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‘Well saved in suffering’: male Piety in Late-Medieval Tribulation Texts

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In her discussion of medieval knighthood and manhood, Ruth Mazo Karras asserts that ‘Religiosity and masculinity did not come into conflict’.¹ Aristocratic lay men had numerous ways of expressing their piety in the Middle Ages, from involvement in confraternities, charitable donations, devotion to saints’ cults and endowments to religious institutions. In devotional reading material particularly, religiosity and masculinity are often deeply intertwined and directly inform one another. This can be seen in a group of late-medieval works that have collectively come to be known as ‘tribulation texts’,² religious works which present the active embrace of suffering as an expression of spiritual strength and of powerful self-control. While Derek Neal has shown that masculinity cannot be solely equated with power or desire for it,³ power was nonetheless fundamentally important to the religious activities of medieval men when it was directed towards the emotional control of their own minds and bodies as a spiritual exercise. In the sphere of personal piety, ideal masculinity is not necessarily grounded in the exertion of power through social position, identity or status, but it is expressed through inward looking self-discipline.

The tribulation literature that became increasingly popular in late-medieval England offered its readers a vision of stoic behaviour that portrays the exertion of self-control as a pious masculine ideal. Moreover, this power over oneself was often illustrated in relation to the varied social roles available to men in the period. P. H. Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis argue that in contrast to femininity, there was a ‘range of potential versions of ideal masculinity [and . . .] Both the theory and performance of these varied depending on other aspects of individual and collective identity, such as age, social status, profession, location and ethnicity’.⁴ This range of experience and identity is something with

which tribulation texts, such as the fifteenth-century *Twelve Profits of Tribulation* and *The Book of Tribulation*, seek to directly engage. The male roles and experiences presented in these texts aim to unite the practical and the spiritual by transferring the location of the reader's power from his outward facing social identity to his interior spiritual self.

In this respect, tribulation texts reflect an ascetic adaptation of stoicism, something which Amy Appleford calls 'a controlled form of self-loss'.⁵ *The Book of Tribulation*, for instance, opens with the following assertion: 'Ffor as Seneca saith, ther is noon so gret gladshep as thilke is, that is ydrawen out of aduersite'.⁶ The object of this ascetic endurance is the achievement self-knowledge, outlined in the fourth 'service' of tribulation, which is 'that thei yeuen the light to knowe what God is and to knowe what thou art thiself. And in knowyng what God is and what a man is himself, is enclosed alle verray philosophie and alle perfeccion of knowyng'.⁷ Yet to achieve this understanding of oneself and of the divine, *The Book* draws repeatedly on the familiarity of the social world as a basis from which to then redirect its reader's spiritual life inwards. In the first chapter, for instance, God is depicted as the reader's 'lyge lorde', leading a 'oost of tribulacions as marchal forto rule hem and forto ordeyne hem to socoure and to rescus his frendes'.⁸ The feudal imagery of God leading an army of tribulations designed to help the vassal-reader overcome himself and find comfort in his suffering is demonstrated in highly social terms before being turned inward by the instruction to think on God's presence in times of trouble.⁹ In this way *The Book* uses masculine social roles to facilitate personal piety. Yet its treatment of gender is not entirely straightforward. *The Book of Tribulation* had a wide readership among gentry women as well as men,¹⁰ and it appears to offer a second way of responding to God's onslaught of tribulation. First the reader is offered friendship ('felauship in thi tribulation') but shortly after, the friend is redefined as a lover: God offers friendship 'to his biloued in her tribulacions'.¹¹ The imagery of vassal and beloved are conflated here in a way which demonstrates a fluidity between in readers' identities and which does not exclude male or female audiences. It also suggests that the previously established image of the reader as vassal is not problematised by becoming an object of love. As Christina Fitzgerald has shown, devotional practices and models that are often labelled as feminine are not always straightforwardly so. For example, Fitzgerald argues that, in addition to

being performances of civic devotion, the Mystery Plays self-consciously address anxieties surrounding masculinity. The figure of Christ, in particular, may have served as a model for male viewers to reconcile various masculine roles (such as householder and guild member) and did not simply function as a feminised figure intended to foster affective compassion from audiences.¹² Similarly, *The Book* presents its reader with the possibility of inhabiting multiple identities simultaneously.

The figures offered as exemplars in *The Book of Tribulation*, including Christ, offer male readers both spiritual and moral role models for their performance of piety grounded in accessible social roles. In this way, the *Book* provides numerous examples of roles and identities which are relevant to a variety of male readers without excluding women and without rigidly fixing male identity as one thing; for as Rachel Stone reminds us, "Men' do not form a single category: instead groups of men differentiated themselves from other men, as well as from women, via ideologies and institutions. These different masculinities are not equivalent, but reflect power relations and social pressures, and in turn affect subjective identities'.¹³ By examining *The Book of Tribulation* and related fifteenth-century devotional writings read by gentry audiences we can begin to understand how writers recognised and responded to the variety of men's experiences and possible identities and how they used these as a basis for devotional expression and the formation of interior personal pieties.

...

Devotional texts concerned with tribulation multiplied in England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Works such as *A Dialogue between Reason and Adversity* (an early fifteenth-century translation of Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae*) and the anonymous *Chastising of God's Children* (c. 1390) stress the temporary nature of tribulation and the rewards that will result from patient endurance of it.¹⁴ William Flete's *De remediis contra temptationes* (1350s), a text 'as practical as it is learned, to be read by anyone suffering for which it offers alleviation',¹⁵ treated the problem of universal suffering and despair, and *The Book of Tribulation* and *The Twelve Profits of Tribulation* deal with the benefits of suffering for the soul. *The Book*

and *The Twelve Profits* were translated, respectively, from the Old French *Livre de tribulacion* and the Latin *De Duodecim Utilitatibus Tribulationis* (both of which originally derive from the thirteenth-century *Tractatus de tribulacione*).¹⁶ Similarly, the concept of tribulation appears in Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, one of the most popular texts of the fifteenth century, though not widely circulated in English until the sixteenth. The *Imitation* extols the virtues of tribulation for all people and sees them as central to leading a pious life. The first English translation (c. 1470) states that 'Alle holy men haue gone and profited bi many tribulacions and temptacions' and that in the face of tribulation one must 'fight manly, suffer patiently' or 'suffre manly'.¹⁷ The *Imitation* suggests that it is patient endurance that makes one 'manly' and whilst the word can mean noble (as Isabel Davis notes in relation to Thomas Hoccleve's usage), the idea that endurance is active, not submissive, is more than evident.¹⁸ The multiplicity of tribulation texts and the presence of tribulation in devotional works suggest instructions on patient suffering were highly desirable in the later medieval period and that such patience was considered a formative feature in religious experience.¹⁹ In addition, *The Book of Tribulation* is significant for the way in which it offers a gendered approach to tribulation. It has a preponderance of masculine imagery and it offers an important insight to how men were encouraged to rethink their social roles in spiritual terms.

Tribulation, and the control of its attendant emotions, such as mental anguish, pain, anger and frustration, was central to the formation of masculine identity in the late Middle Ages and devotional writers saw men's suffering as a practical condition that could be shaped into transformative spiritual experiences. Indeed, *The Book of Tribulation* encourages individuals to cultivate what Nicholas Watson calls the 'wholly unintellectual virtues of patience and strength' in order to translate their identities from ones centred on the outward exercise of worldly power to ones based on the ideal of inward power over the self in the face of suffering.²⁰ Significantly, *The Book of Tribulation* is 'worded in such a way that it has the widest possible applicability' and its audience certainly consisted of both male and female readers (as did that of other tribulation texts, such as *The Twelve Profits of Tribulation* and *The Six Masters of Tribulation*).²¹ It also deals with themes which would have been familiar to all medieval Christians no matter what their

gender or social status. It provides a framework for coping with issues from persecution and poverty to temptation, illness and death, providing meditations on the positive purpose of tribulation.²² However, despite the imagery of the 'beloved' noted above, the text's wide applicability is constructed using almost exclusively masculine imagery and through exemplars that encourage the formation of a distinctively male identity built on the transformative potential of suffering.

The Book survives in incomplete versions in three manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 423 (the most faithful rendition of the French original);²³ London, British Library, MS Harley 1197; and London, British Library, MS Arundel 286 (the shortest version). Each of these is a devotional miscellany containing texts on the mixed life for an apparently mixed audience. However, the text itself is very much concerned with male identity, especially in the different social roles it depicts, which include knights, lords and merchants (including Christ as merchant). Importantly, this imagery did not preclude a female audience. In MS Arundel 286, the *Book* sits alongside a Passion meditation directed to a 'worschipful lady' (fol. 1r), a treatise on virginity employing only female pronouns, and a version of *The Mirror of St Edmund*, a meditation structured on the liturgical hours which were typical reading for educated laywomen.²⁴ Here the *Book* appears to have been compiled as part of a collection with definite appeal to a female audience.²⁵ The *Book* itself also makes reference to women, in the form of the feminine soul as God's beloved noted above, as well as a more negative example of how women's words humiliate men. In addition, the moral lessons available in the *Book* are just as applicable to women as they are to men (as are those of the very similar *Twelve Profits*). The ideals themselves, which include patience, submission to morally and spiritually superior forces, the correct fulfilment of one's social role and self-confident interiority rather than exterior displays of status, are virtues to which women readers can aspire as well. Nevertheless, all of the professional social identities with which the text invites the reader to associate are masculine. This necessarily enables male readers a different kind of access to its teaching.

Although women were active readers of texts about interior asceticism in the Middle Ages, the emotionally detached and self-controlled endurance of suffering is often considered a stereotypically

masculine phenomenon.²⁶ Medieval devotional and courtesy literature frequently advises men on self-restraint in terms of deportment, manners and expressions of piety, and Derek Neal notes that the 'specially masculine nature of the discourse of self-command' is a product of the relative freedom of men in relation to women.²⁷ The concept of correct deportment as a demonstration of self-control is also vitally important in *The Book of Tribulation*. *The Book* clearly establishes expectations of how to act when faced with suffering by repeatedly entreating its readers to 'suffre . . . with good chere'.²⁸ This implies much more than simply masking one's pain; instead, it encourages the reader to actively embrace the positive nature of suffering. In this it offers an ascetic discourse of the kind which, as Appleford writes, 'understands the spiritual pain of sin, with other forms of suffering, as *productive*'.²⁹ The idea of suffering with good cheer involves entirely rethinking tribulation and temptation as positive experiences. This is a common feature of fifteenth-century devotional literature. For example, texts such as *The Tree and Twelve Fruits of the Holy Ghost* (c. 1460) assert the importance of joy in the face of tribulation because happiness directly fosters the virtue of patience, a central value in tribulation texts: 'The þrid degre of paciens is to be Joyful in tribulaciouns and glad whan þou felist hem and desire hem whan þou lakkist hem'.³⁰ The tone of this extract is highly emotive – one should be 'glad' of torments and 'desire' them in their absence – yet such language reveals an ascetic ideal at the heart of lay religious experience in which patient, masterful and joyful suffering (as opposed to anger or self-pity) enable an ultimately comforting union with God. Likewise, *The Book of Tribulation* explores the emotions surrounding comfort after tribulation (for 'gret tribulacion maketh place for gret comfort'), but it is careful to warn against complaining too much about one's present state for fear of never overcoming it.³¹ It also warns the reader against falling prey to the impatience of courtly lovers whose complaints about the lack of fulfilment in love mirror the soul's desire for comfort.³²

The version of *The Book* in Bodley 423 opens with the entreaty: 'da nobis domine auxilium de tribulacione', 'Lord God, grant us help in tribulation'.³³ From this entreaty (Psalm 59:13), it is clear that tribulation should be understood in universal terms, as both mental anguish and physical suffering. Then the reader is addressed directly as

‘soul’, a term which makes obvious the *Book*’s universal application to all Christians. This soul is then envisioned as an individual who has been ‘delyuered to temptacions and to tribulacions of this lyf’,³⁴ further identifying the reader’s condition as both universal and inevitable. However, by following the *Book*’s advice, this inevitable suffering can be understood and used to the reader’s advantage. Through the *Book*:

thou mowe lerne forto knowe of what crafte tribulacions
seruen to wise men, and how gret seruices that thou might
drawe of hem, if it ne be longe on thiself, that [not] oonly thou
konne suffre hem with good chere.³⁵

The *Book* offers the reader a role as student of his own suffering and the opportunity to gain wisdom from it. Significantly, the reader should not simply submit to the tribulations that come his way, he should actively master them and make them his servants. The text directly entreats the reader not to submit in the face of tribulation but rather to employ his suffering to his own advantage. The language here is extremely functional – tribulation can serve you if you use it wisely – and it indicates the text’s potential appeal to the kind of gentry audience used to being served, such as Lewis Clifford (d. 1404), who left a copy of the *Book* to his son-in-law, the courtier Philip de la Vache (d. 1408).³⁶ It also directly employs the familiar imagery of service to enable the reader to treat his tribulations as servants whilst simultaneously reformulating the way in which he perceives the nature of tribulation not as a burden but as an opportunity. In addition, tribulation is described as a ‘craft’, a word which has connotations of artisanship (*MED*, n. 1, 3a), of manual and mental skill (*MED*, n. 1, 2a) and of power and strength (*MED*, n. 1, 1.). Thus, tribulation also has a formative potential. It can become a tool of self-improvement and self-empowerment. Indeed, the *Book* does not offer anything particularly demanding in either intellectual or affective terms for its reader and its ideals reveal much about the ideology and expectations of male piety in the late Middle Ages in terms of how self-control is to be demonstrated in everyday experience. Of course, the image of the ideal man presented in *The Book of Tribulation* does not tell us how that image was received so we cannot use it to explore ‘the subjective experience

of masculinity by men', however, the *Book's* interior spirituality is designed to be imitable and it highlights both the anxieties and aspirations related to men's suffering in the late Middle Ages.³⁷

These ideals and anxieties can be examined further in relation to the behaviour expected of readers in *The Book of Tribulation*. Rachel Stone argues that appropriate behaviour is central to the construction of masculinity.³⁸ By this she means that individuals were required to perform gendered social roles in particular ways and, in addition to the formal courtesy books and manuals of the period, devotional texts such as *The Book of Tribulation* outline the parameters of these roles. For instance, the *Book* implies that certain types of behaviour and emotions are appropriate when experiencing tribulation and others are not. Self-pity, lamentation and even identification with Christ's pain, are deemed inappropriate; while fortitude, stoic endurance and self-reflection are fitting states for the reader. This practical and largely unemotional approach to piety reflects the text's lack of interest in mysticism and its limited appeal to affective means of achieving spiritual experience. Its lack of overt affectivity can be seen in the way in which the reader is invited to contemplate Christ's wounds, which differs between *The Book of Tribulation* and *The Twelve Profits of Tribulation*. For instance, the *Twelve Points* entreats its reader to 'be-hold Crist thi maker & þi brother wounded in the syde for þi loue', portraying Christ as a military commander and the reader as a 'trew knyzt, [who] when he seeth his lordis woundis, he felyth not his own woundis'.³⁹ This offers Christ's wounds as a direct source of comfort for the reader, presented in overtly chivalric terms. However, this passage and other references to the Passion do not appear in the *Book*. Instead, comfort is firmly linked to one's personal endurance of tribulation.⁴⁰ Rather than being a tool to affective meditation (something we would expect in texts such as Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*),⁴¹ rge wounds are instead presented as a mnemonic aid to Christ's own memory of humanity:

Vnderstonde that he himself, in tokenyng of his thenkyng on the, wolde witholde in his body the traces of his woundes in suche manere as men withholden a knotte on a lether, forto do the to wite in certain that thow might not falle to him in foryetyng.⁴²

Here, Christ’s wounds are not offered for the reader’s meditation; instead they are a reminder for Christ himself to send humanity ‘the discipline of tribulacions’, just as he endured ‘the harde discipline of the cros’.⁴³ Moreover, if tribulation reminds God to turn to humanity, so tribulation should remind humanity to turn to God who ‘bete hem with the yerde of tribulacion . . . for thai shulden turne’.⁴⁴

Another way in which the *Book* views tribulation as a practical and unemotional turning to God can be seen where it encourages readers to self-scrutinise in everyday secular situations. One example, from chapter three, which concerns the purgative benefits of tribulation, draws on the common medical practice of bloodletting in order to illustrate the achievable nature of self-control and the transformative potential of practical but painful experiences. This chapter suggests that purgation is one of the most important services of tribulation, for ‘as bitter medicine purges the wicked humours of the body, saith Seynt Gregory, so tribulacions purge the wicked condicions of the herte’.⁴⁵ *The Book* equates the physical bleeding of the body with the spiritual purgation of sins from the heart:

That other maner to purge mannys body, it is of veyne or of garsynge. In the same manere hath the hert his gostly bledying. The bledying of veyne is propirly remeued to the shrift, thilke [of] garsyng to tribulacion. And al be it so that the bledyinge of the veyne, gostliche vnderstone longeth not al to our purpos, ffor onliche of tribulacion we shulde speke, not for than abundaunce vnderstone that ryght as roten blood corrupith the body, right so synne corrupith the hert.⁴⁶

This is particularly important in terms of framing gendered responses to tribulation because it seems clear that the reference to ‘mannys body’ is specifically the male body, not to the human body.⁴⁷ Blood is not associated with affectivity in any way, rather it is used to further the *Book*’s interest in the empowering attributes of fortitude, detachment and self-control in the face of everyday tribulation. However, that empowerment is not without sacrifice. Michael Kaufman argues that ‘The tension between maleness and masculinity is intense

because masculinity requires suppression of a whole range of human needs, aims, feelings and forms of expression'.⁴⁸ This is certainly characteristic of the *Book*. Another text dealing with bloodletting might easily ask the reader to imagine Christ's blood being drained at the Crucifixion or to consider his pain in relation to the incomparable suffering his saviour experienced. The Monk of Evesham, for instance, made this connection.⁴⁹ *The Book of Tribulation*, however, does not indulge in such overt affectivity, as we have seen in its treatment of Christ's wounds. It is eminently practical and limits its emotional imagery to the comfort that will be felt after tribulation. There is little acknowledgment of the positive or salvific nature of blood, no reference to the Eucharist or to Christ's blood spilled at the Passion as a source of compassion or comfort, here or elsewhere in the text.

In fact, deeper spiritual understanding of suffering is specifically avoided in this passage. When the translator writes that 'gostliche vnderstond[ing] . . . longeth not al to our purpos', he implies that nothing spiritual ('gostliche') should distract the reader from the practical application of tribulation. Moreover, while the Bodley version of the text here refers to deeper spirituality as irrelevant, the Harley (fol. 64v) and Arundel (fol. 104v) versions of this passage simply remove the reference to spiritual understanding altogether. This suggests that knowing how to cope with tribulation will in itself lead to self-knowledge and then to knowledge of God via grace and that no deeper exploration on the part of the reader is required.⁵⁰ The emphasis is rather on self-controlled acceptance of one's suffering and its functional transformative purpose, which here is repentance. Drawing on Proverbs 10:11, the *Book* links bloodletting directly to confession by suggesting that the purgation of blood from the body should precede the admission of sins from the mouth, picturing the mouth as a vein: 'The veyne by which thilke blood shold ys[ul]en oute, is the mouthe of the repentaunt'.⁵¹ The reader is thus encouraged to equate the practical act of bloodletting with the practical act of confession, which is the desired outcome of the process of self-reflective purgation. The purging of the metaphorical 'wicked blood of synne', therefore enables the 'good' blood to return to the spiritual 'norisshyng of the hert'.⁵²

As well as transforming practical activities such as bloodletting into opportunities for spiritual reform, *The Book's* portrayal of social roles infuses the commonplace with spiritual significance. It also employs

mercantile and legal language in chapter six to consider the spiritual economy of salvation and reflects on a series of male social roles, including lord, knight, cleric, father, son, craftsman, labourer, master, and servant. Even God is identified with a number of these roles, from the soul's feudal lord to the craftsman who shapes that soul through his workmanship. Indeed, the *Book* pictures the reader as the raw material to be crafted by God, for just as an ironmonger uses a file to purge, scour and brighten iron, so does God use tribulation to enlighten the reader.⁵³ God scours the heart to prevent it falling into 'ghostly derknes', as an unused knife or an undrawn sword will become rusty.⁵⁴ This makes active submission a central element of self-empowerment. Knowing and accepting when to submit indicates a willingness to relinquish outward control in order to achieve interior self-mastery. The reader is encouraged to think of himself as a tool with a specific function, a function for which he is moulded by God and for which he should be constantly primed. The imagery of the reader's mastery over tribulation that opens the text is thus gradually translated into the imagery of willing submission to a master. Those who seek true or 'verray fredom' should 'vnderstonde that he is not moost fre that mooste may do what he wil', rather freedom entails submission to the restrictions of tribulation imposed by God and which create the possibility of union with him: God 'clepith the tribulacions his bondes [and] as thou felist the of thilke bondes more straight ybounde, so muchel thou hast God moor strait ybounde to the'.⁵⁵ However, this submission is by no means passive, it is necessarily the reader's active choice.

The imagery of submission runs through the text, reoccurring in chapter seven where God, the 'goldsmyth of alle creatures', is seen stretching and shaping the reader's heart. Here the heart is compared to precious metal, and the more precious the metal the easier it is to work. For instance, hearts of gold are moulded easily by patience and tribulation and soon finished.⁵⁶ Thus the sooner one submits to the strokes of the hammer, the sooner those strokes will cease, but 'the vessel that [resists], the goldsmith smyt moost strokes'.⁵⁷ Patient and obedient submission to suffering are what will allow the reader to become perfected. In terms of pious masculinity knowing when to submit, and to whom, is fundamental and empowering. Resistance and

complaint will only prolong suffering while self-controlled subjection is the path to spiritual freedom.

Thus, *The Book* offers a vision of pious masculinity which centres on endurance and which prizes and desires tribulation. There is some emphasis on consolation in *The Book of Tribulation*, but ideally one should live in the moment of one's suffering, knowing that self-controlled submission fosters spiritual union with God. So, while Derek Neal asserts that in order to guarantee celibacy a major part of clerical power wielding involved the 'command of self over self' and that in courtesy literature self-command has a 'specially masculine nature', in the context of personal piety, the idea of self-control is equally paramount.⁵⁸ Part of this self-control is a sense of duty and correct behaviour towards one's superiors and one's inferiors. The *Book* presents an interesting take on the treatment of servants by picturing Christ as such in order to illustrate a lord's duty towards those who serve him. Firstly, it instructs the reader in his responsibilities: Christ 'suffre[d] for the; suffre for him', a command which demands toleration of tribulation in reciprocity for Christ's endurance.⁵⁹ Then it goes on to demand 'And yf he [Christ] were in þy service wrongfully euel treted, yelde him him huyre [payment] of this service'.⁶⁰ Not only does this teach the reader about appropriate spiritual actions, but by implication it instructs him in correct lordly behaviour, teaching him to respect those who serve him and correct any wrongs done to them. The *Book* even appeals to images of kingship, asking the reader to 'Forsake not than þe hamer yf thou loue the croune that the hamers of aduersitees maken the and forgen the'.⁶¹ It also speaks to mercantile inclinations, for it is only 'leude marchauntes þat chese the false penyworthes of worldly wurshipes and ioyes', real men choose 'þe good marchaundise of tribulacion'.⁶² In addition it offers some chivalric imagery of fellowship. As noted previously, God sends tribulations to help the reader as a 'lyge lord' would send help to rescue a man from his enemies, and a chivalric bond of 'felauship' is envisioned between God and the reader: 'frende, that he bihoteth in felauship in [thi] tribulacion, thou art wel saued in suffrynge'.⁶³ This chivalric imagery is also extended to direct references to the appearance of the text's imagined reader who wears a 'haberghon', a jacket of armour, and which suggests an audience amongst the male gentry.⁶⁴

As well as considering present suffering in masculine terms, when *The Book* looks forward to the rewards of patient endurance it uses the roles of knight, clerk and lord as exemplars:

Suffre than to proue the, if thou wilt come to eny perfeccion.
And if thou fele the of harde yproued and discomforted with
tribulacions, comforte the ayenwarde and be syker that gret
thinge he arraieth for the, and to grete thinge he clepith the,
that to gret proue puttith þe.⁶⁵

Here ‘suffer’ is clearly an active term. There is nothing passive or accepting (but equally no noisy complaint) about the tribulations one is made to bear. To suffer is to exert self-control, and to suffer well validates a self-possessed, ambitious and interiorised masculine identity which is not reliant on external trappings:

Ffor the knight were not proued for worthy in armes of his
lord, ne the clerk of his boke, yf the lorde wolde auance hem.
And it is custume that after that dignite is gret that a man is
cleped to, therafter the proue is þe strengre of worthines, of
kighthood other of clergie.⁶⁶

Thus a man’s dignified behaviour, demeanour and actions stand as testament to his calling. The knight’s armour and the clerk’s book are unimportant external show if a man does not fulfil the interior moral dignity of his social role.

Despite the fact that tribulation is generalised in the *Book*, the variety of experiences and social roles to which it is applied means that the text is accessible to a wide audience and can be personalised by each reader. In particular, there is one solution to the many types of tribulation that humanity can suffer, for as well as sending tribulation, God also acts as a shield from it. The idea that Christ acts as a form of protection against suffering by sheltering the soul from pain is a familiar one in devotional culture and the armour of God has been allegorised in numerous texts.⁶⁷ For example, in William Flete’s *De remediis* God is ‘our shelde and strength’ and in his *Testament* (1440s) John Lydgate declares that ‘Thou art, Iesu, my socour and refuge / Geyn euery

tempest and tribulacioun'.⁶⁸ However, this protection is only offered if the individual expresses an appropriate degree of love for his protector. *The Book of Tribulation* is very careful to promote the idea that 'without loue it is harde to suffre'.⁶⁹ By suffer the *Book* means not merely to *experience* pain or anguish, but to *endure* it ('sufferen', *MED*, v. 3a, a), through the power of one's love, which is another key concept in the formation of pious masculinity. Indeed, the twelfth service of tribulation marks suffering itself out to be the direct result of divine love, for suffering gives 'witness to þyn herte of the loue of God'.⁷⁰

Love is central to piety; it is portrayed as both the reason for suffering and the way to endure it. Indeed, love has the biblical authority of being the first and greatest commandment, as the late-fourteenth-century treatise *Life of Soul* (which appears with *The Book* in Arundel 286) translates the gospel account: 'thou schalt love thi lord God aboven alle other thinges'.⁷¹ *The Book of Tribulation* likewise presents love as imperative and the strength of that love to withstand tribulation is the mark of a true man. An important example of this is Peter's denial of Christ to the servant woman, moments after his declaration of love (John 21:17) which is used to teach the reader that love should help him withstand all tribulation. *The Book of Tribulation* introduces this episode with the idea that love is a fortifying force that has the potential to inflame the reader and enable them to endure the scourges of tribulation, of which they will receive as many as 'strokes' as they have passions: 'with the fyre of loue it is esy to sustene whiche that without loue is harde to suffre. Strokes of garsyng without fyre, is suffring of tribulacions withoute loue, ffor the fyre of loue swageth [mitigates] the strokes of garsyng of tribulacions'.⁷² *The Book* then picks up on the metaphorical 'garsyng', or cutting, to consider the impossibility of enduring emotionally painful tribulation without the love of God, which enflames Christ's disciples only when God sends 'the Holi Gost in liknes of fyre'.⁷³ The woman's accusation that Peter associated with Christ (Mark 14:67) cuts into him because Peter cannot yet experience the love enabled by the Holy Spirit:

Wherof bifel of Seint Petir, whiche before the fyre of the Holi Gost might not suffer the stroke of the garsyng of a wommans tonge, whan she said him: *Et tu cum Jesu Nazareno eras*; that is to say, "Thou were with Jesu of Nazareth"; he lete garce

himself afterward in turmentyng of the cros, with good chere
and without abaisshing. And more abaissed him the tonge
of the womman than eny torment that he suffred after the fyre
of the Holi Gost'.⁷⁴

Peter is felled by the lashing of the woman's tongue because the kind of love he requires in order to demonstrate his loyalty is unavailable to him. In this, *The Book* judges Peter less harshly than other works, such as the early fifteenth-century *Orcherd of Syon* which emphasises his failure to love, stating that 'Whanne tyme of tribulacioun cam, [Peter] failide in his loue'.⁷⁵ Peter fails in *The Book* too, but he fails not entirely through his own fault. However, such failure is not an option for the reader, who has the advantage of having access to the loving 'fyre of the Holi Gost'. Moreover, the reader is also given an example of repentance in the form of Peter's shame and dismay as he turns to thoughts of 'the turmentyng of the cros' to show remorse by mentally lacerating himself, albeit with the 'good chere' with which all suffering should be endured. Metaphorical gashing of one's sinful nature is therefore linked to repentance in the same way that the cutting of bloodletting is linked to confession. Even more importantly, love, and remorse for not being able to show it, are portrayed as ideals of pious masculinity.

Love is a fundamental feature of a man's spiritual identity and it is tied very much to the idea of power and its proper execution. The twelfth service of tribulation according to the *Book* is that it demonstrates God's love, and reciprocating God's love involves acceptance of appropriate chastisement.⁷⁶ The writer quotes Ecclesiasticus 30:1, "The fadir that loueth the childe yeueth asidual scourynge".⁷⁷ Here the word 'asidual' ('assiduat' in the Vulgate) suggests that the father should not only frequently beat his son but that beating acts as a kind of polishing or cleansing. The responsibility of fathers towards sons (and vice versa) was a common feature of courtesy literature, and poems such as 'How the Wise Man tau3t His Son' teach fathers, in a very idealised way, how to shape their offspring from a young and malleable age.⁷⁸ Devotional literature too draws on the trials of lordship. For instance, in *The Imitation of Christ* the interlocutor declares: 'Thi disciplyne is vppon me, and thi rode she shal teche me',

offering the reader a vision of spiritual submission in the image of a child submitting to his father.⁷⁹ Similarly, in his *Epistle on the Mixed Life* (1380s), which was addressed to a wealthy landowner, Walter Hilton presents the layman's authority over others in terms of responsibility to children:

temporall men which haue souereynthe with moch fauer of worldlye goodes/ & haue also as it were lordship ouer other men for to gouerne & susteyne them as a fader hath ouer his children & a mayster ouer his seruantis & a Lorde ouer his tenauntys.⁸⁰

Catherine Sanok argues that in this passage Hilton encourages men to view their material obligations and power over others in a specifically spiritual sense, as a father governs his son's moral formation.⁸¹

The *Book of Tribulation* also draws on this well-known concept that it is a father's duty to form his son's character through tribulation. However, the text enables the reader to feel both sympathy and respect for the father's responsibility because chastisement of the child is the only way to protect it from the enemies (sins) who appear with 'fair semblant' to tempt the child to his (spiritual) death.⁸² While the *Book* shows the father literally beating the son into shape (as God shaped Christ though 'the grettest aduersitees and tribulacions'), it also demonstrates the extent of God's love in its quotation of Psalm 91:15: 'Cum ipsosum in triblacione; eripiam eum. "I am", saith God in this [worde], "felawe in the tribulacion to him that my socour abytt and bisecheth. And thorough the tribulacion I will restore him"'.⁸³ Bodley 423 develops this father-son imagery more vividly than the other two versions, along militaristic lines. As well as being a father, God is depicted as an archer, a man of self-control and precision, firing the arrows of tribulation into his children only when he knows that they will hit their mark and make the strongest impression.⁸⁴ In Harley 1197, chapter one opens with the image of God beating the soul: 'A, soule, beten and disciplined of þi lorde and of thy maister'.⁸⁵ Here the soul is pictured as a servant rightly corrected by its lord, but in the margin of this manuscript, a later medieval hand has modified the text to include the fact that the soul is beaten specifically 'wip þe louyngze rod of tribulaco~~ms~~' (fol. 61r). The rod imagery immediately conjures up

Proverbs 13:24, with its specifically masculine pronouns: 'He that spareth the rod hateth his son [filium]: but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes'.⁸⁶ Tribulation proves God's love and part of the reader's formation involves acceptance of the fact that even if he is a father literally, he will always be a child spirituality, and should be receptive to the direction of God, his ultimate father.

Much scholarship on masculinity acknowledges the issue that is dangerous to the individual to propagate a set and singular definition of it, just as it is to promote a singular understanding of femininity.⁸⁷ However, recognition of this danger is not an entirely modern phenomenon. While *The Book of Tribulation* suggests that self-command and active submission are essential elements of male piety, it also acknowledges and appeals to different social roles and different understandings of masculine identity in order to make it accessible. The way in which responses to tribulation are formulated in *Book* aims to instil a sense of self-controlled male identity, but the fact that the text exists in manuscripts of mixed gender appeal also suggests that it is not an identity exclusively available to men and that women can also access and adopt its advice and ideals. Isabel Davis reminds us that 'masculinity isn't timeless',⁸⁸ in fact it was an unknown term in the Middle Ages, and *The Book of Tribulation* reveals that just as 'the boundaries between 'maleness' and 'femaleness' are permeable', so the boundaries between the exertion of and the subjection to power are fluid.⁸⁹ The ideal masculinity presented in *The Book of Tribulation* is the ability to submit to forces more powerful than oneself in a patient and uncomplaining manner in order to ultimately master oneself. In the context of late-medieval English piety, the text reinforces the reader's role in a spiritual, rather than social, hierarchy, where self-empowerment comes from the exertion of control not over others but over one's own thoughts, actions and emotions.

Notes

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- 1 Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 44.

- 2 For a recent discussion of 'tribulation texts', in particular *The Twelve Points of Tribulation*, see Amy Appleford, *Learning to Die in London, 1380-1540* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), ch. 3.
- 3 Derek G. Neal, *The Masculine Self in Late Medieval England* (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 2.
- 4 P. H. Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis, 'Introduction', *Religious Men and Masculine Identity in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2013), pp. 2-3.
- 5 Appleford, *Learning to Die*, p. 118.
- 6 *The Book of Tribulation*, ed. from *MS Bodley 423*, ed. by Alexandra Barratt (Heidelberg, Winter, 1983), pp. 38, 10-11.
- 7 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 68, 10-13.
- 8 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 40, 6 and 41, 11-13.
- 9 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 42, 10-15.
- 10 The French source, the *Livre de tribulacion*, circulated with ascetic literature for women, including the Anglo-Norman *Ancrene Wisse*, see Appleford, *Learning to Die*, p. 257, n. 81.
- 11 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 42, 6 and 43, 11.
- 12 Christina Fitzgerald, *The Drama of Masculinity and Medieval English Guild Culture* (New York, Palgrave, 2007), p. 10.
- 13 Rachel Stone, *Morality and Masculinity in the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 17.
- 14 *A Dialogue between Reason and Adversity: A Late Middle English Version of Petrarch's De Remediis*, ed. by F. N. M. Dickstra (New York, Humanities Press, 1968); *The Chastising of God's Children and the Treatise of Perfection of the Sons of God*, ed. by Joyce Bazire and Edmund Colledge (Oxford, Blackwell, 1957).
- 15 Michael Benedict Hackett, Eric Colledge and Noel Chadwick, 'William Flete's "De Remediis contra temptations" in its Latin and English Recensions. The Growth of a Text,' *Medieval Studies*, 26 (1964): 210-230 (p. 211). Horstman edits the versions printed by Wynkyn de Worde (1508 and 1519), *The remedy ayenst the troubles of temptacyons*, in *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and His Followers*, vol. 2, ed. by Carl Horstman (London, Swan Sonnenschein, 1896), pp. 106-23. See also, Edmund Colledge and Noel Chadwick, 'Remedies Against Temptation: The Third English Version of William Flete', *Archivio Italiano per le Storia della Pietà*, 5 (1968), 201-40.
- 16 Ralph Hanna notes that *The Twelve Profits* invariably circulated with *The Six Masters on Tribulation* and often with *The Craft of Dying* and *A Treatise of Ghostly Battle*, 'Middle English Books and Middle English Literary History', *Modern Philology* 102.2 (2004): 157-178 (pp. 169-70). *The Book of Tribulation*, however, appears to have circulated

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- independently of this grouping and only *The Craft of Dying* appears in with it in MS Bodley 423. A fifteenth-century metrical version also exists, see James R. Kreuzer, 'The Twelve Profits of Anger', *PMLA*, 53.1 (1938), 78-85, as does another version of the *Livre de tribulacion* entitled *The Sermon of Tribulation*, see Robert R. Raymo, 'Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction', in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050-1500*, vol. 7, ed. by Albert E. Hartung (New Haven, Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1986), p. 2295. For a discussion of the *Twelve Points* in relation to the craft of dying see Appleford, *Learning to Die*, pp. 117-27.
- 17 *The Imitation of Christ: The First English Translation of the 'Imitatio Christi'*, ed. by B. J. H. Biggs, EETS OS 309 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 12, 90 and 123. For the relationship between tribulation and patience see, Ralph Hanna, 'Some Commonplaces of Late Medieval Patience Discussions: An Introduction', in *The Triumph of Patience: Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. by Gerald Schiffhorst (Orlando, University Presses of Florida, 1978), pp. 65-87.
 - 18 For Hoccleve's treatment of John Oldcastle's masculinity see Isabel Davis, 'Men and Margery: Negotiating Medieval Patriarchy', in *A Companion to The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. by John H. Arnold and Katherine J. Lewis (Cambridge, Brewer, 2004), pp. 35-54 (p. 40).
 - 19 See also Thomas More's 1534 *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, ed. by Louis L. Martz and Frank Manley, Complete Works of St. Thomas More, vol. 12 (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1976).
 - 20 Watson is discussing forms of reading modelled by St Cecilia in Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, 'Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409', *Speculum*, 70.4 (1995): 822-64 (p. 854).
 - 21 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 31; *The Six Masters of Tribulation* and *The Twelve Profits of Tribulation*, in *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, pp. 45-60 and 390-406. *The Twelve Points* was later printed as part of William Caxton's 1491 edition of *The Boke of Divers Ghostly Matters* (STC 3305).
 - 22 In the Middle Ages the patient endurance of suffering was often exemplified using the story of Job which featured prominently in the Office of the Dead, Amy Appleford, 'The Sea Ground and the London Street: The Ascetic Self in Julian of Norwich and Thomas Hoccleve', *The Chaucer Review*, 51.1 (2016): 49-67. For Job in *The Book of Tribulation* see Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 83-4.
 - 23 Bodley 423 was probably copied by the Carthusian scribe Stephen Dodesham either at Witham or Sheen Charterhouse and perhaps had a

- male monastic audience, see Mari Hughes-Edwards, *Reading Medieval Anchoritism: Ideology and Spiritual Practices* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), p. 29; and Mari Hughes-Edwards, “‘How good it is to be alone’? Solitude, Sociability, and Medieval English Anchoritism”, *Mystics Quarterly*, 35.3/4 (2009): 31-61 (pp. 42-3).
- 24 For women and the Hours see Susan Groag Bell, ‘Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture’, in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1988), pp. 149-87.
- 25 On fol. 134v of Arundel 286 the following text in the treatise ‘of maydenhede’ has been underlined: ‘noȝt forþi þei may be vnderstanden gostly by iche goode mayde þat haþ mayden maneres; for iche goode mayden conceyueþ goode vertues þat sche haþ of god’. This suggests a gendered response to the annunciation, an example for women to be imitated by women.
- 26 For self-control as the ‘essence’ of manliness see Neal, pp. 119-20. Todd W. Reeser argues that ‘masculinity will never lose self-control, precisely because masculinity already controls (and has controlled) the other’, *Moderating Masculinity in Early Modern Culture* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 29. For women reading ascetic works see Mary C. Erler, *Women, Reading and Piety in Late-Medieval England* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- 27 Neal, p. 156 and pp. 150-56 for further discussion of courtesy in relation to masculinity. Courtesy books flourished in the late Middle Ages, see Mark D. Johnson, ed., *Medieval Conduct Literature: An Anthology of Vernacular Guides to Behaviour for Youths, with English Translations* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2009) and Jonathan Nicholls, *The Matter of Courtesy: Medieval Courtesy Books and the Gawain-Poet* (Woodbridge, Brewer, 1985).
- 28 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 38, 8.
- 29 Appleford, *Learning to Die*, p. 103.
- 30 *A Devout Treatise Called the Tree and XII Frutes of the Holy Goost*, ed. by J.J. Vaissier (Groningen, Wolters, 1960), p. 81, 18.
- 31 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 45, 2-3.
- 32 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 46, 10-12.
- 33 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 38, 2.
- 34 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 38, 3-4.
- 35 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 38, 5-8.
- 36 Clifford’s will, dated 17 Sept 1404, names ‘my Book of Tribulacion’, which Barratt argues is a version of the text related to that in Bodley 423, see Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 12.

- 37 Stone, p. 15. Clerical visions of masculinity are those most often preserved, see Karras, p. 10.
- 38 Stone, p. 17.
- 39 Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, p. 400.
- 40 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 44-5.
- 41 The *Mirror* is written for those who ‘desireste to haue sorouful compassion borh feruent inwarde affection of þe peynful passion of Jesu’, Nicholas Love, *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Reading Text*, ed. by Michael G. Sargent (Exeter, Exeter University Press, 2004), p. 159, 3-5.
- 42 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 74, 1-5. This passage also appears in the *Twelve Profits*, Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, p. 398.
- 43 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 74, 9-11.
- 44 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 73, 3-5.
- 45 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 53, 8-10. In Harley 1167 this reference to St Gregory and the humours has been removed (fol. 63v).
- 46 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 58, 11 - 59, 2.
- 47 For discussion of the term ‘man’ meaning ‘human’ see Neal, p. 27.
- 48 Michael Kaufman, ‘The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence’, in *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power and Change*, ed. by Michael Kaufman (Toronto and New York, Oxford University Press, 1987): 1-29 (p. 13).
- 49 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania University Press, 2007), p. 167.
- 50 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 68, 9 - 69, 5.
- 51 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 59, 2-3.
- 52 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 59, 16-17. For medieval advice on bloodletting see M. K. K. Yearl, ‘Medieval Monastic Customaries on *Minuti* and *Infirmi*’, in *The Medieval Hospital and Medical Practice*, ed. by Barbara S. Bowers (Aldershot and Burlington, Ashgate, 2007): 175-194, and Cornelius O’Boyle, ‘Astrology and Medicine in Later Medieval England: The Calendars of John Somer and Nicholas of Lynn’, *Sudhoffs Archiv*, Bd. 89, H. 1 (2005): 1-22. There is an underlying concern in *The Book* with ‘wicked blood’ and pollution by the ‘wicked moisture of the fleshly affections’, Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 59, 10-12 and p. 67, 3-11, which could also be considered in terms of its relationship with women, however, Caroline Walker Bynum cautions against exaggerating the prevalence of women’s association with moisture, *Wonderful Blood*, pp. 18-19. For the association of dryness with men and moisture with women see Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages: Medicine*,

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- Science, and Culture* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 183-5.
- 53 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 63, 11-14.
- 54 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 63, 15-18. For discussion of models of masculine labour see Isabel Davis, *Writing Masculinity in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010), ch. 1.
- 55 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 86, 6-7, 18 and 87, 13-5.
- 56 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 99, 17 – 100, 2. For the treatment of this passage in the *Twelve Profits* see Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, p. 402
- 57 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 100, 9-10.
- 58 Neal, pp. 2 and 156.
- 59 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 101, 16.
- 60 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 101, 16-19.
- 61 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 102, 12-14.
- 62 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 131, 5-8.
- 63 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 40, 6-8 and p. 42, 6-9.
- 64 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 64, 1-2. The gentry were typically portrayed wearing armour in funerary monuments, see Malcolm Mercer, *The Medieval Gentry: Power, Leadership and Choice During the Wars of the Roses* (London and New York, Continuum, 2010), p. 56. *Milicia Christi*, which also appears in MS Arundel 286, contains an elaborate description of the way in which the reader must arm himself, including the wearing of a good ‘haburgen vpon his body to kepe hym fro strokes *and* woundes of hys enemye’ (fol. 21r). It even contains an allegory on the habergeon’s benefits to the knight-soul (fols 41r-v). *Milicia Christi* is edited by Valerie Murray, ed., ‘An Edition of *A Tretyse of Gostly Batayle* and *Milicia Christi*’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1970).
- 65 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 77, 4-8.
- 66 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 77, 9-13.
- 67 The image derives from Ephesians, 6:11-17. For a discussion of the image in relation to male piety and asceticism see Liz Herbert McAvoy, *Medieval Anchoritisms: Gender, Space and the Solitary Life* (Cambridge, Brewer, 2011), ch. 3.
- 68 *The remedy ayenst the troubles of temptacyons*, in *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, ed. by Horstman, p. 112; *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. by H. N. MacCracken, vol. 1, EETS ES 107 (London, Kegan Paul, Trench and Trübner, 1911; rpt 1961), p. 349, 535-6.
- 69 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 60, 16 – 61, 1.
- 70 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 128, 13-14.
- 71 *Life of Soul*, ed. by Paul Schaffner, in *Cultures of Piety: Medieval Devotional Literature in Translation*, ed. by Anne Clark Bartlett and

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- Thomas H. Bestul (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 224; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27; and Matthew 22:37.
- 72 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 60, 10 and 60, 15 – 61, 3.
- 73 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 61, 8. The mid-fifteenth-century dictionary *Promptorium Parvulorum* translates ‘Garce’ as ‘Scarificio’ and ‘Inscisio’, *The Promptorium Parvulorum: The First English-Latin Dictionary*, ed. by A. L. Mayhew, EETS ES 102 (London, Kegan Paul, Trench and Trübner, 1908), col. 187.
- 74 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 61, 12-18. *The Twelve Profits of Tribulation* is more succinct, saying bluntly that Peter betrayed Christ ‘for fere of a woman’, Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, p. 395, and Flete’s *De remediis* states that ‘a womans worde fered and put hym in suche drede that he forsake and denyed his mayster’, Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, p. 115.
- 75 *The Orchard of Syon*, ed. by Phyllis Hodgson, EETS OS 258 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 135, 21.
- 76 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 128, 13-14.
- 77 Barratt, *Tribulation*, pp. 129, 16 – 130, 2.
- 78 Claire Sponsler, ‘The English *How the Good Wyf Taught Hir Doughtir* and *How the Wise Man Taught His Son*’, in Johnston, ed. *Medieval Conduct Literature*, pp. 298-304.
- 79 Biggs, *Imitation*, p. 130.
- 80 *Walter Hilton’s Mixed Life*, ed. by S. J. Ogilvie-Thomson (Salzburg, Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1987), cited in Catherine Sanok, ‘John of Bridlington’: Mitred Prior and Model of the Mixed Life’, in *Religious Men and Masculine Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by P. H. Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2013), pp. 143-59 (p. 152)..
- 81 Sanok, p. 152.
- 82 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 40, 17. In a passage drawn from the *Stimulus Amoris*, Flete’s *De remediis* depicts God as a mother chastising her children, Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers*, vol. 2, pp. 118-19. See Hackett, Colledge and Chadwick, ‘Growth of a Text’, p. 217.
- 83 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 130, 11-12 and pp. 41, 14 – 42, 1.
- 84 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 129, 2-7.
- 85 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 40, 4-5.
- 86 Barratt, *Tribulation*, p. 41, 14; ‘Qui parcit virgae odit filium suum; qui autem diligit illum instanter erudit’.
- 87 For instance, Tim Carrigan et al, ‘Hard and Heavy: Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity’, in *Beyond Patriarchy*, ed. Kaufman, p. 166; Karl

Bednarik, *The Male in Crisis*, trans. by Helen Sebba (New York, Knopf, 1970); and Neal, ch. 1.

88 Davis, p. 7.

89 Samantha J. E. Riches and Sarah Salih, 'Introduction. Gender and holiness: performance and representation in later medieval England', in *Gender and Holiness: Men, Women and Saints in Late Medieval England* (London and New York, Routledge, 2002), p. 4.