

SUPPLEMENT TO “HOLY MATTER MAKING HOLY MEANING: FASHIONING
MEMORY, COMMUNITY, AND DISSIMILAR SIMILITUDE IN MIDDLE DUTCH
SISTER-BOOKS AND *THE BOOK OF MARGERY KEMPE*”

MARGERY KEMPE AND CONTINENTAL MYSTICISM

In the past three decades, critics have increasingly begun to maintain that Middle English female mystics like Margery took part in a “transnational tradition of feminized affective piety”, as Liam Temple observes, conveyed through translations and Latin texts and spanning across the Channel from the Continent to the British isle;¹ they were not entrapped in an “English mystical vacuum.”² Discussions situating Margery in this European tradition have paired her with a veritable calendar of Continental holy women.³ As Liz Herbert McAvoy and Diane Watt observe, “the influence of Continental European women writers in Britain [having] been painstakingly charted.”⁴

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¹ Liam Peter Temple, “Returning the English ‘Mystics’ to Their Medieval Milieu: Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe and Bridget of Sweden”, *Women’s Writing* 23, no. 2 (2016), 142. Cf. Nicholas Watson, “The Middle English Mystics,” in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace, The New Cambridge History of English Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 539–65.

² Temple, “Returning the English ‘Mystics’ to Their Medieval Milieu”, 142.

³ Discussions situating Margery in this Continental tradition have paired her, among others, with Beguine Marie d’Oignies (1177–1213), mentioned in the *Book*; Helfta visionary Mechthild of Hackeborn (1240/1241–1298); Dominican tertiary and visionary Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), Dominican nun and visionary Elizabeth of Hungary and Naples (c. 1260–1322), likewise mentioned as an exemplar in the *Book* but conflated with the noblewoman

Elizabeth of Thuringia (1207–2131), and most frequently, Birgitta of Sweden (c. 1303–1373), enthusiastically admired in the *Book*. For Margery and Marie d'Oignies, see Jennifer Nancy Brown, "Marie d'Oignies", in *The History of British Women's Writing 1*, 2012, 198–206; Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, "Mysticism and Medicine: Holy Communion in the Vita of Marie d'Oignies and The Book of Margery Kempe", *Poetica* 72, special issue "Convergence / Divergence: The Politics of Late Medieval English Devotional and Medical Discourses" ed. Dennis Reveney and Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, (2009) 109–21. For Margery and Mechthild of Hackeborn, see Liz Herbert McAvoy and Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, "The Intertextual Dialogue and Conversational Theology of Mechthild of Hackeborn and Margery Kempe", in *Encountering The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. Laura Varnam and Laura Kalas, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2022); Liz Herbert McAvoy, "'O Der Lady, Be My Help': Women's Visionary Writing and the Devotional Literary Canon", *The Chaucer Review* 51, no. 1 (2016): 68–87. For Margery and Catherine of Siena, see Annette Grisé, "Catherine of Siena", in *The History of British Women's Writing 1*, 2012, 216–22; David Wallace and Marion Glasscoe, "Mystics and Followers in Siena and East Anglia: A Study in Taxonomy, Class and Cultural Mediation," in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Exeter Symposium III: Papers Read at Dartington Hall, July 1984* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1984), 169–91.. For Margery and the various Elizabeths, see Laura Saetveit Miles, *The Virgin Mary's Book at the Annunciation: Reading, Interpretation, and Devotion in Medieval England*, (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2020), 115–74; Alexandra Barratt, "Margery Kempe and the King's Daughter of Hungary", in *Margery Kempe : A Book of Essays*, ed. Sandra J. McEntire, Garland Medieval Casebooks 4 (New York: Garland, 1992), 189–201. For Margery and Birgitta, see Gunnel Cleve, "Margery Kempe: A Scandinavian Influence in Medieval England?", in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England: Exeter Symposium V: Papers Read at the Devon Centre, Dartington Hall, July 1992*, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1992), 163–78; Jacqueline Jenkins, "Reading and The Book of Margery Kempe", in *A Companion to The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. John Arnold H. and Katherine J. Lewis (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 113–28; Laura Saetveit Miles, "Bridget of Sweden", in *The History of British Women's Writing (700–1500)*, vol. 1, ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy and Diane Watt (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 207–15; Temple, "Returning the English "Mystics" to Their Medieval Milieu", and the project "ReVISION: Re-assessing St. Birgitta of Sweden and her Revelations in Medieval England" led by Laura Saetveit Miles.

⁴ Liz Herbert McAvoy and Diane Watt, "Introduction: Women's Literary Culture and Late
Medieval English Writing", *The Chaucer Review* 51, no. 1 (2016): 3.