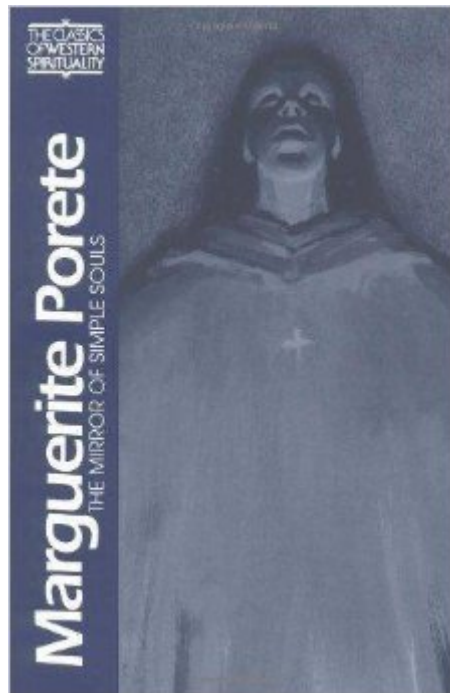


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Marguerite Porete: The Mirror Of Simple Souls (Classics Of Western Spirituality)



Synopsis

The most in-depth and scholarly panorama of Western spirituality ever attempted! In one series, the original writings of the universally acknowledged teachers of the Catholic, Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, Islamic and Native American traditions have been critically selected, translated and introduced by internationally recognized scholars and spiritual leaders. The texts are first-rate, and the introductions are informative and reliable. The books will be a welcome addition to the bookshelf of every literate religious persons". -- The Christian Century

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Porete to me is one of the most haunting and mysterious figures of the medieval period. As the painting on the cover seems to suggest, when you read Porete you seem to feel as if you are coming across a being who is human yet not quite of this Earth, and there is an ethereal glow of transcendent love in Porete's words. Porete was one of a series of female mystics in the medieval period known as 'beguines.' Beguines were lay women who either were unable to become nuns, because to join a nunnery usually required the payment of an expensive sum (and only upper class or aristocratic women could afford that in the middle ages) but who still desired the spiritual life. Along with men (beghards) this group produced many interesting mystics. Porete was charged with heresy and forbidden from circulating her work, the Mirror, by high ranking clerical officials. Porete refused to shut up, and was brought before the inquisition. Unrepentant, like Joan of Arc, she was burned at the stake. The Mirror was also burned but copies were made and her work was kept and

studied, and was not directly connected to her again until the 20th century. Much detailed scholarship has shed a lot of light on this work and on Porete herself. The Mirror, like many mystical works of the time, describes a process of the union between the human soul and God through love. Porete describes a seven stage process by which the soul of the mystic is 'annihilated' and its will lost in God's infinite being and love.

Unique amongst Christian mystical writings and I say that having read a lot of them. Cloud of unknowing to Theresa of Avilla. This book was condemned by the French Inquisition as being heretical. Just like Joan of Arc, Marguerite Porete was asked to recant. When she refused to respond to her inquisitors, she was condemned to death. On 1 June 1310 she was burned at the stake in Paris for her crime of direct knowing. She said things like ;"Thus it is better that the Soul be in the sweet country of understanding-nothing" ... (p. 142)"(God) is incomprehensible except by Himself". (p. 84)"I have only as much being as (God) is able to be of Himself in me". (pp. 174-175) Margerete Porrete is much more purely gnostic in her message which is why the Inquisition burned all of her writings. Strangely this one book survived to express in an exquisite simplicity the path to god through meditation and devotion. She does this brilliantly, explaining her teaching through writing a dialogue between intellectual reason (the churches way of understanding), love , and the soul. She sometimes divides the dialogue further between other parts, but the way she presents it is amazingly more lucid than many other christian mystics. This book is for anyone who has a serious meditation practice and combines this with thier love of God. It is not an intellectual regurgitation of a young woman trying to be a spiritual writer. She is divinely inspired by her own gnosis of what is the truth and of what is love through entering the stillness and silence of the mind. She does this through deep surrender to Christ. This love seeks to motivate others to practice more than intellectual submission, this love pours a method out onto these pages, her method to go back into absorption with GOD.

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