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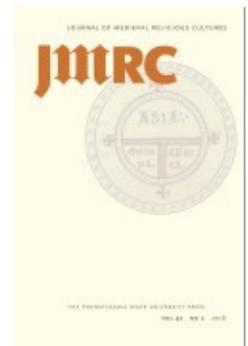
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“About which we want to speak now”: Beatrice of Nazareth’s Reason for Writing *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*

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“ABOUT WHICH WE WANT TO SPEAK NOW”:  
BEATRICE OF NAZARETH’S REASON  
FOR WRITING *UAN SEUEN MANIEREN  
VAN HEILEGER MINNEN*

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ABSTRACT

The fact that the medieval Cistercian nun Beatrice of Nazareth is known today as a well-established Middle Dutch female writer is mainly the result of the identification of an anonymous mystical treatise, *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* (On seven manners of holy love), as a work of Beatrice. The aim of this article is to make a fresh start with this short text. After discussing a number of problematic views that have been put forward by previous scholars, it examines the main features in *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* that reveal its rationale as a text. This analysis underpins the view of Beatrice as a self-conscious mystical author and a teacher.

KEYWORDS: Beatrice of Nazareth, vernacular mystical literature, Middle Dutch literature, thirteenth-century Cistercian nuns

A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

Ever since the thirteenth-century Cistercian nun Beatrice (1200–1268), the first prioress of the Abbey of Nazareth,<sup>1</sup> was identified as the author of the anonymously transmitted text *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* (On seven manners of holy love), her charming mystical treatise has garnered almost all the scholarly attention.<sup>2</sup> It seems as if everyone has completely forgotten the fact that this discovery owes everything to an elaborate medieval Latin *vita*, which for the greater part is based on vernacular writings or notes by Beatrice.<sup>3</sup> Because of its hagiographic form and design, its poor translation,<sup>4</sup> and its additions,<sup>5</sup> the *Vita Beatricis* raises so many questions that scholarship has indeed fought shy of it.<sup>6</sup> As a result, most ideas about

Beatrice's lost literary work are basically still the same as those propagated in 1926, when Jozef Van Mierlo laid the first stone.<sup>7</sup> Since then, Van Mierlo's views—not only those on the alleged mystical diary of Beatrice but even more so those on her spiritual exercises—have met with general agreement and have rarely been challenged.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, scholars have never lost sight of Beatrice's short Middle Dutch treatise. As it is the only text that has been preserved in the vernacular, it provides unique access to her authorship. Nonetheless, here too, we need to ask ourselves if any progress has been made since 1926. Generally speaking, scholars have paid far more attention to the mystical content of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* than to the monastic context in which it was written. More emphasis has also been put on Beatrice's Cistercian views on love than on the literary framework of her discourse. Because of this narrow focus, issues such as *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen's* intended audience or its date of composition have been addressed in an uncritical conjectural manner. Yet, in this, scholars are not entirely to blame. It is foremost the result of a lack of incontrovertible evidence from the *Vita Beatricis*.

To begin with the question of dating, Beatrice's treatise is generally dated sometime during her stay at Nazareth (1236–68), tentatively to around 1250.<sup>9</sup> Although scholars subscribe to several reasons, the preference for a date as late as this one is mainly based on the fact that, in the *Vita*, the Latin translation of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* has been included near the end, in the fourteenth chapter of the third book.<sup>10</sup> This chapter bears a similar title, *De caritate dei et vij eius gradibus* (On the love of God and its seven degrees). From the *Vita's* narrative point of view, the position of this chapter corresponds with the period of Beatrice's life in which she, while living in Nazareth, “had been in the office of prioress for a long time” [multum iam temporis in prioratus officio consummasset], which is stated earlier on.<sup>11</sup>

In light of this evidence, a late date may indeed seem the most obvious conclusion. However, it soon loses much of its value once we realize that, originally, *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* was most probably a separate work—at least, it has been transmitted as such, independent from any of Beatrice's other writings<sup>12</sup>—and that it was reworked by the biographer as an integral part of Beatrice's life story. In other words, there are strong arguments in favor of the idea that the biographer put *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* near the end of the *Vita* on purpose.<sup>13</sup> If true, it would immediately undo the almost natural narrative connection

that is prompted in the *Vita* between, on the one hand, Beatrice's life and her treatise, on the other, and consequently, also jeopardize the proposed date of 1250 (if not any date of the treatise that bases itself on the *Vita*). Unfortunately, as this criticism has never been raised in recent literature on Beatrice, scholars continue to propound this year, almost as if it were a historical fact.<sup>14</sup>

As for the audience of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, it has never emerged as a real issue either. This was not because scholars denied the possibility that, in writing *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, Beatrice may have had in mind other readers such as her (younger) fellow sisters. Leonce Reypens, for instance, explicitly acknowledged the idea.<sup>15</sup> Klaas Hanzen Heeroma has even suggested, unfortunately without providing any evidence, that Beatrice probably wrote her treatise for novices.<sup>16</sup> However, for most scholars of the twentieth century, the identity of the intended audience of Beatrice's text was apparently not considered a matter of importance. Leading scholars such as Herman Vekeman understood Beatrice's primary concern as the putting forward of a mystical doctrine of love, in accordance with what twelfth-century Cistercian authors have written about it.<sup>17</sup> It was therefore first and foremost viewed as a systematic exposition, written for the sake of its ideas, and less as a textbook that was meant to instruct or guide others. An additional element that has contributed to this idea is that Vekeman took the treatise's narrative subject, the human soul (*siele*), as a kind of disguised or objectified substitute for Beatrice. According to his view, in writing about mystical love, Beatrice had not merely drawn on her personal experience, but she intentionally expressed her own mystical life, under the veil of a third-person narrative.<sup>18</sup>

In recent years, the semiautobiographical angle from which Vekeman explored the content of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* has somewhat fallen out of favor. In his dissertation, which is by far the most elaborate study ever made on Beatrice's treatise, Jos Huls has shifted the emphasis from a biographical reading to an entirely functional approach.<sup>19</sup> His analysis of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* aims at fleshing out the mystagogic implications of its mystical content, which is defined in terms of a process. Apart from pointing at common themes in twelfth-century Cistercian literature, Huls's close reading is mainly based on a comprehensive definition of Beatrice's Middle Dutch terminology in light of a number of twentieth-century spiritual-hermeneutical key concepts.<sup>20</sup>

For obvious reasons, the mystagogic perspective is a huge step toward a better understanding of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* as a

mystical instruction. Surprisingly, Huls has not taken the opportunity to justify the validity of his approach by means of Beatrice's text itself. While his book, filling more than a thousand pages, reads as a never-ending spiritual exegesis of the mystical content of Beatrice's treatise, nowhere has he examined or pointed out elements within her vernacular discourse that are in direct support of the purported mystagogic perspective. To Huls, however, the very fact that Beatrice wrote a nonbiographical, objective treatise about mystical life can be considered a sufficient reason in itself. In addition, he also points to the fact that Beatrice had been a novice mistress and a prioress at Nazareth, as well as to the fact that many people from outside the abbey came to seek her counsel.<sup>21</sup> These elements will of course buttress the idea that Beatrice must have been someone who cared for the spiritual well-being of others, but in themselves they are no proof of the suggestion that *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* served a pedagogical purpose.

This short survey of literary-historical scholarship on Beatrice of Nazareth, in particular on *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, makes us aware of the fact that what has been stated about this text is often more a matter of scholarly approach and attitude than a case of textual evidence. Likewise, all too often, and despite the general awareness of its questionable status, scholars continue to rely on the *Vita Beatricis* as well, for the sake of retrieving a minimum of evidence. Or they adhere to unproven ideas about Beatrice's writings that have not been preserved but which are permanently locked inside the *Vita*. For instance, the reason why Vekeman came to view *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* as an essentially autobiographical discourse has not so much to do with the existence of a biographizing Latin translation of this text in the *Vita*, as one would perhaps expect, but, rather, with the autobiographical account that Beatrice is believed to have written. As a presumed collection of diary notes and exercises, produced while she was living as a young nun at other neighboring Cistercian convents, this autobiographical work is considered to have predated the composition of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* at Nazareth.<sup>22</sup> In the *Vita*, we can follow its translated (or rather heavily paraphrased and reworked?) account up to the end of the chapter in which Beatrice is elected as prioress in Nazareth.<sup>23</sup> Clearly, this work must have been very different from *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*. Whereas her mystical treatise defines everything in terms of love, judging from the *Vita*, Beatrice's vernacular life story must

have related mystical events within the very concrete context of monastic life. Yet, as a comparison between its respective chapters in the *Vita* and *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* shows, despite their differences, both vernacular writings contained descriptions of very similar mystical experiences as well.<sup>24</sup> It was these particular correspondences that led Vekeman to the idea that Beatrice had described her inner life on two different occasions, first in her life story and next in *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*.<sup>25</sup>

As a matter of course, the idea that Beatrice left an account of her entire mystical life, which moreover took the form of a diary and was written in her early years as a nun, is merely a conjecture, and Vekeman's dependence on this unproven idea is therefore the first weakness in his argument. Second, it is also reasonable to question the autobiographical premise itself in his idea of Beatrice's intentions as a writer of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*. Huls has indeed a good point when he indicates that the unmistakable "objective" discourse of Beatrice's text means that it is deliberately not a secretly autobiographical account but a reflection on the mystical process.<sup>26</sup> Of course, anyone who writes down a detailed description of a mystical experience is likely to have drawn this experience from his or her own life. But this narrative is therefore not necessarily meant as a personal testimony, at least not when it takes the form of a third-person discourse. On the other hand, it is equally valid that the exceptional character of mystical experiences makes the range of potential candidates for the audience rather narrow. Because of this, it is understandable that, in many cases of mystical literature, one tends to look in the direction of the author as the primary audience, instead of someone else, especially when there is no sign of an intended reader within the text.

For this reason, the only way to successfully undercut an interpretation that is dominantly biographical is to retrieve as much textual evidence from *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* as possible that suggests otherwise. In the second part of this essay, I will therefore examine Beatrice's vernacular discourse itself and comment on a number of relevant features. In doing so, I hope to confirm the widely accepted view that Beatrice intended to produce an original statement about mystical love, building on a number of ideas from existing Latin treatises on love, however, not as a kind of hidden autobiographical kerygma but, rather, with the purpose of offering instruction. This evidence will further underpin Huls's idea of mystagogy as applied to Beatrice's text.

## BEATRICE'S SELF-AWARENESS AS AN AUTHOR OF A MYSTICAL TREATISE

I will start my exploration of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* by making three general observations. The first basic fact is that the author of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* shows herself a self-conscious author, determined to make a statement of her own. Above anything else, the impression of authorial self-awareness is perhaps what strikes the modern reader first while reading Beatrice's short exposition. It is immediately evident from the fact that the text has a title of its own—which is very likely Beatrice's own creation<sup>27</sup>—and that most of the chapters have their own heading (e.g., “The third manner of love” [Die derde maniere van minnen]).<sup>28</sup> This means that she thought carefully about the subject of her treatise, the seven “manners” of love.<sup>29</sup> Another clear example of Beatrice's self-awareness as an author can be found at the beginning of the fourth chapter, the fourth *maniere van minne*: “Our Lord is used to give yet another manner of love, sometimes in huge delight, sometimes in great misery, *about which we want to speak now*” [Noch pleget onse here ander maniere te gheueene van minnen, ende selcstont in groter waelheiden, selcstont in groter welegheiden, *daer wi nv af seghen willen*].<sup>30</sup> In this opening line, Beatrice indicates that she will elaborate on two different experiences of love—the first experience being the actual fourth manner of love, a delightful experience of mystical unification; the second one will be the fifth *maniere*, in which Beatrice deals with a painful experience of mystical wounding. The use of the verb “to speak” (*seghen*) may perhaps suggest that she wrote *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* with an oral delivery in mind. It would then be highly relevant, as a speech automatically brings in an audience. Unfortunately, this interpretation is far from conclusive.<sup>31</sup> In any case, the combination of this locutionary image with the use of the majestic plural *we (wi)* is one of the rare occasions in which Beatrice herself, as a narrator, is present in her discourse. It points to someone who shows confidence in what she writes about love. Beatrice almost sounds like a scholastic master who is about to enter a discussion of a topic.

My second observation is that *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* deals with mystical love. This is of course a truism. Yet I believe it is something that we need to view in close connection with Beatrice's authorial self-awareness. In the same fourth *maniere*, the experience of love is one in which the soul is being “moved in the heart without any involvement of human activity” [beruert int herte sonder enich toe doen

van menscheliken werken].<sup>32</sup> Among the many descriptions of a mystical experience that are laid out in her treatise, this particular sentence is the most unambiguous recognition of its passive and supernatural character.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, Beatrice was probably well aware of having written a text about the exceptional graces of divine love and contemplation.

The same awareness is perhaps also reflected in the title of the treatise itself, more particularly, in the notion of “holy love” (*heilege minne*). In the text, the Middle Dutch lexeme *heil* (holy) appears to have a strong mystical overtone.<sup>34</sup> Because of this peculiar connotation, the qualification of love as “holy love” in the title can therefore well mean something other than a mere reference to spiritual love (as opposed to secular love). “Holy love” should then be understood, rather, by means of the label that is used at present: mystical love, a concept for which Beatrice may not have had an appropriate name.<sup>35</sup> If this interpretation (to which I subscribe) is correct, then it would further consolidate the idea not only that Beatrice was aware that the descriptions in her text concerned rather unusual experiences but, even more, that she deliberately intended to deal with them. In other words, *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* would then be the title of a treatise that was consciously designed as an exposition of mystical love from the very beginning.

Third, Beatrice is acknowledged to have been deeply inspired by a number of Cistercian and Victorine authors. As it happens, a few of their currently best-known writings have been identified as major sources of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, such as *De diligendo Deo* by Bernard of Clairvaux and *De quattor gradibus violentae caritatis* by Richard of Saint-Victor.<sup>36</sup> This means that Beatrice had access to these texts,<sup>37</sup> that she read them, and that, by using their ideas while writing about love, she aligned herself in the same literary and spiritual tradition. The main difference and the novelty of Beatrice’s exposition is, however, that she did not write in Latin but, in fact, in her mother tongue. As one of the earliest vernacular mystical authors, Beatrice had therefore to resort to—if not to invent—a completely new vocabulary of spiritual and mystical terms. However, in this she appears to have stayed very close to Latin idioms. In his lexicographical study, Vekeman has, for example, noted an abundance of abstract nouns, ending on *-heit*, *-icheit*, and *-licheit*: *gotheit* (divinity), *enicheit* (unity), *onbegripelicheit* (incomprehensibility), and so on.<sup>38</sup> These nouns, which can easily be seen as Middle Dutch equivalents of Latin nouns, ending on *-tas*, *-entia*, and several other endings, clearly belong to the vocabulary of authors such as Bernard, Richard, and William of Saint-Thierry

(*edelheit* [nobilitas], *geweldicheit* [violentia], and so on). In other words, Beatrice wrote in the vernacular, but mentally, she used the same language as her twelfth-century mystical predecessors. In addition to this, another conspicuous example of Beatrice's dependence on Latin idioms can be found in the title of her treatise. The first word, the preposition *van* (spelled *uan*), which literally means "of," equals the Latin dative preposition *de* with which countless titles of Medieval Latin texts begin (e.g., *De conscientia*). Once more, this adds to the idea that Beatrice deliberately chose to write a text on a particular subject. At the same time, the preposition *van* also indicates that Beatrice's adoption of a title for her exposition reflects the influence of Latin literature.

When we put all three observations together, the general picture that emerges is that of an author who was keen to make a particular statement on mystical love, alongside twelfth-century texts on the same subject, but who, for some reason or another, preferred to write in her mother tongue. Yet, in doing so, she stayed very close to the Latin language of these texts. It would certainly be an exaggeration to claim that *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* is a kind of textual dialogue with treatises such as *De quattor gradibus violentae caritatis*. Nonetheless, to some extent, Beatrice's exposition can be viewed as a text that attempts to emulate their discourse. Not only does this then reaffirm the idea that scholarship has already advanced on previous occasions—that Beatrice was someone who intended to put forward a number of ideas, in line with existing ideas on mystical love. It also adds a literary or textual dimension. What Beatrice wrote was nothing less than a kind of vernacular *De diligendo Deo*, so to speak.

#### WRITING A VERNACULAR TEXTBOOK ON MYSTICAL LOVE

At the same time, all three observations are also relevant to an understanding that Beatrice intentionally wrote for others, people who were perhaps eager to learn about mystical love. The self-awareness she manifests as an author shows her determination to expound ideas. Obviously, it could be viewed as well as an expression of a desire to teach.

Second, in what she writes about mystical love, Beatrice was inspired by mystical treatises in Latin and consciously even placed herself in its literary tradition. Most of the texts produced by Cistercian and Victorine authors unambiguously served an instructional purpose and were written for an audience of monks and canons. Could the same therefore not apply to *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* as well? In addition to this, for many

mystical authors of the twelfth century, the most important biblical model was the Song of Songs. In its allegorical re-creation by Cistercian commentators, this song is presented as a divine dialogue in which the emotional and contemplative attitude of the Bride forms an exemplary model for any other contemplative soul. When Beatrice refers to the soul as a “young lady” (or “damsel”) (*ionfrouwe*) who serves her lord altruistically, and furthermore as a “bride of our Lord” (*bruut ons heren*),<sup>39</sup> without doubt, she recalls the Song of Songs’ esteemed bridal mysticism. Is it therefore not acceptable to consider the narrative subject of Beatrice’s exposition on the contemplative quest, the soul, as a similar mimetic model for the reader, who is then positioned as a participant?

Finally, the vernacular form of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, too, can be seen as an argument in favor of the idea that this text was written for others, as it points to members of the same linguistic community, members who, in Beatrice’s life, actually, or mostly, were limited to her monastic community and of whom some may perhaps have experienced difficulties in reading Latin texts on spiritual life.

#### *Beatrice’s Descriptive Hermeneutics*

In order to find textual support for these ideas, let me begin by returning to the first observation. As indicated above, in the fourth *maniere*, while stating that she “wants to speak now,” Beatrice herself—or, rather, the narrator—is present in her exposition. It is a clear example of someone who intends to set forth an idea. At the same time, it can also be seen as evidence of someone who instructs. In fact, throughout *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*’s entire discourse, we can hear the same magisterial voice, yet not as a first-person but as a third-person narrator. What Beatrice does in her treatise is not simply to provide straightforward descriptions of different desires, emotions, and experiences. There are many moments at which her well-structured descriptive discourse is rendered intelligible, not only on a metalevel, by means of a general introduction and an enumeration (in the form of chapter headings), but also within each individual *maniere* itself.

The first time we come across this aspect of clarification is in the extremely short exordium of the treatise: “There are seven manners of love. They originate from the Most High and operate upward again” [*SEuen manieren sijn van minnen die comen vten hoegsten ende werken weder ten ouersten*].<sup>40</sup> In these opening lines, the reader is introduced to the idea

of seven manners as emanations of divine love. In terms of narrative, the *manieren* are postulated by an omniscient narrator who prepares his audience for what he is about to reveal.

As the narrative in *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* continues, the narrator proves himself to be someone who holds a firm grip on the discourse. At first sight, the swift sequence of different kinds of desires and feelings that are outlined in each chapter may perhaps leave a chaotic impression on the modern reader. Most sentences and clauses are indeed connected with the conjunction “and” (*ende*), by which the events in the life of the soul seem to pile up on top of one another. Yet Beatrice also uses other coordinating and subordinating conjunctions such as “but” (*maer*) and “because” (*want*), which create contrast or offer an explanation of what happens to the soul. In the fifth *maniere*, for instance, she dwells on an intense feeling of misery or grief (*weelicheit*).<sup>41</sup> This feeling is accompanied and reinforced by the experience of mystical wounding. At the beginning of the chapter, Beatrice sums up the initial sensations and desires that will eventually bring out the misery. In using the conjunction “or” (*ofte/ochte*), she hereby points not to one but to several alternative causes:

SElcstont gesciet oec dat die minne in der zielen starkeleke verwecket wert ende stormeleke op eersteet met groten geruse ende met groter verwoetheit, also oft si met gewout therte sele breken ende sele trecken vut hare seluen ende bouen hare seluen, in die ufeninghe van minnen ende int gebruken<sup>42</sup> der minnen. Ende stout werts i oec getrect in die begerte teruulne die grote werke ende<sup>43</sup> die pure werke der minnen, *ochte* terlangene die menichfoudeghe eischinghen van minnen. *Ofte* si begert te rustene in die suete behelsingen van minnen ende in die begerleke waelheit ende in die genuechlicheit van hebbinghen, so dat hare herte ende hare sinne dit sijn begerende ende erensteleke sukende ende hertelike meinende.<sup>44</sup>

[Sometimes, it also happens that love is awakened vehemently in the soul and rises in a stormy way with great noise and with great fury, as if she will break the heart with violence and will draw out of herself and above herself, in the experience of love and in the enjoyment of love. Immediately, she is also drawn in the desire to fulfill the great works and the pure works of love, *or* to long for the many demands of love. *Or* she desires to rest in the sweet embraces of love and in the desirable benefaction and in the satisfaction of possessing, in

such a way that her heart and her senses are in a state of desiring it, searching for it, and passionately aiming at it.]

Therefore, within *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*'s mainly descriptive prose, Beatrice can be said to provide the reader with some kind of analysis as well. In each *maniere*, she recounts a particular spiritual or mystical experience, which is carried out entirely in terms of love, but at the same time, she also makes this experience intelligible by making the reader aware of its causes. This can be a particular spiritual desire or too much zeal on the part of the soul but also the immediate presence of divine love itself.

The analytical dimension of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* is not limited to the main, descriptive part within each *maniere*. Most of the seven chapters begin with a short introductory statement and end with a concluding remark.<sup>45</sup> In the sixth and the seventh *manieren*, the conclusions take the form of a proper elaborate ending, but mostly, they are not longer than one or two brief sentences. Still, these sentences, too, stand somewhat apart from the descriptive body of the *manieren*, since they do not so much summarize their content as offer a few words of wisdom. To a certain extent, the conclusions can therefore be said to function as an additional explicative tool as well. A good example is the end of the fifth *maniere*, where Beatrice puts forward two paradoxes, distinctly reminiscent of Job 5:18:<sup>46</sup> "The very same thing that hurts and wounds her most is what heals and eases her most. And only that which inflicts the deepest wound on her will give her back her health" [Dat selue dat hare meest tert ende quetst dat selue est dat har meest<sup>47</sup> ganst ende sacht, ende dat hare dipst<sup>48</sup> sleet die wonden, dat geuet hare allene ghesunde].<sup>49</sup> As the perspective of healing is completely absent in the previous lines, this final statement apparently is not intended as a synopsis of the turbulent wounding experience of the fifth *maniere*. Instead, it appears to be a key statement by which the entire experience becomes spiritually digestible.

Both examples taken from the fifth chapter not only demonstrate that the hermeneutic aspect of the *manieren* adds to the initial elucidating exordium and the division into formal chapters, by which the reader is able to keep an overview. At the same time, they also pave the way for an active interpretive role for anyone who reads Beatrice's text. As yet, the existence of such a reader may not have been formally established. But at least, it is imaginable that someone, favored with similar experiences and hoping to gain a deeper understanding, may benefit from a close reading by

discriminating between the many forces that are pointed out within each *maniere*. And an even more important interpretive challenge may then perhaps consist in connecting these constitutive elements with the ultimate cause, divine love, insofar as this connection has not already been made visible by Beatrice in her exposition. After all, as prompted by the title and the exordium of her treatise, Beatrice's all-pervasive idea is that all *manieren* are products of divine love.<sup>50</sup>

*Prescriptive Language and the Interchangeability of the Soul and the Reader*

But was there such an intended reader? If we accept the idea that Beatrice must have been aware of the unusual character of some of the experiences outlined in *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, the group of readers inside her own convent for whom she initially may have written this text would probably not have been very large. The *Vita* cannot be of any assistance to us in answering this question, as there is no (reliable) evidence about the monastic *Sitz im Leben* of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*.<sup>51</sup> Scholars therefore have only briefly touched on this issue, albeit in an entirely hypothetical manner. Unlike Heeroma,<sup>52</sup> Huls, for example, does not favor the idea that Beatrice wrote *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* for novices, precisely because of its advanced spiritual and mystical content. Instead, he assumes that Beatrice only could have written her treatise for spiritually experienced fellow sisters of her community. To this he even adds other *mulieres religiosae* outside the Abbey of Nazareth.<sup>53</sup> However, whether experienced or not, novice or fully professed nun, or a friend outside, this unsolved question is not a concern here, as I particularly want to look for internal evidence. To me, it is important to prove that Beatrice at least had some reader in mind.

In fact, this proof is at hand, and it is easy to demonstrate. To begin with, while nowhere in Beatrice's entire treatise is the intended reader addressed directly, his presence is implied by her use of the plural possessive "our" (*ons*). If we leave aside the somewhat standard expression "our Lord" (*onsen here*), there are three significant occurrences: "our heart" (*ons herten*), "to us all" (*ons allen*), and "us all" (*ons allen*).<sup>54</sup> They are proof of the fact that Beatrice (or, rather, the narrator, to be precise) connects the narrative both to herself and to the reader. Because of this, the mystical journey of the soul is not a solitary adventure but a joint one. Perhaps, it might even be seen as a collective enterprise, when we consider a textual community of several (monastic) co-readers. At any rate, instead of biographizing it and narrowing it down

to one single person, as done not only by Beatrice's biographer in the *Vita Beatricis* but also by scholarship on Beatrice, the soul should be considered an empty, open reference, substitutable with anyone who is able to identify him- or herself with its mystical adventure. This still includes Beatrice (whom we know was a mystic herself), but it definitely also incorporates the reader of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*.

Apart from the plural possessive, there is also a second piece of evidence that leads to the same conclusion. Throughout Beatrice's entire exposition, the narrative subject is almost unremittingly identified with the soul. However, on three occasions, Beatrice has replaced the noun *soul* (*siele*) with another, more generic reference. This substitution takes place in the conclusions of three *manieren*. Here, I quote from the sixth chapter: "But *all who want to reach love*, they *ought to* search for her fearfully, follow her faithfully, and practice her full of desire. And they *are not allowed to* restrain themselves from great labor" [Maer *alle die willen comen ter minnen*, si *moetense* sueken met vreesen ende na volgen met trouwen ende ufenen met begerten, ende si *ne mogent* in sparen in groten arbeide].<sup>55</sup> In these lines the narrative subject is clearly generalized to any other person. This is done in combination with the setting out of a series of conditions, by which Beatrice uses the prescriptive verbs "ought to" (or "have to") (*moeten*) and "to be allowed to" (*mogen*). In the same conditional sense, the end of the first *maniere* substitutes the soul with "those who bring her into practice" [den ghenen die hars plegen].<sup>56</sup> And in the seventh chapter the soul is likewise replaced by "he who has prepared himself" [die hem geufent heft].<sup>57</sup>

Because of these cases of generalization, *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen's* subject may refer to almost anyone, that is, anyone who meets its description. In other words, this is once more proof of the exchangeability of the soul with the reader, a reader who in the conclusions of several *manieren* is sensitized as a conditional subject. And the bottom line is that, by virtue of these short conclusions, Beatrice's entire treatise most obviously takes the form of a spiritual instruction.

### *The Vernacular Dimension*

My final observation concerns the vernacular form of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*. The fact that Beatrice produced an exposition on mystical love in her mother tongue can of course mean many different things. An exploration of the *Vita Beatricis* would surely lead to all kinds of observations with respect to the level of literacy that Beatrice displayed in her

life. For instance, an important fact is that Beatrice had been privileged to attend grammar school as a young girl.<sup>58</sup> Later in life, as a professed nun, she was trained as a scribe. It is also reported that she copied many books for her monastery.<sup>59</sup> As Wybren Scheepsma has argued, Beatrice therefore must have acquired a fair knowledge of Latin in her life.<sup>60</sup> This observation might then lead to the conclusion that her vernacular writings were not necessarily the result of an inability to write in Latin.

But what does this information tell us about her decision to write *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* in the vernacular? Not much. Beatrice's treatise itself will therefore have to elucidate this matter. In this regard, one peculiar element may be revealing. Near the end of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, in the seventh chapter, all the quotations from biblical verses happen to have been translated into Middle Dutch. Beatrice first quotes them in Latin and then provides a translation: "And therefore, she often says with a woeful heart what the Apostle did, when he said: *Cupio dissolvi et esse cum christo* [Philippians 1:23]. This means: 'I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ'" [Ende so segtsie die wile met sereleken heren, also die apostelen dede, die seide: "*Cupio dissolui et esse cum christo.*" Dat es: "Ic begere ontbonden te sine ende te wesene met kerste"];<sup>61</sup> "This is why she cannot nor does she want to be consoled, as the Prophet says: *Renuit consolari anima mea et cetera* [Psalm 76(77):3]. This means: 'My soul refuses to be consoled'" [Hier omme eist, datsi noch enmach noch enwilt getroest werden, als die prophete seget: "*Renuit consolari anima mea et cetera.*" Dat es: "mijn ziele ontsegt getroest te sine"].<sup>62</sup>

The same is done when Beatrice adds a well-known quote from Augustine's *Confessiones*. This quote is even translated in full, whereas the Latin source text is substantially abridged by means of *et cetera*:

Ende daer sal si gaen in die bliscap hars heren, also als sinte Augustijn seget: "*Qui intrat in te, intrat in gaudium domini sui et cetera.*"<sup>63</sup> Dat es: "o here die in gheet in di, hi geet in die bliscap sijns heren. Ende hine sal heme niet ontsien; maer hi sal hem hebben alre best in den alre besten."<sup>64</sup>

[And there she shall enter the joy of her Lord, just like what Saint Augustine says: "*Qui intrat in te, intrat in gaudium domini sui et cetera.*" This means: "O Lord, who enters Thee, he enters the joy of his Lord. And he shall not fear Him, but he will possess Him at best in the best possible manner."]

These quotations illustrate that Beatrice was well versed in the rhetorical practices of medieval spiritual authors, who very often interweave biblical citation into their discourse. Once more, they are an illustration of her emulation of this practice. However, the fact that Beatrice moreover has made an effort to translate her quotations suggests that she had a particular linguistic concern as well. For herself, a translation would of course have been unnecessary. Therefore, Beatrice's Middle Dutch rendering of a number of Latin phrases can only have been related to the readers whom she had in mind, readers who had inscribed themselves in the same contemplative adventure.

In other words, this observation can well lead us to assume an additional *raison d'être* for Beatrice to have written her text in the first place. Her translations into Middle Dutch may indeed be seen not only as supplementary evidence of the fact that she has written for others but also as evidence of the fact that she aimed at or at least included readers who were not proficient in reading the Vulgate Bible or any kind of spiritual writing in Latin. Apart from having put forward her own ideas, what Beatrice then would have intended when writing *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* was to offer a mystical treatise in a language that was comprehensible to other native speakers.

## CONCLUSION

I started this article with a discussion of a number of dominant literary-critical ideas on Beatrice's treatise *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* that have been put forward over the past century. Some of these ideas are no longer tenable. Today, most scholars are all too well aware that Beatrice probably conceived her treatise as a kind of vernacular spiritual instruction. What I have wanted to do is to establish this idea by means of solid textual evidence. At the same time my study also aimed at a better understanding of Beatrice as a writer. As yet, we do not know exactly for whom Beatrice wrote *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* or when. And we are also unable to tell to what degree her formal duties as a novice mistress (1236–37) and as a prioress (1237–68) at Nazareth contributed to the writing of this text. Sadly, anything we say about this will always be a matter of speculation. However, what is both a plausible and a defensible idea is that Beatrice was inspired to write *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*—conceived as a mirror of the contemplative life in love—due to a number

of fellow nuns (or otherwise, other *mulieres religiosae* friends) who were not very proficient in Latin. In my article, I have pointed out a number of elements that can at least be seen as evidence of a linguistic concern on Beatrice's part. At the same time, this need for spiritual instruction in the vernacular could have been an opportunity for her to put forward her own ideas. But whatever scenario is conjured up, Beatrice will always emerge from it as a self-conscious author, as someone who writes about mystical love in a very determined manner, eager to make a statement of her own. The existence of a well-composed exposition, preceded by a title such as *On seven manners of holy love*, is sufficient evidence of such an ambition.

#### NOTES

I wish to thank Veerle Fraeters and Rob Faesen (Ruusbroec Institute, University of Antwerp) and especially Patricia Stoop (Institute for the Study of Literature in the Netherlands, University of Antwerp) for their fruitful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this article, as well as Veronica O'Mara (University of Hull, Department of English) for proofreading my English.

1. Until its abolition in 1797, Nazareth was situated near Lier (in present Belgium), fourteen miles southeast of Antwerp. In 1950, this abbey was reerected in Brecht, eighteen miles northeast of Antwerp, as a community of Trappistines.

2. This title differs slightly from the editorial short title *Seven Manieren van Minne* (Seven Manners of Love), which is commonly used as a reference ever since Leonce Reypens and Jozef Van Mierlo published their seminal critical edition: Beatrijs van Nazareth, *Seven Manieren van Minne*, ed. L. Reypens and J. Van Mierlo (Leuven: De Vlaamsche Boekenhalle, 1926). In this article, I prefer to use the full title, not only because it is Beatrice's original title but also because it is relevant for our understanding of her intentions as an author of a mystical treatise. There are several editions of the Middle Dutch text of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*. I will use the improved (semi)critical edition by Herman Vekeman and Jaques Tersteeg: Beatrijs van Nazareth, *Van seuen manieren van heileger minnen*, ed. H. W. J. Vekeman and J. J. Th. M. Tersteeg (Zutphen: Thieme, 1971), to which I refer as *Uan seuen manieren*. All translations of this text are mine.

3. Edited as *Vita Beatricis: De autobiografie van de Z. Beatrijs van Tienen o. cist. 1200–1268*, ed. L. Reypens (Antwerp: Ruusbroec-Genootschap, 1964). Readers can also use the excellent English translation of the *Vita: The Life of Beatrice of Nazareth, 1200–1268*, trans. and ann. Roger De Ganck (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1991), which includes Reypens's critical text but not his introduction, his commentary, or the critical apparatus. In this article, I will refer to the *Vita Beatricis* with the abbreviation "VB." Note that my references to the Latin text do not refer to the chapters of the *Vita*'s three books but to the paragraph number and the line numbers, which were added in the critical edition. References to Reypens's introduction and his critical commentary will, on the other hand, be indicated by the page number.

4. Beatrice's biographer has presented the *Vita Beatricis* as a faithful rendering of her literary work. However, a comparison between *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* and its Latinized version in the *Vita* has made scholars aware of the fact that this is only true up to a certain point. The many differences and discrepancies between the texts are discussed at length in Amy Hollywood, "Inside Out: Beatrice of Nazareth and Her Hagiographer," in *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and Their Interpreters*, ed. Catherine M. Mooney (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 78–98 and 220–29, especially 85–90; Rob Faesen, "Mystiek en hagiografie: Hoe benadert de anonieme auteur van de *Vita Beatricis*

het verschijnsel mystiek?," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 73 (1999): 97–110; and Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen, "The In-carnation of Beatrice of Nazareth's Theology," in *New Trends in Feminine Spirituality: The Holy Women of Liège and Their Impact*, ed. Juliette Dor, Lesley Johnson, and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1999), 61–79, especially 67–76.

5. An example of an addition that can be mentioned is the fact that the biographer has incorporated elements from other contemporary vitae, such as the *Vita Arnulphi* and the *Vita Lutgardis*. See Simone Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne dans le diocèse de Liège au XIIIe siècle* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1947), 97 and 220; *Life of Beatrice of Nazareth*, x n. 4 and xxv n. 14; Hollywood, "Inside Out," 222 n. 20; and Erwin Mantingh, *Een monnik met een rol: Willem van Affligem, het Kopenhaagse Leven van Lutgart en de fictie van een meerdaagse voorlezing* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000), 154–55.

6. By this, I particularly refer to the lack of recent studies that focus on the lost writings of Beatrice upon which the *Vita* is based. As a historical source and as a work of hagiography, the *Vita* has of course already received a good deal of attention. In this respect, a recent example is Jessica Barr, "The Secret Chamber of Her Mind: Interpreting Inner Experience in the *Vita* of Beatrice of Nazareth," *Exemplaria* 23 (2011): 221–43.

7. See especially J. Van Mierlo, "Algemeene inleiding," in *Seven Manieren van Minne*, 66\*–81\*. See also J. Van Mierlo, "Beatrijs van Nazareth," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Vlaamsche Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde*, 1926: 51–72, at 67–70; and J. Van Mierlo, "Béatrice de Nazareth," in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique: Doctrine et histoire*, 17 vols., ed. Marcel Viller, Ferdinand Cavallera, and Joseph de Guibert (Paris: Beauchesne, 1933–95), vol. I, cols. 1310–14.

8. For general agreement, see, for example, Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, 221–22; Stephanus Axters, "De geschriften van Beatrijs van Nazareth," in *Geschiedenis van de vroomheid in de Nederlanden: I. De vroomheid tot rond het jaar 1300* (Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1950), 223–38, at 227–37; Herman Vekeman, "Vita Beatricis en Seven Manieren van Minne: Een vergelijkende studie," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 46 (1972): 3–54, at 49–54; Pedersen, "In-carnation of Beatrice of Nazareth's Theology," 64; and Frits van Oostrom, *Stemmen op schrift: Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur vanaf het begin tot 1300* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2006), 406. Additional references can be found in Wybren Scheepsma, "Beatrice of Nazareth: The First Woman Author of Mystical Texts," in *Seeing and Knowing: Women and Learning in Medieval Europe 1200–1500*, ed. Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004), 49–66, at 61 n. 35.

For challenges, apart from Ursula Peters, *Religiöse Erfahrung als literarisches Faktum: Zur Vorgeschichte und Genese frauenmystischer Texte des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1988), 32–33, which takes an overly critical and judgmental stance, see notably L. Reypens, "Beatrijs als schrijfster," in VB, 56\*–60\*, at 58\*–59\*; and Scheepsma, "Beatrice of Nazareth," 54–58 and 60–62. See also Wybren Scheepsma, *The Limburg Sermons: Preaching in the Medieval Low Countries at the Turn of the Fourteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 288–91. While, in keeping with Peters, Scheepsma rejects Beatrice's authorship of *Uan seven manieren van heileger minnen*, he proposes a valuable alternative view on Beatrice's vernacular autobiography and her spiritual exercises.

9. See VB, 57\*–59\*; Vekeman, "Een vergelijkende studie," 49–54; and *Uan seven manieren*, 5. 10. See VB 246–62.

11. VB 234.4–5; trans. *Life of Beatrice of Nazareth*, 275.

12. Beatrice's treatise has been transmitted in three manuscripts: MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 3067-73 (MS. B), fols. 24v–40v (mid-fourteenth century); MS. The Hague, Royal Library, 70 E 5 (MS. H), fols. 190vc–97rb (late thirteenth century); and MS. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 15.258 (MS. W), fols. 252r–71v (early fifteenth century). In addition, it is worth mentioning the late fifteenth-century MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 2252, fol. 134r, which contains a summarizing paraphrase of certain parts of *Uan seven manieren van heileger minnen*, which is edited in R. Lievens, "Verbijsterend tekstbederf," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 81 (1965): 209–11, at 211; see also R. Lievens, "Verbijsterend tekstbederf (Aanvulling)," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 83 (1967): 76–77.

13. An additional indication that seems to confirm this idea is that, at the end of the chapter that deals with Beatrice's election as prioress, the biographer informs the reader in a straightforward way not only that he has found no more biographical details in her (autobiographical) "book" (*liber*) but also that he will add extra material in order to edify the reader (see VB 233.110–14). Before the biographer ends the *Vita* in recounting Beatrice's death

(chapter 16 of book 3) and writing his conclusion (chapter 17), five more chapters will indeed follow after this statement (chapters 11 to 15), among which the chapter that contains the Latinized version of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* (chapter 14). At the end of this particular chapter, the author once more repeats that he will “insert” one more chapter: “I insert it in this work before I end, so that everyone may be edified” [ad edificationem omnium inserendum huic operum, priusquam dictis finem] (VB 262,602–5; trans. *Life of Beatrice of Nazareth*, 327). This means that these five chapters were added to Beatrice’s autobiographical account in a supplementary way. Their chronological arrangement in the *Vita* therefore does not necessarily reflect the order in which the vernacular source texts of these chapters had been written originally by Beatrice or the time of their composition (at least, insofar as we may assume the existence of such a source text for all of the extra chapters).

14. See, for example, Sara S. Poor, “Early Mystical Writings,” in *German Literature of the High Middle Ages*, ed. Will Hasty (Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2006), 185–200, at 185; and Ann Faems, “Beatrijs van Nazareth,” in *Key Figures in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson (New York: Routledge, 2006), 57–58, at 58.

15. See VB, 59\* and 79\*.

16. See K. Heeroma, *Spelend met de spelgenoten: Middel nederlandse leesavonturen* (The Hague: Bert Bakker, 1969), 219–20. His proposal was met with a mixed review: see Vekeman, “Een vergelijkende studie,” 4; and *Uan seuen manieren*, 12.

17. See Herman Vekeman, “Van seuen manieren van heiliger minnen: Extase en traditie in een cultus van de minne,” *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 88 (1972): 178–98; and, more comprehensively, Herman Vekeman, “Beatrijs van Tienen: Seuen Manieren van Minne: Lexicografisch onderzoek,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Katholieke Universiteit van Leuven, 1967).

18. See Vekeman, “Extase en traditie”; Vekeman, “Een vergelijkende studie,” especially 16–17, 23, and 51–54.

19. Jos Huls, “Seuen manieren van minnen” van Beatrijs van Nazareth: *Het mystieke proces en mystagogische implicaties* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002). In 2013, an abridged and popularized version of Huls’s dissertation appeared in English: Jos Huls, *The Minne-Journey: Beatrice of Nazareth’s “Seven Ways of Minne”: Mystical and Mystagogical Implications* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013).

20. See Huls, *Het mystieke proces*, 57–61.

21. See *ibid.*, 50–51.

22. See notes 7 and 8.

23. VB 228–33.

24. See Vekeman, “Een vergelijkende studie,” 25–49.

25. *Ibid.*, 23: “Beatrijs [heeft] hetzelfde object, haar mystieke ontwikkeling, tweemaal beschreven, daarbij telkens een erg verschillend standpunt innemend.”

26. Huls, *Het mystieke proces*, 50: “Dit brengt ons onmiddellijk bij de aard van dit geschrift, dat—zoals het zich in het Diets aan ons presenteert—geen egodocument is, maar een reflectie van het mystieke proces.”

27. The authenticity of the title *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* is based on the fact not only that the peculiar genitive expression “van heileger minnen” (of holy love) occurs in the body of Beatrice’s text (*Uan seuen manieren*, 53 l. 487) but also that this heading appears in MS. B (fols. 24v–25r). Although MS. B is not the oldest manuscript (it is dated in the third quarter of the fourteenth century), it certainly has the best text. This textual quality is indeed relevant, because in the oldest manuscript, MS. H (dated in the last quarter of the thirteenth century), Beatrice’s treatise is preceded by another, more simple heading: *Det sin seuen manieren van minnen* (These are seven manners of love) (fol. 190va). As a textual witness, MS. H is very important, as it has preserved thirteenth-century Middle Dutch orthography, which is how Beatrice herself wrote. On the other hand, it has a lesser text than MS. B. Because of this, it is less likely that its alternative title, *Det sin seuen manieren van minnen*, is authentic. In fact, we can ask ourselves whether this incipit was intended as a real title. As a simplification of the original title, moreover entirely rubricated, it, rather, forms a kind of announcement of the treatise (an impression that is strengthened by the deictic feature of the pronoun *det* [these]). We also have to be aware of the fact that many of the changes in MS. H are probably due to the compiler of the Middle Dutch sermon collection—the so-called Limburg Sermons (*Limburgse sermoenen*)—into which Beatrice’s treatise was incorporated (i.e., the compiler of the original manuscript of which MS. H is a copy). This compiler has, for example, left out the headings that figure above most chapters and which are still preserved in MS. B. Therefore,

it is arguable that the same person also must have been responsible for having simplified the original title or, rather, for having left it out as well, replacing it with a similar-sounding incipit instead.

28. *Uan seuen manieren*, 37 l. 100.

29. For obvious reasons, the noun *maniere* (manner)—together with *minne* (love)—is the key term in *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*. As a category of Beatrice's thinking on mystical and divine love, *maniere* has to be understood in a twofold sense. On the one hand, it refers to a condition (of the soul) in which love is an object of desire or experience. At the same time, love is also the (ultimate) cause of this condition. This double aspect of love, both cause and object, is what is described in all seven *manieren*. However, at the level of the entire treatise (as expressed in the title and the opening lines), Beatrice's use of the term *maniere* also has an additional layer of meaning. Despite the element of progress that can be detected in the sequence of the seven chapters (in terms of mystical contemplation and activity of love), the manners of love are not presented as cascading grades. In choosing *maniere* and not a traditional term such as *grade* (grade), which is the Middle Dutch equivalent for the Latin term *gradus*, Beatrice therefore ultimately expresses the idea that all seven events described in her treatise are considered equal as manners of divine love. All share the fact that love is both their cause and their object. See also Huls, *Het mystieke proces*, 145–46.

30. *Uan seuen manieren*, 39–40 ll. 166–70.

31. Even within a medieval, i.e., heavily orally focused, context, references to the act of speaking should not always be taken literally. Many medieval treatises contain the same locutionary imagery but were written merely in order to be read in private. This is, for example, the case in John of Ruusbroec's (1293–1381) mystical treatise *Vanden seven sloten* (The seven enclosures), as it was written for an enclosed nun and was sent to her as a letter: "I will *speak* no more on this subject, but I will teach my sister how she should serve in humility" [Hier ave en willic nemmeer *spreken*, maer ic wille leren mier suster hoe si dienen sal in oetmoede]. See Jan van Ruusbroec, *Vanden seven sloten*, ed. G. de Baere, trans. H. Rolfson (Tielt, Belgium: Lannoo, 1981), 126 ll. 238–40 and 127 ll. 254–55; emphasis mine. Initially, Ruusbroec may perhaps have dictated his text to a secretary, but once it was sent to his addressee, his textual voice becomes an imaginary locutionary act.

32. *Uan seuen manieren*, 40 ll. 174–75.

33. Cf. Rob Faesen, "La mystique christocentrique de Béatrice de Nazareth," *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 66 (2003): 97–109, at 108.

34. In this respect, all three occurrences are significant: "And then she feels that all her senses have become *holy* in love" [Ende dan ghevuelt si dat al hor sinne sijn *geheilicht* in der minnen] (*Uan seuen manieren*, 41 l. 190–92); "but only by *holy* love and by eternal love she desires in a passionate, impetuous and extremely yearning way to arrive in the land of eternity and in the glory of enjoyment" [maer allene van *heileger* minnen ende van eweliker minnen so begertsi niedeleke ende doientleke ende sere verlanleke te comene in dat landschap der ewelicheit ende in die glorie der gebrukelicheit] (53 ll. 487–92); "Oh *holy* desire of love, how strong is your power in the love of the soul!" [Ay *heilege* begerte der minnen, wie staerc es uwe cracht in der minnen der sielen] (53–54 ll. 497–99; emphases mine).

35. We should keep in mind that the Middle Dutch noun *minne* (love) in the title refers not only to the subjective feeling of love in the human soul but also to a self-subsistent, divine reality. Therefore, the expression of "holy love" has to be understood as "Holy Love" at the same time. Immediately, this expression makes us aware of the analogy with the Holy Ghost, both nominally (the capitals are only meaningful to us, since medieval writers did not capitalize names) and theologically. "Holy Love" is indeed also reminiscent of this divine Person of the Holy Trinity, who is not only seen as the Giver of love but often also identified with it (as a divine self-gift). In this light, the mystical connotation in the adjective "holy" has to be considered an aspect of love as a divine reality, too. "Holy Love," then, refers to a divine being who confers mystical graces upon the soul (in the form of love).

36. In addition to Vekeman's "Extase en traditie" and "Lexicografisch onderzoek," see, with respect to *De diligendo Deo*, the evidence by Stephanus Axters in his study "De 'Unio mystica' voor de Brabants-Rijnlandse mystiek van de dertiende en de veertiende eeuw," *Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België: Klasse der Letteren* 11, no. 6 (1949): 7; and in his *Geschiedenis van de vroomheid in de Nederlanden: I*, 231 n. 1. As for *De IV gradibus violentae caritatis*, see VB, 60\* and 69\*; and Kurt Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik: 2. Frauenmystik und Franziskanische Mystik der Frühzeit*

(Munich: Beck, 1993), 151–52. Apart from this, Beatrice is also believed to have read *De natura et dignitate amoris* by William of Saint-Thierry, which is, for example, suggested in VB, 60\* and 69\*.

37. In the *Vita*, we are informed that Beatrice was trained as a scribe and had copied many books for her monastery (see VB 50.32–34 and 230.43). The majority of these texts probably were liturgical books. But, as the biographer points out that Beatrice possessed copies of books on the Holy Trinity (see 213.11–12), it is likely that she had also copied spiritual texts. This is all the more probable when we take into account the sources of *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen* (see the preceding note). It is imaginable that manuscripts with texts by spiritual authors were loaned temporarily to female Cistercian convents by neighboring monasteries of male Cistercians such as Villers.

38. See Vekeman, “Lexicografisch onderzoek,” vol. 2, 163–66ff.

39. See, respectively, *Uan seuen manieren*, 36 l. 83 and 46 l. 312.

40. *Ibid.*, 32 ll. 3–5.

41. See *ibid.*, 43 l. 254, 44 l. 268, and 45 l. 292. At the beginning of the fourth *maniere*, this negative feeling is put forward as the determining emotion of the fifth *maniere*: see 40 l. 169.

42. In accordance with MS. B, Vekeman and Tersteeg’s edition has the verb *gebreken* (to lack) (*Uan seuen manieren*, 42 l. 230). For reasons of coherence in terms of content, I prefer to adopt the reading of MS. H (fol. 193ra).

43. Both MS. B and Vekeman-Tersteeg have *in* (in). I have emended this obvious scribal error to *ende* (and), in line with the readings of MSS. H (fol. 193ra) and W (fol. 259v). See also *Seven Manieren van Minne*, 17 l. 10.

44. *Uan seuen manieren*, 42–43 ll. 223–40; emphasis mine.

45. On *Uan seuen manieren van heileger minnen*’s literary structure, see Vekeman, “Lexicografisch onderzoek.”

46. Vulgate Bible and Douay-Rheims translation: “quia ipse vulnerat et medetur percudit et manus eius sanabunt” [For he woundeth, and cureth: he striketh, and his hands shall heal]; available at <http://www.latinvulgate.com> (accessed February 25, 2016).

47. In MS. B, the phrase “hurts and wounds her is what . . . her most” [tert ende quetst dat selue est dat har meest] is missing. It was not emended in Vekeman and Tersteeg’s edition. I have included this scribal *saut du même au même* in line with MSS. H (fol. 194ra) and W (fol. 262r). See also *Seven Manieren van Minne*, 23 ll. 77–78.

48. This word, missing both in MS. B and in Vekeman-Tersteeg, has been included in line with MSS. H (fol. 194ra) and W (fol. 262r). See also *Seven Manieren van Minne*, 23 l. 79.

49. *Uan seuen manieren*, 46 ll. 307–10.

50. On Beatrice’s rich concept of the *manieren*, see note 29.

51. In the chapter *De caritate dei et vij eius gradibus*, we find a number of biographical facts, but these happen to be fictitious additions by Beatrice’s biographer. See, for example, VB 254, 278–304.

52. See Heeroma, *Spelend met de spelgenoten*, 219–20.

53. See Huls, *Het mystieke proces*, 3 and 50–51; Huls, *Minne-Journey*, 15.

54. See, respectively, *Uan seuen manieren*, 39 l. 164 and l. 166, 50 l. 400, 49 l. 392, and 56 l. 581.

55. *Ibid.*, 49 ll. 373–77; emphasis mine.

56. *Ibid.*, 35 l. 75.

57. *Ibid.*, 56 ll. 577–78.

58. See VB 21.

59. See note 37.

60. Scheepsma, “Beatrice of Nazareth,” 58.

61. *Uan seuen manieren*, 53 ll. 476–81.

62. *Ibid.*, 54 ll. 508–12.

63. *Confessiones* II. 10. 18; cf. Matthew 25:21. See Augustine, *Confessions: Books 1–8*, ed. and trans. J.-B. Hammond (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 88–89: “Those who enter into you enter into the joy of their Lord and will not be afraid, and will abide perfectly in the One who is perfect” [qui intrat in te, intrat in gaudium domini sui et non timebit et habebit se optime in optimo].

64. *Uan seuen manieren*, 56 ll. 567–74. In accordance with Augustine’s text in the *Confessiones*, I have added the first verb form *intrat*. This word is missing in MS. B and was not emended

in Vekeman-Tersteeg's edition. As Beatrice's Middle Dutch translation correctly renders the verb twice (*gheet* and *geet* [enters]), the omission of *intrat* presumably was not her doing and may therefore be considered a scribal error. (In Reypens–Van Mierlo's edition, *intrat* is added as well, but immediately before *in gaudium*, making the quotation slightly different from Augustine; see *Seven Manieren van Minne*, 38 l. 159.) I have also placed the last quotation mark at the end of the last sentence and not, as in Vekeman–Tersteeg, after *heren* (Lord).