche, for that bi so greet a dyuersite had in so manye religiouns (what for dyuersite of outward habit and of inward wering, and of diet, and of waking, and of officiyng, and of sitis, or of placing, and of bilding, and of othere suche manie), the mo of the peple schulde be prouokid and stirid therbi into religioun, than if ther were fewer religiouns.[33]
>
>> (Wherefore, what feature of the lodging, stabling, gardens, beds, services of the innkeeper (and of other things) pleases one guest pleases not another; and what feature amongst these things offends one pleases another well; and therefore, wherever the more such diversity is had and found, the more an effort is stirred to please many guests; and thereby consequently the more guests will desire to lodge themselves in this town — more than if there were less variety, which there would necessarily be with fewer inns. If, then, this is true, and if you answer to me thus, I answer you with a similar argument, that God therefore provided many diverse religious orders to be in the Church, because by so great a diversity had in so many orders (be it diversity of outward habit and what is worn underneath, and of diet, and of waking and of

32 Pecock, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by Greet, p. 268. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 27–60 for discussion of these three examples from the *Reule*.

33 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, II, 521–22. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 162–65 for discussion of the formal logical principles operative in this example.

> the performance of divine services/offices, and of sites/situations, or of placing/placement, or of buildings, and of many other such things), more of the people should be enticed and stirred thereby into a religious order than if there were fewer religious orders.)

This allegorical marketizing of the orders may, of course, have been appreciated by some layfolk more than others. The simile is, in one sense, tactically unfortunate, because it could be taken as giving the impression that religious orders are founded rather trivially on what individuals find personally agreeable and pleasing, rather than as giving the impression that it intends to create — that a productive diversity of people of various personal temperaments and spiritual capabilities, would, through the aggregate of their own unique contributions, make a much larger contribution to the Church Militant than ever the population of a smaller number of foundations could. Intriguingly, Pecock deploys a favourite verb of devotional tradition, 'stiring', to denote the worldly phenomenon of customer preference. One also wonders if God being described as having '*purueied* manye dyuerse religiouns to be in the chirche' (provided many religious orders to be in the church) is a nod not only to Divine Providence but also to the commercial notion of purveying. Whether or not this is the case, we are on more solid ground with the idea that the greater good is served by individual commercial gain and market diversity, for this had a place in medieval academic tradition. For example, in his *Didascalicon* Hugh of St Victor proclaims that the 'pursuit of commerce […] commutes the private good individuals into the common benefit of all'.[34] Pecock follows suit: although the religious orders share the same three principal vows, their diversity, so he claims, produces more good than harm:

> [T]houȝ the good of iij. principal vowis be lijke and oon in ech and alle religiouns, ȝit the othere plesauntis and eesis of the religiosis persoones, whiche schulde tolle hem into religioun and whiche also schulde make hem the perfitlier and the stablier perfoorme her othere substancial vowis, ben not like and the same in alle religiouns and neither in alle housis of oon religioun.
>
> And thouȝ summe harme and yuel cometh thoruȝ the hauyng of such now seid multitude, ȝit not so greet harme and yuel as is excludid bi the hauyng of so greet multitude; for not so greet harme and yuel as schulde come of this, that so greet multitude of persoones schulde not entre into tho religiouns, neither so myche harme as is the myche good which cometh bi the seid multitude and dyuersitie of religiouns.[35]
>
> ([T]hough the benefits of the three principal vows may be alike and the same in each and all religious orders, yet the other pleasures and

34 Hugh of St Victor, *The Didascalicon*, trans. by Taylor, p. 77.

35 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, II, 523–24.

comforts of religious persons, which should attract them into a religious order and which should also make them the more perfectly and the more stably perform their other substantial vows, are not alike and the same in all religious orders, and neither are they so in all houses of the same religious order.

And though some harm and evil come of having such a said multitude, yet it is not such great harm and evil as what is prevented by having so great a multitude; for not such great harm and evil should come of this that so great a multitude of persons would not enter into the religious orders, nor should there be a harm so great as is the great good which comes of the said multitude and the diversity of religious orders.)

It is difficult to know how much credence laypeople would have given to this simile. Presumably, reactions to it would have varied according to pre-existing individual attitudes towards the religious orders. Citizens intermittently resentful of monks and friars may have, grudgingly or not, accepted to a significant extent Pecock's conclusion that diversity produces more good than harm, especially if they were favourably impressed by, or spiritually involved with, prestigious and devotionally formidable newer establishments that had recently diversified the mix of religious foundations in England, such as the Birgittine house of Syon and the Carthusian houses of Mount Grace and Sheen.

We move now from a commercial simile to one, in the *Repressor*, drawing on popular tradition — the custom of 'uplond' people ('country' folk) bringing branches and flowers into London for the citizens to decorate their houses on Midsummer's Eve in celebration of the Feast of St John the Baptist. Extrapolating from this custom, Pecock launches into another syllogistic parallel, illustrating that the foundation of all truth and moral law is not Scripture and its authors, but the law of nature and reason implanted by God in the human soul. The simile opens with a direct challenge to readers and hearers to respond personally to this question:

Seie to me, good Sire, and answere herto, whanne men of the cuntre vplond bringen into Londoun in Mydsomer eue braunchis of trees fro Bischopis wode and flouris fro the feeld, and bitaken tho to citeseins of Londoun forto therwith araie her housis, schulen men of Londoun receyuyng and taking tho braunchis, and flouris, seie and holde that tho braunchis grewen out of the cartis whiche brouȝten hem to Londoun, and that tho cartis or the hondis of the bringers weren groundis and fundamentis of tho braunchis and flouris? Goddis forbode so litil witt be in her hedis.[36]

(Say to me, good sir, and answer this: when men from the outside countryside bring into London at Midsummer's Eve branches of trees

36 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 28. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 160, 170–71 for discussion of Pecock's deployment of this tradition.

> from Bishopswood and flowers from the field, and deliver them to citizens of London to adorn their houses, should the men of London, receiving and taking those branches and flowers, say and maintain that those branches grew out of the carts that brought them to London, and that those carts or the hands of the bringers were the grounds and footings/sources of those branches and flowers? God forbid so little wit be in their heads.)

Clearly, no one would argue against this, especially as Pecock gives away the answer as to what constitutes the true origins of the branches and the flowers — respectively the wood and the field: 'braunchis of trees *fro Bischopis wode* and *flouris fro the feeld*' (branches of trees from Bishopswood and flowers from the field). At this point, he could have chosen to wheel on the other half of the parallel — his endemic maxim that Scripture is rooted in the forest or field of reason — but he does not do this yet. Instead, he first complicates the conceit by bringing Christ and his Apostles into it:

> Certis, thouȝ Crist and his Apostlis weren now lyuyng at Londoun, and wolden bringe so as is now seid braunchis fro Bischopis wode and flouris fro the feeld into Londoun, and wolden delyuere to men that thei make there with her housis gay, […] ȝit tho men of Londoun receyuyng so tho braunchis and flouris ouȝten not seie and feele that tho braunchis and flouris grewen out of Cristis hondis, and out of the Apostlis hondis.[37]
>
> (For sure, though Christ and his Apostles were now living in London and would bring, as was said just now, branches from Bishopswood and flowers from the field into London, and would deliver them to men so that they could make their houses attractive with them, […] yet those men of London, receiving in this fashion those branches and flowers, ought not to say and feel that those branches and flowers grew out of Christ's hands, and out of the Apostles' hands.)

Christ, the author and subject matter of the Bible, together with his own team of inspired primary interpreters/preachers of his Word, his Apostles, are here represented as merely handing on goods that originate elsewhere. Whether or not the flowers growing out of Christ's hands might, for some, constitute an unfortunate echo of the nails of the Crucifixion, or, for others, represent a decorously positive Langlandian allusion, Pecock intensifies his vignette by asserting that, in doing what they do, Christ and his Apostles are only doing what all humans are capable of doing anyway. What they are doing marks a stage in a process of tracing of origins that may be likened to the stemmatic qualities of trees — from branch back to bough back to trunk back to root back to originary earth, *ground* indeed. Holy Scripture

37 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 28.

and even Christ Himself, then, have a function on a par with the hands of branch-gatherers:

> Forwhi in this dede Crist and the Apostlis diden noon other wise than as othere men miȝten and couthen do. But the seid receyuers ouȝten seie and holde that tho braunchis grewen out of the bowis vpon whiche thei in Bischopis wode stoden, and tho bowis grewen out of stockis or tronchons, and the tronchons or schaftis grewen out of the roote, and the roote out of the nexte erthe therto upon which and in which the roote is buried, so that neither the cart, neither the hondis of the bringers, neither tho bringers ben the groundis or fundamentis of the braunchis; and in lijk maner the feld is the fundament of tho flouris, and not the hondis of the gaderers, neither tho bringers. Certis, but if ech man wole thus feele in this mater, he is duller than eny man ouȝte to be.[38]
>
> > (Wherefore, in this deed, Christ and the Apostles did nothing differently from what other men might and could do. But the said receivers ought to say and maintain that those branches grew out of the boughs upon which they stood in Bishopswood, and those boughs grew out of the stocks or trunks, and the trunks or shafts grew out of the root, and the root out of the neighbouring earth upon which and in which the root is buried, so that neither the cart, nor the hands of the bringers, nor the bringers are the grounds or foundations of the branches; and in like manner the field is the foundation of those flowers, and not the hands of the gatherers nor those bringers. For sure, unless each man would feel the same in this matter, he is duller than any man ought to be.)

Perhaps, in using earthly ground as a metaphor for scriptural ground (itself a metaphor based on earthly ground), Pecock is exercising a kind of academic wit that proves its validity through the commutativity, the reciprocity, of referent and tenor. Note too how Pecock uses alliteration to make his conclusion emphatic — 'the feld is the fundament of tho flouris' (the field is the foundation of those flowers), and to assert the key relationship between field, fundament, and flowers. Here perhaps, Pecock knowingly takes an alliterating collocation common in popular verse, 'feld of flouris' (field of flowers), and modifies it pointedly by inserting the suitably alliterating word 'fundament' — the profound meaning and significance of the 'feld of flouris' — between the alliterating elements of the routine pair: 'the feld is the fundament of tho flouris'. A familiar secular formula is thereby given new life as spiritual *sententia*.

Pecock then proceeds to elaborate and clarify his forest metaphor, combining it with that of the human soul as book. The forest is a rich resource inviting exploration, a place for finding truths and conclusions concerning issues of

---

38 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 28–29.

the holy. He takes care to make the point that 'needis every wijs man muste graunte and consent that noon of the now seid treuthis and conclusiouns of lawe of kinde is ground in Holi Scripture of the Bible' (every wise man must necessarily grant and consent that none of the now-said truths and conclusions of the law of nature is grounded in the Holy Scripture of the Bible).[39] To be 'wijs' (wise) one must accept a Pecockian line on reason's doom. Lay free will is accordingly directed by Pecock's 'muste'. The doublet 'graunte and consent' serves as a reminder that Pecock expects his audience to use their reason and their free will to assent to the natural determinism of reason's doom.

The forest and the field are the foundation, then, for all truths that may arise from it. It is a forest planted by God in man's soul, accessible to all who make the effort to find its truths through reason:

> [N]oon of the now seid treuthis and conclusiouns of lawe of kinde is ground in Holi Scripture of the Bible, but thei ben groundid in thilk forest of lawe of kinde which God plauntith in mannis soule whanne he makith him to his ymage and likenes. And out of this forest of treuthis mowe be take treuthis and conclusiouns, and be sett into open knowing of the fynder and of othere men.[40]
>
> > ([N]one of the now-said truths and conclusions of the law of nature is grounded in the Holy Scripture of the Bible, but they are grounded in the same forest of the law of nature which God plants in man's soul when he makes him after his image and likeness. Out of this forest of truths may truths and conclusions be taken and be set for the open knowing of the finder and of other men.)

The ground is still bookish but it is also more organically earthy. The soul is now a place of growth and harvest rather than one of reading and utterance — though it never stops being so. From this ground grow truths to be sought and found in the forest by human endeavours of reason, endlessly.

Conclusion

Pecock does not use domestic and occupational similes merely to drive home theological arguments or polemical points about Church politics. His broader intention is to show something more complex and profound: that not only theological discourse but also clerics themselves may to a significant extent be understood, judged, and valorized through the everyday reason and knowledge of layfolk. Pecock suggestively licenses the laity to absorb and put to use a measure of elevated clerical discourse and also to think about some matters

39 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 29.
40 Pecock, *The Repressor*, ed. by Babington, I, 29.

previously reserved to the ordained. He never lets go, however, of sacerdotal authority, and always makes it clear that clerics must remain the intellectual leaders of layfolk and must be obeyed by them. The laity, however, are by no means merely passive. On the contrary, Pecockian *translatio studii* is to be realized through free-willed lay thinking, guided rather than compelled by clerics, let alone enforced by fire, sword, and hanging. It was also, of course, right and proper in Pecock's eyes to laicize a measure of vernacular theology on the authority of a bishop rather than to attempt this illegitimately and without control on the ostensibly scriptural say-so of any number of Lollard *idiotae*.

Though the imaginative syllogisms deployed by Pecock may verge on the playful or fanciful, they nevertheless invoke a radical shift of socio-theological habitus and field in the form of a new community of interpretation. Through the interplay of scholastic discourse and the everyday reason and working knowledge of layfolk, Pecock endeavoured to interpellate a new community of interpretation. Such a shame that it all went so bad. Perhaps, then, it would be appropriate as well as charitable to end with a vignette of the dream that was dashed — Pecock's own personal portrayal of the very community of lay theological engagement and clerical supportiveness that he and his culture failed to establish. His vision of a community, not of divided clergy and laity, but simply of 'peple' (people) loving and learning together, is worked into a prayer in the *Folewer to the Donet*:

> But euermore, o lord, grettist louer of men, and grettist desirer þat þi peple schulden loue togidere and leerne togidere þe vij cheef maters of my writyngis deuysid for lay men, and þat þey schulde speke þerin togidere into eche of hem oþeris edifying, perfoorme þou such work in hem to be excercisid and vsid into þi plesure and into her rewardyng.[41]
>
> > (But evermore, O Lord, greatest lover of men and greatest desirer that your people should love together and learn together the seven principal matters of my writings devised for laymen, and that they should speak about them together to the edification of each other, give form to such work within them, to be exercised and used to your pleasure and to their reward.)

In this prayed-for community of people teaching each other, the reason through which they would commune is infused by divine grace, for God is besought to 'perfoorm […] such work' (give form to such work) in them, that is, to help give it active form and effect. Bonds of social affection intertwine with those of reason and grace. Reginald Pecock's prayer, however, went cruelly unanswered. This community, an absent community of interpretation, was never to be.

---

41 Pecock, *The Folewer*, ed. by Hitchcock, p. 8. See Campbell, *Call to Read*, pp. 84, 231–32, 237–43 for discussion of this passage and recognition of the collaborative lay-clerical fellowship of learning proposed by Pecock.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Hugh of St Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. by Jerome Taylor, Records of Western Civilization (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991)

Pecock, Reginald, *The Donet … with The Poore Mennis Myrrour*, ed. by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, Early English Text Society, o.s., 156 (London: Oxford University Press, 1921 [for 1918])

———, *The Folewer to the Donet*, ed. by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, Early English Text Society, o.s., 164 (London: Oxford University Press, 1924 [for 1923])

———, *Reginald Pecock's Book of Faith*, ed. by J. L. Morison (Glasgow: Maclehose, 1909)

———, *The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy by Reginald Pecock, D.D., Sometime Lord Bishop of Chichester*, ed. by Churchill Babington, Rolls Series, 19.1, 19.2, 2 vols (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860)

———, *The Reule of Crysten Religioun*, ed. by W. C. Greet, Early English Text Society, o.s., 171 (London: Oxford University Press, 1927 [for 1926])

Secondary Studies

Ball, R. M., 'The Opponents of Bishop Pecock', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 48 (1997), 230–62

Brockwell, Jr, Charles W., *Bishop Reginald Pecock and the Lancastrian Church: Securing the Foundations of Cultural Authority*, Texts and Studies in Religion, 25 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1985)

Campbell, Kirsty, *The Call to Read: Reginald Pecock's Books and Textual Communities* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010)

Gillespie, Vincent, 'Chichele's Church: Vernacular Theology in England after Thomas Arundel', in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. by Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh, Medieval Church Studies, 21 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 3–42

Green, V. H. H., *Bishop Reginald Pecock: A Study in Ecclesiastical History and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945)

Lindenbaum, Sheila, 'London after Arundel: Learned Rectors and the Strategies of Orthodox Reform', in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. by Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh, Medieval Church Studies, 21 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 187–206

Rice, Nicole R., *Lay Piety and Religious Discipline in Middle English Literature*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 66 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008)

Scase, Wendy, *Reginald Pecock*, Authors of the Middle Ages, 8 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996)

———, 'Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop's Common-Profit Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London', *Medium Aevum*, 61 (1992), 261–74

Westphall, Allan F., 'Reconstructing the Mixed Life in Reginald Pecock's *Reule of Crysten Religioun*', in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. by Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh, Medieval Church Studies, 21 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 267–84