

Abstract: Reading Devotion. Asceticism and Affectivity in Love's *Mirror*

The *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* by Nicholas Love is one of the most significant Middle English devotional texts of the late-medieval period. A translation and adaptation of the Latin *Meditationes vitae Christi*, an influential Franciscan text from the fourteenth-century, the *Mirror* had both educational and polemical aims, intended as an accessible meditative guide for the devout laity as well as an orthodox statement against the contemporary Wycliffite heresy. Through its Carthusian monastic origins, in terms of authorship and focus, and its presentation of themes, language, and imagery that hinge on ascetic and affective attitudes, Love's *Mirror* provides compelling evidence for the increasing engagement between the monastic and secular spheres in the late Middle Ages, and illustrates the mutual responses inherent in devotional culture.

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