Preface

Since both Everyman and the other English translation of Elckerlijc, The Mirror of Salvation by Adriaan J. Barnouw,¹ are relatively free, the following relatively close translation, in prose, should be useful to various readers. The need for such a translation has been obscured not only by Middle English scholars in general² but also by most recent editors of Everyman, who have resorted to hedging on the question of so-called priority,³ though only a scholar as perverse as Henry de Vocht⁴ would deny, after studying the long debate, that Den Spyegehel der Salieht van Elckerlijc — to emphasize its full title⁵ — is the original. In his well-known edition of Everyman A. C. Cawley provides a handy summary of the debate and remarks, “The only arguments which have not been turned inside out are the ones based on factual evidence, and these point to Elckerlijc as the original and to Everyman as the translation.”⁶ Yet Professor Cawley seldom cites Elckerlijc and, unduly influenced, apparently, by Everyman’s reputation, shrinks from conceding the defects of

2. Cf. Donald R. Howard’s ambiguous silence on Elckerlijc in a recent comment on Everyman: “For example, the English morality play Everyman, known as a text and specimen, was produced in 1901 by the Elizabethan Stage Society... Medieval drama became theater again, and Everyman rose above other morality plays as the classic of its genre,” “The Four Medievalisms,” University Publishing, No. 9 (1980), 5.
3. For example, J. B. Trapp, editor of the medieval section of The Oxford Anthology of English Literature (New York, 1973), writes, “Everyman may be a translation of a Dutch play on the same theme, Elckerlijc, but some scholars maintain that the Dutch play is the translation. It is certain that they are closely related” (I, 367). Cf. E. Talbot Donaldson in The Norton Anthology of English Literature, rev. ed. (New York, 1970), I, 314.
5. The title of Everyman has been similarly abbreviated (see the prologue: “The Somonynge of Everyman called it is” [4]).
this work, while preferring to call the translator “poet” or “author” or at least “author-translator.”

Accordingly various errors in the translation are either glossed over or bypassed in this edition. For example, Everyman, in his prayer for forgiveness, fuzzily addresses God as “O goodly vysyon” (582), a phrase never questioned in anthologies of English literature. In this instance Professor Cawley retreats to euphemism: “These words seem to preserve the appearance, though not the meaning, of the Dutch godlic wesen ‘divine being’ (Elckerlijc 550).” Earlier, Confession instructs Everyman that he must scourge himself before “thou scape that paynful pilgrymage” (565). Though there is no escaping, Professor Cawley tries to explain the line away: Everyman “has still to make satisfaction... before he can hope to finish his pilgrimage and attain eternal bliss.” The Dutch refers to another pilgrimage (530-32): “Peyst dat ons Here oek was geslaghen/Met geesselen dat Hi woude verdraghen./Recht voer Sijn pelgrimagie stranghe...” (Remember that our Lord was beaten/With scourges, which He was willing to endure/Just before His hard pilgrimage...”). In Professor Cawley’s notes there is nothing on “brytell” (425), where Goods refuses to accompany Everyman: “Nay, not so! I am to brytell; I may not endure.” Apparently the translator simply guessed the meaning of “onbranlijc” (394), that is, adamant: “Neen, ick bin onbranlijc.” Nor is there any com-

8. Ibid., pp. xxiv-v and xxviii. The translator is referred to as such on p. xiii, however. In a recent edition, much indebted to Cawley’s, Everyman is presented throughout the first four pages of the introduction as an original play (The Summoning of Everyman, ed. Geoffrey Cooper and Christopher Wortham [Nedlands, W. Australia, 1980]; moreover, in the notes I count only ten references to Elckerlijc, nearly all in Cawley, and only one, also in Cawley, specifically concerns the adequacy of the translation, the note on lines 575-76.
9. As De Vocht pointed out, in all the other instances of wesen, it is correctly translated (Everyman: A Comparative Study, p. 36). On the speculation that this error and certain others represent “not what the translator saw but, rather, what he thought that he had heard in dictation,” see John Conley, “Aural Error in Everyman?,” Notes and Queries, N. S. (1975), 244-45.
10. Everyman, p. 34.
11. Ibid.
12. As G. Kalf pointed out in a review of Henri Logeman’s edition of Elckerlijc... and Everyman in Taal en Letteren, 4 (1894), 119. All citations of Elckerlijc are to the accompanying text, which, except as cited (see the introduction to the “Notes on the Text of Elckerlijc”), follows the lineation of R. Vos’s edition, Den Spieghel der Saliciteit van Elckerlijc (Groningen, 1967). The text of this edition follows the Brussels print except where eked out with the Brussels manuscript.

Though Barnouw’s translation is said to be in “modern English,”15 it is not consistently so, as these lines from God’s opening speech indicate (10-17, 23):

Avarice, hate, envy, pride
With the seven powerful deadly sins
Have not [i.e., now] in the world gained prominence.
For it is because these seven conspire
That I have opened up my ire,
Which saddens me and my heavenly host.
The seven virtues, who once were most,
Have all been driven away and shent...
All that groweth up worsens on.

As is common in a free translation, there are various embellishments, such as “heaven’s radiance” (682) for “the salvation of mankind” (“des menschen salicheyt,” 687), and “Grief is carved upon your face” (196) for “One could cut anguish out of you” (“Een mensche mocht druc uut u snijden,” 196). Similarly God is interpolated twice within a few lines in one of Death’s speeches; thus “be certain about this” (“des seker sijt,” 90) is rendered “so God says” (91), and “Also no delay is here befitting” (“Oeck en hoort hier gheen verlaet,” 93), “since God has thus decreed” (95). Sometimes the loss in tone and style is considerable: “Loyalty here, loyalty there” (Trou hier, trou daer” 264), or “Such harping on loyalty,” becomes “Faith is a perishable fodder” (264). And an especially flat statement in the original appears as an exclamation; thus “I am really glad about that” (“des bin ick rechts verhuet,” 184) is converted into “O joy!” (184).16

Our purpose has been a modest one: to provide as literal a translation of Elckerlijc as we could without blurring the meaning or wrenching English usage. Though we have resorted to paraphrase from time to time, most of the translation is word for word, and ordinarily we have not amended where

14. The second question can be regarded as a garbled rendering of Doot’s statement in line 71: “Dit suldi wel weten” (“This you will surely know”).
15. Mirror of Salvation, p. xvi.
16. It is especially regrettable that the names of two of the characters, Duecht (Virtue) and Kennisse (Knowledge), appear as Charity and Contrition respectively. The latter interpretation apparently originated with Francis A. Wood (“Elckerlijc—Everyman: The Question of Priority,” Modern Philology, 8 [1910], 5-7). A grammatical confusion in the translation should also be noted; an antecedent, Elckerlijc, has been altered to Christ. The original reads (554), “die Adam onterfde bi Yeven rade” (“Whom [i.e., Everyman] Adam disinherited by Eve’s advice”). Barnouw’s version comes out as “Everyman, who [i.e., Christ] paid/With death for the sin of Adam and Eve” (548-49).
the syntax of the original is awkward or a construction verbose (cf. "ende buten seghe," 68, and "trouwe, die groot is," 261). Emendations are italicized, and interpolations are bracketed. The notes, which were also done in collaboration, are nearly all confined to matters of text and translation; among these are textual cruces and literal renderings of certain passages. Variants are ordinarily supplied only when the text is emended. To help the reader follow the original, the translation appears as if in verse and usually corresponds line for line. Obviously, nothing like an edition proper, with a complete textual apparatus, comprehensive introduction and notes, has been attempted, nor is a bibliography provided; the one in Vos is still relatively up to date for Elckerlijc, and there are bibliographies of Everyman both in Cawley's edition and Cooper and Wortham's. As for editorial chores, these were performed with the assistance of Dr. de Baere, Drs. Schaap, and Professor Toppen.

The text of Elckerlijc provided here is based on the print by Willem Vorsterman (Antwerp, ca. 1518-25). It is the only so-called complete early copy of the work, now in the Leiden University Library; Van Mierlo has argued that Everyman derives from this print.17 The two other prints are earlier: Delft, ca. 1495, and Antwerp, ca. 1501. All three are apparently at least twice removed from the archetype, and all are corrupt. The manuscript of the work, discovered in 1932, though useful, is late (ca. 1593-94).

Certain letters of the Vorsterman print have been modernized according to conventional practice. The line numbering, as already noted, is that of Vos's edition.

To further comparison between the two plays, Everyman has been included, according to the Huntington Library copy (ca. 1528-29), which is the earlier of the two complete prints, both by John Skot (or Scott). In keeping with general practice, some of the spelling has been modernized. Various emendations have also been included.

The doctrinal scheme of Elckerlijc and Everyman is Catholic and emphasizes two articles of faith in particular: the necessity, for salvation, of good works, and divine judgment after death.18 In time the first of these articles kindled Lutheran revisions of Elckerlijc, treated below, as well as latter-day scholarly strictures on Everyman.19


19. Cf. E. K. Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1947), p. 64: "I am no theologian, but the strong emphasis on Good Deeds seems to me to suggest a Protestant temper rather than a Catholic one." Some years later Arnold
The plot of *Elckerlijc* and *Everyman* consists of a test of friendship made by a worldly young man when he suddenly learns that God has summoned him to his reckoning. The delineation of friendship is in accord with the essential commonplaces of the medieval doctrine of friendship: that no man should be accounted a friend whose friendship has not been tested; that true friendship is lasting; that it is virtuous, indeed supernatural — a gift of God; that, correspondingly, it is precious; finally, that it provides counsel and comfort pertaining not only to this life but also to the next life.\(^{20}\)

The author of *Elckerlijc* is unknown except as a certain Peter of the Flemish city of Diest (Petrus Diesthemius). Since the late nineteenth century, Petrus Dorlandus (1454-1507), or Peter of Doorlandt, a native of Diest, has been persistently advanced as the probable author.\(^{21}\) A theologian and Carthusian, he wrote numerous religious works, many of them in dialogue. But no play is mentioned in a long list of his works by a contemporary Carthusian, Andreas of Amsterdam.

In Antwerp, at a rhetorical contest or festival of the sort called a *land-juweel*, *Elckerlijc* was awarded the prize ("palmamque adepta"). Its early history, however, is largely one of various translations, or adaptations, which were often staged. The first such adaptation is a Latin one, *Homulus* (1536), modeled on Plautus and Terence and written by Christianus Ischyrius, or Christiaan de Stercke, rector of the Latin school of Maastricht. Its title page is the source both of the attribution of *Elckerlijc* to Peter of Diest and our knowledge of the prize. Two other Latin adaptations soon followed. The first of these, *Hekastus*, or *Everyman* in Greek, was done by Georgius Macropedius (Joris Langvelt), rector of the Latin school at Utrecht, where the play was first produced a year earlier. In *Hekastus*, by contrast with *Homulus*, which preserves the Catholic character of the original, a Protestant (Lutheran) shading is evident, though the author defended his orthodoxy in the second edition. Nevertheless, Kennisse has been displaced by Fides, and it is she, rather than

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Williams quoted this statement as an example of "a certain uneasiness" among "the more perceptive critics" concerning the theology of the two plays, after which he explained Chambers' meaning: "the theology of *Everyman* struck him as different from that with which he was familiar. If he had been a Baptist, he would probably have labelled it Catholic," "The English Moral Play before 1500," *Annuale Mediaeval*, 4 (1963), 20. Williams then commented that, though he is "no theologian" either, he has "read a good bit of theology, and it is my impression that man is saved by grace, not by good deeds... There is a theology in which man achieves his salvation through his own efforts, aided by knowledge. This is a fundamental Buddhist tenet, and it ought to come as no surprise [sic] that the original source of *Everyman* is a Buddhist parable" (ibid.).

20. Conley, "Doctrine of Friendship," p. 382. A special version of the traditional classification of goods is implicit in the play — earthly, spiritual, and lasting goods (ibid.).

21. Vos questions this attribution, however, arguing that the language of *Elckerlijc* is scarcely in keeping with a "Carthusian-humanist" and that "the character" of the play is unlike "that of the work of Petrus Dorlandus" (*Den Spieghel der Salickeit*, p. 26).
Virtus, who is Hekastus' chief counsellor and spokesman right to the end. As numerous performances and translations into German, Danish, and Swedish attest, this adaptation was very popular in Protestant circles in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and is the basis of Hans Sachs's *Ein Comedie von dem reichen sterbenden Menschen — A Comedy of the Dying Rich Man* (1549). Mercator (The Merchant) followed Hekastus by one year (1540). It is an out-and-out Protestant adaptation by Thomas Naogeorgus, or Kirchmeyer, with a polemical preface. The dialogue is no less polemical. Along with Mercator three other characters are summoned to judgment before Christ, and all three — Princeps, Episcopus, and Franciscanus — are damned; Mercator, who has been instructed by Paulus and who has learned during his respite to trust in faith, or God, alone, is saved from papist doctrine. The play was translated into French, Polish, Czech, and Russian as well as Dutch and High German. These three adaptations contain numerous characters and are progressively diffuse: *Homulus*, almost twice as long as *Elckerlijc*, runs to 1, 539 lines; *Hekastus*, to 1, 831, and *Mercator*, to 3, 204.22

The Low German *Homulus, Der sünden loin ist der Toid (Everyman, the Wages of Sin Is Death)* appeared in the same year (1540) as *Mercator* but is a Catholic version, by Jaspar von Gennep, the printer of *Homulus*. It was twice translated into Dutch, once in a Protestant adaptation, which went through six editions by 1700. Another Low German adaptation, a Protestant one by Johannes Stricerius, or Stricker, appeared in 1584 under the title *De Düdesche Schlömer (The German Gourmand)*. Like Gennep's version, it draws on both *Homulus* and *Hekastus*. As for *Elckerlijc*, it apparently languished meanwhile until the nineteenth century whereas *Everyman* had been reprinted in 1773.

*Elckerlijc* is itself an adaptation, perhaps the author's own, of the widespread parable of the Faithful Friend, which appears in the oriental tale *Barlaam and Josaphat* and in such famous medieval compilations as the *Gesta Romanorum* and the *Legenda Aurea*. The latter presents the version in *Barlaam and Josaphat*; it runs as follows. In fear of his life after being summoned to appear before the king, a man seeks out his three friends, one of whom he loves more than himself, the second, as much as himself, and the third, for whom he has done little, not at all. The first friend offers him two sackcloths for his burial; the second is willing to accompany him only as far as the gate of the palace; the third, to whom he turns in shame and despair, readily promises to plead for him before the king "lest he hand you over to your enemies." The three friends are then identified in turn as riches; wife, sons, and kindred; faith, hope, alms, and other good works. The king is of course God.

Various debts remain to be acknowledged.

22. By comparison the relative fidelity of *Everyman* to *Elckerlijc* is notable.
Vos's edition of *Elckerlijc* should be mentioned first; the editions by A. van Elslander, H. J. E. Endepols, G. Jo Steenbergen, and J. van Mierlo have also been regularly consulted,\(^23\) as well as the diplomatic, parallel-text edition by M.J.M. de Haan and B.J. van Delden.\(^24\)

The translation has benefited from careful and gracious readings by Professor Philip E. Webber of Central College, Iowa, and by Professor Herbert S. Lindenberger of Stanford University. At an early stage Professor C. A. L. Jarrott of Loyola University, Chicago, provided me with her own translation of the first 291 lines of *Elckerlijc*.

For help in a search for requisite scholars of Dutch the following should be mentioned: Professor Stanley M. Wiersma of Calvin College, Michigan, above all; Professor W. M. H. Hummelen of the Catholic University, Nijmegen; Professor Emeritus A.C. Cawley of Leeds University. Nor should I fail to include Professor James J. Wilhelm of Rutgers University, Professor E. G. Stanley of Oxford University, and Mr. Paul J. Mevolaert, editor emeritus of *Speculum*, as well as Professor Derek Pearsall of the University of York and Drs. M. Buning, editor of the *Dutch Quarterly Review*.

The Vorsterman *Elckerlijc* is printed by permission of the Leiden University Library; the earlier of the Skot editions of *Everyman*, by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. The edition of *Elckerlijc* by Mr. Vos has been used as a basic source for the translation by permission of both the editor and the publishers, Wolters-Noordhoff. In each instance the terms are very generous.

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John Conley

\(^23\) Van Elslander, *Den Spyeghel der Salicheyt van Elckerlijc* (Amsterdam, 1952); Endepols, *Den Spyeghel der Salicheyt van Elckerlijc* (Groningen, 1925); Steenbergen, *Den Spiegel der Zaligheid van Elckerlijc*, 2nd ed. (Zwolle, 1963); Van Mierlo: see note 13

\(^24\) *De Spiegel der Zaligheid van Elkerlijc* (Leiden, 1979), Publication No. 7 of the Vakgroep Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde. One should not assume that the transcription is free from error, however. Thus – to cite two examples from the transcription of the Leiden print – *spreeckt* appears as "spreekt" in the incipit (p. 19), and in line 817 (Vos 821) *ghestelt*, as "geselt."