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## ***THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MYSTIC SELF*** **THE BOOK OF MARGERY KEMPE**

**Keywords:** *Autobiography, medieval, liminal identity, mystical writers, pilgrimage, religious, women writings*

**Abstract:** *This paper intends to analyse Margery Kempe's story as it was dictated by the illiterate Margery Kempe to a scribe. The Book of Margery Kempe is considered the first English-language autobiography and it is a record of her mystical visions and her struggles to follow a saintly life. Margery Kempe is unique in trying to explain her personality, and to show the obstacles she encountered in her attempt to construct her mystic self. The article briefly talks about her life, the general characteristics of her personality and the different influences that shaped her way of life and affected her choices, like the English mystic writers or the feminine mystic tradition. The final chapter tries to define the inimitable way in which she chose to lead her life by analysing the different levels of liminality which characterise her existence. Her work itself is in a liminal position. At the threshold between a hagiography and an autobiography, The Book of Margery Kempe is a testimony of a woman's struggle to unite her existence with God and thus to transcend her identity and to open her self to God. Margery's aim in life was to be united with God and she prepared for that moment her entire existence. When she recorded her memories she wrote them according to the patterns of hagiographies which were known to her, trying to explain herself and her actions to others, remembering and analysing her self. By preserving her unique liminal position, and evolving slowly on a spiritual path, Margery Kempe creates a mystic identity, or self, for herself.*