

Julian Among the Books

Julian Among the Books:

*Julian of Norwich's
Theological Library*

By

Julia Bolton Holloway

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



Julian Among the Books:
Julian of Norwich's Theological Library

By Julia Bolton Holloway

This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2016 by Julia Bolton Holloway

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-8894-X
ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-8894-3

Jonathan Luke Holloway

figlio della tua figlia

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	ix
Preface	xii
I.....	1
The Westminster Manuscript	
II	20
Julian's <i>Showing</i> in a Nutshell	
III.....	51
Julian's Judaism	
IV.....	75
Julian's Benedictinism	
V.....	97
Julian and Cardinal Adam Easton, OSB	
VI.....	147
Julian and <i>The Cloud Of Unknowing</i> : Textual Communities and Gendered Audiences	
VII	182
Saints, Secretaries, Scribes, Supporters: Birgitta of Sweden and Catherine of Siena	
VIII.....	198
The Amherst Manuscript	
IX.....	229
Julian and Margery: The Soul a City	
X.....	246
Brigittines and Benedictines	

Appendices	289
Ia. Margaret Gascoigne, Bridget More, Fragment of <i>Showing of Love</i>	
Ib. Barbara Constable, Fragment of <i>Showing of Love</i>	
IIa. Gertrude More, <i>Defense of Augustine Baker, OSB</i> , 1633	
IIb. Catherine Gascoigne, <i>Defense of Augustine Baker, OSB</i> , 1633	
Index	313

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plates

- I a,b,c. Westminster Manuscript, fols. 1, 74, 72v-73
II. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Manuscript, fols. 8v-9
III. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fols. 97, 97v
IV a,b. British Library, Sloane 3705, fol 8v, & 2499 Manuscripts, fol. 9
V a. Cambridge University Library Ii.III.21, Dionysius, *Opera*, fol. 108v
V b. Florence, Museo Horne, Simone Martini, Diptych
VI. Westminster Abbey, *Liber Regalis*, fol. 20
Copyright: Dean and Chapter of Westminster
VII a. Norwich Cathedral, Despenser Retable, Paul Hurst, ARPS
VII b. Urdiala, Finland, Bishop Åbo, St Birgitta, Diptych

Figures

- Figure 1. Westminster Manuscript, fol. 1
Figure 2. Westminster Manuscript, fol. 72v
Figure 3. Westminster Manuscript, fol 74, detail
Figure 4. Pieter Breughel the Elder, “Death of the Virgin”, Upton House, Bearsted Collection, circa 1564, ©National Trust Images/Angelo Hornak
Figure 5. Death of St Catherine of Siena
Figure 6. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 97, 97v
Figure 7. Westminster Manuscript, fol. 74, detail
Figure 8. Bibliothèque Nationale, anglais 40, Paris Manuscript, fols. 8v-9
Figure 9. Westminster Manuscript, fol. 74, detail
Figure 10. Norwich Castle Manuscript, fol. 1. detail
Figure 11. Colwich Abbey H18, Margaret Gascoigne, Bridget More
Figure 12. Upholland Manuscript, Courtesy, Stanbrook Abbey
Figure 13. Public Record Office, 1233 Tallage Roll, E401/1565
Figure 14. Westminster Manuscript, fol. 74, detail
Figure 15. St Birgitta, *Revelationes*. Lübeck: Ghotan, 1492
Figure 16. Cambridge University Library, Ii.III.32, fol. 108v
Figure 17. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 180, fol. 1
Figure 18. Urdiala, Finland, Bishop Hemming, Birgitta of Sweden

- Figure 19. Santa Maria Novella, Spanish Chapel, fresco detail
 Figure 20. St Birgitta, Revelaciones, Lübeck, Ghotan, 1492
 Figure 21. Siena, Biblioteca Communale degli Intronati, I.V.25/26
 Figure 22. Birgitta's Board, Piazza Farnese, Roma
 Figure 23. Birgitta's Shrine, Blue Church, Vadstena, Sweden
 Figure 24. Despenser Retable, Norwich Cathedral, Paul Hurst, ARPS
 Figure 25. Westminster Abbey, *Liber Regalis*, fol. 20,
 Copyright: Dean and Chapter of Westminster
 Figure 26. London, National Gallery, Wilton Diptych
 Figure 27. Rome, St Agnes, Mosaic, detail
 Figure 28. Rome, St Cecilia, mosaic and sculpture
 Figure 29. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 97v
 Figure 30. Florence, Museo Horne, Simone Martini, diptych
 Figure 31. Rome, St Cecilia in Trastevere, Adam Easton's Tomb
 Figure 32. Canterbury Cathedral, Black Prince's Tomb
 Figure 33. Uppsala C240, "Soror mea"
 Figure 34. Norfolk Record Office, entries on Adam Easton's books
 Figure 35. St Birgitta, Revelaciones. Lübeck: Ghotan, 1492
 Figure 36. Cambridge University Library, Ii.III.32, fol. 108v
 Figure 37. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 97
 Figure 38. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 101v
 Figure 39. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 106v
 Figure 40. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 108
 Figure 41. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 108v
 Figure 42. Norwich Castle Manuscript, fol. 1, detail
 Figure 43. Norwich Castle Manuscript, fol. 31, detail
 Figure 44. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 97
 Figure 45. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 101v
 Figure 46. Norwich Castle Manuscript, fol. 31, detail
 Figure 47. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 108
 Figure 48. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 238
 Figure 49. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 97v
 Figure 50. Westminster, Wynken de Worde, Orchard of Syon, 1519
 Figure 51. British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, fol. 108v
 Figure 52. St Julian's Church, with Round Tower, before WWII
 Figure 53. Stockholm, Kungliga Bibliotek, A65, Birgitta's Handwriting

Figure 54. Bridget More, OSB, Courtesy, Colwich Abbey

Figure 55. Colwich Abbey, H18, Margaret Gascoigne, Bridget More OSB

Figure 56. Barbara Constable, OSB, Catholic Record Society 13 (1913)

Figure 57 Upholland Manuscript, Courtesy, Stanbrook Abbey

Figure 58. Gertrude More, OSB, Permission Ampleforth Abbey Trustees

Figure 59. Catherine Gascoigne, OSB

PREFACE

I sawe that alle es to litelle þ^t
y can telle or saye for itt maye nougt be tolde botte ylke saule af=
tere the saying of ssaynte Pawle schulde feele in hym þt in criste
Jhesu.

They always begin accounts of Julian of Norwich saying “Very little is known about the anchoress Julian of Norwich”. But if one studies her manuscripts and the other materials that form her thought it is to find a cornucopia (“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over”, Luke 6.38), of many books, an entire library, of great value for studying medieval women’s theology. Christine de Pizan, having the run of the King of France’s library, created tapestry upon tapestry, book upon book, from those books. Similarly, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and the crates of books from Italy she gives her Aurora, had access to the library her father created from his slave wealth, which she hated, though she loved its library, and she begins her epic, *Aurora Leigh*, “Of writing many books there is no end”. These women, without university schooling, our “Cloud of Witnesses”, are best portrayed in their books, in manuscript, in print, and in whole libraries shelving their books.

I came to Julian, as it were, by the back door. The medievalist editor, Professor Jane Chance, contracted me to write a book on Birgitta of Sweden for her Library of Medieval Women series. I had already travelled to Europe’s libraries and archives studying manuscripts and documents concerning Dante Alighieri’s teacher, Brunetto Latino. I was trained at Berkeley in palaeography, textual editing, and intertextuality, before the advent of the study of the Body, of Women’s Studies, of Theory, and then at Princeton continued all those studies. I had already edited the *Tesoretto* of Dante Alighieri’s teacher, Brunetto Latino (New York: Garland, 1981), and Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s *Aurora Leigh and Other Poems* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995). I now found myself retracing my steps, questing manuscripts in libraries and documents in archives during

summers of research, but adding to them Scandinavian libraries and also convents, as well as the Vatican, the Laurentian, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the British Library. While writing *Saint Bride and Her Book: Birgitta of Sweden's Revelations* (Newburyport: Focus Books, 1992; Cambridge: Brewer, 1997/2000), I kept finding Birgitta of Sweden, Catherine of Siena, Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe in related manuscripts and landscapes, as part of the same literary landscape, inscribing "Holy Conversations", their practise of God's Presence, across the map of Europe's Continent, and not just England.

However a Syon Abbey manuscript eluded me. It had last been read and transcribed in 1955. I wrote to Westminster Cathedral about it—to no answer for an entire year. Finally a letter came. I was invited to return to England to see it. When I did so the secretary told me they had discovered it, because of my letter, at the back of a safe where it had lain for years, unlabelled, unnoticed, wrapped in brown paper. The reading of this Westminster Manuscript of Julian of Norwich's *Showing of Love*, itself written in preparation for printing by a Brigittine Syon Abbey nun before Thomas More's execution would block all such publications, prompted my renouncing my American Professorship and Citizenship and returning to England to edit it for the MA Thesis in Theology, while living in Julian's context of prayer and studying Greek and Hebrew in order to tutor in the Lambeth Diploma. Julian was a "pearl of great price".

I found the happenstance of studying Hebrew of great value while editing Julian's *Showing*, discovering in an epiphany that she knew the Bible in its original tongue and script. But "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread". I returned to England at a fraught time, my diocese a bastion against the priesting of women. Our convent was destroyed by bishops, its endowment for women's ecumenical theological education removed in order to pay debts incurred by men, its library first shut up, then woefully reduced. The thesis was scorned. I fled to Italy with only my books, my computer and some of the convent's book-binding equipment with which to earn a living, and where I continued to edit all the extant Julian manuscripts.

I had discovered that they had already been edited by an Irish Catholic nun, Sr Anna Maria Reynolds, CP, who, teaching in Leeds in WWII, had submitted two meticulous theses for her MA and PhD degrees at Leeds University. These were to be published by the Early English Text Society. But male scholars, who had got wind of her work, at first promised to collaborate with her, then took her materials from her, and next published her work under their names only, while discounting her in their first paragraph to the two volumes. I found her in Kilcullen, County Kildare,

and she came to Sussex to my convent before we lost it, and we worked together, now deciding to have our edition see the light of day. Our dream had been of Julian's *Showing* shared ecumenically by a Catholic nun and an Anglican one. But the Church of England opposed that ecumenical vision.

She and I had independently edited all the extant manuscripts in libraries in London and Paris, so we could check each other's work, finding almost no errors between us. I set our transcriptions electronically (her version had been hunt and peck on a typewriter, while reading microfilm a word at a time with a microscope between bombing raids), and Tony St Quintin, an Irish Nota Bene computer expert in Leeds, helped us typeset the pages to replicate the texts exactly, letter for letter, line for line, folio by folio, including the rulings of the Westminster and Paris Manuscripts, as they were prepared for being printed in Tudor and Elizabethan times by Brigittine nuns.

No longer an American professor, no longer an Anglican nun, I became a penniless hermit in exile in one unheated room above Florence for four years, with only the Julian editorial work and book-binding to keep body and soul together. A German Dante scholar, Otfried Lieberknecht, told SISMEL (Società Internazionale per lo Studio del Medioevo Latino, then housed in the Carthusian monastery outside of Florence), of my work and its President, Professor Claudio Leonardi, who had been introduced to Julian of Norwich by the contemplative hermit, Don Divo Barsotti, and who had included her text in his anthology of Christian theology, *Il Cristo*, agreed to find the funds, achieving these from the Committee on Savonarola. SISMEL published our edition in 2001.

I next published a paperback translation which shows the palimpsested layers of Julian's text in modern English in Julian of Norwich, *Showing of Love* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press; London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 2003). James Hogg then published my *Anchoress and Cardinal: Julian of Norwich and Adam Easton, OSB* (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik Universität Salzburg, 2008, Analecta Cartusiana 35:20), based on the lecture I had given in Norwich Cathedral, 1 December 1998. Following that I aided Teresa Morris compile her 2010 *Julian of Norwich: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Handbook*, and typeset Greek Orthodox Fr Brendan Pelphrey's 2012 *Lo, How I Love Thee: Divine Love in Julian of Norwich*, all the while encouraging translations of the *Showing of Love* into other languages, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Danish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Croatian, Korean. Juliana Dresvina's translation into Russian facing the pages of the English texts is particularly

fine. Jeongho Yang researches Julian's text comparatively in trauma studies, examining Korean and Middle English vocabularies concerning this aspect.

In 2000, I had been able to leave my one unheated room and become custodian of Florence's Swiss-owned so-called "English" Cemetery, a position I accepted on condition I could maintain a library on the premises. This vowed hermit, like Julian, now lives in a graveyard, teaches the alphabet to Roma families and counsels troubled souls as a "wounded healer". With the coming of the Internet I was already able to place essay after essay on the web, including one on the account of how three Julian scholars came together at Sr Anna Maria Reynolds' Cross and Passion convent in Kilcullen, County Kildare, Sr Ritamary Bradley flying from America, myself, from Italy, the third living in St Bridget of Ireland's realm, in order to work on the edition, our Julian Summit. Another presents the entire and searchable Latin text of Birgitta's *Revelations*. The website reaches, according to Google Analytics, 7000 readers a month worldwide. But the form I use for it, simple .html and .jpg, replicating medieval manuscripts and their memory systems of images and colouring, is not considered scholarly. So this version, instead, is in Word and .pdf. A departure from modern printing cost-plus printing practices in black and white only was that I replicated the original rubrication of Julian's Paris Manuscript throughout in red to indicate the practice of emphasizing God's Word amidst her own words in a "Sacred Conversation", a "Holy Conversation", of a manuscript tradition dating back even to Ancient Egypt's rolls of papyri for conversations with deities in the *Book of the Dead*. (For this printed book these are not in red, but **bolded**. I ask my gentle reader to image that blood red colour on its white and black pages.)

Julian's male editor to the Paris and Sloane Long Text Manuscripts prefer a Latinate title and the numbering of imposed Scholastic divisions, and therefore call the work on the order of *XVI Revelations of Divine Love*. I found that her original and male editor of the Long Text in the Sloane Manuscripts exactly copies the editorializing practices of Magister Mathias and Bishop Hermit Alfonso of Jaén to the *Revelationes* of Birgitta of Sweden. (In Greek "Revelations" is "Αποκάλυψις", the title of St John's Apocalypse). But Julian herself sees her *Showing of Love* as a seamless garment, as "One Love" (P89^v), and writes it down in medieval English for her 'Even Christian'; neither she nor Dante ever add to their titles "Divine", "Divina", but simply call their master works, "Showing", and "Comedy". Likewise her scholars and editors can seek to wrench her into their own religious confessions. But she is ecumenical, skilfully consonanting the Gospels' Judaism and Christianity, and in so doing

harmonizing also Orthodoxy with Catholicism, Catholicism with Lollardy, only rejecting in all of these, Pseudo-Dionysian hierarchies (a word he invented), that would exclude women from men, poor from rich.

The methodology of this book is to heed primary materials above all else, particularly examining the palaeography of the manuscripts, their folios, lines, words, letters, and, where they are of paper, their watermarks, to bring Julian scholars as close as possible to the extant texts. References are made to the manuscripts' foliation, which can be retrieved from the diplomatic edition by Sr Anna Maria Reynolds, CP, and Julia Bolton Holloway (Florence: SISMEL, 2001). References to the Edmund Colledge and James Walsh edition's comments are given as CW, plus the volume and page number. References to Early English Text Society (EETS) volumes are to volume number. page number: line number. Nicholas Watson's teaching edition is not used as it normalizes texts. A diplomatic transcription is WYSIWYG, "What You See Is What You Get", carefully replicating the extant evidence; a normalized edition adapts and distorts the medieval text to current conventions. The Paris Manuscript (Bibliothèque Nationale, anglais 40, Plate II), for instance, represents a text normalized to Elizabethan conventions and the London dialect, while the very hastily written seventeenth-century British Library Sloane 2499 Manuscript (Plate IVb), instead, took the greatest care to replicate the spelling diplomatically of its lost medieval exemplar from Norwich, the Benedictine nuns in exile functioning as an Earliest English Text Society.

W refers to the Westminster Manuscript, now at Westminster Abbey;
 P, to the Paris Manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale, anglais 40;
 S and SS, to the Sloane Manuscripts, Sloane 2499 (diplomatic), Sloane 3705 (normalised), in the British Library (P and SS being of the "Long" Text);
 A, to the Amherst Manuscript, British Library, Add. 37790, of the "Short" Text;
 N, to the Norwich Castle Manuscript, 158.926/4g.5;
 L, to the Lambeth Palace Library 3600 Manuscript;
 G, to the Colwich, St Mary's Abbey, H18 manuscript fragment, by Dame Margaret Gascoigne/Dame Bridget More, OSB;
 U, the now lost Upholland Manuscript, by Dame Barbara Constable, OSB; kindly supplied from Stanbrook Abbey's photocopy
 M, to the *Book of Margery Kempe*, British Library, Add. 61823.

The relevant parts of L (in Chapter X), M (Chapter IX) and N (Chapter II), are given diplomatically in the body of this book; the relevant texts of G and U in this book's Appendix I, Dame Catherine Gascoigne and Dame

Gertrude More's Defense of Father Augustine Baker's Prayer in Appendix II, while diplomatic excerpts from W, P, and S¹ are given throughout to bring us as close to Julian's text as possible.

There are several controversial arguments which this book presents, hypothetically, based on primary, not secondary, evidence, from research amongst the manuscripts themselves and their libraries' intertextuality: that Julian of Norwich and Cardinal Adam Easton, a Norwich Benedictine and supporter of Birgitta of Sweden's canonisation, would have known each other (discussed by Emily Hope Allen, Grace Jantzen and the 1998 lecture in Norwich Cathedral that became the book, *Anchoress and Cardinal: Julian of Norwich and Adam Easton, OSB*); that Adam Easton is the more likely author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* cluster of texts quarrying the library he himself possessed of manuscripts by Origen, Pseudo-Dionysius, David Kimhi and the Victorines, and also author of the M.N. ("AdaM EastoN" in cryptography) glosses to Marguerite Porete's Englished *Mirror of Simple Souls*, than would have been a cloistered Carthusian, such as the suggested Michael Northbrooke; that he writes them to a woman contemplative like Julian, and not to a Latinless lay brother, as has commonly been assumed; that the texts he is said to have translated when under house arrest by Pope Urban VI for three years in Genoa and Perugia could have been Marguerite Porete's *Mirror of Simple Souls*, Birgitta of Sweden's *Revelationes*, Catherine of Siena's *Dialogo*, Mechthild von Hackeborn's *Book of Ghostly Grace*, Jan van Ruusbroec's *Sparkling Stone*, and, partially, Henry Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae*, introducing these to England, and in English, from the Continent; that the Amherst Manuscript's text is not Julian's first but her last version of the *Showing of Love*, written, as the manuscript itself declares, in 1413, during her lifetime, as if in her presence; that Margery's first amanuensis is not her dying English son, but his robust Baltic widow who is helping her illiterate grieving mother-in-law write a great book about her pilgrimages and her visions, that copy those in the *Revelationes* of St Birgitta, a saint so much beloved in the daughter-in-law's native Gdansk, as logotherapy, while wrestling as an unschooled woman with the differences between German and English orthography and script; finally, that the Paris Manuscript, based on scientific trained palaeographical and codicological evidence, is not seventeenth-century but Elizabethan, and not Benedictine but Brigittine.

A term currently in use amongst medievalists is "Vernacular Theology" for such works. Instead, I use and adapt a more dynamic and participatory term from Art History, "Sacred Conversation", and, taking Francis Blomefield's word describing Julian, "This Woman in those Days, was esteemed one of the greatest Holynesse", I change this to "Holy

Conversation” for these women’s theological texts. A “Sacred Conversation” painting or fresco has the donor and even his family or her convent kneeling before their patron saint or saints as if present, for instance, at the Crucifix or the Nativity (Plates Vc, d, e, VIIa, VIIb, Figures 15, 20, 26, 27, 28, 30, 35, 50). Such “Sacred Conversations”, such “Holy Conversations”, function like Heraldry’s “*mise en abyme*”, like the “Droste effect”, where the image is repeatedly reflected in fractals. In these cases we identify with the donor or donors, in a “Spiritual Exercise”, placing ourselves within the frame, not outside of it, in contemplation, so entering into the Presence of God, the “Shekinah”, and of the saints; kneeling humbly in holiness, instead of standing arrogantly apart, divorced from it in a world of time and sin.

In texts, similarly, we are to respond, as did St Augustine, “*Tolle, legge!*”, in conversion, our “Reader Response”. In most of the works discussed in this book, the writer describes his or her contemplative conversation with God in one’s soul: in the Biblical book of Job, Augustine’s *Confessions*, Jerome on Paula and Eustochium, Boethius’ *Consolation*, Gregory’s *Dialogus*, Dante’s *Vita nova* and *Commedia*, Marguerite Porete’s *Mirror of Simple Souls*, Birgitta of Sweden’s *Revelationes*, Catherine of Siena’s *Dialogo*, just as Julian of Norwich’s *Showing of Love* and Margery Kempe’s *Book* seek to approach “Holynesse” through conversations and conversions, responding—Body and Soul—to their message. Later, Sr Mary Champney, OSS, in 1580, and Dame Margaret Gascoigne, OSB, in 1637, will do the same in their “Holy Dying”, their Brigittine and Benedictine congregations with them scribally participating in what Brian Stock usefully termed as a “Textual Community”, bridging and conversing across time, prompting also the conversion of their readers, such as ourselves, in the “Reader Response” of inclusion as Julian’s “Even Christians”. In the final Appendix we will see Dame Gertrude More, OSB, and Dame Catherine Gascoigne, OSB, risking all to defend this “Textual Community” of women’s sacred writings from destruction.

Modern sainthood requires medically certified miracles, expects pathological hallucinations, and is bureaucratically literal. Medieval saintliness was ungendered, a possibility for all, the teaching of the “Discernment of Spirits” in accepting prophecies, visions and miracles where they were carried out in charity to one’s “Even Christian”, for then they were judged to have come from the Holy Spirit, but which were to be rejected if they were seen to lead to selfish vainglory. Jean Gerson, from his university chair, would seek to exclude women from the Canon of Saints, mirroring the exclusion of women from the new-fangled lecture halls of theology, but he would be overruled. This aspect has been

especially studied by Rosalynn Voaden in connection with Birgitta of Sweden, while David Aers and Lynn Staley have discussed Julian's writings in the context of the "Powers of the Holy". A "devout" person meant someone who had vowed themselves to God, to become "collected" in that presence, carrying out contemplative *lectio divina* as a "Holy Conversation" between Creation and Creator, later called "mental prayer", whether they were a professed nun, an episcopally enclosed anchoress, a consecrated widow, or a beguine. This was indeed open to all "Even Christians" of either gender or any age, not requiring male university training in theology, despite Archbishop Chancellor Thomas Arundel's 1408 *Constitutions*.

There was to be a great disjunction in this "Holy Conversation" in northern countries at the Reformation. But one finds that it always continued, even if forced into "samizdat" underground channels, in monastic Orders in exile. Here I give their acronyms: OSB referring to the Order of St Benedict, or Benedictines, OSS, to the Order of the Most Holy Saviour and St Birgitta, or Brigittines, OP, to the Order of Preachers, or Dominicans, O.Carm, to the Order of Carmel, or Carmelites, OSA, to the Order of St Augustine or Augustinians, SJ to the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, and CP, to the Order of the Cross and Passion, or Passionists, whole Orders, as well as individuals, sharing in these textual communities through time. Julian's *Showing* had to be hidden for centuries, like a splendid Coleridgean underground river, only to emerge triumphantly, with healing for all, in the last century through their conduits.

I wish particularly to thank all the participants, both real and virtual, in 'The City and the Book' VI, "Julian at Carrow" Symposium held at Norwich Shire Hall Study Centre, Norfolk Record Office and Carrow Abbey, 10-11 May 2013: Santha Bhattacharji, St Benet's Hall, Oxford, Rev John Clark, Marleen Cré, Ruusbroecgenootschap, University of Antwerp, Antoinette Curtis, Norfolk Record Office, Gabriella Del Lungo, Università di Studi di Firenze, Juliana Dresvina, KCL/Wolfson College, Oxford, Linda & Michael Falter, Rev Malcolm Guite, Girton College, University of Cambridge, Rev Jeremy Haselock, Paul Hurst, Bradford Manderfield, KU Leuven, Richard Norton, Rev Brendan Pelphrey, Tim Pestell, Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Stefan Reynolds, Heythrop College, University of London, Rev Norman Tanner, S.J., Pontificia Universitaria Gregoriana, Nancy Bradley Warren, Texas A & M University, and Jeongho Yang, Seoul Women's University, Korea, their papers to be found at <http://www.umilta.net/JulianatCarrow.html>, the conference held in honour of Sr Anna Maria Reynolds, CP. Following which Joan Greatrex and Christopher De Hamel held a conference at

Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 10-11 April 2014 on Adam Easton, at which even the music of his Office of the Visitation was performed. Chapter V, “Julian and Cardinal Adam Easton, OSB”, was the 1998 lecture presented in Norwich Cathedral, now revised, Chapter VII, “Saints, Secretaries and Supporters”, originally appeared in *Birgittiana* 1 (1996), 29-45, Chapter IX, “Brigittines and Benedictines”, was researched for the Florence, 2001, edition, then published in *Anchoress and Cardinal: Julian of Norwich and Adam Easton, OSB*, Salzburg, 2008, edited by James Hogg. Hoyt Greeson ably studied the dialect of the Sloane Manuscript, a competence I lack. Father Robert Llewelyn quietly consoled me, when I was soul-broken, telling me I was the one who knew the most about Julian. Sheila Upjohn found the text libelling Syon Abbey. Brigittine Syon Abbey and Benedictine Stanbrook Abbey and Colwich Abbey are most greatly to be thanked for their preservation of Julian’s “Holy Conversation” for her “Even Christians”. The Orthodox monk, Nathanael Smythe, gave me the icon of Julian as Benedictine, contemplating on Mary, contemplating on her as-not-yet-born Son, whose contemplative *mise en abyme* we thus mirror in ourselves, “treasuring all these things in our heart”.

This book about books is structured like a fugue in music, like an arabesque in art, like fractals in mathematics, repeating and reinforcing its points. It begins through the lens of an abbreviated and translated version of Westminster Manuscript text that prompted my leaving the profession of the university and entering the vocation of a cell, a hermitage, as its Chapter I. And then it will continue past that introduction to the various aspects of Julian’s Library in the following chapters: II. The manuscripts of her text (this chapter the most technical and difficult of the book); III. Her knowledge of the Bible, surprisingly, directly from its Hebrew, discovered while studying that language in the convent; IV. Her Benedictinism and *lectio divina*, including her use of Gregory’s account of Benedict and Scholastica, understood more deeply from living in monasticism than as a university professor; V. Her relationship with the Norwich Benedictine, Cardinal Adam Easton, and his use of Pseudo-Dionysius; VI. His possible authorship of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and its cluster of Epistles, perhaps written to her, as well as the “M.N.” glosses to Marguerite Porete’s *Mirror of Simple Souls*; VII. Saints Birgitta of Sweden and Catherine of Siena as her models; VIII. The “Friends of God” texts (known from my ancestors’ Quakerism), in her Amherst Manuscript anthology, and the Carmelite and Lollard influences upon her; IX. Her oral conversation recorded by Margery Kempe, as if with a microphone in East Anglia in the early fifteenth century, a “Holy Conversation” which

crystallizes and practices all the wisdom of these books; X. It then ends with Julian's influence on the further writings by her Brigittine and Benedictine nun editors, who clandestinely, in "Holy Disobedience", preserved her *Showing of Love* for us, despite the opposition of Archbishop Arundel, the Reformation, Benedictine monks, and the French Revolution's atheism, and despite the real threats to courageous women contemplatives of censorship, oblivion, being burned at the stake in chains, hung, drawn and quartered, exiled, starved, imprisoned, and guillotined.

Florence's "English" Cemetery
17 December 2015, "O Sapientia"

I

THE WESTMINSTER MANUSCRIPT

And in þis he shewed me a lytil
thyng þ^e quantite of a hasyl
nott. lyeng in the pawme of
my hand

IN translating Julian of Norwich's *Showing of Love* in 1991 from the Syon Abbey manuscript owned by Westminster Cathedral and now on loan to Westminster Abbey,¹ I chose to keep her own English words, rather than turning them into our Latinate forms, giving her "oneing" instead of our "uniting", her "noughting" instead of "negating", her "endlessness" instead of "eternity", her "showing" instead of "revelation". Somehow Latin hides their meaning into its foreignness. The English words' truth, though now so unusual that they seem foreign, are actually closer to what we mean. I changed her "kynde" to our "natural", though for us, in post-Darwinism, Nature has become red in tooth and claw in competitive cruelty, rather than with her original natural, nurturing, maternal "kindness". Yet Julian's theological concepts have a most modern ring. Computers, like brains and noughts and crosses games, generally simply "one" and "nought" their way through problems. Julian's "oneing" is one's bringing one's self to that of God; while her "noughting" is the opposite of "oneing", a turning away, to that which is evil, which is non-being. Her "endlessness", her "w^louzt be=gynnyng" (P23^{bis}), "without beginning", is of God, who is all time, at the centre; but the smaller and smaller bits of time, like death, being farther and farther away as the circle widens and thins, are of "noughting". Modern time and eternity are linear; medieval time, as Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* teaches us, is like our clock face and circular about the centre.

There are three versions of Julian's *Showing of Love*. The hypothetical "First" text in the Westminster Manuscript, of which excerpts are given in this first chapter, was perhaps written when she was twenty-five. Its Tudor version was written and even corrected against another manuscript by Syon Abbey's nuns *circa* 1500-35, copying a now-lost exemplar of *circa*

1450. The manuscript, which includes Hilton as well as Julian, the Hilton excerpts in a different order than his final version, begins with the date “1368”, written at the bottom of its first page as if to record that information (W1, Plate I a), next repeated on the end papers and the spine of the manuscript, though this manuscript is copied out later than this date.

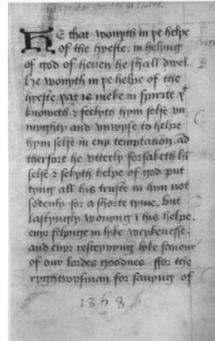


Figure 1. Westminster Manuscript, date of ‘1368’, bottom first folio.

It is the second-oldest manuscript we have of Julian’s *Showing*. It has no reference to the “Holy Dying” vision of 1373. In it Julian speaks of her desire to die when young, and God tells her this will happen soon. If we accept that date in the manuscript Julian in 1368 was just 25 years old. Yet the theology of this manuscript, centring on Wisdom and Truth, is brilliant. (Not unlike the theological precociousness of the very young Catherine of Siena and Thérèse of Lisieux, both now “Doctors of the Church”.)

It opens with “Oure gracious god”, as Wisdom and Truth, it shows the Nativity of the Word, mirror-reversing time, becoming the Annunciation, the Incarnate Word within Mary’s Body, in this book in Julian’s and our hands (W72^v, Plate Ic). The “Long” Text constantly refers back to this scene as its “First” Showing (P8-9, 11-11^v, 13^v-14, 47^v-49, concluding with P128^v, “And that shewde he in the furst = wher he brought þ^t meke maydyn before the eye of my vnderstondyng in þ^e sympyll stature as she was whan she conceived. that is to sey oure hye god the souereyn wisdom of all”), though it is not given as the First Showing in the opening index of the Paris Manuscript by the male editor who presents that instead as the Crowning of Thorns (P1). This contemplating by Mary on the Word, both as Wisdom, mirrored in turn again and again by Julian in her texts, and now also by ourselves who read her *Showing*, carefully reflects Luke’s Gospel 1.29,2.19, 51, on Mary as she ponders on all these things in her

heart, the Word increasing in wisdom and stature. This “Sacred Conversation” is an intensely feminist, obstetrical, maternal form of *lectio divina*. It is centred on gestation and birth, in fact, on the Body within the Body, on Life.² Similarly, and for which Chancellor Jean Gerson of the University of Paris sought to condemn her, Birgitta of Sweden wrote “Four Prayers”, of which the third is addressed to the Body of Christ, the fourth to the Body of Mary.³

However, the counter arguments to this “1368” date on the manuscript’s opening folio are, first of all, and most strongly, that Walter Hilton’s *Scale of Perfection* is dated to the 1380s, and, secondly, that the other editors of this Hilton/Julian manuscript view it as a compilation created out of excerpts from the “Long” Text. Edmund Colledge and James Walsh believed the repetition in the Paris manuscript to be an error due to careless dittography,⁴ and Hugh Kempster wrote of this section of the Westminster Manuscript as the work of a mere Tudor hack, strongly objecting to its initial Marian imagery as a male, Romish interpolation unworthy of Julian’s “virile Christology”,⁵ not noticing that this obstetrical and doubled wonderment is actually carefully repeated in all the versions of Julian’s *Showing of Love* (W72^v, P8-9, A99^v.19,8), such “careless dittography” only editorially excised from the two late Sloane manuscripts, and that its earlier and multiple inclusion is surely no accident. Julian is echoing, in this paradox, Mechthild von Magdebourg, Marguerite Porete, Dante Alighieri, Birgitta of Sweden, and Geoffrey Chaucer, a paradox which will influence Elizabeth Barton, in which they imply the relationship of Mary as both God’s Mother and God’s Daughter, Wisdom, playing at his side at the Creation of the World, and in which we enter with Julian into the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Gospel of Luke (Proverbs 8, Wisdom 8.1, Luke 1.27-38),⁶ as embedded in Paris (P8-9, Plate II),

¶In this he brought
 our ladie saint mari to my vnderstanding,
 I saw her ghostly in bodily liknes a sim=
 ple mayden and a meeke yong of age
 a little waxen aboue a chylde in the sta=
 ture a^s she was when she conceivede,
 ¶Also god shewed me in part the wi=
 sdom and the truth of her sowle. wher
 in I vnderstode the reuerent beholding
 that she beheld her god. that is her ma=
 ker. marvayling w^t great reuerence
 that he would be borne of her that
 was^a symple creature of his makyng

¶ffor this was her marvayling that
 he that was her maker would be borne
 of her that was made, ¶And this
 wisdom and truth knowing the gre=
 atnes of her maker. And the littlehead
 of her selfe that is made. made her to say
 full meekely to gabriell. **Loo me here
 gods handmaiden,** ¶ In this syght
 I did vnderstand verily that she is more
 then all that god made beneth her.
 in wordiness and in fullhead. for aboue
 is nothing that is made. But the [her
 blessed manhood of Christ. as to my syght,

and in Amherst (A99^v.4-20),

In this. God brought owre ladye to myne
 vnderstandynge. I sawe hir gastelye in bodilye lykenes A Sympille
 maydene & ameeke zonge of Age in the stature that scho was wh=
 en scho conceyvede. Also god schewyd me in parte the wisdom & the
 trowthe of hir saule. Where yn I vndyrstode reuerente beholdynge þ^t
 sche beheld oure^{hyr} god that ys hir makere *mervelande* with grete re=
 uerence that he wolde be borne of hir that was Asympille creature
 of his makynge. Ffor this was hir *mervelyng* that he that was hir
 makere walde be borne of hir that was asympille creature
 of his makynge. And this wysdom of trowthe & ^knawande the gretnes
 of hir makere and the lytelle heede of hir selfe that ys made made hir for to
 saye mekelye to the Angelle gabriele loo me here goddys hande may=
 dene. In this sight. I sawe sothfastlye that scho ys mare than alle þat
 god made benethe hir in worthynes & in fulheede. ffor Abovene hir
 ys nothyng that is made botte the blyssede manhede of criste this
 lytille thyng that is made that es benethe oure ladye Saynt Ma=
 rye.

The text next includes the hazel nut passage, and it quotes again and again from St Gregory's *Dialogues* on the Life of St Benedict, on how when the soul sees the Creator all that is created seems little. Then it turns that inside out, like the Beatles' pocket, and speaks of God in a point, from Pseudo-Dionysius, the Greek Church Father, and from Boethius, the Latin Church Father. It discourses upon prayer, using Origen on the Lord's Prayer and William of St Thierry's *Golden Epistle*.⁷ It talks to us of Jesus as Mother, reflecting back to that opening of God and Mary "oned" in the "Great O" Antiphon of Wisdom, and Truth, in its "Holy Conversation" collapsing time to its centre, as in a Rose window, rather than of the

“noughting” of this world. Julian uses the concept, from Pseudo-Dionysius, Marguerite Porete and Dante Alighieri, of the Holy Trinity (to which the now Protestant Norwich Cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity is still dedicated), as Might, Wisdom and Love. (Hagia Sophia in Constantinople is so dedicated to Christ as Wisdom, while Wisdom in Proverbs is God's Daughter, playing at his side at the Creation, Arnolfo di Cambio for Florence's original cathedral sculpting Mary's soul as a girl child in Jesus' arms at the Dormition of the Virgin, a combination which gives us Julian's androgynous Jesus as Mother.) It ends with God saying he will grant Julian's prayer to die young.

The “Long” Text, given in the Syon Abbey, Bibliothèque Nationale, anglais 40, Paris Manuscript and in the three Benedictine Sloane 3705, Sloane 2499, Stowe 42 Manuscripts in the British Library, presents a version originally written when she was fifty, in 1393, discussing a vision of the Crucifix she had had when she lay, she and others thought, dying, in 1373. A final version, the “Short” Text, is given in the British Library, Add. 37790, Amherst Manuscript, and states it was written when she was still alive in 1413, at seventy, when the Lollards, ancestors to Quakers such as Norwich's Elizabeth Gurney Fry, were being burned at the stake. That manuscript also contains Marguerite Porete's *Mirror of Simple Souls*, Henry Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae* and Jan van Ruusbroec's *Sparkling Stone*, amongst other contemplative texts.

All the early Julian manuscripts are connected to Brigittine Syon Abbey, the Westminster Manuscript being owned by the courageous recusant Lowe family. The last monk to be buried at Syon Abbey at the Reformation was a Lowe. The Lowes in exile continued to be associated with Syon Abbey in exile in Flanders, then Rouen, then Lisbon, Lowe women, as well as men, being imprisoned for their recusancy, and a Lowe priest was drawn, hung and quartered at Tyburn for converting five hundred souls to Catholicism. In the early nineteenth century a Rose Lowe entered Syon Abbey in Lisbon, saving it from extinction under Wellington's deprivations in Portugal and became its Prioress. Bishop James Bramston contemporaneously studied for ordination at the English College, Lisbon. The manuscript next passed from Lowe and Syon ownership into his hands, being rebound at this date, the “1368” date being twice more repeated on the end paper and the binding, and it finally came to Westminster Cathedral.⁸

Julian, if this hypothesis is correct, thus spent her whole life writing this book. From the age of fifty on she lived as a Solitary, an Anchoress, in an anchorhold at St Julian's Church, Norwich, surrounded by the tombs of its graveyard, while probably dressed in the black of a Benedictine nun, for

she may have earlier been at the Benedictine Carrow Priory, which lies just beyond Norwich's medieval flintstone wall with a fine view of Norwich's Cathedral and Castle, and, in the tradition of hermits, she may have taught the A.B.C. and counselled troubled souls, like that of Margery Kempe from Lynn. In all these versions, except the last, Julian gives copious passages from the Bible in her Middle English, from Genesis, from Exodus, from the Psalms, from Isaiah, from Jonah, from the Epistles and much else, but she dares not do so in the 1413 version when to own or use John Wyclif's translation of the Bible into English would have caused one to have been burnt at the stake in chains as a Lollard heretic. Strangely, she uses neither Jerome's Latin Vulgate nor Wyclif's Middle English of the Bible, the evidence being that she has access to the Hebrew of the Scriptures, likely gained through her family if they were *conversi* (Jews converted to Christianity), or through Cardinal Adam Easton who had taught the Hebrew Scriptures at Oxford and who had translated them into Latin, correcting Jerome's errors, or both. But she is not an elitist scholar. Her last word in her last version is the Lollard term, one's "even Christian", one's neighbour as one's equal in the eyes of God.

Julian begins the Westminster Manuscript *Showing of Love* by contemplating on the Virgin Mary contemplating on her still unborn Child within her. As in paintings of "Sacred Conversations" where the artist portrays the donor or donor's whole family in the presence of the Virgin and Child or the Crucifixion, supported by their patron saints, so also did medieval contemplative texts, being "Holy Conversations", transcend time to the Gospel, to Eternity, to the centre, rather than to the diminishing and thinning outer circlings of time, noughting and sin. Long before the Jesuits with Ignatius Loyola's male-dominated and carefully structured and organised "Spiritual Exercises", Jerome had described how Paula had done so at the Holy Places, at Bethlehem and Calvary. Birgitta of Sweden, Margery Kempe likewise did so, paintings even showing Birgitta as present at the Virgin's birthing of her Child. Paula, Birgitta, Julian and Margery all practice the "Presence of God" liturgically and obstetrically. The initial "O" in the manuscript is illuminated in blue with red penwork ornamentation, the text written in brownish ink within rules to ease typesetting in print. It echoes typographically the Advent Antiphon, "O Sapientia", enveloping liturgically the pregnant Virgin's sung Magnificat at Vespers, in which she worships and addresses her as-yet-unborn child as Wisdom (W72^v, Plate I c).⁹

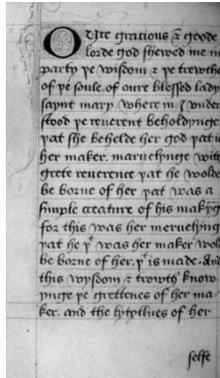


Figure 2. Westminster Manuscript, Westminster Abbey, fol. 72^v

Oure gracious & goode
 lorde god shewed me in
 party þe wisdom & þe trewthe
 of þe soule of oure blessed lady.
 saynt mary. where in I vnder=
 stood þe reuerent beholdyng
 þat she behelde her god þat is
 her maker. maruelyng with
 grete reuerence þat he wolde
 be borne of her þat was a
 simple creature of his makyng. (W92^v)

In this Tudor manuscript the single letter, “thorn”, þ, is used for our *th*, *s* being long-tailed *ʃ*, except at the end of a word (not observed in this printing), *us* and *vs* the reverse of our practice, *g* or *gh* being “yogh”, *3*, and *n* is often abbreviated with a macron above the previous letter. The manuscript has drawings of hands in the margin pointing to important parts of the text. (Later, Julian speaks of the tender hands of God as our Mother, W111, while the first Jewish prayer a mother teaches her child to say in Hebrew at bedtime, “Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit”, is what Mary hears her dying Son say as she stands at the foot of the Cross.) The sections given in the following quotations in **bold** are rubricated in the Paris Manuscript, but not in the Westminster Manuscript. In other manuscripts these phrases are in engrossed letters, which, in one instance, occurs also in the Westminster Manuscript (W87^v), and which may have been Julian’s own practice, perhaps borrowed from Rabbinical texts, as in the Balliol College, Oxford, manuscript of Rabbi David Kimhi,

once owned by Cardinal Adam Easton, the Norwich Benedictine who effected Birgitta of Sweden's canonisation in 1391. Or they are underlined, and, in the 1670 printed edition, in *italics*. All these emphasise the "Holy Conversations" Julian mediates with us, with Mary and with God, as did Birgitta in her *Revelationes*, humbling their words to the Word.

What follows is a modernised and abbreviated version of the Westminster Manuscript with some glimpses at its original form on its parchment folios as an *accessus*, an introduction, to this book on Julian. In reading its words, seek to become Dame Julian, and place yourself within her "Holy Conversation".

OUr gracious and good lord God showed me in part the wisdom and the truth of the soul of our blessed Lady, Saint Mary that he would be born of her that was a simple person of his making. For this was her marvelling, "That he who was her maker would be born of her that is made". And this wisdom and truth, knowing the greatness of her Maker and the littleness of her self who is made, caused her to say full meekly to Gabriel, "**Lo, me here, God's handmaiden**". This wisdom and truth made her see her God so great, so high, so mighty and so good that the greatness and the nobility and beholding of God fulfilled her with reverent dread. And with this she saw herself so little and so low, so simple and so poor in reward of her God, that this reverent dread fulfilled her with meekness. And thus, by this ground, she was fulfilled with grace and of all manner of virtue, and overpassed all people. In this sight, I understood truly that she is more than all that God made beneath her in worthiness and fullness. For above her there is no thing that is made: but the blessed manhood of Christ, as to my sight. And this our good Lord showed to my understanding, in teaching us. . . .

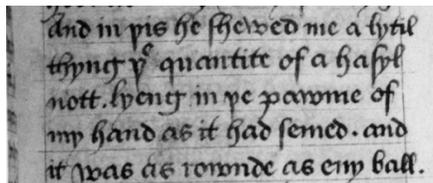


Figure 3. Westminster Manuscript, fol. 74, detail

and in þis he shewed me a lytil