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"Stirring" – A Verbal Parallel in the 14th-Century *The Cloud of Unknowing* and in the Writings of the 16th-Century Reformer and Bible-Translator William Tyndale

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It seems appropriate to include a paper¹ on "stirring" in a volume devoted to interdisciplinary approaches to spirituality in the literatures of the English-speaking world. The angle of this essay is partly philological, partly comparative. Firstly, the meaning and significance of the word "stirring" will be explored in the context of spirituality. Secondly, the various shades of the conspicuously frequent occurrences of the word "stirring" in the 14th-century mystical treatise *The Cloud of Unknowing* will be discussed. Thirdly, reflections will focus on the writings of the 16th-century Bible translator and martyr William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536), who used this word not only in his New Testament but in most of his prose works. Fourthly, in assessing the analytical explorations, some light will be shed on the similarities and differences of 14th-century Catholic and 16th-century Protestant spirituality, claiming that the spiritual tradition and the Reformation were not unconnected to one another.²

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2 Cf. Hoffman, Bengt R. *Luther and the Mystics: A Reexamination of Luther's Spiritual Experience and His Relationship to the Mystics*. Minneapolis, MA: Augsburg, 1976.

