

**Cultivating the Heart: Suffering and Language
in *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the
*Katherine Group***

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Abbreviations

AASS: Acta sanctorum quotquot tot orbe coluntur, vel à Catholicis Scriptoribus celebratur, ed. Jean Bolland et al, 68 vols (Brussels: Alphonsum Greise, 1863-1940)

EETS:

The Early English Text Society (1864-)

O. S. Original Series (1864-)

E. S. Extra Series (1867-1920)

S. S. Supplementary Series (1970-)

JEGP: Journal of English and Germanic Philology (1903-)

MED: Middle English Dictionary, ed. by Hans Kurath and S. M. Kuhn (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1952-)

Online version (Michigan, 18th December 2001)

<<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/>>

PL: Patrologiae cursus completus: series Latina, ed. by J. P. Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Migne, 1844-55 and 1862-65)

RB: Revue Bénédictine (1890-)

References

Due to considerations of space, biblical references are to the Douay-Rheims translation, and not to the original Latin Vulgate (*The Holy Bible, Douay Version: Translated from the Latin Vulgate* (Douay, A. D. 1609; Rheims, A.D. 1582). London: Catholic Truth Society, 1956).

Editions of Middle English

All quotations from *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, the *Katherine Group*, and the thirteenth-century lyrics are taken from the editions or manuscripts listed below:

I. *Ancrene Wisse*

Ancrene Wisse: A Corrected Edition of the Text in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402 with Variants from Other Manuscripts, ed. Bella Millett, 2 Vols, EETS O.S. 325 and 326 (2005-2006).

II. *The Wooing Group*

Given the diplomatic nature of W. Meredith Thompson's edition, this thesis provides quotations directly from the following manuscripts:

London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. xiv (for *On wel swuðe god ureisun of god almihti*, *On Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, and *On Lofsong of ure Louerde*);

London, British Library, Titus D. xviii (for *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*).

Abbreviations (with the exception of the *Tironian nota*) are expanded, word-spacing is modernized, 'wynn' is rendered 'w', and interlinear or marginal insertions in the manuscripts are also made silently. Obvious scribal errors— typically eth for 'd', and thorn for 'b'— are corrected without comment. Semi-colons stand for the *punctus elevatus*.

Corresponding references to Thompson's edition are also given for the reader's convenience: *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*, etc, ed. W. Meredith Thompson, EETS O.S. 241 (1958).

Carleton Brown's (1932) edition is used for *On God Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, included here as part of the *Wooing Group*. Please see 'Thirteenth-century lyrics' below.

III. *Seinte Katerine*

Seinte Katerine, ed. S. R. T. O. d'Ardenne and E. J. Dobson, EETS S.S. 7 (1981).

IV. *Seinte Iulienne*

Pe Liflade Ant Te Passiun of Seinte Iulienne, ed. S. R. T. O. d'Ardenne, EETS O.S. 248

(1961); quotations are from the emended text based on Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 34, which does not have line numbers.

V. *Seinte Marherete*

Seinte Marherete: þe Meiden ant Martyr, ed. Frances M. Mack, EETS O.S. 193 (1934).

VI. *Hali Meiðhad*

Hali Meiðhad, ed. Bella Millett, EETS O.S. 284 (1982).

VII. Thirteenth-century lyrics

English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, ed. Carleton Brown (Oxford, 1932). ‘Wynn’ in Brown’s edition is reproduced as ‘w’, but ‘thorn’ and ‘eth’ are preserved.

Editions of Latin

All quotations from Aelred’s *De institutione inclusarum*, Goscelin of Saint-Bertin’s *Liber confortatorius*, and Anselm of Canterbury’s *Orationes sive meditationes* are taken from the editions below:

I. Aelred

De institutione inclusarum, in *Aelredi Rievallensis Opera Omnia: I Opera Ascetica*, ed. A. Hoste and C. H. Talbot. Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, i (Turnhout, 1971).

II. Goscelin

‘The *Liber confortatorius* of Goscelin of Saint-Bertin’, ed. C. H. Talbot, *Analecta Monastica textes et études sur la vie des moines au moyen âge*, 3me série, par M. M. Lebreton, J. Leclercq, *Orbis Catholicus* (Rome, 1955).

III. Anselm

S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia, ed. F.S. Schmitt, 6 vols, III (Stuttgart, 1968).

Translations

In order to maintain consistency in the use of terminology for the affections, I have provided my own translations of Latin, Anglo-Norman, and modern French, unless otherwise stated. Due to considerations of space, I have not provided translations of Middle English quoted, translating only key Middle English terms (available in Appendix I).

Introduction

In Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse*, the author encourages the anchoress to ‘cultivate’ her heart. It is an image based on the sayings of the Ethiopian Abba Moses in Cassian’s *Collationes*:¹

For as þe hali abbat Moyses seide, al þet wa ant al þet heard þet we þolieð o flesch, ant al þet god þet we eauer doð, alle swucche þinges ne beoð nawt bute as lomen to tilie wið þe heorte.
(145: 12-15)

The human heart is figured as tillable land, receptive to the intricate tools put to work on it by the anchoress, who problematizes any scholarly misapprehension that medieval figures were ‘benighted, insentient, too brutalized or primitive to have a subtle emotional life’.² No land could be more precious, for the heart, in the *Ancrene Wisse*-author’s definition, houses the life of the soul.³

On entering the anchoress’ heart, the modern scholar finds a realm that is exceptionally rich, a ‘nest’ (54: 239) in which sophisticated affective movements are

¹ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 259: 7/12. Given that this thesis deals exclusively with female anchoritic readers, it uses the term ‘anchoress’ consistently, as this is preferable to the repeated qualification ‘female anchorite’. I acknowledge the difficulties inherent in the term ‘anchoress’, particularly its absence in thirteenth-century usage. See Liz Herbert McAvoy, ed., *Anchoritic Traditions of Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 11-12.

² William Ian Miller summarizes the misconceptions here: *Humiliation and Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Ithaca, 1993), p. 93. See further Catherine Peyroux, ‘Gertrude’s *furor*: Reading Anger in an Early Medieval Saint’s Life’, in *Religion and Emotion: Approaches and Interpretations*, ed. John Corrigan (Oxford, 2004), pp. 305-325 (pp. 317-318).

³ See: 5: 162-163; 20: 1-8; 48: 17; 67: 757-760.

hatched and reared.⁴ The anchoress' existence is characterized by an acute but discriminating sensitivity to pain, and a capacity to cultivate affective stirrings through the use of textual, and visual, languages. Affective pain, inseparable from pleasure, underpins the anchoress' profession. Without it, intimacy with Christ as man and Christ as God is unattainable; and if the anchoress is unable to gain such intimacy, entrance into Heaven is lost for her. A twenty-first-century audience may find the active nurturance of pain in these texts at best distasteful, and at worst disturbing, a blemish in the history of female empowerment. However, this thesis deliberately avoids a framework of pathology, insisting on the need for a materialist consciousness: in a thirteenth-century European, Christian context, the anchoress' painful existence is defined by agency and emancipation. To become a worthy spouse of Christ, the anchoress bars herself from the world with all its pleasures and comforts, and enters a realm where she must be alive to Christ's embrace as they hang together, in agony, on the Cross: in doing so, she will enjoy his loving embrace in Heaven (*On wel swuðe god ureisun of god almihti*, fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 57-62). But in entering the anchorhold, the anchoress also enters a life defined by pain that is not relieved until her death. In her death, she will leap from suffering into 'eche blisse' (*De Wohunge of ure Lauerd*, fol. 132va; p. 36, ll. 593-597). In her life, however, she

⁴ However, 'heorte' is not the only term used to denote the anchoress' capacity for affective stirrings. In the vernacular and Latin texts studied in this thesis, hearts, souls, minds, breasts, chests, and 'insides' are all credited with being the space of affective pain. There is a fluidity between the terms *anima*, *cor*, and *mens*, both in these anchoritic texts, and more broadly in medieval textualities. For the broader context, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 49. Whilst the terms could be translated as 'soul', 'heart', and 'mind' respectively, the difference is not always clear, and it is a fluidity that finds expression in Middle English (and modern English) translations. Although the *Ancrene Wisse*-author is clear about the respective meanings of 'heorte' and 'sawle', the blurring of boundaries can still be seen in a passage in Part II, where the author moves almost seamlessly from souls to minds to hearts in his translation of the Latin terms (30: 398-404).

remains oppressed by temptation or the threat of temptation; she purges herself of sin in confession only to accumulate more sin that must be purged once more in a repeating cycle of penitence. She lives in a state of constant anxiety akin to that described by Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167) in his *De institutione inclusarum*:

Te, soror, nunquam uolo esse securam, sed timere semper, tuamque fragilitatem habere suspectam, et instar pauidae columbae frequentare riuos aquarum, et quasi in speculo accipitris cernere superuolantis effigiem, et cauere.⁵
(654)

(I do not want you to ever be secure, sister, but to always be afraid. Be cautious of your frailties. Like the terrified dove, go to the streams of water; and, as in a mirror, see the image of the hawk flying overhead, and take care.)

The anchoress chooses to become this ever-fearful dove, knowing that on earth she is only safe from the preying hawk when she is inside Christ's wounds, in anguish with Him.⁶ For love of Christ, for the prospect of resting eternally in his arms, she welcomes a life that is defined by pain, embracing actively a life of perpetual suffering.

In providing an insight into the anchoress' intricate affections, this thesis seeks to make a contribution to the 'history of emotions', as the field is now known—a burgeoning research area, embodied in a spectrum of international research centres.⁷

⁵ Aelred explains that the streams denote scriptural writings.

⁶ See Chapter 3 for discussion of this Bernardine image: *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, 8 Vols, ed. J. Leclercq, C. H. Talbot and H. M. Rochais (Rome, 1957-1977), II, 149; all subsequent references to Bernard's sermons are to this edition.

⁷ The research hubs include the Centre for the History of the Emotions at Queen Mary University, London, Les émotions au Moyen Âge in France, and parallel centres in Berlin and Australia. There was also a roundtable discussion at the recent 47th International Congress on Medieval Studies, in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on the 'historiographies of feeling'.

In 2006, Barbara H. Rosenwein challenged the assumption that medieval emotion is puerile and unsophisticated, with a study that investigates ‘emotional communities’ in a range of texts in the early Middle Ages, ending in the seventh century. Sarah McNamer (2010) examines affective meditations in Middle English as ‘scripts for the performance of feeling’. And in her monograph of 2011, Michelle Karnes argues for the important ‘cognitive work’ of the imagination, linked closely with affective stirrings, in Aristotelian philosophy, meditations on Christ, and *Piers Plowman*.⁸ The present thesis is a cartography, rather than a history, of affections: whilst Rosenwein, McNamer, and Karnes each cover a large body of material that spans two or three centuries, this thesis examines closely a small group of texts to assess the ways in which affective stirrings are shaped, expressed, and evoked in the anchoritic existence.

The anchoress’ affective pain is an aspect of the solitary life which has received surprisingly little sustained attention. Linda Georgianna made a breakthrough in scholarship with her 1981 book on the rich ‘world’ of the anchoress’ self in *Ancrene Wisse*—the author of which changes ‘the traditionally self-negating solitary life into a highly self-conscious journey through human experience’.⁹ Since then, Christopher Cannon has written on the anchoritic ‘self’. In her 1990 work on early English devotional prose, Elizabeth Robertson assesses the anchoress’ use of *Sawles Warde* in her processes of affective regulation, and emphasizes the centrality

⁸ Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2006); see especially her introduction, pp. 10, 13, 26. Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia, 2010); for quotation, see p. 12. Michelle Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages* (Chicago, 2011); for the term ‘cognitive work’, see, for example, pp. 4 and 15.

⁹ Linda Georgianna, *The Solitary Self: Individuality in the Ancrene Wisse* (Cambridge, MA, 1981); for quotations, see pp. 6, 142.

of the affective stirrings of fear and hope in the anchoritic existence. Denis Renevey, both in his unpublished dissertation and in his article on the *Wooing Group*, examines the self-based and introspective meditative practice of these texts, suggesting ‘evidence for continuity in the practice of affective piety in England, from the eleventh century of Anselm to the fourteenth century’. A contribution to the recent essay collection on the *Wooing Group* takes as its focus the anchoritic experience of pain and pleasure.¹⁰ But to this date, there has been no book-length study on the anchoress’ affective movements (beyond Georgianna’s study on *Ancrene Wisse*), nor has there been sustained scholarly work dedicated to understanding pain in the anchoress’ existence. The present thesis seeks to fill this gap in scholarship, doing so by examining closely *Ancrene Wisse* and associated texts.

Chapter 1 of this thesis examines the coupling of physical and affective pain in the anchoress’ penitence, as expressed in Parts V and VI of *Ancrene Wisse*. Her confessional performance is inseparable from intensive processes of self-examination and affective movements such as sorrow, fear, and hope; and physical discomfort in her penitence must always be accompanied by a multifaceted affective pain. In Chapter 2, the thesis considers the *Wooing Group*, assessing the anchoress’ use of these meditations to stimulate affective pain in her shifting relationship with Christ and the Holy Mother. An anchoress reading *Wohunge* could imagine herself entering

¹⁰ Christopher Cannon, ‘The Form of the Self: *Ancrene Wisse* and Romance’, *Medium Ævum*, lxx (2001), 47-65; Elizabeth Robertson, *Early English Devotional Prose and the Female Audience* (Knoxville, 1990), pp. 126-143; Denis Renevey, ‘Enclosed Desires: A Study of the *Wooing Group*’, in *Mysticism and Spirituality in Medieval England*, ed. William F. Pollard and Robert Boenig (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 39-62 (p. 62), and ‘The Moving of the Soul: the Functions of Metaphors of Love in the Writings of Richard Rolle and Antecedent Texts of the Mediaeval Mystical Tradition’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1993); Anne Savage, ‘The *Wooing Group*: Pain, Pleasure and the Anchoritic Body’, in *The Milieu and Context of the *Wohunge Group**, ed. Susannah Mary Chewning (Cardiff, 2009), pp. 165-177.

Christ's Wounded Heart. In this arena, she sees the potential for reading precious love letters from her Lover. Chapter 3 focuses on imagery of physical and affective woundedness. Christ's painful love-wounds inspire the anchoress' own affective wounding, and she enters into the wound-spaces of his body, as his beloved dove. She also uses the image of sin-wounds and penitential wounding to rationalize her penitential existence, and she learns from the saints to use physical and affective wound-imagery in productive contexts. As a spectator of pain, the anchoress is far from passive—the subject of Chapter 4. In her spectatorship of the hagiographies, a spectatorship based on defamiliarization, she enables herself to find and read God's beauty within the clutter of violence and brutality. In her spectatorship of the Passion, however, she attempts to participate with Christ in His pain. The anchoress appropriates *tableaux* of pain in the Passion, comparable with her potential use of church wall paintings, and attempts to imagine herself touching Christ's body. She also spectates the anguish of Passion spectators, using their expressions of pain as a guide for her own spectatorship of and performance in the Passion. This fourth chapter closes with an analysis of the *Katherine Group* text *Hali Meiðhad*, envisioning a general female user of this text. Unlike the anchoress' various forms of penitential pain, the pain explored in *Hali Meiðhad* lacks a redemptive core. The reader is forced to immerse herself in the various sufferings of a married and child-bearing woman, sufferings which achieve nothing. The fifth and final chapter of this thesis studies the anchoress' 'rewðe', her compassion, a central affection in the anchorhold. The anchoress does not 'pity', but rather 'co-feels', participating in an affective space shared with other selves. It is an affection most skillfully taught by the Virgin Mary herself.

Texts and Readers

The texts likely to have been read by the anchoress are invaluable tools for her in the discernment, expression, and evocation of the affective pain that is so fundamental to her existence. Mark Amsler has coined the powerful term ‘affective literacy’ to define a collection of ‘emotional, somatic, activity-based relationships’ with texts that can be associated particularly with anchoritic readers.¹¹ The anchoress’ activity in the reading process is crucial: she is not a passive consumer of her anchoritic guide, meditations, saints’ legends, and epistle on virginity, but an active performer of devotional reading, employing all her somatic and affective capacities in this process.¹² Anchoresses are affectively highly literate, a ‘literacy’ nourished by texts, along with visual images, discussions with her confessor, sermons, and liturgical performances. The original audience of anchoresses could not read Latin texts fluently, but, according to the *Ancrene Wisse*-author, they read in both English and French (18: 393-396). Whereas the *Katherine Group* authors are self-consciously looking back to archaic English, the same cannot be said for *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*.¹³ The *Ancrene Wisse*-author does not have a nationalistic agenda. After all, he uses a higher proportion of French-derived words than previously

¹¹ Mark Amsler, ‘Affective Literacy: Gestures of Reading in the Later Middle Ages’, *Essays in Medieval Studies*, xviii (2001), 83-110 (83).

¹² Amsler (2001), 89.

¹³ See Dorothy Bethurum, ‘The Connection of the *Katherine Group* with Old English Prose’, *JEGP*, xxiv (1935), 553-64. Bethurum’s claim that the *Katherine Group* legends are poor translations of Ælfric’s *Lives* has since been challenged by Millett, however. See Bella Millett, ‘The Saints’ Lives of the *Katherine Group* and the Alliterative Tradition’, *JEGP*, lxxxvii (1988), 16-34.

recorded anywhere in English, and he is the first recorded author to use certain Latin or French-derived terms in English, such as ‘conscience’, ‘trinite’, and ‘affectiun’.¹⁴

But despite using Latin material and models, the authors of *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* overwhelmingly privilege English terms for the affections, as can be seen in Appendix I.¹⁵ Such a decision in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* can be explained by the intended audience: as stated, these anchoresses could not read Latin fluently, and English forms of Latin terms are likely to have been unfamiliar to them. This vernacular preference is demonstrated most clearly with the term ‘luue’, stemming from Old English ‘lufu’.¹⁶ The *Ancrene Wisse* author glosses ‘chearite’ (*caritas*) at its first instance (‘chearite, þet is luue’ (3: 75)), suggesting that the term would have been unfamiliar for his readers. There are only seven instances of ‘chearite’ and one of ‘chearitable’ in *Ancrene Wisse*.¹⁷ Compare this to the instances of ‘luue’: there are no fewer than 158 instances of this word in *Ancrene Wisse*, along with numerous occurrences of its related verbs, adjectives,

¹⁴ Richard Dance, citing Arne Zetterson, notes: ‘the proportion of the lexis in the AB texts that is French-derived (i.e. the number of different lexical items of this origin), and especially that of *AW* at approximately ten per cent (c. 570 words), is higher than it has been in any prior stage of English’. Richard Dance, ‘The AB Language: the Recluse, the Gossip and the Language Historian’, in *A Companion to Ancrene Wisse*, ed. Yoko Wada (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 57-82 (p. 75). On the uniqueness of the use of ‘trinite’, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 125, 3/568. The author’s use of the term ‘conscience’ will be discussed in Chapter 1. ‘Affectiun’ will be discussed later in this introduction.

¹⁵ This table lists the terms for the affections in the early Middle English anchoritic texts, along with their approximate equivalent(s) in Latin, Anglo-Norman, and modern English.

¹⁶ See *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, ed. C. T. Onions (Oxford, 1966), p. 538.

¹⁷ *Concordance to Ancrene Wisse: MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402*, ed. Jennifer Potts, Lorna Stevenson and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Cambridge, 1993), p. 110.

adverbs, and compound nouns.¹⁸ In the *Wooing Group*, ‘chearite’ is never used. ‘Luue’, on the other hand, has a higher frequency than any of the Middle English terms listed in Appendix I.¹⁹ In this preference for native, vernacular terms for the affections, the authors of all texts create a fundamentally English affective vocabulary. And in reading these texts, the anchoress nurtures an English affective literacy. Underpinning this thesis is the belief that, despite a powerful physiological component in the sensation of affective pain, affections are not biologically predetermined; rather, they are created by socio-cultural forces. As put by Catherine Peyroux, ‘[w]hatever the immediate felt experience or physiological component of emotions, feelings are “cultural acquisitions” intelligible only in the context in which they occur.’²⁰ A crucial socio-cultural factor in the shaping of affective pain is the language in which writers, readers, and speakers attempt to express it. The anchoress does not only read in English: she also feels in English.²¹

So far, this introduction has used the term ‘anchoress’ in the singular, which implies a unified and easily defined readership. But *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* were not read by only one group or one kind of reader, as will be clarified at various points throughout this thesis. *Ancrene Wisse* was adapted to meet the needs of a widening audience. Anchoresses of varying degrees of literacy and in different geographical locations would have read it in its revised form, and it was also adapted for male and lay readerships.²² Its material on confession was

¹⁸ This is based on the **A** version. *Concordance to Ancrene Wisse*, pp. 472-478.

¹⁹ 68 instances of ‘luue’ can be found. See *Concordances to the Katherine Group and the Wooing Group (MS Bodley 34, MS Nero A XIV and Titus D XVIII)*, ed. Lorna Stevenson and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 864-867.

²⁰ Peyroux (2004), p. 309.

²¹ See further Miller (1993), pp. 98-101.

²² See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, xxxvii-xl.

intended to be used by a lay audience from the text's earliest stages, as will be noted in Chapter 1. And as explained later in this introduction, two of the *Wooing Group* texts were adapted for a broader audience in *A Talkyng of the Loue of God*; the *Katherine Group* hagiographies are directed at a lay audience; and *Hali Meidhad* could have been read by nuns, rather than anchoresses. Whilst the wide readership of all the texts is acknowledged throughout this thesis, the decision to use the singular ' anchoress ' is deliberate. This thesis focuses on anchoresses' reading of the texts, with special attention to the anchoress who had a high level of literacy in English and French, with some basic knowledge of Latin.²³ The original three-sister audience of *Ancrene Wisse* clearly enjoyed such levels of literacy, as, perhaps, did others in the larger anchoritic community addressed in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402 (A).

The version of *Ancrene Wisse* used in this thesis is that in A, a heavily revised version of the text intended for a broader audience of anchoresses than the original three sisters.²⁴ Other versions of the text, at different points in its development and transmission, will also be referred to, notably that in London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C.vi (C), and that in London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. xiv (N).²⁵ N represents an early point in the text's history, and C contains important marginal and

²³ On anchoresses' literacy, see Bella Millett, 'Women in No Man's Land: English Recluses and the Development of Vernacular Literature in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Women and Literature in Britain 1150-1500*, ed. Carol M. Meale (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 86-103; and Elizabeth Robertson, "'This Living Hand": Thirteenth-Century Female Literacy, Materialist Immanence and the Reader of the *Ancrene Wisse*', *Speculum*, lxxviii, no. 1 (2003), 1-36.

²⁴ The date of composition of *Ancrene Wisse* is assumed to be within the first thirty years of the thirteenth century, and certainly after 1215. See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, xi-xiii. See also T. P. Dolan, 'The Date of *Ancrene Wisse*: A Corroborative Note', *Queries and Notes*, ccxix (1974), 322-323.

²⁵ For the dates of all these manuscripts, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, xi-xxvii.

interlinear annotations, many of which are incorporated in the revised version in **A**.²⁶ The later French and Latin translations of *Ancrene Wisse* are also used in this thesis to assist in ascertaining the intended or derived meaning of English terms when there is possible confusion.²⁷ There is a clear authorial presence in the text as represented in **A**, **C**, and **N**, but modifications and additions in **A** and **C** also reveal other agents involved in the creative evolution of *Ancrene Wisse*; it is the classic case of *mouvance*.²⁸ As Millett has remarked, whilst there is ‘a good case for attributing at least some (probably the majority) of the revisions in **A** to the original author’, this does not mean ‘that the text in **A** reflects a revised version made under the original author’s supervision, or that it contains only his modifications’.²⁹ There is now a strong case for Dominican authorship of this text. Eric Dobson’s tentative hypothesis that *Ancrene Wisse* received a Dominican influence via the Augustinian canons has been strengthened by Bella Millett’s comparisons of the Dominican constitutions with the three passages in *Ancrene Wisse* on the author’s own practice.³⁰

The meditations collectively known as the *Wooing Group* are associated with *Ancrene Wisse* by manuscript tradition, and belong to what is now known as the ‘**AB**’

²⁶ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, xiii-xiv and xix-xx.

²⁷ Jocelyn Wogan-Browne helpfully summarizes *Ancrene Wisse*’s thicket of associations with the French language. See her ‘“C’est livre liseez...chescun jour”’: Women and Reading, c. 1230- c. 1430’, in *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England, c. 1100-c. 1500*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, with Carolyn Collette, Maryanne Kowaleski, Linne Mooney, Ad Putter and David Trotter. (York, 2009), pp. 239-253 (p. 245).

²⁸ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, especially lv-lxi. See also Bella Millett, ‘*Mouvance and the Medieval Author: Re-Editing Ancrene Wisse*’, in *Late-Medieval Religious Texts and their Transmission: Essays in Honour of A. I. Doyle*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 9-20.

²⁹ Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, lviii.

³⁰ See Eric Dobson, *The Origins of Ancrene Wisse* (Oxford, 1976); and Bella Millett, ‘The Origins of *Ancrene Wisse*: New Answers, New Questions’, *Medium Ævum*, lxi (1992), 206-228.

group of texts, joined together by shared linguistic features and localized to the northern Herefordshire and southern Shropshire border.³¹ The ‘*Wooing Group*’ is a volatile category that has been repeatedly undone and recreated since W. Meredith Thompson’s invention of its name and contents in 1958.³² In this thesis, the *Wooing Group* is defined as follows: *On wel swuðe god ureisun of god almihti*, *On Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *On Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and *Be Wohunge of ure Lauerd*; to these is added *On God Ureisun of ure Lefdi*.³³ Despite its inclusion in the recent essay collection, *A Talkyng of the Loue of God* is not considered part of the *Wooing Group* in this thesis, since the *Group* is here understood to be temporally specific, and belonging to a small nucleus of manuscripts.³⁴ The table below clarifies the texts included as the *Wooing Group*, with the manuscripts in which they are found. As is clear from this table, N and London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xviii (T), two of the *Ancrene Wisse* manuscripts, also contain texts of the *Wooing Group*:

³¹ ‘Homogeneity’ would be overstating the linguistic similarities, however. For a summary of the findings on the language of the texts, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, x and xiii-xvi. Richard Dance has also shown that, as literary media, the ‘AB’ texts are not clear indicators of the ‘AB’ dialect behind them (Dance (2003)).

³² Thompson, ed. (1958), p. xvi.

³³ Henceforth the texts will be referred to as *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *Ureisun of God*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and *Wohunge*. The various *Wooing Group* and *Katherine Group* texts are assumed in this thesis to have been written between 1200 and 1230. The focus on confession in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* suggests a post-1215 date, as with *Ancrene Wisse* (see n. 24 in this introduction); its confessional nature will be discussed in Chapter 2. For a summary of datings, see Anne Savage and Nicholas Watson, trans. *Anchoritic Spirituality* (Mahwah, NJ, 1991), pp. 7-8.

³⁴ For the inclusion of *A Talkyng of the Loue of God*, see Susannah Mary Chewning, ‘Introduction’, in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 1-25 (p. 3).

<i>On God Ureisun of ure Lefdi</i>	<i>On wel swuðe god ureisun of God almihti</i>	<i>On Lofsong of ure Lefdi</i>	<i>On Lofsong of ure Louerde</i>	<i>Þe Wohunge of ure Lauerd</i>
London, British Library Cotton Nero A. xiv (fols 120v-3v).	London, British Library Cotton Nero A. xiv (fols 123v-6v).	London, British Library Cotton Nero A. xiv (fols 126v-8r). Editorial title (Morris, ed. (1867-1868)).	London, British Library Cotton Nero A. xiv (fols 128r-31r). Editorial title (Morris, ed. (1867-1868)).	
	London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 487 (fols 65v-67r). Incomplete version.	London, British Library Royal 17 A. xxvii (fol. 70r-70v). Fragmented version, entitled <i>Þe Oriesun of Seinte Marie</i> in this manuscript.		London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xviii (fols 127r-33r).

Table 1

Renevey defines the *Wooing Group* as the same four texts edited by Thompson, but he also studies *On God Ureisun of ure Lefdi* alongside these texts.³⁵ This meditation is included neither in Thompson's edition nor in the translations by Anne Savage and Nicholas Watson.³⁶ It is also left out of the recent essay collection on the *Wooing Group*, though the editor does acknowledge the 'tantalizing possibility' that this meditation is 'by the same author or, even more likely, intended for the same audience as the *Wooing Group*'.³⁷ There are undoubtedly differences between this meditation and the others, not least that it is male-voiced and originally

³⁵ Renevey (1993), p. 71.

³⁶ See Thompson, ed. (1958), p. xvi, and p. xvi, n. 1; and Savage and Watson, trans. (1991), p. 428, n. 1.

³⁷ Chewning (2009), p. 20, n. 13.

intended for a monastic audience.³⁸ But Renevey notes that the presence of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* in N ‘suggests a later female readership’, with this text being an ‘instance of assimilation of monastic material into the specialized anchoritic world, by means of paraphrase, gloss, translation and/or new manuscript contextualization of the original pieces.’³⁹ Caroline Cole has also powerfully revealed the problems of the original editorial exclusion in 1958. She demonstrates that the texts literally merge on the manuscript page in N, and that there also exists an inter-textual dialogue, with *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* beginning the collection, and the Creed ending it.⁴⁰

The shared manuscript tradition with *Ancrene Wisse* indicates that the meditations are likely to have been read by anchoresses. Images in the texts, particularly that in *Wohunge* of the speaker being ‘spered querfaste wiðinne fowr wahes’ (fol. 132va; p. 36, ll. 591-593), bolster the case for an anchoritic readership.⁴¹ Although this thesis focuses on anchoritic readers of the texts, this is not to ignore the other readers who read the texts in the course of their transmission history. In addition to the original monastic readership of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge* reach a broader readership with their translation and adaptation in the fourteenth-century *A Talkyng of the Loue of God*.⁴² Furthermore, *Wohunge* is found in London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xviii, in which *Ancrene Wisse* ‘shows signs

³⁸ See Catherine Innes-Parker, ‘*De Wohunge of ure Lauerd* and the Tradition of Affective Devotion: Rethinking Text and Audience’, in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 96-122 (p. 97).

³⁹ Renevey (1993), pp. 80-81.

⁴⁰ Caroline Cole, ‘The Integrity of Text and Context in the Prayers of British Library Cotton MS Nero A. XIV’, *Neophilologisches Mitteilungen*, civ (2003), 85-94 (88-93).

⁴¹ See further Millett, ed. (1982), p. xxiii.

⁴² See *A Talkyng of þe Loue of God: Edited from MS. Vernon (Bodleian 3938) and Collated with MS. Simeon (Brit. Mus. Add. 22283)*, ed. M. Salvina Westra (The Hague, 1950). Material from *Ureisun of God* is found on pp. 2-18 and 56 of this edition; material from *Wohunge* is found on pp. 26-62.

of modification for a male religious community'.⁴³ Given that this thesis foregrounds an anchoritic reader of the *Wooing Group*, the terms 'meditator', 'speaker', and ' anchoress' are used interchangeably in this thesis. The meditating anchoress is clearly meant to speak the meditations out loud, as the authorial remark at the close of *Wohunge* clarifies: 'carpe toward iesu 7 seie þise wordes' (fol. 133ra; p. 38, ll. 652-653).

Since Eugen Einkenkel's 1882 article in which he claimed that *Wohunge*, *Ureisun of God*, and *Lofsong of ure Louerde* were written by women, there have been suggestions that the four 'canonical' *Wooing Group* texts should be ascribed to female writers. The present thesis, however, assumes male authorship of all five texts.⁴⁴ There is no evidence that they were all written by the same man, but it is possible that *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge* share the same author.⁴⁵ Sarah Salih has recently brought the authors of the *Wooing Group* meditations into the limelight. As she says, the anchorhold is 'not an exclusively female space, but also a repository for

⁴³ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, xxiv.

⁴⁴ E. Einkenkel, 'Eine englische Schriftstellerin aus dem Anfange des 12. Jahrhunderts', *Anglia*, v (1882), 265-282. See further Thompson, ed. (1958), pp. xxiii-xxiv. Eric J. Dobson rejects the idea of female authorship as 'merely fanciful'. See Dobson (1976), p. 154, n. 2. Male authorship is more probable, as Millett shows. See Millett (1996), pp. 86-103 (pp. 98-99). The anchoresses are nonetheless credited with scribal activity. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author suggests that the anchoress 'writes' her hours and the common Marian prayers: 'Euchan segge hire Ures as ha haueð iwriten ham' (9: 86); 'þe ureisuns þet Ich nabbe buten ane imearket beoð iwriten oueral wiðute þe leaste. Leoteð writen on a scrowe hwet-se 3e ne kunnen' (17: 356-358). The boundary between scribal activity and composition is a fluid one.

⁴⁵ *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge* share imagery and structural features. The speakers also adopt similar tones (taking on the voice of a lover in search of her beloved), differing from the fearful and communal speaker of *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and the more confessional speaker of *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*. Renevey (1993) suggests a 'close authorial relationship' between the two meditations (p. 84).

the excess of clerical affects'.⁴⁶ She puts forward a compelling triangular model that takes into account both author and speaker as interlocutors in a shared desire for 'access to Christ'.⁴⁷ The present thesis adopts this model, acknowledging the authorial desire in all the meditations alongside that nurtured by the anchoress.

The *Katherine Group* defines the five texts found together in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 34 (**B**): *Seinte Katerine*, *Seinte Marherete*, *Seinte Iuliene*, *Hali Meiðhad*, and *Sawles Warde*. **B** along with **A** are the two manuscripts that formed the basis of J. R. R. Tolkien's seminal work on 'AB Language'.⁴⁸ *Seinte Katerine*, *Hali Meiðhad*, and *Sawles Warde* are also found in **T**, which contains *Ancrene Wisse* and the only full surviving copy of *Wohunge*; all three hagiographies plus *Sawles Warde* are also found in London, British Library, Royal 17 A. xxvii, which has a fragmented version of *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*.⁴⁹ There is a range of genres within this 'group'. Three are hagiographies, one is an allegorical narrative, and *Hali Meiðhad* can be defined with various labels beyond the **B**-scribe's own definition: 'Epistel of meidenhad meidene froure' (fol. 52).⁵⁰ Given the association of these five

⁴⁶ Sarah Salih, 'Transvestism in the Anchorhold', in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 148-164 (pp. 152, 158).

⁴⁷ Salih (2009), pp. 156-157.

⁴⁸ J. R. R. Tolkien, '*Ancrene Wisse* and *Hali Meiðhad*', *Essays and Studies*, xiv (1929), 104-26.

⁴⁹ For a tabular summary of the manuscripts containing 'AB' texts, see Geoffrey Shepherd, ed., *Ancrene Wisse: Parts Six and Seven* (Manchester, 1972), p. xiv.

⁵⁰ Lara Farina dubs *Hali Meiðhad* an 'advisory, quasi-epistolary AB text', R. M. Wilson calls it a 'homiletic treatise on virginity', G. R. Owst uses the term 'verse-homily', John Bugge describes it as a 'heavily sermonic treatise on virginity', and C. Clark sees it as, simply, a homily. See Lara Farina, *Erotic Discourse and Early English Writing* (NY, 2006), p. 70. R. M. Wilson, *Early Middle English Literature* (London, 1939), p. 117. G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England: A Neglected Chapter in the History of English Letters and of English People* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 21. J. Bugge, *Virginitas: An Essay in the History of a Medieval Ideal* (The Hague, 1975), p. 3. C. Clark, 'Ancrene Wisse and the Katherine Group: A Lexical Divergence' *Neophilologus*, 1 (1966), 117-24 (118).

texts with *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* in the manuscript and linguistic traditions, it is likely that anchoresses would have comprised part of the readership, and this thesis concentrates on an anchoress' reading of the hagiographies.⁵¹ That said, the *Katherine Group* hagiographical legends are never explicitly directed at anchoresses. As Millett has shown, '[w]hat evidence we have suggests that the *Lives* were written for public delivery to a relatively uneducated audience'.⁵² Further to this, *Hali Meidhad* needs to be freed from rigid association with anchoritic readers. As Bella Millett notes, 'there is nothing in the work which would not be equally applicable to nuns'.⁵³ *Sawles Warde* will not figure prominently in this thesis, although its technique of personifying the reader's cognitive and affective movements is mentioned in the context of *Ancrene Wisse* in Chapter 1.

This thesis does not suggest that any of the manuscripts discussed were read directly by a thirteenth-century anchoress in her anchorhold. There is little evidence that could prove such a claim.⁵⁴ She would have read the texts in some form, however, possibly as full books, loose leaves, or booklets. In Part I of *Ancrene Wisse*, the author advises the anchoress to copy her unmemorized prayers on a scroll ('scrowe' (17: 356-358)). In Part IV, he declares that an anchoress who refuses to loan a 'cwaer' to another has her eye far away from faith:

Be ancre þe wearnde anoþer a cwaer to lane, f[e]or ha hefde heoneward hire
bileaue ehe.
(94: 989-990)

⁵¹ See further Millett, ed. (1982), p. xxiii.

⁵² Millett (1988), 33.

⁵³ Millett, ed. (1982), p. xxiii

⁵⁴ For evidence indicating the provenance of these manuscripts, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, xi, xiv, xv, xvii, xx and xxiv.

This insight into anchoress' reading practices suggests that she read from quires, which she was then expected to lend to others in the anchoritic community.⁵⁵

Catherine Innes-Parker, following Anne Savage and Nicholas Watson, has also suggested that the *Wooing Group* texts may have 'originally circulated on scrolls and individual leaves'.⁵⁶

In addition to these core texts, a range of Latin and Anglo-Norman texts will also be studied in this thesis, as sources and analogues of the early English anchoritic material. Prominent among these are Aelred of Rievaulx's *De institutione inclusarum*, a rule for the enclosed life written for Aelred's biological sister; Bernard of Clairvaux's († 1153) *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, a collection of eighty-six sermons written between 1135 and 1153; and the *Orationes sive meditationes* by the abbot of Bec and second Archbishop of Canterbury after the Norman Conquest, Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109).⁵⁷ Aelred, Bernard, and Anselm are three of the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's named sources. The *De institutione inclusarum* is a text on which *Ancrene Wisse* draws heavily, with the author openly acknowledging Aelredian influence at one point (139: 285ff). Through the *Orationes sive meditationes* especially, Anselm also pioneered the Psalter-based meditative tradition within which the *Wooing Group* functions.

The *Liber confortatorius* by Flemish cleric Goscelin of Saint-Bertin (c. 1035-1107) is also studied in this thesis as a crucial analogue of *Ancrene Wisse* and the

⁵⁵ For more on the anchoress' reading abilities and practice, see Millett (1996), especially p. 95.

⁵⁶ See Catherine Innes-Parker (2009), p. 97; and Savage and Watson, trans. (1991), p. 29.

⁵⁷ For the background to Bernard's sermons on the Song of Songs, see *Bernardi Opera*, I, xv-xvi.

Wooing Group. This epistolary book is never cited in *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*, nor is there any evidence that the early Middle English authors knew of the *Liber*.⁵⁸ Goscelin's 'letter' to Eva of Wilton remains, however, a vital demonstration of an affective vocabulary created for an anchoress. The other dominant analogue examined in this thesis is the Anglo-Norman 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame', a prose text based on the Pseudo-Bernardine *Planctus*.⁵⁹ 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame' is preoccupied with the need to express pain in human language. The late thirteenth-century date of the two earliest manuscripts suggests that this Anglo-Norman text may have been composed later in the century than the anchoritic texts, but it remains useful for gauging the broad affective climate of the thirteenth century.⁶⁰

Other texts referenced in the thesis as sources and analogues include Augustine's (354-430) *Confessiones*, Peter Lombard's (c. 1110-60) *Sententiae*, Peter Abelard's (1079-1142) *Ethica*, the *Vita* of Christina of Markyate (c. 1096-1098 – c. 1155-1166), Bonaventure's (c. 1217-1224) *Vitis mystica*, a range of Dominican penitential material, Anglo-Norman penitential and meditative material, early Middle English sermons, early Middle English Marian lyrics, and the *Vitae* or writings of various European female religious. Whether these texts are treated as sources or

⁵⁸ There is also no evidence that the text circulated in or near the West Midlands during the thirteenth century. André Wilmart affirms that the one surviving copy of the *Liber confortatorius* (London, British Library, MS Sloane 3103) was copied in the abbey of Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte in Coutances, and was moved from there at the end of the seventeenth century. See André Wilmart, 'Ève et Goscelin', *RB*, 1 (1938), 43-83 (especially 54-55).

⁵⁹ For dating of the surviving manuscripts and background to the text, see '*Cher alme*': *Texts of Anglo-Norman Piety*, ed. Tony Hunt and trans. Jane Bliss (Arizona, 2010), p. 181. Hunt and Bliss use the text of 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame' in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 374, with corrections from Cambridge, Emmanuel Coll., MS 106 (I. 4. 31); they date MS 374 to s.xiii², and MS 106 to s. xiv^m. See Hunt, ed. and Bliss, trans. (2010), p. 181. References are to this edition.

⁶⁰ See *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. Ruth J. Dean with Maureen B. M. Boulton (London, 1999), p. 479 (item 955).

analogues of the early English anchoritic texts will be clarified as the thesis progresses. The thesis also demonstrates interconnections between textual and visual imagery, especially in the unique ‘Christological Space’ created by church wall paintings.⁶¹

Affection: The Movement of the Soul

At the heart of this thesis lies an analysis of the anchoress’ affections, and before progressing any further it is essential to define what is meant by ‘affection’. The earliest recorded instance of ‘affectiun’ in the English language is found in *Ancrene Wisse* itself.⁶² But in this text, ‘affectiun’ narrowly defines a step in the movement of the soul towards sin.⁶³ Both instances near the end of Part IV refer to one of the three stages in the soul’s progression to sin as identified by the author in following Bernard of Clairvaux:⁶⁴

Ah þet understondeð wel, þet þreo degrez beoð þrin, as Seint Beornard witneð. Þe forme is cogitatiun; þe oþer is affectiun; þe þridde is cunsence. Cogitatiuns beoð fleoninde þohtes, þe ne leasteð nawt, ant teo, as Sein Beornard seið, ne hurteð nawt te sawle; ah þah ha bispottið hire wið hare blacke speckes swa þet nis ha nawt wurde þet Iesu hire leofmon, þet is al feier, bicluppe hire ne cusse hire ear ha beo iwesschen. [...] Affectiun is hwen þe þoht geað inward, ant delit kimeð up, ant te lust waxeð; þenne as wes spot ear upon þe hwhite hude, þer waxeð wunde ant deopeð in toward te sawle efter þet te lust geað, ant te delit þrin, forðre ant forðre. [...] Cunsence, þet is skiles 3ettunge, hwen þe delit i þe lust is igan se ouerforð þet ter nere nan wiðseggunge 3ef þer were eise to fulle þe dede.
(109-110: 1571-1587)

⁶¹ ‘Christological Space’ is Ellen Ross’s phrase. See Ellen M. Ross, *The Grief of God: Images of the Suffering Jesus in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1997), p. 53.

⁶² See *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, pp. 17 and 310.

⁶³ See *Concordance to Ancrene Wisse*, p. 8.

⁶⁴ Regarding the author’s source, Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, notes that ‘the idea occurs more than once in Bernard of Clairvaux’s works, and is summed up in *Sermones de diversis, Sermo 6* (193: 4/ 1572).

‘Affectiun’ (*affectio*) defines the second stage, where the sinful desire deepens, going progressively further into the soul. It seems to be associated with *delectatio*, since it involves pleasurable concentration on sin whilst not yet allowing the soul to move to the next and final stage, ‘cunsence’.⁶⁵ Consent defines the moment when mortal sin is engendered within the soul. Once the reason (‘skile’) has surrendered to the pleasurable desire, the devil can make the mortal blow: ‘þenne leapeð he to þe stod ear feorren-to, ant bit deaðes bite o Godes deore spuse’ (110: 1591-1592).

The definition of ‘affection’ in this thesis does not correspond to the *Ancrene Wisse*-author’s. This thesis accepts a dating of *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* to the first thirty years of the thirteenth century.⁶⁶ As such, the texts would have been composed before the late-thirteenth-century drive to form a clear and unified taxonomy of the affect, inspired by the propagation of Aristotelian translations. The anchoritic texts were composed before ‘[...] the native medieval tradition stemming from Augustine, supplemented by medical information from the Arabic commentators, were combined to produce a unique and comprehensive theory of the emotions [...] given its highest expression by Thomas Aquinas’.⁶⁷ Accordingly, this thesis uses the term ‘affection’ expansively, based on the Latin

⁶⁵ For more on *delectatio*, and the ‘first movements’ of sin, see Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 178-180.

⁶⁶ See ns 24 and 33 above.

⁶⁷ Peter King, ‘Emotions in Medieval Thought’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford, 2010), pp. 167-187 (p. 174). This is not to suggest that there were no taxonomies for the affect prior to Aquinas (see subsequent footnote).

affectus/affectio/affectiones.⁶⁸ P. Pourrat in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* examines

affectio as a penetration into and movement of the soul:

Affection, du latin *affectio* qui signifie disposition de l'âme, derive d'*afficio affici*, être pénétré d'un sentiment agréable ou pénible. Selon quelques auteurs spirituels, *affection* viendrait d'affectionner, s'attacher à ce qui plaît.⁶⁹

(Affection, of the Latin *affectio* which signifies the disposition of the soul, derives from *afficio affici*, to be penetrated by a pleasant or punishing emotion. According to several spiritual authors, *affection* perhaps came from '*affectionner*', to attach oneself to that which pleases).

Pourrat offers an invaluable compendium of the 'species' of affections, clarifying that the various species are born from virtues.⁷⁰ But the greatest cause of affections is 'l'amour divin' (divine love), since, Pourrat clarifies:

L'affection, c'est le mouvement de l'âme qui se porte vers ce qu'elle aime[.]

(Affection is the movement of the soul, which carries itself towards that which it loves).⁷¹

⁶⁸ Knuuttila (2004) has investigated the various taxonomies developed to understand the affect and its *affectiones*. Renevey expounds a key twelfth-century model for understanding the *affectus* and its *affectiones*: '*Affectus, ratio and memoria* are the three parts of the soul. The *affectus* can give birth to four different *affectiones*: *amor, timor, gaudium and tristitia*': Denis Renevey, *Language, Self and Love: Hermeneutics in the Writings of Richard Rolle and the Commentaries on the Song of Songs* (Cardiff, 2001), p. 36. Renevey notes a blurring of the boundary between *affectus* and *amor* in Aelred's work (pp. 36-37). It is a fluidity of definition born from the phenomenon of 'affection' itself. As put by P. Pourrat, 'Dans toute affection, on peut dire, il y a une part d'amour' (in all affection, one could say, there is a dimension of love). P. Pourrat, 'Affections', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité: ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, ed. Marcel Viller et al, 17 Vols, I (Paris, 1937), 235-240 (238).

⁶⁹ Pourrat (1937), 235.

⁷⁰ Penitence, for example, 'est particulièrement fertile en affections' (is particularly fertile in affections), including contrition, horror of sin, regret for the past, among others. See Pourrat (1937), 237.

⁷¹ Affections can also come from 'the study of Christian doctrine'; Pourrat labels these as affections of a 'caractère dogmatique' (dogmatic nature). Furthermore, affections can be inspired by a text from Office and Mass, giving birth to 'affections liturgiques' ('liturgical' affections), especially found in the Benedictine school. See Pourrat (1937), 238.

As Renevey puts it — in an assertion based particularly on his studies of Augustine, Richard of Saint-Victor († 1173), and Aelred— the *affectus* is understood in texts of medieval Latin as the movement of the soul, or ‘the way by which the soul is touched’.⁷² *Affectus* is not separate from cognitive processes; the modern polarisation of ‘emotion’ versus ‘reason’ is untenable in a medieval context.⁷³ Geoffrey Shepherd has drawn attention to this well-attested fact:

Affectus is not an exact equivalent of the modern ‘emotion’, if we think of emotion as a spontaneous, instinctive reaction to sensations of pleasure or pain, isolated from mental activities such as thinking and willing. Love as one of the *affectus* is itself ‘an appetite of the will’, the directing of the whole self to what is desired. [...] Love was not merely a passion or a reflex, it was also the product of the conscious will. Man could love God if he would.⁷⁴

It is difficult to disentangle the anchoress’ affective and cognitive processes. In the early Middle English anchoritic texts, ‘poht’ processes are not purely cognitive acts in the way a modern reader might understand ‘thinking’.⁷⁵ The command ‘penche’ is used in Part IV of *Ancrene Wisse* to stimulate meditation, as will be examined in Chapter 2. Its closest equivalent in Latin is the imperative *Cogita*, which is not a superficial, quick thinking, but rather a long, drawn-out process of affective absorption. In the *Liber confortatorius*, Goscelin gives Eva the command *Cogita*, to

⁷² Renevey (2001), pp. 36-37.

⁷³ The inseparability of ‘emotion’ and ‘cognitive procedure’ is also becoming more pronounced in modern theory of emotion, opposing the influential James-Lange theory. See, in particular, R. C. Solomon, ‘Emotions, Thoughts and Feelings: Emotions as Engagements with the World’, in *Thinking About Feeling: Contemporary Philosophers on Emotions*, ed. R. C. Solomon (Oxford, 2004), pp. 76-88.

⁷⁴ Shepherd, ed. (1972), p. liii.

⁷⁵ For more on this in the context of monastic cultivation of meditational prayer, see Carruthers (1990), pp. 200-201.

think upon Christ's lovability (106). Aelred gives his sister an identical command, *Cogita*, though here to think of St Agnes as protection against temptation (652). In the Anglo-Norman text 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame', Mary asks the women to think devotedly on the bitterness caused by separation from the chaste spouse. The command is 'think devotedly, recollect intently in your hearts':

Pensez, dames, devotement, recuiliez ententivement en vos quors cume est amere chose al quor de sei deseverer de celui a ki vus estes espusees par le non de chasteté.
(p. 182)

(Think, ladies, devotedly, recollect intently in your hearts how bitter a thing to the heart it is to be severed from him to whom you are espoused by the name of chastity.)

The anchoress' remembrance is a significant resource in the nurturance of affective pain. Goscelin emphasizes the importance of their shared *memoria* in Eva's evolution as an anchoress and Christ's bride (44). Memories are inextricably linked with images in medieval cultures; in turn, memory and affective activity are bound with one another, and are at the heart of meditational creativity.⁷⁶ The term 'munegunge', deriving from Old English, is a precious reservoir in which the anchoress reaches to develop intimacy with Christ.⁷⁷ In *Ureisun of God*, the remembrance of Christ's 'god deden' occurs in conjunction with an imagined kissing of the Lamb (fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 79-82). Additionally, 'munegunge' is linked to intimate experience of Christ's sweetness in the opening lines of *Be Wohunge of ure Lauerd*: 'Sweter is munegunge of þe þen mildeu o muðe.' (fol. 127rb; p. 20, ll. 3-5),

⁷⁶ Carruthers (1990), pp. 17-18, 200-201. See also Anna Maria Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory* (Berkeley, 2005), pp. 198-199.

⁷⁷ For a list of occurrences, see *Concordance to Ancrene Wisse*, p. 526, and *Concordances to the Katherine Group and the Wooing Group* (2000), p. 882.

inspired by the hymn *Dulcis Iesu memoria*.⁷⁸ As will be discussed in Chapter 2, the anchoress' remembrance of Christ brings her closer to his sweetness and his pain.

Suffering and Language

Ancrene Wisse, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* are used in this thesis as a prism through which to understand the anchoresses' suffering; and yet the texts were not written by them, nor is there any evidence of a thirteenth-century anchoress' response in marginal annotations of the manuscripts containing the texts. As Esther Cohen has said of the study of pain in medieval culture, there is a 'multitude of sufferers whose voices we cannot hear across the chasm of the ages', sufferers who 'can be perceived only through the writings of those who told them how to behave, what to believe, how to relieve pain, and how to suffer it in an appropriate manner'.⁷⁹ However, anchoresses are not passive readers. Male author and female reader engage with one another through the texts to formulate a language that explains, evokes, and attempts to express suffering.

As observed earlier in this introduction, affections are understood and felt in a particular language. Yet affective and physical suffering is also characterized by its inexpressibility in language. In a Kristevan context, sorrow and anguish are incompatible with language in a depressed person. For Julia Kristeva's sufferer, language is 'dead'—an unreachable realm situated on the other side of a 'gulf', an

⁷⁸ Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1968), p. 174. See also Renevey (1993), p. 84, n. 55.

⁷⁹ Esther Cohen, *The Modulated Scream: Pain in Late Medieval Culture* (Chicago, 2010), p. 3.

‘alien skin’.⁸⁰ And for Elaine Scarry, extreme physical pain ‘does not simply resist language but actively destroys it’.⁸¹ Both modern theorists are right to stress the ultimate ineffability, in human language, of pain: as will be seen, twelfth- and thirteenth-century devotional texts in Middle English, Anglo-Norman, and Latin frequently draw attention to their failure to express suffering. But Scarry’s distinction between physical and what she terms ‘psychological’ pain (‘affective pain’ in this thesis) is problematic. She suggests that whilst it is impossible to ‘objectify’ physical pain, psychological pain is entirely expressible.⁸² The texts studied in this thesis disprove such a distinction, revealing that extreme affective pain also resists and destroys language.

Despite the medieval awareness of pain’s resistance to linguistic expression, and despite the fact that the anchoresses are not the authors, *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* remain valuable tools in the anchoress’ discernment and stimulation of her pain. Through these texts, the anchoress learns to understand and shape the nature of her suffering; she stimulates her pain, and nurtures a multifaceted ‘affective literacy’. To demonstrate twelfth- and thirteenth-century authors’ preoccupation with affective pain in the anchoritic life, and the anchoresses’ use of texts to discern and evoke this pain, it will be useful to look briefly at two anchoritic guidance texts: Goscelin’s *Liber confortatorius* and Aelred’s *De institutione inclusarum*. Both authors construct affective vocabularies intended for use

⁸⁰ *Soleil noir: dépression et mélancolie* (Mayenne, 1987); see especially pp. 13, 64-65. Leon S. Roudiez’s translation of ‘alien skin’ for Kristeva’s ‘peau étrangère’ is adopted here: *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (NY, 1989), p. 53. This thesis does not share Kristeva’s focus on emotional pathology, however.

⁸¹ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (NY, 1985), p. 4.

⁸² Scarry (1985), p. 11.

by Eva and Aelred's unnamed sister, among the other anchoresses who possibly benefited from Aelred's guide.

In his *Liber confortatorius*, Goscelin is preoccupied with the affective delectability and agony that characterizes Eva's anchoritic existence. He recalls the ceremony of Eva becoming a nun:

Deinde cum pontifex noster fumigans thimiamaterium infererret sic cantando: *Dirigatur oratio me sicut incensum in conspectu tuo*, quid tunc infudi pectori tuo? <<Tali>> inquam, <<exemplor debes intrare coram Domino, non sensu frigido, non pectore uacuo, sed cum incensu amoris flagrantissimo, cum ignito uirtutum odoramento. Hinc angelo habenti thuribulum aureum data sunt incensa multa, id est innumera piarum mentium uota et suspiria, que angelica manu oblata ascendunt ad Dominum ut fumus aromatum, ab estu et ebullitione lacrimarum.>>

(28)

(Then, when our bishop with smoking censer came in, thus singing: *Direct my prayer just as incense in your gaze*, what was it then that I infused into your breast? 'This', I said, 'is exemplary of how you must enter before the Lord, not with a cold sense, nor a vacant breast, but with kindled love aflame, with the perfume of virtues carrying fire. From here the angel who has this golden thurible is given many incenses, which are the innumerable prayers and sighs of devout minds, which the angelic hand offers, ascending, to God like aromatic smoke, from the boiling and bubbling of tears.')

This passage crystallizes the affective sensitivity Eva must cultivate as a nun, no doubt intensified as an enclosed anchoress: she must not be affectively cold ('sensu frigido') or have a vacant breast ('pectore uacuo'). She must, rather, be set aflame with love ('incensu amoris flagrantissimo'); the angel carries such burning wishes and sighs (*uotum, suspiria*), with boiling and bubbling tears ('estu et ebullitione lacrimarum'). Goscelin's awareness of Eva's sensitivity to affective pain continues well into the first book. Her heart is the cradle of love ('caritatis cubile'): her *cor* forms the central tool of the anchoritic existence, nurturing the *caritas* within, for and

in Christ. The wealth of affections becomes a tempest inside her ('affectuum tempestas' (42)).

In Book III, Goscelin refers to the anchoress' active affective stirrings:

[...] effunde animam tuam Domino per alta desideria et anhela. Et sufficiat tibi omnia uno uerbo ex intimo petere: *Veniant mihi miserationes tue et uiuam. Viuat anima mea et laudabit te.* Et pro aliquo intimo: *Fac cum seruo tuo, Domine, secundum misericordiam tuam.* Plura dice corde et desideriiis uociferis.
(83)

(Pour out your soul to the Lord through deep desires and gasps. And it is sufficient for you to [ask for] all with one word from the most intimate (parts) of your chest: *Come to me your mercies and I shall live. My soul shall live and shall praise you.* And for someone close to you: *Do with your servant, Lord, according to your mercy.* Say more with your heart and vociferous desires.)

The soul here is a liquid that can be poured out ('effunde animam tuam'). Profound desires and sighs ('alta desideria et anhela') emanate from the depths of the pourable soul, though here expressed with the generic term 'chest' ('ex intimo petere'). The words of prayer only express a small fraction of the anchoress' 'tempest of affections'; her heart and 'desideriis uociferis' will say significantly more. Goscelin expands on the agony of Eva's vocation in Book IV:

Habes magnam materiam lacrimarum. Omne seculi gaudium exclusum, elongata turba propinquorum et amicorum, Christo pupilla relictas es, ut in eo de ciuilitate et de contubernio sanctorum angelorum exultes. Hinc in spiritu humilitatis et in animo contrito immola te Deo sacrificium, quia sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus. In spiritu, inquam humilitatis et in animo contrito seruiens Domino in timore, et exultans ei cum tremore, totis desideriorum suspiriis cor tuum in Deo salutari tuo effunde, totis uisceribus illum concupisce, illum concipe, illum amplectere. Cogita quam dulcis, quam suauis, quam benignus, quam mitis, quam mansuetus, quam tractabilis, quam amabilis [...]
(106)

(You have great material of tears. All the worldly joy has been excluded; the tumult of neighbours and loved ones is far away. You have been abandoned as

Christ's orphan girl, in order that in him you may exult with your companion citizens and the holy angels. Henceforth in the spirit of humility and in a contrite soul immolate yourself as a sacrifice to God, because a crushed spirit is a sacrifice to God. In spirit which is in humility and in a contrite soul serve the Lord in fear, and exult him with trembling. Pour out your heart with all the sighs of your desires in God, your salvation. With all your insides desire him, conceive him, embrace him. Meditate on how sweet, how charming, how kind, how mild, how gentle, how tractable, how lovable he is [...]

Tears are created from materials ('materiam lacrimarum'), materials that are in themselves affective, namely the absence of earthly joy ('seculi gaudium'). From this basis of suffering, Eva nurtures a contrite soul ('animo contrito'), fear (*timor*), and all her possible desires ('totis desideriorum'), in an existence defined by her sighs (*suspirii*). There are three stages to her love of God, expressed with three distinct verbs: desiring (expressed through the sexually charged verb *concupiscere*), conceiving (*concipere*) and embracing (*amplectere*). These actions are achieved by all her insides ('totis uisceribus'). Like the liquescent soul of the earlier passage, her heart is here invoked as an entity that can be poured out ('cor tuum [...] effunde').

In Aelred's *De institutione inclusarum* also, the heart is an entity that can be poured, imaged as the alabaster box which Lazarus' sister Mary breaks upon Jesus' head (Mark 14:3):

Gaude, quaeso, huic interesse conuiuio; singulorum distingue officia: Martha ministrabat, discumbit Lazarus, ungit Maria. Hoc ultimum tuum est. Frange igitur alabastrum cordis tui, et quidquid habes deuotionis, quicquid amoris, quidquid desiderii, quidquid affectionis, totum effunde super Sponsi tui caput, adorans in Deo hominem, et in homine Deum.

(667)

(Be joyful, I beg you, to participate in this feast. Distinguish the office of each one: Martha was serving, Lazarus was reclining, Mary was anointing with oil. This last is yours. Break, therefore, the alabaster of your heart, and whatever devotion you have, whatever love, whatever desire, whatever affection, pour it all on your Bridegroom's head, adore the man in God, and the God in man.)

Her heart becomes a material substance: she owns an alabaster heart (*alabastrum cordis*), which, when broken, pours forth (*effundere*) her love (*amoris*), her desires (*desiderii*), and her affections (*affectionis*). And as Aelred states unequivocally, this is the anchoress' office (*officium*). The anchoress' soul responds to Christ's affections in a multitude of ways:

Quotiens prae timore arescenti pius consolator astat, quotiens aestuanti prae amore ipse se tuis uisceribus infundebat, quotiens psallentem uel legentem spiritalium sensuum lumine illustrabat, quotiens orantem in quoddam ineffabile desiderium sui rapiebat, quotiens mentem tuam a terrenis subtractam ad caelestes delicias et paradisiacas amoenitates transportabat.
(676)

(How often he stood before [you], dried up by fear, with gentle consolation; how often he infused himself into your insides, when you were burning with love; how often he illumined you with the light of spiritual sense [or, feeling] when you were singing Psalms or reading; how often he carried you off with a certain ineffable desire for himself when you were praying; how often he carried away your mind from the things of the earth, and transported you to celestial delights and the charms of Paradise.)

She is observed in many affective stirrings here: she can be dried up by fear ('timore arescenti'), inflamed with love ('aestuanti prae amore'), and at peace while praying or reading. Christ pours himself into her insides ('uisceribus infundebat'), he takes the anchoress into an ineffable longing or desire ('ineffabile desiderium') during her prayer, and he transports (*transportare*) her mind (*mens*) upwards away from the Earth's territory to 'caelestes delicias et paradisiacas amoenitates'.

Unlike Martha, the anchoress' role is to nourish (*nutricare*) her affections (*affectio*) by Christ's feet beside the Magdalene (660). The anchoress accompanies the Magdalene to Christ's tomb, where both enter an unspeakable realm of affective pain, based on John 20:

[...] nunc ipsum Iesum Mariam flentem et tristem tam dulci reficientem oculo, tam suaui uoce dicentem: *Maria*, Quid hac uoce dulcius? Quid suauius? Quid iucundius? *Maria*: rumpantur ad hanc uocem omnes capitis cataractae, ab ipsis medullis eliciantur lacrymae, singultus atque suspira ab imis trahantur uisceribus. *Maria*: o beata, quid tibi mentis fuit, quid animi, cum ad hanc uocem te prosterneres, et reddens uicem salutanti inclamares: *Rabbi*. Quo rogo affectu, quo desiderio, quo mentis ardore, qua deuotione cordis clamasti: *Rabbi*. Nam plura dicere lacrymae prohibent, cum uocem occludat affectus, omnesque animae corporisque sensus nimius amor absorbeat.
(672)

([...] now Jesus himself restores Mary, weeping and sorrowful, with such a sweet eye, [and] with such a charming voice says: *Mary*. What is sweeter than this voice? What more charming? What more joyful? *Mary*: at this voice may the waterfall crash, by it may the marrow of tears be drawn out, sobs and sighs hauled from your deepest insides. *Mary*: O blessed one, what was your mind, what was your soul, when to this voice you prostrated yourself, and to answer the greeting cried out: *Master*? I ask you, what affection, what desire, what ardour of mind and devotion of the heart when you clamoured: *Master*. Tears prohibit any more to be said, when all affections occlude the voice, and the feeling of soul and body are overwhelmed by excessive love.)

There is a surfeit of affective pain in this encounter, experienced by Aelred, the anchoress, the Magdalene, or all three. Aelred and the recluse search desperately for Mary's affective response, attempting to recreate and relive it. Floods of tears ('lacrimaris'), sobs ('singultus') and sighs ('suspira') emanate from the anchoress' insides—her insides again defined by the term *uisceris*. They attempt to unlock the Magdalene's mind (*mens*) and soul (*anima*). The terms of Mary's affective response are studied: her affection (*affectus*), her desire (*desiderium*), her mind's fervour (*mentis ardore*), and heart's devotion (*deuotione cordis*). As this search for the Magdalene's affective response continues, the affective pain reaches a point of excess. The voice and soul are silenced by the *affectus*, and the body is desensitised by an excess of love (*amor*). Trying to reconstruct the Magdalene's affective response in this encounter, Aelred finds he cannot. The capacity for verbal expression returns,

however, as Christ bars the Magdalene and the anchoress from touching him (John 20:17):⁸³

Noli, inquit, *me tangere*. O uerbum durum, uerbum intolerabile: *Noli me tangere*. Vt quid, Domine? Quare non tangam? Desiderata illa uestigia tua pro me perforata clauis, perfusa sanguine, non tangam, non deosculabor? An immitior es solito, quia gloriosior? Ecce non dimittam te, non recedam a te, non parcam lacrymis, pectus singultibus suspiriisque rumpetur, nisi tangam. (672)

(*Do not*, he says, *touch me*. Oh harsh word, intolerable word: *Do not touch me*. What is this Lord? Why may I not touch you? Those desired feet of yours which for me were perforated with nails, perfused with blood: may I not touch them, may I not kiss them? Are you less intimate than is your habit, because you are more glorious? Behold! I will not release you, I will not withdraw from you, I will not refrain from crying, sobs and sighs will rupture my chest unless I touch you.)

The Magdalene and the anchoress both desire tactile contact with Christ's feet. When denied, the affective pain again begins to accumulate in the form of tears (*lacrymae*), sobs (*singultus*), and sighs (*suspirii*), potentially causing a physical rupture in the chest (*pectus*). The anchoress reading *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* nourishes affective stirrings as sophisticated as Aelred's sister and Eva, as this thesis will now reveal. It will begin with an assessment of the cognitive self-examination, and the affective and physical pain, at the core of the anchoress' penitence in *Ancrene Wisse*.

⁸³ Elizabeth Robertson is developing a project on touch in the *Ancrene Wisse* Group, connected with paintings depicting the John 20:17 biblical episode: 'Noli me Tangere: The Enigma of Touch in Middle English Religious Literature and Art', paper presented to the Medieval English Research Seminar at the University of Oxford (April 2012).

Chapter 1

Under the Black Cross:

The Language of Penitential Suffering in

Ancrene Wisse

For the anchoress who read *Ancrene Wisse*, penitence was the essence of her existence.¹ Her penitence did not involve a solely body-based suffering: the penitential processes required both physical and affective pain, in addition to a confessional performance underpinned by a range of cognitive and affective phenomena.² Recent scholarship on *Ancrene Wisse* has highlighted the fact that the anchoress' penitence was not confined to bodily discipline. As Cate Gunn has remarked: 'It is the heart, not merely the outer garments, that must be torn.' And as Robert Hasenfratz points out: 'education, and not literal mortification or deadening is the goal'.³ Chapter 1 of this thesis investigates the multidimensionality of the anchoress' penitential processes as revealed in *Ancrene Wisse*. In its first part, the

¹ The term 'penance' refers to penance as sacrament, whilst the term 'penitence' is separate from any sacramental overtones. Nonetheless, the two terms are used interchangeably in this thesis, given the uncertain status of penance as a sacrament in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

² As discussed in the introduction, it is not possible to straightforwardly distinguish 'cognitive' and 'affective' phenomena. However, the term 'cognitive' is used in addition to 'affective' in this chapter, in order to more fully capture medieval authors' understanding of the self-examination involved in confessional preparation— a methodical and meticulous process.

³ Cate Gunn, *Ancrene Wisse: From Pastoral Literature to Vernacular Spirituality* (Cardiff, 2008), p. 105; and Robert Hasenfratz, "'Efter hire euene": Lay Audiences and the Variable Asceticism of *Ancrene Wisse*', in *Anchorites, Wombs and Tombs*, ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy and Mari Hughes Edwards (Cardiff, 2005), pp. 145-160 (p. 149).

chapter examines the twelfth- and thirteenth-century climate of penitential and sermonic material and practice, assessing Latin and Anglo-Norman confessional manuals, and the Lambeth and Trinity homilies.⁴ There is an emphasis in this material not only on physical self-mortification, but also on the range of cognitive and affective phenomena crucial to the successful enactment of confession and satisfaction. Subsequently, the chapter turns to *Ancrene Wisse*, examining this multilayered penitence in the diction and imagery of the text.

I. The Penitential Climate of *Ancrene Wisse*

The Multidimensionality of Penance

By the early thirteenth century, three dimensions were recognised in the penitential processes: contrition (*contritio cordis*), confession (*confessio oris*), and satisfaction (*satisfactio operis*), each to combat the three modes of offence: the heart, speech, and deed. Peter Lombard (c. 1110-60) reproduces this tripartite model in his *Sententiae*.⁵ It is a model also found in the Dominican Paul of Hungary's *Summa de penitentia* (c. 1219-21), and the later work of the Dominican Raymund Pennaforte (c. 1180-1275).⁶

⁴ This resonates with the work on *Ancrene Wisse*'s relationship to contemporary sermon and pastoral literature by Bella Millett and Gunn. Such an emphasis is evident throughout Millett's research, but is crystallized in her survey chapter: 'The *Ancrene Wisse* Group', in *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 1-17; and Gunn (2008).

⁵ Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, 2 Vols (Rome, 1981), I, 336.

⁶ Paul of Hungary, *Summa*, *Bibliotheca Casinensis* iv (Monte Cassino, 1880), p. 197b. Raymund Pennaforte, *Summa de paenitentia*, ed. Xaverio Ochoa and Aloisio Diez, excerpted in *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales*, 2 Vols, I, ed. Robert M. Correale and Mary Hamel (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 529-611 (p. 547); all subsequent references are to this edition. For the full text, see *Summa de poenitentia et matrimonio, gum glossis Ionannis de Friburgo* (Hants, 1967); the reference to the

Contrition acquires a specialised meaning in the thirteenth century, narrowly defining the perfect sorrow that facilitates sin-remission.⁷ In differentiating *contritio cordis* and *satisfactio operis*, a distinction was made between ‘interior penitence’ and ‘exterior penitence’. The former referred to the interior experience of contrition, whereas the latter defined the exterior acts done by the penitent as prescribed by a priest. This distinction is seen in Hugh of Saint-Victor’s (1096-1141) *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*: ‘Poenitentia alia est interior, alia exterior. Poenitentia exterior est in afflictione carnis. Poenitentia interior est in contritione cordis.’⁸ (One penitence is interior, another is exterior. Exterior penitence is in affliction of the flesh. Interior penitence is in contrition of the heart). The term *penitentia* was used for both physical and affective pain. As Mary C. Mansfield observes:

In medieval Latin, one word, *penitentia*, could mean both the sinner’s saving contrition and the satisfactory penalty imposed by the priest. English since the Reformation has distinguished between ‘doing penance’ and ‘being penitent’, but one word, *penitere*, covered both senses in Latin. Sometimes medieval writers applied the word *penitentia* to the whole process, sometimes to part of the process, but never argumentatively to exclude one aspect or the other.⁹

Within this, a threefold model for satisfaction came to the foreground, of fasting (*ieiunitas*), prayers (*oratio*), and alms (*helemosina*).¹⁰ But shame was also a

three-fold model is on p. 442. Paul entered the Order in 1219: see William A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order: Origins and Growth to 1500* (NY, 1965), 2 Vols, II, 238. As the third master general of the order, Pennaforte was at the core of the Dominican administrative infrastructures; see Hinnebusch (1965), I, 198, 224.

⁷ See Pierre Adnès, ‘Pénitence’, in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, ed. Viller et al, XII (1984), 943-1010 (971).

⁸ Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De sacramentis Christianiae fidei*, PL clxxvi, 554D-555A.

⁹ Mary C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, 1995), pp. 16-17.

¹⁰ See, for example, Robert of Flamborough, *Liber poenitentialis*, ed. J. J. Francis Firth (Toronto, 1971), Book IV, p. 200; and Thomas of Chobham, *Summa*

recognised aspect of satisfaction in twelfth-century theology— and inherent in confessional performance. For Peter Abelard, a ‘great part’ of satisfaction rests in humility (‘in humilitate confessionis magna pars agitur satisfactionis’), and confession naturally invokes fear and shame. For the Lombard, shame is ‘gravis poena’, quoting John Chrysostom to demonstrate this:¹¹

Confessio peccati pudorem habet, et ipsa erubescencia est gravis poena; ideoque iubemur confiteri peccata, ut erubescenciam patiamur pro poena: nam hoc ipsum pars est divini iudicii.

(Confession of sin involves shame, and this blushing itself is a grave penance; therefore we are ordered to confess sins, so that we may suffer reddening as a part of penance: for this itself is part of divine judgement.)

Debates on the sacramentality of penance are fundamental to this study in two ways. First, the fact that penance (and within it, confession) did not enjoy uncontested sacramental status in this period is reflected in a marginal annotation in *Ancrene Wisse*. Second, and more importantly, affective and physical pain—in the shape of contrition and satisfaction respectively—are both essential to the Lombard’s authoritative definition of penance as a sacrament, and may partly explain the significance given to both physical and affective pain in the anchoritic text.¹² Hugh of

confessorum, ed. F. Broomfield (Louvain, 1968), p. 9. See further n. 21 in this chapter.

¹¹ See *Sententiae*, II, 355; Peter Abelard, *Peter Abelard’s Ethics: An Edition with Introduction, English Translation and Notes*, ed. D. E. Luscombe (Oxford, 1971), p. 98. There were also three recognised species of penance by the early thirteenth century: solemn penance, non-solemn public penance, and private penance. However, Mansfield makes a strong case for solemn and nonsolemn public penance as ‘artificial intellectual constructs invented less to describe contemporary practice than to satisfy a desire for neatness and consistency’; and she demonstrates how avowedly ‘private’ penance was conducted in very public ways. Mansfield (1995), p. 92.

¹² It is clear that the *Ancrene Wisse*-author makes use of the Lombard’s corpus, as will be seen later in this chapter. For discussion of the importance of suffering to key scholastic debates, see Donald Mowbray, *Pain and Suffering in Medieval Theology: Academic Debates at the University of Paris in the Thirteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2009), especially his third chapter (pp. 61-80).

Saint-Victor famously fails to define penance as a sacrament in Book I, Part ix of *De sacramentis*, since, by his definition, a sacrament requires the presence of a ‘corporeal or material element’ (‘corporale vel materiate elementum’) for the senses, which ‘represents from likeness, and signifies from institution, and contains from sanctification in some way an invisible and spiritual grace’ (‘ex similitudine repraesentans, et ex institutione significans, et ex sanctificatione continens aliquam invisibilem et spiritalem gratiam’).¹³ The Lombard’s definition of penance as a sacrament excludes this ‘material element’.¹⁴ In distinctions xiv-xxii of Book IV of the *Sententiae* he offers two divergent sacramental definitions. The first is that exterior penance is the sign, the *sacramentum*, of interior penitence; interior penitence is the object, the *res*: ‘Quidam dicunt sacramentum hic esse quod exterius tantum geritur, scilicet exterior poenitentia, quae est signum interioris poenitentiae, scilicet contritionis cordis et humiliationis.’¹⁵ (Certain people say that a sacrament is only what is produced exteriorly, namely exterior penitence, which is the sign of interior penitence, namely contrition and humility of heart).

The second solution alters the position of interior penitence; here, it becomes both *sacramentum* and *res*. Interior penitence remains the *res* of exterior penitence, but is also the *sacramentum* of the remission of sin:

¹³ *PL* clxxvi, 317C-319A.

¹⁴ His categorisation of penance as a sacrament remained deeply influential until the sixteenth century; see Adnès (1984), p. 970. For the dates of the divergent recessions of the *Sententiae*, see Philipp W. Rosemann, *Peter Lombard* (NY, 2004), p. 55. For further discussion of Hugh’s and the Lombard’s sacramental definitions, see Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 93.

¹⁵ *Sententiae*, II, 389.

Quidam autem dicunt exteriorem poenitentiam et interiorem esse sacramentum: nec duo sacramenta, sed unum, ut species panis et vini non duo sunt sacramenta, sed unum. Et sicut in sacramento corporis, ita etiam in hoc sacramento dicunt aliud esse tantum sacramentum, scilicet exteriorem poenitentiam; aliud sacramentum et rem, scilicet interiorem poenitentiam; aliud rem et non sacramentum, scilicet remissionem peccatorum. Interior enim poenitentia et res est sacramenti, id est exterioris poenitentiae, et sacramentum remissionis peccati, quam et signat et facit. Exterior quoque poenitentia et interioris signum est et remissionis peccatorum.¹⁶

(Certain people, on the other hand, say that exterior and interior penitence are sacraments: not two sacraments, but one, as the appearance of bread and wine are not two sacraments, but one. And just as in the sacrament of the body, thus also in this sacrament they say one is only a sacrament, namely exterior penitence; one is sacrament and object, namely interior penitence; and one an object and not sacrament, namely the remission of sins. For interior penitence is object of the sacrament, namely of exterior penitence, and the sacrament of sin-remission, which it signifies and performs. Exterior penitence is the sign also [or, both] of interior penitence and the remission of sins.)

As such, the abolition of sin is only an object; interior penitence is both object and sign; and exterior penitence is only a sign, but for two tiers of object. This latter solution persists into Pennaforte's work a century later, where confession (rather than exterior penitence) is only sign, interior penitence (*contritio* in his terminology) is both signified and sign, and cleansing is the object: 'Confessio est signum tantum, scilicet, contritionis. Contritio est res et signum: res signi confessionis, signum mundationis. Mundatio est res signi tantum, scilicet, contritionis.' (Confession is only a sign, namely of contrition. Contrition is object and sign: object signified by confession, sign of cleansing. Cleansing is object of a sign only, namely of contrition (p. 553)).¹⁷

¹⁶ *Sententiae*, II, 389-390.

¹⁷ An additional complication in sacramental definitions was the refusal by many thinkers, even until the thirteenth century, to accept private penance as a sacrament. As Mansfield notes, these theologians 'did not elaborate their reasons for believing public penance more sacramental; it was something they simply assumed.' Mansfield (1995), p. 33.

The enforcement of confession, as decreed in Canon 21 of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), cannot be disentangled from the sacramental status of penance: both issues hinged on the level of sacerdotal power in absolving the penitent. Hugh violently disagrees with the Abelardian notion that absolution rests in contrition alone, insisting instead that confession of the mouth is a prerequisite.¹⁸ The Lombard does maintain that forgiveness comes solely from contrition and ‘humilitatem cordis’ (humility of heart), differentiating confession of the heart (*confessio cordis*) from confession of the mouth (*confessio oris*). However, he also makes clear that the Divine has endowed priests with the power of binding and loosing, and that if a priest is available, confession of the heart is insufficient to remit sins.¹⁹ By the time of *Ancrene Wisse*’s composition, post-1215, theological writings present all three dimensions to the penitential equation as integral to the whole process. Whilst confession was considered indispensable to erasure of sins, this was not to deny the necessity for genuine contrition of heart. Satisfaction also remained important in the early thirteenth century. Although Mansfield traces the dwindling significance of satisfaction over this century, and Nicole Bériou also postulates that outward acts of satisfaction become progressively more ‘discreet’, in the temporal scope of this thesis, satisfaction retains its powerful presence.²⁰

¹⁸ See *Ethics*, ed. Luscombe (1971), p. 100; and Hugh of Saint-Victor, *PL* clxxvi, 564D-570B.

¹⁹ Lombard, *Sententiae*, II, 345 and 351.

²⁰ Mansfield (1995), p. 66. Nicole Bériou, ‘Autour de Latran IV (1215): La naissance de la confession moderne et sa diffusion’, in *Pratiques de la confession: des Pères du désert à Vatican II: quinze études d’histoire* (Paris, 1983), pp. 73-93 (p. 81). Pierre-Marie Gy also highlights the complex ‘verbal coupling’ of hearing confession and imposing satisfaction, with the priest and penitent as interlocutors engaged in a self-conscious dialogue. Pierre-Marie Gy, ‘Les définitions de la confession après le quatrième concile du Latran’, in *L’Aveu: antiquité et moyen-âge* (Rome, 1986), pp. 283-296 (p. 288).

Latin ‘Penitential Literature’

The ‘tariff books’ of penances were not used after the twelfth century; these mechanical models could not accommodate the deepening focus in the penitential procedures on an array of cognitive and affective phenomena.²¹ This, coupled with the priest’s increasingly central role, instigated a demand for explicatory penitential literature. Admittedly, ‘penitential literature’ is a nebulous term, encompassing a spectrum of texts.²² But this chapter conflates all the texts into a category of ‘penitential / confessional literature’, since all would have contributed, however

²¹ ‘Tariff books’, popular in the twelfth century, were catalogues of sins with corresponding satisfactions, used as a basic list during confession: ‘A penitent would enumerate his sins to a priest, and in turn the priest would read the equivalent satisfaction from the list’. See Mary Flowers Braswell, *The Medieval Sinner: Characterization and Confession in the Literature of the English Middle Ages* (London, 1983), p. 24; see also p. 38. Early examples of the later, more complex form of penitential literature include the *Penitential* of Bartholomew Iscanus, Bishop of Exeter (1161-84), and Alain of Lille’s († 1200) *Liber poenitentialis* (c. 1175-1200). These were followed in the early thirteenth century by the *Liber poenitentialis* of Robert Flamborough, penitentiary at the Abbey of Saint-Victor (1210-1215), and the *Summa Confessorum* of Thomas Chobham, subdean of Salisbury (composed after 1214). See Pierre Michaud-Quantin, *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au moyen âge: xii-xvi siècles*, *Analecta Mediaevalia Namurcensia*, xiii (Louvain, 1962), 21, and Broomfield, ed. (1968), p. xxvi. Initially distinguishing between ‘civil’ and ‘ecclesiastical’ penance, Alain of Lille upends this distinction by suggesting that civil penances should more correctly be called penalties, whereas ecclesiastical satisfactions may be called ‘penitence’ (*poenitentia*), since they stem from interior penitence (‘ex interiori poenitentia’). He significantly aligns the term ‘penitence’ with ‘interiority’. Alain of Lille, *Liber poenitentialis*, ed. Jean Longère, *Analecta Mediaevalia Namurcensia*, xviii (Louvain, 1965), 130.

²² Leonard E. Boyle studies the intricate divisions in all forms of penitential literature during this period (‘*Summae confessorum*’, in *Les genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales: définition, critique et exploitation* (Louvain-le-Neuve, 1982), pp. 227-237). Boyle’s most productive distinction is between the academic texts—intended to educate the confessor not only in the sacrament of penance but also in wider doctrinal and canonical issues—and the more practical handbooks, teaching the priest how to manage the sacrament of penance in his day-to-day duties. J. Goering and P. J. Payer adopt these two distinct categories. (J. Goering and P. J. Payer, ‘The “Summa penitentie Fratrum Predicatorum”: A Thirteenth-Century Confessional Formulary’, *Mediaeval Studies*, lv (1993), 1-50 (3)). F. Broomfield distinguishes those texts that have a ‘legal bias in their treatment of the sacrament’ from confessional manuals (Broomfield, ed. (1968), p. xviii).

indirectly, to the anchoress' penitential existence. Given that much confessional material in the early thirteenth century was written in Latin, it is unlikely that the anchoress read it directly; rather, the confessor dedicated to her welfare would have communicated its matter to her. As Rotha Mary Clay, Ann K. Warren, and Patricia J. F. Rosolf all observe, the confessor was a crucial point of contact for the anchoress, with the bishop able to designate all responsibility to him.²³

As noted in the introduction, there is now a strong case for Dominican authorship of *Ancrene Wisse*. Leonard E. Boyle notes that by the early thirteenth century, the newly founded Dominican Order was a potent force in the production of his general category of 'summa poenitentia'.²⁴ Particular reference will be made in this chapter to Paul of Hungary's *Summa* (the first handbook on penance for the Order), the anonymous manual 'Cum ad sacerdotem', the *Confessio debet*, and the two most popular and widely influential texts containing material on penance, Pennaforte's *Summa de poenitentia et matrimonio* and William Peraldus' (c. 1190-1271) *Summa de virtutibus et vitiis*.²⁵ Two emphases are clear in this range of

²³ Clay and Rosolf also imply that the anchoress had some choice as to who fulfilled this vital role. See Rotha Mary Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London, 1914; repr. 1968), p. 76; Ann K. Warren, *Anchorites and their Patrons in Medieval England* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 53, 63, 265; and Patricia J. F. Rosolf, 'The Anchoress in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Medieval Religious Women II: Peaceweavers*, ed. Lillian Thomas Shark and John A. Nichols (Michigan, 1987), pp. 123-144 (p. 135).

²⁴ Boyle (1982), p. 233.

²⁵ On Paul of Hungary's work as the first Dominican handbook, see M. Michèle Mulchahey, *First the Bow is Bent in Study': Dominican Education Before 1350* (Toronto, 1998), p. 530. Pennaforte's *Summa* was written subsequent to his entrance to the Order, in 1223; see Gunn (2008), p. 121. On the enormous influence of Pennaforte's *Summa*, see Morton W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature* (Michigan, 1952), p. 124. See further Hinnebusch (1965), II, 248-251. On the glossing of Pennaforte's text, see Mulchahey (1998), p. 542, and Michaud-Quantin (1962) on William of Rennes' standard gloss, pp. 40-41. Peraldus

thirteenth-century Dominican material: the centrality of cognitive and affective phenomena to confessional performance, and the necessity of both physical and affective pain in the penitential processes.

Crucial to confession was the confessant's self-examination, a rigorous and methodical process guided by the confessor. The later-thirteenth-century Dominican manual *Summa penitentie fratrum Predicatorum*, 'Cum ad sacerdotem' instructs the confessor in questioning the penitent, frequently using short mnemonic verses, 'uersiculi', to imprint the information onto the learning confessor's memory.²⁶ After the confessor establishes the locality and exact status of the penitent, for which he is given meticulous guidelines, the penitent is invited to describe the sins in detail.²⁷ If the account is defective or insufficient, the confessor must harness his interrogative skills (ll. 58-60). The nature of this questioning, according to different schema, forms the main part of the manual. The first and dominant schema is that of the seven sins. After the second schema, according to the 'decem preceptis' (Ten Commandments), comes the third schema according to the 'quinque sensibus'.²⁸ This schema of the five senses is given less attention than the previous two. The writer quickly progresses

became prior of the Dominican convent in Lyons by 1261: see *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, ed. Simon Tugwell (New Jersey, 1982), p. 165; and Gunn (2008), p. 121.

²⁶ See Goering and Payer (1993), 6-7. Goering and Payer offer convincing grounds that it was written earlier rather than later in the century, given its inflexible view on marriage consent, and the glaring absence of any mention of Pennaforte's influential *Summa*. See Goering and Payer (1993), 10. As Mulchahey describes the history of this text, it disseminated 'fairly widely' within Dominican circles, and it is also likely to have served a pedagogical purpose for the friars. Mulchahey (1998), pp. 532-533.

²⁷ 'The "Summa penitentie Fratrum Predicatorum"' (1993), ll. 24-25; all subsequent references are to this edition.

²⁸ As Alexandra Barratt affirms, this schema of the Five Wits alongside the Seven Deadly Sins is 'common practice in the Middle Ages'. See Alexandra Barratt, 'The Five Wits and their Structural Significance in Part II of *Ancrene Wisse*', *Medium Ævum*, lvi (1987), 12-24 (15-17).

through sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch, and briefly notes the sins that could be committed through them; ‘visu’ and ‘tactu’ (sight and touch) are particularly related to illicit enjoyment of female bodies (ll. 214-27). Two further schema are given brief treatment: sins of omission, and the sins in the exterior versus the interior man (ll. 231-8, 261-4). The inclusion of sins of omission in this manual indicates the centrality of human consent to the process of sin, and thus to confession. As is well-known, the basic premise of Peter Abelard’s *Ethica* is that sin is only formed when consent takes place:

Nichil ergo ad augmentum peccati pertinet qualiscumque operum executio, et nichil animam nisi quod ipsius est coinquinat, hoc est consensus quem solummodo peccatum esse diximus, non uoluntatem eum precedentem uel actionem operis subsequentem.²⁹

(Therefore, the execution of the deeds extends nothing whatsoever to the increase of sin, and nothing pollutes the soul except itself, that is consent which alone we call sin, not the will that precedes it, nor the subsequent enactment of the deeds.)

Like ‘Cum ad sacerdotem’, the mid-thirteenth-century *Confessio debet* reveals the inescapability of thorough self-examination.³⁰ It begins with a statement on the ten necessary qualities of confession, in a mnemonic rhyme.³¹ From this, the text progresses to the questions the priest should ask according to the seven sins (53-56). The next section establishes the questions according to the five senses. Here, the

²⁹ See *Ethics*, ed. Luscombe (1971), pp. 22-24. From this foundation, the modern scholar Odon Lottin rationalizes the certainty of ‘sin’ in sins of omission (see his *Morale fondamentale* (Paris, 1954), p. 479).

³⁰ It originated from an earlier work by the controversial Hugh of Saint-Cher (c. 1200-63), the first Dominican cardinal; see Hinnebusch (1965), I, 233. On Hugh’s controversiality within the Dominican order, see Hinnebusch (1965), I, 234, 391. Initially a digression in Hugh’s commentary on the *Sentences*, it was excerpted and adapted by a redactor, possibly ‘one of Hugh’s confreres at St. Jacques’: Mulchahey (1998), pp. 539-540.

³¹ Pierre Michaud-Quantin, ‘Deux formulaires pour la confession du milieu de xiii^e siècle’, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, xxxi (1964), 43-62 (52); all subsequent references are to this edition.

priest's questions pertain to a spectrum of possible sins occurring on the site of the human senses: relishing the sight of beautiful women, listening to rumours and backbiting, taking pleasure in the appetising smells of food, and over-indulging in the taste of food (56-57). The sense of touch is left unexplored, possibly due to an error by the redactor or a common manuscript ancestor with this defect, as Pierre Michaud-Quantin suggests (45). It is unlikely that the redactor intentionally omits the sense of touch in a manual of this nature.

The affective stirring of 'sorrow' more broadly, and *contritio cordis* more specifically, is a vital component to penitence in this Dominican literature. The legalistic nature of Pennaforte's *Summa* does not stifle the affective core of penitence in his text.³² In the extensive final chapter of Book III, 'De paenitentiis & remissionibus' (Chapter xxxiv), penance is defined as lamentation so as not to re-commit sin (pp. 543-545). Pennaforte underscores the 'passive' and 'active' effects of contrition:

Passive, quia totum cor ad litteram quasi teritur et scinditur prae nimia angustia, dolore, ira et indignatione quae concepit contra ipsa peccata. [...] Active, quia ista tamquam fortissima machina conterit congeriem peccatorum quae, quasi quidam murus separabant nos a Deo.
(p. 551)

(Passive, because the whole heart is literally ground and torn apart because of much anguish, sorrow, anger and indignation which has formed against the sins themselves. [...] Active, because that way, like a very strong machine, it crumbles the accumulation of sins, which, like a kind of wall, would separate us from God.)

³² Mulchahey and Gunn rightly note the 'legalistic approach' and 'legalistic tone' of Pennaforte's *Summa*. See Gunn (2008), p. 121; and Mulchahey (1998), p. 537.

Both these passive and active effects are characterized by their potency and violence, destroying the sin prior to any exterior act of satisfaction.

And satisfaction is itself envisaged by Pennaforte as being both physical and affective in nature. Although Pennaforte defines the external acts of penance / ‘satisfactio’ by the quintessential three-fold model of prayer, fasting, and the giving of alms (reproduced in ‘Cum ad sacerdotem’ (ll. 250-256)), he suggests an alternative two-fold model: giving alms and tormenting the flesh. It is in this two-fold model that an easy separation of ‘physical’ and ‘affective’ suffering becomes difficult. There are three kinds of alms: contrition of heart, compassion for one’s neighbour, and donation of material support. The first kind is the greatest, Pennaforte says, for by it one offers oneself as a ‘holocaustum’ (‘burnt offering’) to God (p. 557).³³ Prayer and fasting are placed together as torments of the flesh, along with vigils and tribulations. He defines three kinds of fasts: from material food, from temporal joy, and from deadly sin. It is this multidimensional model of fasting that is truly effective, Pennaforte argues:

Et hoc triplici jejunio debemus castigare jumentum nostrum. Parum enim prodest jejunare a cibo nisi jejunetur a peccato.
(p. 559)

(And with this triple fasting we must castigate our beast of burden. Truly, it is insufficient benefit to fast from food and not to fast from sin.)

Finally, ‘flagellis’ entail four dimensions. The first is in ‘the arms of penitence, namely in ashes, hairshirt and tears’ (‘armis paenitentialibus scilicet, in cinere, cilico, et lacrimis’); second, in beating one’s chest, genuflexions, and disciplines (‘pectoris tusione, jugi genuflexione, et disciplines’); the third in ‘afflictione peregrinationis’

³³ This understanding of ‘alms’ is not original to Pennaforte, as it is also seen in the Lombard’s *Sententiae* (II, 330).

(affliction of exile [or, pilgrimage]); fourth, in tribulations and affliction of sickness ('tribulatione', 'aegritudinis afflictione'), the sort of flagellation endured by Job ('qualia flagella sustinuit Job' (p. 561)). For Pennaforte, physical and affective suffering are so deeply intertwined that they cannot be separated in penitential procedures.

For Peraldus in his *Summa* (c. 1200-1271), cognitive and affective processes are inscribed in the penitential process of combatting sin. Peraldus' most famous text is the combined *Summa de virtutibus et vitiis*, the *summa* on virtues being added to the earlier one on vices. The first portion of this treatise was completed by c. 1236, first exploring 'De vitiis in communi' (the vices collectively), and subsequently progressing through *gula*, *luxuria*, *avaritia*, *acedia*, *superbia*, *invidia* and *ira*; the text ends with a section on 'peccato linguae' (sins of the tongue).³⁴ Part III on 'octo remediis contra acediam' (eight remedies against *acedia*) includes busying the self, considering (with the verb *considerare*) future punishment, and loving and being grateful to God. This departs from the more body-based remedies for *acedia* suggested by the Old Irish penitentials, of continued fasting or seclusion until the dejected person can rejoin the community in joyful spirit.³⁵ Peraldus' eight remedies for gluttony are predominantly geared towards the cognitive function of considering the ill effects of excessive food and drink, among other considerations. The eight

³⁴ On the creation of the *Summa*, see Hinnebusch (1965), II, 243. William Peraldus, *Summa de vitiis*, Treatise IX, quoted from the critical edition developed by Kent Emery, Joe Goering, Richard Newhauser, and Siegfried Wenzel in 'The Peraldus Project', available online (1995): <<http://www.unc.edu/~swenzel/peraldus.html>> [accessed 2nd October 2009]. For the full text, see *Summa virtutum ac vitiorum* (Paris, 1519); see especially fols cxvi-cxvii for the remedies of *acedia*.

³⁵ See *Medieval Handbooks of Penance: A Translation of the Principal Libri Poenitentiales*, trans. John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer (NY, 1938; repr. 1990), p. 168.

remedies for avarice are also primarily cast in the command: ‘consideratio’.³⁶ Also notable in this range of Dominican material is the affective nature of the ‘impediments to confession’.³⁷ The potential impediments to confession in Paul of Hungary’s *Summa* are all related to affective experience, which in turn suggests the need to combat these impediments affectively: ‘pudor, spes, timor, desperatio’ (shame, hope, fear, despair).³⁸ Pennaforte’s four ‘impediments’ to penance are identical to Paul of Hungary’s, though listed in a different order, an order which Pennaforte insists must be followed: ‘timor, pudor, spes & desperatio’ (pp. 560-561).

The anchoress’ Vernaculars:

Anglo-Norman Penitential Texts and English Sermons

The material studied thus far has been Latin. But Jocelyn Wogan-Browne has exploded assumptions that vernacular confessional literature only appeared in the later Middle Ages:

The vernacular results of Lateran IV have been unproblematically accepted as arriving in the late fourteenth century in the form of an ‘efflorescence’ of late medieval devotional and doctrinal texts in Middle English, even though for the century and a half before that efflorescence it is French that is the dominant language of pastoralia and the formation of the self in England.³⁹

³⁶ Treatise II, IV and V in ‘The Peraldus Project’ (V transcribed by Siegfried Wenzel from the Lyons 1668 edition).

³⁷ For a discussion of this tradition, particularly how the list of impediments increases in length over time, see Bella Millett, ‘The Pastoral Context of the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies’, in *Essays in Manuscript Geography: Vernacular Manuscripts of the English West Midlands from the Conquest to the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Wendy Scase (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 43-64 (pp. 49-50).

³⁸ Paul of Hungary, *Summa* (1880), p. 200.

³⁹ Wogan-Browne (2009), p. 239.

As Dominica Legge had previously asserted, the Fourth Lateran resulted in the creation of ‘a remarkable [Anglo-Norman] series of manuals, treatises, and encyclopedias of religious knowledge’ for use by a wide audience.⁴⁰ Since the *Ancrene Wisse*-author advises the anchoress to read in both English and French (18: 393-396), it is possible that the author and the anchoresses had direct access to Anglo-Norman penitential literature.⁴¹

There is no evidence that any surviving confessional manuals in Anglo-Norman were intended for anchoritic readers. Further to this, Tony Hunt has emphasized the difficulty of ascertaining the monastic houses from which Anglo-Norman confessional manuals originated.⁴² But one Anglo-Norman confessional treatise is especially relevant to this thesis, given its date and its focus on affective and cognitive phenomena in the penitential processes.⁴³ A copy is found among a group of Anglo-Norman sermons in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 282, dated by Hunt and Bliss to s. xiii^m.⁴⁴ The small size and plainness of MS Douce 282 indicates that this confessional manual was, like so many of its equivalent Latin texts,

⁴⁰ M. Dominica Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background* (Oxford, 1963), p. 206.

⁴¹ It remains unlikely that the anchoress would have used this material independently, however. As will be seen in the second part of this chapter, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author believes the subject of confession to be too complex for the anchoress to manage without guidance.

⁴² *pers. comm.*

⁴³ Ruth J. Dean’s catalogue refers to fourteenth-century ‘Verses illustrating a Latin compilation on the vices and virtues based on *De viciis et virtutibus* by Guillaume Perault’ (Dean with Boulton (1999), p. 368 (item 676)). But given the pervasive influence of Peraldus’ *Summa*, these verses were not necessarily of Dominican origin.

⁴⁴ Hunt, ed. and Bliss, trans. (2010), p. 294. References are to this edition. The mid-thirteenth-century date of this manuscript suggests that the *Ancrene Wisse*-author would not have used it directly.

disseminated for practical use to a broad audience.⁴⁵ Hunt and Bliss remark on its ‘comprehensive’ audience, though they also stress that ‘nothing suggests whether a woman might use this treatise, except for the mention of vowing widowhood’.⁴⁶

Based on Latin penitential literature, this treatise situates itself in an authoritative tradition, disseminating Latin matter on penance to a vernacular audience. The author asserts the penitential processes’ three-fold nature early on: ‘[A] faire penitence sunt treis choses busuignables. Icestes sunt compunctiun, con[fe]ssiun, satisfaciun’ (In doing penitence, three things are needed. These are compunction, confession, satisfaction (p. 296)). The penitential procedures are later said to involve the heart, mouth and deed: ‘contri[t]ion de quor, e puis confessiun de buche, e puis satisfaciun en overaigne’ (contrition of heart, and then confession of mouth, and then satisfaction in works (p. 310)). This text appears to equate contrition with compunction, although the two are not interchangeable in thirteenth-century Latin usage.⁴⁷ According to this treatise, the first stage of any confessional process is collecting sins in the memory (‘vos pechez plenerement venir a memorie’ (your sins come fully to memory)) followed by feeling sorrow (expressed with the verb *duler*) and confessing (expressed with the verb *geir* (p. 310)). The need for *volenté* in penitence is inevitable, given the centrality of the will to the process of sin. As the

⁴⁵ Plain brown ink is used throughout, and there is no illumination or illustration. The only decorative features include a large brown initial on fol. 1r, some red touching in letters throughout, and a red rubric for the opening of ‘On Penance’.

⁴⁶ See Hunt, ed. and Bliss, trans. (2010), pp. 294-295.

⁴⁷ See Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire of God*, trans. Catharine Misrahi (NY, 1961), p. 39. For more on compunction, see Sandra McEntire, ‘The Doctrine of Compunction from Bede to Margery Kempe’, *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England*, IV, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 77-90.

author clarifies, to consent (*consentir*) to any vice, even if not executed in action, is a sin (p. 318).

Penitence is defined as sorrow (*dolur*): ‘Penitence est dolur de ço ke est alé quant vus estes dolent del mal ke vus avez fait’ (Penitence is sorrow of that which is gone, when you are sorrowful of the bad that you have done (p. 298)). It cannot exist without compunction, along with the will (*volenté*) to fulfil the other two dimensions of the penitential process: ‘Veraie penitence est compunctiun e dolur de peché od plenere volenté de confessiun e de satisfactiun.’ (True penitence is compunction and sorrow of sin, with full will of confession and of satisfaction (p. 298)). Here, ‘compunctiun’ is separated from a more general ‘dolur de peché’. Compunction is defined by a dual fear-hope model (p. 296): ‘Compunctiun aver sunt deus choses. Icestes sunt pour e esperance’ (To have compunction is to have two things. These are fear and hope). Contrition is described as ‘la confessiun de quor’ (confession of the heart), and it is considered sufficient action should a confessor or other confidant be unavailable (p. 300). Later, the author informs his reader that confession involves an outward performance of the confessant’s sorrow: ‘dites od suspirs e od gemissemenz, dites od lermes e od quer dolent’ (say with sighs and with groans, say with tears, and with sorrowful heart (p. 314)). A clear distinction is made between the sin of ‘tristesce del siecle u accidie’ (sadness of the world or *acedia*), and the good sadness in ‘true penitence’ (‘La bone tristesse est en veraie penitence’ (pp. 306, 308)).

As for thirteenth-century English, useful matter on the cognitive and affective phenomena involved in penitence can be found in sermons. Confessional and sermonic materials are deeply linked, as corroborated by D. L. d’Avray and M.

Michèle Mulchahey.⁴⁸ And as P. H. Tibber remarks, sermons play a role in the sacrament of penance, activating what he terms ‘the process of self-examination and contrition’ at the heart of the sacrament’s efficacy.⁴⁹ *Ancrene Wisse*’s relationship to contemporary sermonic material has been the focus of powerful scholarship.

Throughout her research, Millett explores avenues of comparison with Odo of Cheriton’s († 1247) and James of Vitry’s (c. 1170-1240) sermons. Gunn makes comparisons with sermons delivered at the Beguinage of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century.⁵⁰ Most germane to *Ancrene Wisse* are two collections of English sermons found in London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 487 (L), and Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 335 (B. 14. 52). The Trinity College manuscript has been dated to the second half of the twelfth century, and L is datable to the first quarter of the thirteenth.⁵¹ L contains seventeen homilies (fols 1r-59v), five of which are also found in Trinity, and a copy of the *Poema Morale* (fols 59v-65r), also found in Trinity: all are by one scribe. The manuscript also has an unfinished copy of *Ureisun of God* appended to it, on fols 65v-67r, by a mid-thirteenth-century scribe.⁵²

⁴⁸ D. L. d’Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused Before 1300* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 47, 51. Mulchahey (1998), p. 527. See Canon 10 of the Fourth Lateran for its proclamation of the value of preaching: *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, ed. Alberigo Giuseppe (Basil, 1962), pp. 215-216.

⁴⁹ P. H. Tibber, ‘The Origins of the Scholastic Sermon, c. 1130- c. 1210’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1983), p. 192.

⁵⁰ See Millett (2004), p. 12; and Gunn (2008), pp. 105-17. For the primary texts, see Nicole Bériou, ‘La prédication au beguinage de Paris pendant l’année liturgique 1272-1273’, *Recherches Augustiniennes*, xiii (1978), 105-229. *Ancrene Wisse*’s interaction with the preaching device of *distinctiones* has also been well acknowledged. See in particular Nicholas Perkins, ‘Reading the Bible in *Sawles Warde* and *Ancrene Wisse*’, *Medium Ævum*, lxxii (2003), 207-237.

⁵¹ See Margaret Laing and Angus McIntosh, ‘Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 335: its Texts and their Transmission’, in *New Science out of Old Books: Studies in Manuscripts and Early Printed Books in Honour of A. I. Doyle*, ed. Richard Beadle and A. J. Piper (Aldershot, 1995), pp. 14-52 (p. 14); and Millett (2007), p. 44-45.

⁵² For descriptions of the manuscript contents, see Sarah M. O’Brien, ‘An Edition of Seven Homilies from Lambeth Palace Library MS. 487’ (unpublished doctoral thesis,

The hand of the homilies and *Poema Morale* in **L** has been localized to the West Midlands area: Margaret Laing and Angus McIntosh state that the **L** texts show a ‘language of a clearly western type, quite different from those of T[rinity], and belonging somewhere near the border of Herefordshire and south Shropshire’.⁵³ In personal communication with Millett, Laing has further suggested that **L** can be localized to ‘anywhere’ in the north Herefordshire/ north Worcestershire/ south Shropshire ‘intersection’.⁵⁴ This localization of **L** excitingly places it, as Millett observes, ‘in the same West Midlands area as the early manuscripts of the *Ancrene Wisse* group’.⁵⁵ Millett proposes a compelling ‘unified theory’, viewing the texts of the *Ancrene Wisse* group as part of post-1215 pastoral reform in the West Midlands.⁵⁶ Like the later Anglo-Norman and Dominican Latin material, these homilies are useful for gauging the penitential climate in which *Ancrene Wisse* was composed.⁵⁷

Throughout the homilies, auricular confession is presented as necessary for the effacement of sin. Lambeth 5 enumerates all three dimensions of the penitential processes.⁵⁸ After a list of possible Lenten acts of bodily satisfaction, the preacher of Trinity 10 comments that: ‘no man ne mai synnes beten er þanne he hem forlete and

University of Oxford, 1985); and Millett (2007), p. 63. See also the description in Laing and McIntosh (1995), p. 14.

⁵³ Laing and McIntosh (1995), p. 39.

⁵⁴ Millett (2007), p. 45, n. 8.

⁵⁵ Millett (2007), p. 63.

⁵⁶ Millett (2007), p. 61.

⁵⁷ Millett (2007), pp. 52, 57.

⁵⁸ *Old English Homilies*, First Series, ed. Richard Morris, EETS O.S. 29, 34 (1867-1868), p. 49; all subsequent references are to this edition. Punctuation and capitalisation have been modernised.

shewe em his prest and nime shrifte þeroffe.⁵⁹ In the confessional processes sketched out in Trinity 12, sins must be expressed exactly as they are, with no embellishment or covering, each of its circumstances laid bare in language (p. 71). The preacher of this sermon also enumerates ten possible obstacles to confession, expanding each in turn: ‘forgetnesse, nutelnesse, recheles, shamfestnesse, drede, ortrowe, trewðeleas, [softgerne], trust, wilfulnesse, misleue’ (pp. 71-73). The impediments of ‘shamfestnesse’ and ‘drede’ correspond to the lists of Pennaforte and Paul of Hungary; those of ‘ortrowe’ and ‘trust’ appear to be identifiable with the impediments of *spes* and *desperatio* in the Dominican writers’ lists.⁶⁰

Sorrow is prominent throughout these sermons. Within the older schema of eight principal vices, the preacher of Lambeth 10 draws a fine distinction between the sin of *tristitia*, and beneficial sorrow: ‘Twa sarinesse beoð: an is þeos uuele, oðer is halwende, þet is þet mon beo sari her on worlde for his sunnen’ (p. 103). The sermon in honour of St. James in Trinity (Trinity 25/Lambeth 17) centres on the potency of tears in their varying forms. Developing Psalm 125:6 (‘Going they went and wept, casting their seeds’), the preacher forms a taxonomy for these tears, with each kind of tear born from a particular affective movement. First, there are the tears for sins (‘see water’); this form of crying is aligned with a cleansing process, typified by Mary Magdalene and St Peter. The second type of tears is compassion for one’s neighbour (‘snaw water’), and the third that which is born from weariness with the world (‘welle

⁵⁹ *Old English Homilies*, Second Series, ed. Richard Morris, EETS O.S. 53 (1873), p. 57; all subsequent references are to this edition. Punctuation and capitalisation have been modernised.

⁶⁰ Millett (2007) has already observed the possible mapping of ‘trusting in long life’ onto the impediment of ‘*spes*’ (p. 50).

water’). Last of all are the tears of longing for Christ (‘rein water oðer deu water’ (pp. 147-149, 155-157)).

There is an emphasis in the homilies on a satisfaction that is both physical and affective. The preacher of Trinity 11 establishes four ways of turning to God, expanding upon each in turn: ‘on heorte, on festene, on wope, on meninge’ (p. 63). Heart-sorrow, bodily suffering, and the spoken act of confession are all amalgamated. ‘Meninge’ combines contrition, confession, and general repentance in a ‘þrefeld’ model of lamentation (p. 65). Centred on the biblical exhortation to deny the self and take up the Cross (Luke 9:23; Mark 8:36; Matthew 16:24), Lambeth 15/Trinity 32 asserts that self-mortification entails both physical and affective pain. The bodily crosses in both versions denote emaciation of flesh (‘fleises lensing’) through physical hardships; this simulates but does not recreate Christ’s torture (pp. 205-207, 147). The spiritual crosses signify ‘heorte sar’ for sin, and compassion (‘rowðe’) for fellow-Christians (pp. 207-209, 149).

Like the Latin Dominican material, vernacular confessional and sermonic material reveals an emphasis on the physical and affective nature of the penitential processes. Masha Raskolnikov finds a distinctive ‘vernacular psychology’ in her broad understanding of ‘confessional literature’ (‘works using tropes and methods of the confessional to structure narrative’), a unique psychology which actively departs from Latin models.⁶¹ But in this thesis, the vernacular penitential and sermonic

⁶¹ At the close of her review, she rightly calls for a ‘dialogue’ between ‘medieval theories of the self and work on affect in other periods.’ See Masha Raskolnikov, ‘Confessional Literature, Vernacular Psychology, and the History of the Self in Middle English’, *Literature Compass*, ii (2005), online version, 1-20 (13).

literature is inspired by the Latin: both underscore the thicket of cognitive and affective phenomena pervading the penitential processes.

II. Penitential Suffering in *Ancrene Wisse*

The first half of this chapter has assessed penitential and homiletic material produced within the broad span of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It has sought to emphasize the multidimensionality of the penitential processes: in this material, these processes involved a combination of affective and physical pain, with the added dimension of confessional performance underpinned by affective and cognitive phenomena. The chapter now turns to *Ancrene Wisse* itself, which germinates from and contributes to this rich theological terrain. In examining the articulation of these penitential procedures in the diction and imagery of the text, this chapter demonstrates that the anchoress' suffering is both physical and affective. The anchoress does not author the procedures. Cast as an infant spiritual learner, she is frequently given a penitential phraseology to imitate.⁶² Accepting her dependency on authorial constructs, this chapter nonetheless stresses that the enactment of the penitential processes rests with her own agency. First, this chapter will analyse the close but uncomfortable connection between confession and the anchoress' cognitive and affective phenomena— a key issue in Part V. Second, it will examine the merging of physical and affective pain in the anchoress' penitence, at the core of Part VI. From the early stages of *Ancrene Wisse*'s transmission, Part V was directed at a wider

⁶² An example of the anchoress' infantilisation can be seen in the author's assertion that he breaks up the subject of confession as a piece of bread (129: 587-589).

audience, as asserted by the author himself (129: 595-597).⁶³ Only the last section was designed specifically for the anchoresses. Notwithstanding its broad audience, Part V remains highly appurtenant to the anchoress: the ‘lutle leaste ende’ for her ‘bihoue’ is more technical in nature, and does not supplant the general section (129: 597-598).

The present thesis does not attempt to treat Parts V and VI as an isolable whole.⁶⁴ It is undeniable that penitence pervades all the ‘dales’ of *Ancrene Wisse*—not only Parts V and VI. Parts I and VIII frame the anchoress’ daily penitential life; Parts II and III intensify her penitential enclosure; Part IV stratifies the temptations she must conquer in her penitential career, and Part VII elucidates the love relationship with Christ born from her penitence. The penitential procedures explored in Parts V and VI are activated by the anchoress’ aliveness to pain, an aliveness which the text begins to cultivate in Part II. At first glance, Part II seems devoted to a penitential ‘closing up’ of the anchoress. The author persistently engages in attempts to shutter the window through which she may look or reach out her hand, to veil her from view, and to deaden her senses to external stimuli.⁶⁵ But a deadening does not entirely characterize anchoritic penitence in *Ancrene Wisse*. Later in Part II, the author recounts Christ’s sufferings on the Cross. Christ smells the ‘licomes irotet’ on

⁶³ Millett and Clare Kirchberger have both remarked on Part V’s wide audience. See Bella Millett, ‘*Ancrene Wisse* and the Conditions of Confession’, *English Studies*, lxxx (1999), 193-215 (193); and Clare Kirchberger, ‘Some Notes on the *Ancrene Riwle*’, *Dominican Studies*, vii (1954), 215-238 (231).

⁶⁴ Kirchberger suggests that Parts IV, V and IV ‘together form one whole on the subject of sin and penance’, and Gerard Sitwell argues that Parts II and III take on a separate existence from the remainder of the text. Kirchberger (1954), 230; and Gerard Sitwell in his introduction to M. B. Salu’s translation, *The Ancrene Riwle* (London, 1963; repr. 1967), p. xviii.

⁶⁵ See, in particular, 20: 20-23, 26: 231-251, 46: 1020-1027, and 46: 1032-1035. As Part II progresses, the author continues to depart from his stated aim of inspecting the five ‘senses’, merging the senses with organs. Barratt (1987) has shown the roots of this confluence in penitential traditions (12-24).

Calvary; he sees his ‘deorewurðe moder teares, ant Sein Iuhanes Euuangeliste, ant te oðre Maries’; he weeps with his ‘feire ehnen’; he has them ‘schendlac iblintfeallet’; he is beaten in the mouth ‘wið hare dreori fustes’; and he tastes gall ‘on his tunge’, among other pains (42: 845-870). Christ’s most excruciating pain, and that which offers the anchoress her point of most profound engagement, resides in his sense of touch. He is intensely, agonisingly alive: ‘Euch monnes flesch is dead flesch a3ein þet wes Godes flesch, as þet te wes inumen of þe tendre meiden’ (45: 982-983). It is a divergence illustrated by a tactile reference to an ‘ehe’ versus a ‘hele’: ‘A lutel hurt i þe ehe derueð mare þen deð a muchel i þe hele, for þe flesch is deaddre.’ (45: 980-982). There is no obvious epistemology for this surreal image of Christ’s suffering body as an eye, but it perfectly encapsulates his incomparable sensitivity.⁶⁶

This tenderness is extended beyond his skin; the author connects it to Christ’s affective touch, with three spears of sorrow penetrating his ‘seli sawle’:

Vre Laverd i þis wit nefde nawt in a stude, ah hefde oueral pine; nawt ane
3ond al his bodi, ah hefde 3et inwið his seli sawle. [...] Þis stiche wes
þreouald, þe ase þreo speren smat him to þe heorte.
(45: 958-962)

These three spears are specified as the pain caused by observing ‘his modres wop ant te oþre Maries, þe flowen o teares’, the pain of his disciples’ betrayal, and the pain of loss—knowing that, despite his tremendous sacrifice, those that ‘drohen him to deaðe’ will not enter into grace (45: 962-968).

⁶⁶ E. J. Dobson observes a parallel passage on Christ’s sensitive flesh in *Moralia super Evangelia*, though there is no mention of an eye. See E. J. Dobson, *Moralities on the Gospels: A New Source of Ancrene Wisse* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 131-132. As Vincent Gillespie notes, ocular imagery becomes prominent from the twelfth century onwards (*pers. comm.*).

Like the anchoress, Christ is acutely susceptible to penetration. But in a complete shift from the emphasis on sense-numbing in the earlier sections of Part II, the stress here is on the sensitisation of all senses/organs. Instead of being dangerous junctions, rife with the potential for sin, the senses/organs become points of engagement with Christ's agony. Christ's senses are directly mapped onto the anchoress. His suffering due to the rotting bodies on Calvary reminds the anchoress not to reject all bad smells, since the devil may be blocking her from a useful object (41: 836-837). She is taught patience through remembrance of the beatings and humiliation Christ suffers on his face: 'Amid þe muð me gurde him sumcheare inohreaðe as me tobeot his cheken ant spitte him o scarne—ant an ancre is for a word ut of hire witte!' (42: 860-862). As Christ was blindfolded, the anchoress endures a figurative blindfolding for his love: 'þah þu þine ehnen, for his luue ant i munegunge þrof, blintfealli on eorðe to beoren him feolahreadden, nis na mucche wunder.' (42: 857-859). Confronted with the bitter gall Christ is forced to taste, the anchoress is less likely to 'grouch' about her food: '[...] he smahte galle on his tunge, forte learen ancre þet ha ne grucchi neauer mare for na mete, ne for na drunch, ne beo hit swa unorne.' (42: 866-868). She is taught to parrot Christ's feigned deafness and muteness on the Cross, in the midst of humiliation:

'Ich heold me', he seið, 'stille as dumbe ant deaf deð, þet naueð nan ondsware þah me him misdo oðer missegge.' Þis is þi leofmonnes sahe; ant tu, seli ancre, þe art his leoue spuse, leorne hit 3eorne of him, þet tu hit cunne ant mahe soðliche seggen.
(44: 944-948)

And reminded of the appalling pain Christ feels in his physical and affective 'touch', the anchoress is dissuaded from luxuriating in the feel of a man's hand:

Godes honden weren ineilet o rode; þurh þe ilke neiles Ich halsi ow, ances
 [...] haldeþ ower honden inwið ower þurles! Hondlunge oðer ei felunge
 bitweone mon ant ancre is þing swa uncumelich, ant dede se scheomelich, ant
 se naket sunne [...]
 (46: 1020-1024)

Whilst it is undeniable that the author continues to affirm the need for sense-deadening—particularly in his sudden and disconcerting shift from Christ’s sensitive physical-spiritual touch to the anchoress’ hidden hands which are used to dig her own grave (46: 1034-1035)—there is a clear alignment of Christ’s tender body and soul with the anchoress’ suffering self.⁶⁷ It is this aliveness of Christ, experiencing agony both in his physical senses/organs and in his affective faculties, which the author most fully expands upon in later parts. As becomes clear later on in *Ancrene Wisse*, only by embracing such raw sensitivity can the anchoress enable herself to undertake the penitential procedures formulated in Parts V and VI, to which we now turn.

There is a deep interconnection in Part V between cognitive and affective phenomena on the one hand, and the exteriorising act of spoken confession on the other. Various cognitive and affective processes are essential to the effectiveness of confessional performance, and without confession, cognitive and affective phenomena lack potency. But this intimate relationship between cognitive-affective phenomena and spoken confession is also frequently an uncomfortable one, as will be seen. Georgianna has placed *Ancrene Wisse* on the frontier between contritionist and post-contritionist thought.⁶⁸ Whilst it is unclear whether or not confession performs

⁶⁷ As Barratt (1987) states, this recourse to the touch of hands is a ‘cruder approach’ than the understanding of touch in the figure of the Saviour (22). See also Robertson’s (2003) analysis (34).

⁶⁸ See Georgianna (1981), pp. 103-116.

the erasure of sin, as shown by Georgianna's analysis, it remains a necessary stage in the penitential procedures.⁶⁹

Preceding the final short segment for the anchoresses, the general section of Part V has two subdivisions: the powers of confession, and 'hwuch hit schule beon' (114: 1-3). The close confession-contrition bond is established in the first subdivision by use of the pseudo-biblical narratives of Judith and Judas Maccabeus. At the start of Part V, the author establishes the close bond between confession and the affective phenomenon of contrition by examining Judith's treatment of Holofernes. Judith signifies confession, and Holofernes the devil lurking in souls:

Ha hackede of his heaved ant seoððen com ant schawde hit to þe burh
preostes. Þenne is þe feond ischend hwen me schaweð [i schrift] alle hise
cweadschipes. His heaved is ihacket of ant he islein i þe mon sone se he eauer
is riht sari for his sunnen ant haueð schrift on heorte. Ah he nis nawt þe-3et
ischend hwil his heaved is ihulet—as dude on earst Iudith—ear hit beo
ischawet: þet is, ear þe muð i schrift do ut þe heaved sunne, nawt te sunne ane
ah al þe biginnunge þrof ant te foreridles þe brohten in þe sunne.
(114: 13-20)

Both contrition and confession are essential weaponry in the war against the devil; both are agency-filled, violent processes. But whereas Holofernes is decapitated within the soul, he can only be annihilated by the externalising act of confession, spoken to priests. Contrition is not specified by name, though this is indubitably the

⁶⁹ As seen earlier in this chapter, debates on whether or not confession was needed to erase sin took place between Abelard and Hugh of Saint-Victor. J. L. Austin's seminal findings are useful for comprehending this potency: confession, when undertaken correctly, amounts to a 'performative utterance': *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, 1962). This thesis does not use Austin's work as a theoretical basis, but adopts the germane terminology of performativity in spoken language.

author's meaning by a man 'riht sari for his sunnen'.⁷⁰ He rather uses the terminology of an internal versus external confession. Like the Lombard, he differentiates *confessio cordis* from *confessio oris*: 'schrift on heorte' versus 'schrift' from the 'muð'.⁷¹ Georgianna has demonstrated this intentionally shifting borderline between contrition and confession, achieved by the author's disruption of the narrative progression: 'Contrition and confession—cutting off the devil's head and confounding him—are inextricably bound together as two concurrent parts, one outer and one inner, of the same act, which results in the remission of sins.'⁷² This 'outer' nature of confession is detectable in the above passage: '*schaweð [i schrift]*', 'his heaved is ihulet [...] ear hit beo *ischawet*' (emphasis added). Yet, the terminology of 'showing' shifts. After shedding her widow's clothes, Judith wears her 'halidahne weden' and adorns herself outwardly, 'as schrift deð us inwið, wið alle þe feire urnemenz þe blisse bitacnið' (115: 48-49). Confession becomes a sign that not only shows the soul, but also beautifies it. From this early stage in Part V, contrition and confessional performance have moved close to one another.

Crucially, the author begins the next and dominant subdivision by placing the penitent's self at the heart of confessional performance. He first enumerates his sixteen conditions of confession (115: 65-67), here responding to a wider European tradition, witnessed in the first half of this chapter in *Confessio debet*. It is unhelpful to reduce *Ancrene Wisse* to a mere replica of this 'conditions of confession' tradition,

⁷⁰ The author never uses the term *contritio*, but the frequent term 'heorte bireowsunge' is translated by Millett thus, and is most probably his vernacular equivalent. See, for instance, 'heorte bireowsunge' (139: 303), translated by Millett as 'contrition of heart' (*Guide for Anchoresses: A Translation Based on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402* (Exeter, 2009), p. 139).

⁷¹ Lombard, *Sententiae*, II, 345.

⁷² Georgianna (1981), p. 107.

however. Millett (1999) observes that the text's exact relationship to the tradition is difficult to define, 'and it is quite possible that the author did not work from any specific source text'.⁷³ With the first condition of 'wreiful', he scathingly dismisses those who excuse themselves, a lineage of excusers including Adam and Eve (116: 71-72). Culpability falls upon the sinner: 'Þe feond ne mei neden na mon to na sunne, þah he eggi þer-to' (116: 73-74). An accurate, self-oriented attitude to sin is voiced: 'Min ahne unwrestlec hit dude, ant willes ant waldes Ich beah to þe deouel' (116: 76-77). Here, he interacts with the Abelardian concept that consent to follow the will is the true basis of sin. Confession is worthless without the awareness that sin is committed neither within nor because of the external arena; sin is engendered in the depths of the soul: '3ef þu witest ei þing þi sunne bute þe seoluen, þu ne schriuest te nawt.' (116: 77-78). Surviving in these depths, the sin must be externalised through confession in order to be defeated, like the display of Holofernes' head.

With the finger of responsibility pointed at the sinner's self, the author explicates the processes of painful self-examination.⁷⁴ This self-examination is cast as the proceedings of a court case, an unmistakable resonance with Pennaforte's *Summa*.⁷⁵ But before viewing the court case that must take place within the self, the author invokes, as a forceful parallel, the terrifying Tribunal to come. He preserves

⁷³ Bella Millett, 'Ancrene Wisse and the Conditions of Confession', *English Studies*, lxxx (1999), 193-215 (211).

⁷⁴ In Georgianna's (1981) vocabulary, 'self-examination' is a more detached process than 'self-reflection'; the former does not demand remorse. See her comment on the Norman soldiers: 'self-examination does not lead to any self-reflection, nor obviously can it lead to any change of heart' (p. 83). In this thesis, however, 'self-examination' equates Georgianna's 'self-reflection'.

⁷⁵ Nicole Bériou traces the parallel development of the legal and medicinal discourses pervading post-1215 penitential material. See Nicole Bériou, 'La confession dans les écrits théologiques et pastoraux du xiii^e siècle: médication de l'âme ou démarche judiciaire?', in *L'aveu: Antiquité et Moyen-Âge* (Rome, 1986), pp. 261-282.

from his Anselmian source the suffocating spatial dimensions of the court, entrapping the doomed sinner.⁷⁶

O þe an half o Domes[dei] schulen ure swarte sunnen strongliche bicleopien us of ure sawle morðre; o þe oþer half stont Rihtwisnesse þet na reowðe is wið, dredful ant grislich ant grureful to bihalden; buuen us þe eorre Deme [...] þet is ec witesse ant wat alle ure gultes, bineoðen us 3eoniende þe wide þrote of helle, inwið us seoluen ure ahne conscience (þet is, ure inwit) forculiende hire seoluen wið þe fur of sunne, wiðuten us al þe world leitinde o swart lei up into þe skiwes.
(116: 88-101).

Ancrene Wisse's use of 'conscience' is unique in early thirteenth-century English literature. As Millett observes, it is 'the first recorded instance' of the term, its use being 'very rare in [Middle English] before the late fourteenth century'.⁷⁷ The author's attempts to define this highly specialist term are symptomatic of its rarity. In the A version of the psychological court-case, 'conscience' is defined as 'inwit'; it embodies the broad concept of 'internal knowledge'. However, in the C version of this court-case in Part V, 'conscience' is glossed as 'þonc' instead of 'inwit'.⁷⁸ C also has another use of 'conscience', in a marginal annotation by the C² scribe (likely to be the original author) in the Preface, a short passage that depicts a curiously fragmented self.⁷⁹

3ef þe con[s]cience—þet is, þe inwit of þi þoht ant of þin heorte—bereð wisse i þe seolfe te3eines þe seoluen þet tu art i sunne unscriuen ant þet tu misdest þet ant þet, ant hauest þet unþeaw ant þet, þulli conscience, þullic inwit is woh ant unefne ant cnosti ant dolki; ah þeos riwle efneð hire ant makeð hire smeðe ant softe[.]
(1: n. 1)

⁷⁶ For the corresponding passage in Anselm of Canterbury's *Meditatio I*, see Schmitt, ed., III, 78-79. An emphasis on shaming the sinner is also at the core of Trinity 12, where the sins become a separate, hostile entity from the unrepentant sinner (p. 69). In Trinity 28, the dimensions of Judgement Day are sketched out, with the sinner caged between them (p. 173).

⁷⁷ Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 207: 5/99.

⁷⁸ Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, has already observed this difference (207: 5/99).

⁷⁹ On the C² scribe, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, xiv.

This marginal annotation by C² uses the gloss of ‘inwit’, but defines the object of this internal knowledge: it is internal knowledge of ‘thought’ and ‘heart’.⁸⁰ The C¹ scribe equates ‘þonc’ with ‘inwit’ in Part V, but this is undercut by C²’s addition in the Preface, where ‘þonc’ is an object of the ‘inwit’. ‘Inwit’, with its sense of internal knowledge, is likely to be the most authoritative gloss of ‘conscience’ in *Ancrene Wisse*.

This unusual term ‘conscience’ places self-knowledge (‘inwit’) at the heart of confessional performance. There is an uncomfortable juxtaposition of the interior and exterior spheres in this parallel confession-court. The sinner’s sins leap out into the external arena, becoming separate from the self; the exterior forces of the fearsome ‘Deme’ and ‘Rihtwisnesse’ invade the sinner’s interior domain. The fire that burns the conscience mirrors the fire consuming the external world: the sinner’s conscience becomes a further dimension to the courtroom, caging her between the realms of her affective-cognitive space and the external arena. Having failed to externalize her sins in confession, the Doomsday sinner is agonisingly and fatally caught between these two realms.

To escape from the fate of those dead souls banished by the Lion-God (116: 106-109), the sinner must methodically enact this court case within her self:

Skile sitte as domesmon upo þe dom-seotel. Cume þrefter forð his þohtes
Munegunge, wreie him ant bicleopie him of misliche sunnen [...] His Inwit

⁸⁰ It is unclear how the C² scribe is differentiating ‘thought’ and ‘heart’ here, as it seems to contradict the merging of cognitive and affective processes elsewhere in the text. Millett translates this gloss as ‘your intellectual and emotional sense of right and wrong’. Millett, trans. (2009), p. 1, n. a.

beo icnawes þrof ant beore wisse [...] Cume forð þrefter Fearlac þurh þe deme heast, þe heterliche hate, ‘Tac, bind him heteueste, for he is deaðes wurðe. Bind him swa euch lim þet he haueð wið isuneget þet he na mahe wið ham sunegi na mare.’ [...] 3et nis nawt þe deme (þet is, Skile) ipaiet þah he beo ibunden ant halde him wið sunne, bute 3ef he abugge þe sunne þet he wrahte; ant cleopeð forð Pine ant Sorhe, ant hat þet Sorhe þersche inwið þe heorte wið sar bireowsunge, swa þet hire suhie, ant Pin[e] þe flesch utewið mid feasten ant wið oþre fleschliche sares.
(117: 114-127)

The penitent’s cognitive and affective phenomena are personified, each playing a different role, which resonates powerfully with the techniques employed in *Sawles Warde*. Reason (‘skile’) is the judge: the capacity to discern sin is given the foundational role.⁸¹ Remembrance is the prosecutor, for it holds all the evidence of sin.⁸² Conscience is a witness, for the sins occur within its territory. Fear appears to act as a jail-guard; the author departs from Abelardian precepts in this instance by selecting fear, and not love, as the facilitator of the ‘Sorhe’ (sorrow) that ‘thrashes’ the penitent’s heart with contrition (‘þersche inwið þe heorte wið sar bireowsunge’).⁸³ The tribunal is entirely psychological until the externalising act of physical ‘Pine’ is brought into its structure. After the court-case is completed, confession is implied in the author’s act of distancing God’s court from that of the ‘schire’, where ‘þe þet nickeð wel mei beon iborhen, ant te ful þe is icnawen’ (117: 131-133). Confession has been defined as an inescapably self-based process, requiring an intense self-examination, only then followed by spoken confession and physical pain.

⁸¹ In *Sawles Warde*, Reason (‘Wit’) also assumes the foundational role, as the ‘husebonde’ of the household and ‘godes cunestable’. *Sawles Warde: An Early Middle English Homily Edited from the Bodley, Royal and Cotton MSS*, ed. R. M. Wilson (Kendal, 1938), p. 24, ll. 215, 216; quoted from **B** text. All subsequent references are to this edition.

⁸² For the role of memory in confession, see the condition of ‘biþoht biuore longe’ (129: 579-585).

⁸³ See *Ethics*, ed. Luscombe (1971), p. 84.

The author subsequently illuminates the bitterness occurring within this self, emphasising that this bitterness is inseparable from confession. Using Hebraic etymology to substantiate the inseparability of confession and bitterness, he asserts that Judith was Merari's daughter, and Judah was Tamar's husband; he clarifies that Judith and Judah both mean 'confession', and Merari and Tamar both mean 'bitterness' (117: 137-139). It is a bitterness defining the painful regret for sin: 'Schrift schal beo bitter, a3ein þet te sunne þuhte sumchearre swete' (117: 136-137). Despite the specific nature of this bitterness, the author calls attention to its inherent complexity through four successive comparisons between worldly and Heavenly losses. First is the bitterness of losing one's family, contrasted with the graver loss of one's kindred in Heaven and the Holy Church (118: 152-158). As Janet Grayson notes, the sinner is cast as both child and mother in this analogy.⁸⁴ He is the latter insofar as he kills all his children, 'þet beoð his gode werkes', but he is also a lost child: he has forfeited the Heavenly Father to become, instead, 'þe deofles bearn of helle' (118: 161-164). From a basis in Jeremiah 6:26, the sinner then becomes a mother bereaved 'for hire child þe nefde bute him ane, ant sið hit biuoren hire fearliche asteoruen' (118: 168-169). The bitterness of familial loss is subsequently replaced by the bitterness of a criminal condemned 'to beo forbearnd al cwic oðer scheomeliche ahonget', comparable with the sinner deported to Hell (118: 170-180). Such bitterness is clearly not identical to that of family grief, and the author implies this difference in his open question about the damned man: 'hu walde his heorte stonden?' (118: 171-172). The last two kinds of bitterness again differ: they define the bitterness of losing the entire world 'al on a stunde', and the bitterness of an abducted

⁸⁴ Janet Grayson, *Structure and Imagery in Ancrene Wisse* (Hanover, New Hampshire, 1974), p. 133.

child that ‘weorrede upon his feader’ (118: 180-182, 188). Confessional performance is underpinned by the sinner’s experience of a complex regret, a complex ‘bitterness’.

Soon after this commentary on bitterness, Part V reaches a particularly important condition of confession, influencing the remainder of the part: confession must be ‘naket’. It is a nakedness that attempts to link forcefully the penitent’s affective-cognitive processes with the act of spoken confession. Nakedness is attainable first by the words of confession: ‘schulen þe wordes beon ischa[p]et efter þe werkes’ (120: 241-242). Invoking both the nature of the sin and the sinner’s perception of her sinner-identity, the words of confessional performance can potentially exhibit — render ‘naket’ — the penitent’s cognitive and affective phenomena. The author tries to voice this lack of euphemism, acting as the confessant’s ventiloquist: ‘Sire, Godes are! Ich am a ful stod-meare, a stinkinde hore!’ (120: 249-50). Curiously, however, he fails to achieve a nakedness of words, retreating under a protective layer of referentiality with the metaphor of ‘a ful stod-meare’. Such a move is testament to the text’s wider anxieties about the language of confessional performance. An addition in **A** encourages caution when using undisguised words: ‘Me ne þearf nawt nempnin þet fule dede bi his ahne fule nome, ne þe schendfule limes bi hire ahne nome.’ (120: 252-254). This addition is present from an early stage in *Ancrene Wisse*’s history, and may be authorial.⁸⁵ A similar anxiety resurfaces in the final section of Part V, written for the anchoress. The author barely permits the anchoress to disclose her ‘flesches temptatiuns’ to a ‘3unge preost’ (130: 620-631). Her expression is restricted further with an addition in **A**: ‘ant 3et of þis inohreaðe him walde þunche wunder’ (130: 631-632). In spite of the author’s

⁸⁵ See Millett (1999), 214.

attempts to translate the penitent's psychological realm into confessional performance, the two spheres are not comfortably reconciled. Confession cannot be 'naket' without being potentially unsafe for both confessant and confessor.

Another facet of naked confession is the shedding of sin's 'totagges', the circumstances surrounding it. As the author later informs the anchoress, a sin is exacerbated by its 'totagges' (131: 651-652). Here, he is manifestly working within the wider tradition that demands a rigorous clarification of circumstances—seen in 'Cum ad sacerdotem' (ll. 133-135).⁸⁶ After his initial gloss of the Latin ("circumstances" (on Englisch "totagges" mahe beon icleopede)'), the author privileges the vernacular term (120: 257-258). The more direct of the two French translations of *Ancrene Wisse*, found in the early fourteenth-century manuscript London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius F. vii, uses 'circumstances' consistently. The same is true for the Latin version in Oxford, Merton College, MS c.i.5 (Merton 44), an abridged though direct translation of the English also dating to the early fourteenth century, which uses 'circumstancie'.⁸⁷ This suggests that the *Ancrene Wisse*-author chooses 'totagges' purely for the sake of his audience. He furnishes the penitent with her own language by which she can peel away the trappings of circumstance. She must reveal her bare heart as one pours out 'wewater': in contrast to the residue, smell, or colour left by other liquids, 'wewater geað al somet ut.' (122: 306-311). To help her achieve this naked heart, the author continues to act as a ventriloquist, offering templates to be filled by the real confessant:

⁸⁶ Dolan (1974) has remarked on this link (323).

⁸⁷ *The French Text of the Ancrene Riwe, Edited from British Museum MS., Cotton Vitellius F vii*, ed. J. A. Herbert, EETS O.S. 219 (1944), p. 225ff; for dating, see p. ix. *The Latin Text of the Ancrene Riwe, Edited from Merton College MS. 44 and British Museum MS. Cotton Vitellius E vii*, ed. Charlotte d'Evelyn, EETS O.S. 216 (1944), p. 121ff; for dating, see p. x.

Sire, Ich hit dude for delit; for uuel luue; for bi3ete; for fearlac; for flatrunge.
 Sire, Ich hit dude for uuel, þah þer ne come nan of.
 (121: 297-299)

This voicing technique renders the circumstances lucid and memorable. Paralleling the ‘uersibus’ of ‘Cum ad sacerdotem’, it equips the penitent to de-robe her heart in confessional performance. Differently from the Dominican manual, however, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author endows this agency to the confessant herself— not the learning confessor.⁸⁸

Under the shadow of confession as ‘naket’, the author then returns to the parallel court-case of the Last Judgement. In this instance, the boundary between the external court and the sinner’s interior sphere dissolves. Like other writers on confession, the author uses his free translation of Nahum 3:5 to emphasize the parallel between the sinner’s failure to achieve naked confession, and the punitive nakedness of the Hereafter (122: 314-318).⁸⁹ He proceeds to efface the borderline between the sinner’s affective stirrings and the external arena:

ant trussin al þi schendfulnesse o þin ahne necke, as me deð o þe þeof þe me
 leat to demen; ant swa wið al þe schendlac þu schalt, trusse ant al, torplin into
 helle.
 (122: 318-20)

This use of ‘shendfulnesse’ and ‘schendlac’ is of particular importance. ‘Scheome’ and ‘schendlac’ have a high occurrence across all the texts of the *Ancrene Wisse*

⁸⁸ This is not to deny the potential value of such templates to a clerical audience, given the evidence in *C* that indicates *C*³ was a Dominican friar. See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, xiv.

⁸⁹ On the use of Nahum 3:5 by other writers of confessional manuals, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 219: 5/313-4.

Group: in *Ancrene Wisse* alone, there are sixty-two cases of ‘scheome’ and its related verbs, adjectives and adverbs, combined with sixteen instances of ‘schendlac’ and its related adjectives, adverbs and verbs.⁹⁰ A distinction must be made between sins (as ‘shameful things’), and the affective phenomenon of shame. The two senses are frequently blurred throughout *Ancrene Wisse*, as with the reference to ‘scheome sunnen’ immediately preceding the above passage (122: 316-317). The ‘schendlac’ carried around the neck could denote either the sins themselves, or the sinner’s affection of shame. In a similar image in Thomas of Chobham’s († c. 1233) *Summa de arte praedicandi*, there is no reference to shame; the sinner carries his actual sins (‘omnium peccatorum’) around the neck, which, as in *Ancrene Wisse*, are likened to the bundle of stolen goods (*sarcina*) worn by a thief before his tribunal.⁹¹ Both possible meanings in *Ancrene Wisse* refer to an interior entity: sins, as established earlier in Part V, are situated in the profundity of the soul. This interior ‘schendlac’ — whether referring to the affection or to the sins — is metamorphosed into exterior baggage carried around the neck; its weight causes a literal tumble into Hell. Such traumatic exteriorisation is also present in the author’s addition to Bernard of Clairvaux’s account of pus secreting from the sin-corrupted bodies.⁹² This pus of sin is exteriorised, the author says, ‘biuoren al þe wide worlt, eorðware ant heouenes—nawt ane of werkes, ah of idelnesses, of wordes ant of þohtes þe ne beoð ibet her’ (122: 325-327). In embodying external deeds as well as thoughts and sins of omission, the pus is formed of cognitive or affective phenomena. These failures

⁹⁰ This is based on the **A** version. See *Concordance to Ancrene Wisse*, pp. 627-629. All the instances of ‘schendlac’ in the *MED* are from the *Ancrene Wisse* Group; it lists ‘shame’, ‘disgrace’, ‘ignominy’ and ‘a humiliation’ as the term’s various meanings.

⁹¹ See Thomas of Chobham, *Summa de arte praedicandi*, ed. Franco Morenzoni, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*, lxxxii (Turnhout, 1988), 158.

⁹² See Geoffrey of Auxerre, *Declamationes de colloquio Simonis cum Jesu ex S. Bernardi sermonibus collectae*, *PL* clxxxiv, 469B.

within the sinner's interior space now become an exterior entity, as pus, fully accessible to the external arena.

Having attempted to demonstrate the nakedness of confessional performance— an attempt bolstered by the threat of nakedness on Doomsday— the author now re-examines the affective phenomena which activate confession's potency. Across the conditions of 'ofte imaket' and 'hihðe imaket', this potency is defined both in sacramental terms (123: 341-342), and, in an extensive authorial addition in **A**, as a literal beating of the devil-'hund' (124: 392-399).⁹³ Whether cast in a language of sacramentality or of warfare, the potency is activated by the anchoress' multifaceted affective response. Moving on from the bitterness of regret, the author now assesses the affective phenomena of shame, fear and hope. Unlike Paul of Hungary, Pennaforte, and the homilist of Trinity 12, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author investigates a 'scheome' that facilitates, rather than impedes, confession. He explicitly perceives shame to be an affection stimulated by the presence of external selves: 'God riht is, wat Crist, þet us scheomie biuore mon þe for3eten scheome þa we duden þe sunne biuore Godes sihðe' (125: 437-439).⁹⁴ With the confessant shamed 'biuore mon', the author indicates the presence of a confessor.⁹⁵ He alters his pseudo-Augustinian source to emphasize shame as the greatest, not only a great, part of 'penitence': 'Scheome is þe measte deal, as Seint Austin seið, of ure penitence' (125:

⁹³ As Millett observes, the longer additions in **A** are likely to be authorial. See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), I, lviii. The addition echoes the warrior anchoress of Part IV, who brutally attacks the devil as a flea-bitten dog (110: 1596-1604).

⁹⁴ Milton B. Singer argues that the real or imagined presence of an audience is not a viable criterion for differentiating shame from guilt; this hypothesis is inapplicable to *Ancrene Wisse*, however. See Gerhart Piers and Milton B. Singer, *Shame and Guilt: A Psychoanalytic and Cultural Study* (Illinois, 1953), pp. 52, 76.

⁹⁵ The homilist of Lambeth 3 acknowledges shame before the confessor as a typical affective response (see p. 35).

441-443).⁹⁶ Penitence here signifies ‘satisfaction’. In recognising shame as a weighty component of satisfaction, the author recalls the similar propositions made by the Lombard and Abelard. It is also in the condition of confession as ‘scheomeful’ that the author returns to confession’s sacramentality:⁹⁷

ant euch sacrement haueð an ilicnesse utewið of þet hit wurched inwið [...] i schrift þe cwike rude of þe neb deð to understonden þet te sawle, þe wes bla ant nefde bute dead heow, haueð icaht cwic heow ant is irudet feire.
(125: 446-450)

Already defined by the author as an integral part of satisfaction, shame becomes the *sacramentum*, or sign, of the soul’s growth.⁹⁸ Shame is positioned at the core of the sacrament itself.

The nature of confession as ‘dredful’ and ‘hopeful’ is subsequently divulged. Fear and hope join shame as affective phenomena activating the potency of confessional performance, though they are two impediments to confession in Trinity 12 and in Paul’s and Pennaforte’s *summae*. Echoing a similar adjuration in Alain of Lille’s *Distinctiones*, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author insists that fear and hope be merged to avoid two extremes: ‘[...] dred wiðuten hope makeð mon untrusten, ant hope wiðute dred makeð ouertrusten’ (126: 469-72).⁹⁹ It is these ‘unþeawes’ that are obstacles to

⁹⁶ See Pseudo-Augustine, *De vera et falsa poenitentia*, PL xl, 1122.

⁹⁷ The author identifies ‘schrift’ as the sacrament.

⁹⁸ The author’s definitions correspond to those of the Lombard, as outlined in the first half of this chapter. Millett also notices use of the Lombard in the subsequent marginal annotation, found only in A: ‘Interior tamen penitencia non dicitur sacramentum, sed exterior uel publica uel solempnis’ (126: 451-452). (‘However, interior penitence is not called a sacrament, only exterior or public or solemn penance’). See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 227: 5/451-2.

⁹⁹ ‘spes sine timore praesumptio est, timor sine spe desperatio’ (hope without fear is presumption, fear without hope, despair). Alain of Lille, *Distinctiones*, PL ccx, 861D.

confession— not the subtle blend of hope and fear. For those who have ‘outertrust’, he documents the numerous biblical instances of God’s wrath (127: 494-502), and for those who have ‘untrust of his unimete milce’, he summons examples of His incalculable mercy. Significant is the example of the crucified thief: ‘loke [...] [hu] þe þeof o rode, þe hefde aa iliued uuele, in a sterthwile [ofeode] ed him milce wið a feier speche’ (127: 503-507). In the condition of confession as ‘eadmod’, the penitent herself is cast as a worthy thief, engaging in what the author paradoxically terms ‘seli truandise’. Like a resourceful beggar, she piously swindles the generous Lord of His forgiveness (124-125: 409-433). But, as is made clear in the conditions of ‘scheomeful’, ‘dredful’, and ‘hopeful’, this is no crude thievery; it demands a careful management of the affections. The penitent’s sensitivity to varied affective phenomena— and her ability to creatively shape her affections —is at the basis of confession’s potency.

Ultimately, towards the end of Part V, voluntary confession becomes the source of pleasurable fruitfulness. The author quotes and translates David (Psalm 27:7) to this effect: ‘Mi flesch is ifluret, bicumen al neowe, for Ich chulle schriue me ant herie Godd willes.’ (128: 553-554). David’s utterance is expanded; it is not only the self who ‘ifluret, bicumen al neowe’ by a voluntary confession. The willing confessant, embracing all the virtues inherent in submission of the soul to God, has the power to create an entire garden within the self:

Eadmodnesse, abstinence, culures unlaðnesse, ant oþre swuuche uertuz beoð feire i Godes ehnen ant swote i Godes nease smeallinde flures. Of ham make his [herber] inwið þe seoluen, for his delices, he seið, beoð þer forte wunien. (128: 557-560)

Millett notes that this is ‘a formula common in twelfth-century writers’. Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 228: 5/470-1.

The soul that moves voluntarily to confession has remarkable potency, able to give perfect delight to God. Having struggled through a long, painful, and sordid self-examination, the confessant at last creates a pleasure-garden in the depths of her shriven soul.

The exterior act of spoken confession enables the nurturance of a garden within the self: this pleasure-garden embodies the close relationship between confession and the cognitive and affective movements that occur in the interior realm. But this relationship, permeating Part V, is only one aspect of the multidimensionality characterizing the anchoress' penitence. As evident in Part VI of *Ancrene Wisse*, there is an amalgamation of physical and affective suffering. Throughout the anchoress' penitential procedures, suffering in the physical body is entwined with affective suffering—a composite pain that is always parallel to pleasure, and frequently indistinguishable from it.

First of all, it must be clarified that physical-affective pain, existent alongside pleasure, is cultivated in the penitential processes as a whole, rather than in satisfaction alone. There is a level of confusion in these definitions, brought about by the author's misleadingly simple summary of Part VI. At the close of Part V, he claims that the part to come is concerned with 'penitence, þet is deadbote' (131: 653). His meaning with this Old English-derived term, 'deadbote', is clearly 'satisfaction'. The Vitellius French renders this phrase: 'penitence cest...mendee de pecche qe nous apelom satisfaction' (penitence, that is making amends for sin, which we call satisfaction). And the Merton Latin provides the following translation: 'Post

confessionem restat loqui de penitencia, que est satisfactio' (After confession it remains to speak of penitence, which is satisfaction).¹⁰⁰ There is very little by the way of physical satisfaction in Part VI, however. Only two references to specific practices of satisfaction are present (139: 283-289, and 144: 482-485). Such comment is left to Part VIII— though even there, it is minimal. Moreover, 'penitence' does not consistently signify 'deadbote', but is used both in the sense of 'doing satisfaction' (Part V: 129: 570-571), and as a more general term also comprising contrition (see 132: 1-4, and 140: 352). As noted earlier, Mansfield observes a similar multivalency in the medieval Latin term *penitentia*. For clarity, this analysis speaks of 'physical-affective penitence' rather than 'physical-affective satisfaction'. Like the material studied in the first half of this chapter, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author does envisage a composite, physical-affective satisfaction. But he is essentially exploring the multidimensionality of the penitential processes as a whole.

The author first grapples with the anchoress' sensitisation to pain, the foundation of her physical and affective suffering.¹⁰¹ At its beginning, Part VI affirms the all-pervasiveness of penitence in the anchoritic life:

Al is penitence, ant strong penitence, þet 3e eauer dreheð, mine leoue sustren.
 Al þet 3e eauer doð of god, al þet 3e þolieð, is ow martirdom i se derf ordre,
 for 3e beoð niht ant dei upo Godes rode.
 (132: 1-4).

Penitence permeates every moment of the anchoress' existence, becoming its essence and definition. All her acts are collapsed together, and no explicit reference is made

¹⁰⁰ Herbert, ed. (1943), p. 249, ll. 3-5; D'Evelyn, ed. (1944), p. 134, ll. 22-23.

¹⁰¹ Unlike Part V, no outline of Part VI's structure is given. Any references in this thesis to 'sections' of Part VI are not authorial in origin.

either to physical or affective suffering: ‘Al þet 3e eauer doð of god, al þet 3e þolieð’. This ubiquitous penitence is imaged as the anchoress’ suspension on ‘Godes rode’, paralleling the physical and spiritual crosses of self-mortification in Lambeth 15/Trinity 32. The author’s three categories of self-mortifying lives on Earth— the ‘pilegrimes’, the ‘deade’, and those ‘ihongede wið hare gode wil o Iesuse rode’—do correspond to the *peregrino*, *mortuo* and *crucifixo* categories in the sixth of Bernard’s ‘Sermones in Quadragesima’ (132: 15-16).¹⁰² But the author makes what Millett terms ‘radical departures’ from the sixth Lenten sermon.¹⁰³ Most crucially, as Millett succinctly puts it, he ‘identifies the highest level with the penitential suffering of the anchoritic life.’¹⁰⁴ Occupying the apex of this hierarchy, the anchoress is distinguished by her sensitisation to pain: she is dead, but also, like Christ in Part II, excruciatingly alive. Elsewhere in *Ancrene Wisse*, the anchoress is defined as being dead to the world— no doubt alluding to such emphases in her ritual enclosure.¹⁰⁵ In Part VI, however, she is distinguishable from the ‘deade’: the third step is specified as the ‘ancre steire’ (133: 74). This concurrent alignment with and separation from the dead is a product of the author’s attempts to distinguish different experiential domains. The anchoress is dead to the temptations that beset the ‘pilegrimes’, yet sensitised to Christ— his agony, and the prospect of eternal bliss in his embrace.

¹⁰² *Bernardi Opera*, IV, 377-380 (377).

¹⁰³ Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 237: 6/14-94.

¹⁰⁴ Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, xxxii.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, Part II: 46: 1034-1035, and Part VIII: 156: 36-40. As both Warren and Clay note, there were various liturgical versions of the anchorite’s rite of enclosure. See Warren (1985), pp. 98-99; Clay (1914; repr. 1968), p. 94. The earliest surviving rite, found in London, British Museum, Vespasian D. xv, fols 61r-65r, includes both the Office of the Dead and of Extreme Unction, in addition to prayers for the dying. See the appendix of H. A. Wilson, ed., *The Pontifical of Magdalen College* (London, 1910), pp. 243-244. Warren observes that further dimensions were appended in later centuries, including the requiem mass— ‘reinforcing the dead-to-the-world psychology appropriate to the anchorite’. Warren (1985), p. 99.

The anchoress and the ‘deade’ are both concealed from the sinful allurements of the world in a way the pilgrims are not (133: 40-44). But whereas God only lives in the heart of the dead (133: 59-60), the anchoress is a sharer of Christ’s pain. As in Bernard’s sermon (IV, 378), the dead are entirely non-sentient: ‘Preise him, laste him, do him scheome, sei him scheome—al him is iliche leof’ (133: 56-58). By contrast, from a basis in Galatians 6:14, the anchoress’ sensitivity is made plain:

Ah þe þe is o rode ant haeð blisse þrof, he wendeð scheome to menske ant wa into wunne, ant ofearneð for-þi hure ouer hure. Þis beoð þeo þe neauer ne beoð gleade iheortet bute hwen ha þolieð sum wa oðer sum scheome wið Iesu on his rode; for þis is þe selhðe on eorðe, hwa-se mei for Godes luue habben scheome ant teone.
(134: 82-87)

There is a progressive intimacy between the two lexical fields of pain and pleasure. On her elevated plane, the anchoress first turns shame into honour, and pain into joy: ‘he *wendeð* scheome to menske ant wa into wunne, ant ofearneð for-þi hure ouer hure’ (emphasis added); it is a process of transformation. Afterwards, she ‘neauer ne beoð gleade iheortet bute hwen ha þolieð sum wa oðer sum scheome wið Iesu on his rode’; for her, ‘þis is þe selhðe on eorðe’. It is no longer a process of transformation; happiness is pain and shame. Suspended on the Cross, the anchoress is acutely sensitised to this pain-joy.

At these heights, the anchoress is susceptible to a pleasurable agony that is not wholly physical. The next section of Part VI is dedicated to discerning the exact nature of her suffering. By the author’s definitions, it comprises both the affective phenomenon of ‘scheome’ and a more generalised pain. It is only with this shame-pain model that Christ’s passion is imitated: ‘For swuch wes Godes deað o þe deore

rode, pinful ant schentful ouer alle oþre' (135: 130-131). And through this two-fold suffering, the anchoress reaches a 'twafald blissen': 'a3ein scheome, menske; a3ein pine, delit ant reste buten ende' (135: 138-139). Noticeably, the words for pain continue to alter throughout the elucidation of the shame-pain model. The terms used — 'wa', 'sorhe', 'sar', 'teone' — are not directly synonymous with 'pine' in Middle English. Although the main emphasis remains on bodily pain, there are subtle differences in meaning. Given these shifting terms, the exact meaning of 'pine' becomes generalised, encompassing attacks to the flesh, toil, and even sorrow.¹⁰⁶

A shame-pain terminology first begins to emerge when illustrating the anchoress' blissful position upon the Cross. As seen in the passage quoted earlier, she must experience 'sum wa oðer sum scheome'; she must hang 'sariliche ant scheomeliche'; she must be joined with Christ 'i scheome ant i wa'; for God's love, she must experience 'scheome ant teone'. The terms are reordered: 'scheome' is placed both before and after the terms for pain, performing the merging of shame and generalised pain on a basic syntactical level. These inconspicuous assertions are then brought to the foreground, with the author declaring the indispensability of both shame and pain:

Moni walde summes weis þolien flesches heardschipe, ah beon itald unwurð
ne scheome ne mahte he þolien. Ah he nis bute halfunge upo Godes rode 3ef
he nis igreiðet to þolien ham baðe.
(134: 94-97)

¹⁰⁶ 'Sorhe' and 'sar' are frequently associated with sorrow rather than physical pain, as in the compound 'heorte sar' used throughout *Ancrene Wisse* (see, for example, 71: 131-136).

Pain is ingrained in the anchoress' life: 'Pine ne trukeð ow nawt' (135: 136-137). The author provides a more precise definition for the 'scheome' with which the 'pine' is combined. This 'scheome' is not the same as that experienced in confession:

Scheome Ich cleopie eauer her beon itald unwurð, ant beggin as an hearlot, 3ef neod is, hire liueneð, ant beon oþres beodesmon—as 3e beoð, leoue sustren, ant þolieð ofte danger, of swuch oðerhwile þe mahte beon ower þreal.
(135: 133-136)

Whether a beggar literally or rhetorically, the anchoress can experience this exquisite 'scheome' in the platitudes of her day-to-day existence.¹⁰⁷

To demonstrate this combination of shame and generalised pain in the anchoress' penitential processes, the author makes recourse to a rapid succession of images, each merging shame and pain. First is the series of images in which shame 'colours' a generalised pain. Elijah's wheel (134-135: 116-117) moves to the 'cherubines sword' (135: 119-123), which in turn moves to the Holy Cross itself: 'Ant nes Godes rode wið his deorewurðe blod irudet and ireadet forte schawin on him seolf þet pine ant sorhe ant sar schulden wið scheome beon iheowet?' (135: 123-126). A subsequent series of images all centre on pained human bodies, which enact both physical pain and shame. The author first portrays the beautification of the mortified body: '3ef we libbeð i scheome ant i pine for his luue, i hwucche twa he deide, we schulen beon iliche his blisful ariste, ure bodi briht as his is' (136: 171-173). The Heaven-adorned body of the penitent then gives way to a composite Christian body, of which Christ is the head—a common Pauline image: 'Nis Godd ure heued, ant

¹⁰⁷ On the anchoress' vagrancy, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 242-243: 6/ 133-6.

we his limen alle? Ah nis euch lim sar wið sorhe of þe heued?’¹⁰⁸ The entire Christian community is constructed as an aching human body. Agony is its functioning state: limbs that cannot feel agony in unison with the head must be amputated (136:183-191). This amputation leads on to the culminating image, a body that is ‘torenen’ (137: 214). The author first documents this image of a torn body by reference to the ‘tearing’ of St Lawrence, St Agatha, and others:

Nes Seinte Peter ant Seinte Andrew þer-uore istraht o rode? Sein Lorenz, o þe gridil? Ant laðlese meidnes, þe tittes itoren of, tohwiðeret o hweoles, heafdes bicoruen?
(137: 201-204)

The author cannot expect the anchoress to imitate the saints’ laceration, since he emphatically prohibits the literal tearing of the flesh in Part VIII, a prohibition reinforced by revisions in A (see 158: 118-127; and also Part V: 129-30: 599-604).¹⁰⁹ Rather, given the positioning of this account— placed soon after the discussion of the shame-pain model—, and given the prohibitions on self-mutilation elsewhere in the text, the mauling of the saints is a ‘tearing’ that merges both physical discomfort and shame. Both are inherent in the anchoritic existence.

As the author develops this image of the torn body, the penitent’s agency is revealed. He makes an unusual analogy with wealthy children, who ‘toteoreð hare claðes forte habbe neowe’— harking back to the ‘innocent fraud’ encountered in Part V (137: 206). But the torn penitent does not simply receive a present from God in the way a cunning child might. The penitent herself becomes a gift for God, a notion

¹⁰⁸ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 245: 6/183.

¹⁰⁹ The intensified prohibition in the revised version might be related to the expanded audience.

based on the author's reading of Isaiah 18:7: 'A folc tolaimet ant totoren, a folc [...] fearlich, schal makien to ure Lauerd present of him seoluen' (137: 212-214). Like the willing confessants who cultivate pleasure-gardens, the torn penitent is able to delight God in her very existence. These torn people are equated with a protected, victorious castle:

Eise ant flesches este beoð þes deofles mearken. Hwen he sið þeos mearken i mon oðer i wummon, he wat þe castel is his, ant geað baldeliche in þer he sið iriht up swucche baneres, as me deð i castel. I þet totore folc, he misseð his merken, ant sið in ham iriht up Godes banere, þet is heardschipe of lif, ant haeuð mucche dred þrof, as Ysaie witneð.
(137: 222-227)

The tearing does not cause fissures in the 'castel', but fortifies its defences. As Christiania Whitehead observes on the architectural image of the virgin body in *Ancrene Wisse*, the anchoress in Part VI becomes an unassailable fortress; the tearing of penitential shame and pain seals her from penetration.¹¹⁰ These body-based images do not define penitence as an exclusively physical act; the body becomes an imagistic site that amalgamates both physical and affective suffering.

From the body torn by shame and pain, the author moves to the third and final discernible section of Part VI. As becomes clear, the suffering he describes is of both a physical and affective nature. The first part of this section is structured by responses to sceptical questions, with each zealous answer joining physical and affective pain. This is powerfully detectable in the author's answer to the second question, 'wule Godd se wracfulliche wreoken upo sunne?' (138: 239-240). At first,

¹¹⁰ Christiania Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory* (Cardiff, 2003), p. 91. See further Christopher Cannon, *The Grounds of English Literature* (Oxford, 2007), p. 159. The human being is also configured as a castle in Lambeth 2 (p. 23).

the author's answer seems body-based: God pitilessly beats his sinless Son simply because 'he ber flesch ilich ure, þet is ful of sunne' (138: 245). The Mother-Christ shields humanity from the enraged Father, 'ase moder þet is reowðful deð hire bitweonen hire child ant te wraðe, sturne feader hwen he hit wule beaten' (138: 261-263), and the anchoress' penitence becomes the aftershock of this seismic beating on Calvary:

Hwer-se muchel dunt is, hit bulted a3ein upo þeo þe þer neh stondeð.
Soðliche, hwa-se is neh him þe ikepte se heui dunt, hit wule bulten on him ne
nule he him neauer meanen, for þet is þe preoue þet he stont neh him[.]
(138: 265-268)

The deflected beating suffered by the by-standers prevents the crueller assaults in Hell with the devil's 'botte' (138: 269-270). And yet, in spite of the savagely physical nature of these terms, the beating is not solely physical. Christ's affective pain is embodied in his piteous cries: 'Mi feader, 3ef hit mei beon, speare me ed tis time' (138: 252-253). Mark 15:34 is expanded to evoke His affective vulnerability: 'Mi Godd, mi Godd, mi deorewurðe feader, hauest tu al forwarpe me, þin anlepi sune, þe beatest me se hearde?' (138: 255-257). It is a beating enacted within an absence: part of the affective torment stems from the absence of the attacking Father. Penitence, as a reflection of this beating, must consequently be both physical and affective in nature. Grayson also plausibly suggests that the author refers to the Virgin Mary and John the Evangelist in the phrase, 'þeo þe þer neh stondeð'.¹¹¹ The historical pain of these two figures is not physical, but deeply affective; the beating rebounding on Mary is a configuration of Simeon's Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35). This subtle invocation of Mary and John may have been reinforced for the anchoress by the two

¹¹¹ Grayson (1974), p. 163.

figures' dominant visual presence within the anchorhold.¹¹² As she stands with Mary and John, the penitent anchoress is both a witness of the Cross and also crucified upon it. Feeling Christ's agony rebound on her, she experiences an affective beating combined with physical pain.

After demolishing all the doubting questions, the author more explicitly combines physical and affective bitterness. From Aelredian premises (139: 283-289), he first devotes some attention to the role of physical suffering in the penitential procedures.¹¹³ The biblical narrative of Nicodemus bringing a hundred 'weies' of myrrh and aloes (John 19:39) is used to underscore the need for both perfection and moderation in physical pain (140: 335-343). But soon after, the author announces a shift to 'bitternesse inwið' (140: 343-346). This inner bitterness defines a multifaceted affective suffering, represented by the three Marys; the fact that 'Mary' signifies 'bitterness' is an etymology he is keen to repeat (140-142: 351, 388, 420). From this etymological basis, a tripartite model of affective suffering emerges:

Þe earste bitternesse is i sunne bireowsunge, ant i deadbote, hwen þe sunfule is iturnd earst to ure Lauerd. Ant þeos is understonden bi þe earste Marie, Marie Magdaleine [...]. Þe oðer bitternesse is i wreastlunge ant i wragelunge aþeines fondunges. And þeos is bitacnet bi þe oðer Marie, Marie Iacobi, for 'Iacob' spealeð 'wreastlere'. [...] Þe þridde bitternesse is i longunge toward heouene ant i þe ennu of þis world [...]. Ant tis þridde bitternesse is understonden bi Marie Salomee, þe þridde Marie, for 'Salome' spealeð 'pes' [...]
(140-141: 351-377)

This model encompasses a spectrum of affective phenomena, beyond both shame and contrition. Contrition is present in the 'sunne bireowsunge', but it is fused with hope

¹¹² Aelred allows images of the Holy Mother and the Virgin Disciple to adorn the anchorhold (659).

¹¹³ This is based on a passage in the *De institutione inclusarum* (653-657).

(141: 356-359). Mary ‘wreastlere’ represents the affective movements of temptation; as crystallized in the well-known passage in Part IV on the Lord as a playful Mother, temptation involves sorrow and fear (88: 743-752). The yearning for Heaven embodied in Mary Salome is aligned with *compunctio cordis* in the Gregorian sense, rather than with contrition.¹¹⁴ As observed earlier in the chapter, this deep-rooted distinction is imaged in Trinity 25/ Lambeth 17 as sea- versus rain/dew-tears.¹¹⁵ A multifaceted affective suffering is offered up to the anchoress as a crucial part of her penitence.

Like the pleasure-gardens of Part V, the final emphasis in Part VI is on the beauty cultivated by the anchoress’ composite physical-affective pain. The ‘bitternesse’ generates ‘swetnesse’ (see 140: 345-346, and 141-142), and for the anchoress, this ‘swetnesse’ takes the form of her love relationship with Christ. This love is first captured in the intimate parallel between the anchoress’ bitter enclosure and Christ’s incarceration within the ‘ancre-huses’ of his mother’s womb and stone tomb (142: 424-425).¹¹⁶ The Anchorite-Christ’s flowering relationship with the penitent anchoress is then built around an exegesis of Canticles 2:8 (‘The voice of my beloved, behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping over the hills’):

Dunes bitacnið þeo þe leadeð hest lif; hulle beoð þe lahre. Nu seið ha þet hire leof leapeð o þe dunes;] þet is, totret ham, tofuleð ham, þoleð þet me totreode ham, tuki ham al to wundre, schaweð in ham his ahne troden þet me trude him in ham, [ifinde] hu he wes totreden, as his trode schaweð. Þis beoð þe

¹¹⁴ See Leclercq (1961), p. 39. On this reference to Mary Salome, see further Roger Dahood, ‘*Ancrene Wisse* and the Identities of Mary Salome’, in Wada, ed. (2003), pp. 225-243.

¹¹⁵ As Shepherd observes, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author ‘uses stock material throughout, but no treatment has been found which reproduces exactly the combinations of interpretation and etymology.’ Shepherd, ed. (1972), p. 46, 14/7.

¹¹⁶ Lambeth 8 also has the image of Christ’s enclosure within his mother’s womb: ‘bitunde him solue in ane meidenes innepe’ (p. 83).

hehe dunes, as munt of Muntgiw, dunes of Armenie. Þe hulles, þe beoð lahre, þeo, as þe leafdi seið, hire [leof] ouerleapeð, ne trust nawt se wel on ham, for hare feblesce ne mahte nawt þolien swuch totreodunge. Ant he leapeð ouer ham, forbereð ham ant forbuheð aþet ha waxen herre, from hulles to dunes. His schadewe lanhure ouergeað ant wrið ham hwil he leapeð ouer ham [...] (143: 452-463)

Departing from Bernard's angel-based interpretation of the mountains and hills in the *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's exegesis lays emphasis on the penitent anchoress' capacity to draw closer to Christ.¹¹⁷ She is once again moulded as a sturdy, dependable structure; first a sealed fortress, she is now a firm Alpine mountain on which Christ can securely stand. Bitterness and sweetness become indivisible: in his love for the anchoresses, the Lover-Christ 'totret ham, tofuleð ham, þoleð þet me totreode ham, tuki ham al to wundre'. It is through this maltreatment that the anchoress fuses with the Lamb, receiving his imprints on herself. The value of the 'schadewe', passing over the less reliable hills, rests in its potential to transform into such an imprint: 'aþet ha waxen herre, from hulles to dunes.' In all its multidimensionality, penitence is a process of evolution. The anchoress grows to withstand ever-increasing levels of pain, intertwined with ever-increasing levels of pleasure, as her love for Christ blossoms.

¹¹⁷ Sermons 53 and 54 (II, 95-111).

Chapter 2

Textual Tools: Affective Pain in the *Wooing Group*

Chapter 1 of this thesis highlighted the importance of affective pain in the anchoress' penitence. It affirmed that the anchoritic existence involves both physical and affective pain, demonstrating this interconnectedness in the language of *Ancrene Wisse*. Chapter 2 turns to the lyrical meditations collectively known as the *Wooing Group*, assessing their role in the cultivation of the anchoress' affective pain.¹ As Millett observes, '[t]he works of the *Wooing Group* are emotive rather than emotional, designed to evoke rather than simply express the love of God'.² This chapter argues that the *Wooing Group* texts are tools of pain-cultivation, evoking the anchoress' affective pain through the shaping of diction, imagery, and grammatical structures. As such, they are poised to play a central role in her penitential existence.

That meditative activity formed part of the anchoress' day is certain. How large a part it occupied, and when during the day it occurred, is less so. In the recent essay collection on the *Wooing Group*, Nicholas Watson draws attention to the fact that the meditations were part of the anchoress' recreation: the *Wohunge*-author says

¹ Written in rhythmical, alliterative prose (with the exception of the verse-meditation *On God Ureisun of ure Lefdi*), the meditations also have affinities with the religious lyrics. See Thompson, ed. (1958), p. xxi; and Woolf's (1968) study, which includes *Wohunge* (see pp. 61, 64, 66, 159, and 173-174). This thesis does not provide a detailed assessment of the *Wooing Group*'s alliterative and rhythmic patterns.

² Millett (2004), p. 5.

the text should be used ‘hwen þu art on eise’ (fol. 133ra; p. 38, ll. 650-651).³ These meditations were crucial to the anchoress’ penitential existence, with *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* itself being ‘a form of confession’.⁴ Watson’s claim that the *Wooing Group* is ‘a series of imaginative texts defined [...] precisely by the fact that they are unnecessary: useful, pleasurable [...] but not designed to be authoritative or definitive of the way of life they portray’ needs qualification.⁵ The anchoress’ ‘recreational’ activity is just that: a process of re-creation, as she continually shapes herself and her intimacy with Christ through meditation.⁶ In Part IV, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author affirms that ‘[h]alie meditatiuns, inwarde ant meadlese ant angoisuse bonen’ help to eradicate temptation, an essential penitential task in the anchorhold (91: 868-869). He provides a Latin verse listing the focal points of meditative activity (91: 877-878), followed by an English translation expanding each item with the imperative ‘Þench’:

Þet is:
 Þench ofte wið sar of þine sunnen,
 Þench of helle wa, of heoueriches wunnen,
 Þenc of þin ahne deað, of Godes deað o rode,
 Þe grimme dom of Domesdei mu[ne] ofte i mode,
 Þench hu fals is þe worlt, hwucche beoð hire meden,
 Þench hwet tu ahest Godd for his goddeden.
 (91: 879-885)

As observed in the introduction, the command ‘Þench’— corresponding to Aelred’s and Goscelin’s *Cogita*, or the Anglo-Norman command *Pensez ententivement*— suggests a slow-moving and careful cogitation.⁷ The *Ancrene Wisse*-author asserts the

³ See Nicholas Watson, ‘Afterword: “On Eise”’, in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 194-210. A similar phrase is found at the close of *Ancrene Wisse*: ‘Of þis boc redeð hwen 3e beoð eise euche dei leasse oðer mare’ (164: 336).

⁴ It is defined thus by Innes-Parker (2009), p. 107.

⁵ Watson (2009), p. 208.

⁶ ‘Recreate’ with the sense of ‘restore to a good or wholesome condition, refresh’, stems from Latin *recreare*, re + ‘create’. Cited from *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 747.

⁷ Carruthers (1990), pp. 200-201.

need for a ruminative timescale: ‘Euchan of þeose word walde a long hwile forte beo wel iopenet; ah 3ef Ich hihi forðward, demeori 3e þe lengre.’ (91: 886-887). He places meditation within the wider context of ‘þohtes’, affective cogitation in the heart (92: 899-904). He does not specify when meditation should take place, saying only ‘Efter ower sunnen, hwen-se 3e þenched of helle wa ant of heoueriches wunnen [...]’ (91-92: 887ff). This reference to meditating ‘after your sins’ would suggest that the meditative process coincides with confessional preparation, possibly occurring immediately prior to spoken confession.

As meditation is bound with the anchoress’ confession, it is also impossible to sever it from her acts of reading and prayer. Referring to Anselm of Canterbury’s (1033-1109) prayers, Benedicta Ward highlights the interconnectedness of reading, prayer, and meditation.⁸ The *Ancrene Wisse*-author unambiguously views reading and prayer as linked parts of one process:

Accidies salue is gastelich gleadschipe ant froure of gleadful hope, þurh redunge, þurh hali þoht, oðer of monnes muðe. Ofte, leoue sustren, 3e schulen uri leasse forte reden mare. Redunge is god bone. Redunge teached hu ant hwet me bidde, ant beode bi3et hit efter. Amidde þe redunge, hwen þe heorte likeð, kimeð up a deuotium þet is wurð monie benen.
(109: 1552-1557)

Reading is good prayer: as prayer is reading, meditating is prayer, and reading is meditating. ‘[A]ngoisuse bonen’ help to fight temptation, and reading is the remedy for *acedia* (see also 105: 1404), resonating with Peraldus’ later cognitive/affective

⁸ Benedicta Ward, trans., *The Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm* (Harmondsworth, 1973), pp. 43-44. See also Vincent Gillespie, ‘Lukyng in Haly Bukes: *Lectio* in some Late Medieval Spiritual Miscellanies’, in *Looking in Holy Books: Essays on Late Medieval Religious Writing in England* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 114-115.

remedies for the same sin, noted in Chapter 1.⁹ All three activities are intertwined in the monastic and anchoritic existences, and all are necessary.

Through the meditative process, the anchoress creates imaginative access to Christ, Mary, the saints, the horror of sin, the fear of Judgement, and the bliss of Heaven. The *Wooing Group* texts are textual tools, implements with which the anchoress cultivates the terrain of her heart. Rachel Fulton uses the same terminology with regard to the prayers of Anselm, arguing that his prayers are not simply ‘things made (or crafted)’, but rather ‘themselves tools for making’.¹⁰ As Watson notes, the *Wooing Group* meditations are not complete, static artefacts in and of themselves. They are ‘meditative texts which at once generate experience and presuppose or await it’.¹¹ To use Ann W. Astell’s terminology on the Song of Songs, the *Wooing Group* texts await their own fulfilment in the reader.¹² This chapter examines the anchoress’ active use of the *Wooing Group* to nurture her affective suffering, a suffering which can never be disengaged from pleasure.¹³ Her affective pain is especially related to

⁹ On this moment in *Ancrene Wisse*, see also Amsler (2001), 88. Sorrow (‘sorhe’/ *dolor*) in the context of Love is an accepted part of the anchoritic life, but depression and despair are not. Aelred fears the anchoress’ susceptibility to forms of sinful depression. He engages with the terms *tristitia* (sadness) and *acedia*: *acedia* being a step further from mere sadness (642, 644). Goscelin’s third book is especially concerned with tackling spiritual exhaustion. Differently from Aelred, he uses the term *tedia* to label this phenomenon (90). If her mind remains focused inwards on the intent of God (*intus cum Domino intenta*), Eva escapes the clutches of deadly depression (*mortalia tedia*). The risk is a roaming or vagabond mind (‘mente uagabunda’ (90)).

¹⁰ Rachel Fulton, ‘Praying with Anselm at Admont: A Meditation on Practice’, *Speculum*, lxxxi (2006), 700-33 (717).

¹¹ Watson (2009), p. 200.

¹² See Ann W. Astell, *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1990), p. 40.

¹³ Savage proposes a therapeutic model to interpret the anchoress’ reading or performance of the *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerde* and related texts: the texts embody ‘the positive counterbalance to suffering which could be provided by affective meditation’. This seems entirely at odds with the argument of this chapter, but, as Savage argues later in her article, the anchoress’ ‘greatest suffering is affective [...]’

gaining intimacy with the Spousal Lamb and his Mother; this intimacy is not easily attainable, nor does it remain indefinitely once it has been attained. In Part IV, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author describes a game the Lord plays with His children:¹⁴

[...] ure Lauerd, hwen he þoleð þet we beon itemptet, he pleieð wið us as þe moder wið hire 3unge deorling. Flið from him ant hut hire, ant let him sitten ane, ant lokin 3eorne abuten, cleopien ‘Dame! Dame!’ ant wepen ane hwile; ant þenne wið spredde earmes leapeð lahhinde forð, cluppeð ant cusseð ant wipeð his ehnen.
(88: 743-748)

The anchoress reading the *Wooing Group* is engaged in a painful game of hide and seek, drawing close to her Lover only to find herself distanced from Him again.¹⁵ It is through intimacy with her Lover and isolation from Him that she cultivates affective pain in her heart.

[a]nd this is also the source of pleasure, something which keeps her heart sweet and tender’. See Savage (2009), pp. 169, 175. The closeness of pain and pleasure in the anchoritic existence means that there are correspondences between this thesis and Savage’s model.

¹⁴ For later adaptations of this passage, see *The Chastising of God’s Children and the Treatise of Perfection of the Sons of God*, ed. Joyce Bazire and Eric Colledge (Oxford, 1957), pp. 259-263; for dating of this text, see pp. 34-37.

¹⁵ For the ‘games’ of absence and presence played by later English mystics, particularly Julian of Norwich’s (b. 1343) attempts to move beyond the shackling play of human language, see especially Vincent Gillespie with Maggie Ross, ‘The Apophatic Image: the Poetics of Effacement in Julian of Norwich’, in *Looking in Holy Books* (2011), pp. 277-305 (for the phrase ‘game of mystical hide and seek’, see p. 278). See Renevey (2001), p. 58, on the hide-and-seek game between Lover and Beloved in the writings of William of St Thierry (c. 1075-1147/1148). See also Marion Glasscoe, *English Medieval Mystics: Games of Faith* (NY, 1993); see p. 3 for ‘a life of faith understood as a game’. The *Wooing Group* texts are not treated as ‘mystical’ in this thesis, and the anchoress’ game of intimacy and distance cannot be straightforwardly translated into the terms of cataphatic and apophatic theology.

I. The Meditative Context of the *Wooing Group*

The Coherence of the *Wooing Group*

As observed in the introduction, Cole has rightly stressed the merging of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *Ureisun of God*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, and *Lofsong of ure Louerde* on the manuscript page in N, as well as the texts' inter-textual dialogue. As she also points out, in this manuscript the last *Wooing*-text, *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, is followed by the Creed. Cole's suggestion that the prayers are 'constituents of a holistic entity with a considered trajectory' needs to be nuanced, however.¹⁶ Appealing as this reading may be, it has the danger of forcing a uniform identity onto the texts, stifling each text's idiosyncracies. It is also important to emphasize that the *Wooing Group* meditations do not form a coherent meditative programme outside of N, as mentioned by Cole.¹⁷ *Wohunge*, which has clear parallels with *Ureisun of God*, is not even included in this manuscript, and *Ureisun of God* and *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* are also found, in fragmented form, in other manuscripts. Furthermore, Ralph Hanna has recently presented codicological evidence from London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 487 (L) and London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xviii (T) which casts doubt over the 'AB' texts more generally as 'the result of a non-problematic single acquisition of all items as some formed canon dispersed from a single centre'. The evidence indicates instead 'a much less centralized and organized group of texts, available only fitfully and sporadically to book producers and the readers they served'.¹⁸

¹⁶ Cole (2003), 80.

¹⁷ Cole (2003), 87, 94.

¹⁸ Ralph Hanna, 'Lambeth Palace Library, MS 487: Some Problems of Early Thirteenth-century Textual Transmission', in *Texts and Traditions of Medieval*

Accordingly, this thesis does not take ‘group’ to mean a pre-planned and inseparable family of texts, but interprets it as referring to a cluster of texts linked by theme, style, language, manuscript affiliation, and probable audience.

The Origins of the *Wooing Group*

Back in 1958, Thompson acknowledged the *Wooing Group*’s ‘Problems of Origin’.¹⁹ Some fragments of information on the texts’ origins can be pieced together. *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* has a known monastic background—with the speaker identifying himself as a ‘Munuch’ in the final stanza (p. 8, l. 169)—before its use by anchoritic readers. From a citation in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, it is clear that the author of this meditation used Augustine’s *Confessiones* in some form (fol. 130v; p. 14, ll. 153-156). *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* seems to be based on Marbod of Rennes’ (1035-1123) *Oratio ad sanctam Mariam*, but it greatly expands this short verse prayer in Latin.²⁰ Given that Aelred is a named source in *Ancrene Wisse*, the meditative section of his *De institutione inclusarum* (662-682) may have also been a source for the *Wooing Group* authors; the same is true for Bernard of Clairvaux’s sermons. Although there is a pervasive scholarly assumption that *Wohunge* draws on Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse*, it is more likely that the two have a shared origin—an origin also shared by thirteenth-century Parisian sermons, as Millett has shown.²¹

Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett, ed. Cate Gunn and Catherine Innes-Parker (York, 2009), pp. 78-88 (pp. 86, 88).

¹⁹ See Thompson, ed. (1958), pp. xv-xxiv.

²⁰ See Thompson, ed. (1958), pp. xv-xvi, and ‘Appendix’ for the text (p. 80). See also Shepherd, ed. (1972), p. xiii; and Renvey (1997), p. 46.

²¹ Bella Millett, ‘The “Conditions of Eligibility” in *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*’, in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 26-47.

Anselmian and pseudo-Anselmian prayers are other possible sources for the *Wooing Group*-authors. In 1888, William Vollhardt presented a table comparing passages from the *Wooing Group* texts, particularly *Ureisun of God*, with ‘Anselm of Canterbury’s’ prayers and meditations, and the *Vitis Mystica*.²² His work is evidence for verbal correspondence between the *Wooing Group* and the Latin he cites, but these are not authentic Anselmian prayers; Vollhardt was writing before André Wilmart’s scholarship and F. S. Schmitt’s critical edition.²³ A strong correspondence is the image of earthly and spiritual loves failing to make a bed in one breast (*Ureisun of God* (fol. 124r; p. 5, ll. 27-29)), found in the pseudo-Anselmian prayer ‘Ad Christum’ (PL clviii, 897A). Another viable correspondence is the image of the breaking heart (*Wohunge* (fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 489-90)), occurring in the pseudo-Anselmian ‘Meditatio super miserere’ (PL clviii, 840D). A further possibility is the image of the stretching, spreading body of Christ embracing the meditator (*Ureisun of God* (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 48-50)), present in the pseudo-Anselmian meditation ‘De passione Christi’ (PL clviii, 761B-762A). There is evidence that the manuscripts of Anselm’s prayers and meditations, merged with and indistinguishable from pseudo-

²² William Vollhardt, *Einfluss der Lateinischen Geistlichen Litteratur* (Leipzig, 1888), pp. 48-52, 53-65. He is also cited by Renevey (1993), p. 97, n. 100, who says ‘parts’ of *Ureisun of God* ‘are translations of some of Anselm’s prayers and the general mood is Anselmian’ (p. 97).

²³ In the decades and centuries after Anselm’s death, his prayers and meditations inspired an avalanche of imitations that were spuriously attributed to him. Only twenty-two prayers and meditations are authentic, and they have been concretized in F. S. Schmitt’s 1968 edition. André Wilmart determined the authentic Anselmian texts. See his authoritative *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen Age Latin: études d’histoire littéraire* (Paris, 1971), pp. 162-201. For a study of the twelfth-century Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud. Misc. 363, which is one example of the mélange of authentic meditations with imitations falsely attributed to Anselm, see R. W. Southern, ‘St. Anselm and his English Pupils’, *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. Richard Hunt and Raymond Klibansky, I (London, 1943), 3-34.

Anselmian texts, circulated in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁴ It is thus feasible that the *Wooing Group*-authors had access to authentic Anselmian and pseudo-Anselmian texts, and may have used them as sources.²⁵

As remarked in the introduction, the *Wooing Group* authors worked within the tradition of Psalm-based and solitary meditation to which Anselm was a key contributor. This was a tradition in which, to use R. W. Southern's phrase, 'the Psalter held an undisputed supremacy'.²⁶ As outlined in Anselm's letter to a certain Adelaide, in 1071 he sent her a collection of six prayers and one meditation, appended to a *florilegium* of the Psalms (113-114).²⁷ However, his prayers evolved beyond the brief eleventh-century collects found in, for example, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS D'Orville 45.²⁸ Anselm's prayer-responses, not the Psalms themselves, became the dominant element of Adelaide's prayer-book.²⁹ The *Wooing Group* meditations are

²⁴ MS Laud. Misc. 363 belonged to the abbey of St Albans. See Southern (1943), 24-25. Otto Pächt affirms that Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Auct. D. 2. 6, otherwise known as the Littlemore Anselm, 'came from the priory of Benedictine nuns at Littlemore, near Oxford, and must have already belonged to that house in the thirteenth century'. See Otto Pächt, 'The Illustrations of St. Anselm's *Prayers and Meditations*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xix, no. 112 (1956), 68-83 (69). This is also evidence that the Anselmian prayers were being read by women.

²⁵ Many of Vollhardt's other correspondences can be otherwise explained by biblical imagery, such as the gazing angels and the hard nails. See Vollhardt (1888), pp. 48, 52.

²⁶ R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059 - c. 1130* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 38-39.

²⁷ Although the original collection sent to Adelaide has been lost, its contents have been reconstructed by Southern (1966): the meditation on the fear of death, the Prayers to St John the Baptist, St Peter, St Paul, St John the Evangelist, St Stephen and St Mary Magdalene. (p. 43). In 1104, Anselm sent a completed collection of prayers and meditations to Countess Mathilda of Tuscany (1046-1115). For more on this, see Ward, trans. (1973), p. 277.

²⁸ Southern and Ward both draw attention to this manuscript as an example of the kind of prayer book available during Anselm's lifetime. See Ward, trans. (1973), p. 37, and Southern (1966), p. 41.

²⁹ Southern, (1966), p. 43. Ward, trans. (1973) makes a similar observation (p. 275).

highly Psalmic in character, but, like Anselm's prayers, the meditations themselves have the greatest importance. This Psalter-based meditation functions on the premise of absolute solitude. In Southern's terms on the *Orationes sive meditationes*, 'we have not only withdrawn from corporate worship into the privacy of the chamber; we have withdrawn into the secrecy of the soul'.³⁰ Like Anselmian prayers, the anchoress' meditative exercises occur in her secluded chamber, and take effect within the secret reaches of her soul.³¹

Anselm and the *Wooing Group* author(s) also produce potentially flexible meditations. In a much-quoted admonition in his Preface to the *Orationes sive meditationes*, echoed in his letters to the monk Gundolf and Countess Mathilda of Tuscany (1046-1115), Anselm imbues his prayers with an inbuilt adaptability:

Nec debet intendere lector ut quamlibet earum totam perlegat, sed quantum sentit sibi deo adiuvante valere ad accendendum affectum orandi, vel quantum illum delectat. Nec necesse habet aliquam semper a principio incipere, sed ubi magis illi placuerit.

(3)

(The reader should not exert himself/herself in order to read through the whole of any of them, but as much as he/she feels, by the help of God, useful to kindle his/her affection to pray, or as much as delights him/her. Nor is it necessary for someone to always begin at the beginning, but wherever the reader will be more pleased.)

Whilst each text—whether an Anselmian prayer, or a *Wooing Group* meditation—is most effective when read in its entirety, there do exist passages that are isolable as

³⁰ R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 102. See also Ward, trans. (1973), pp. 51-52.

³¹ The imagery of secluded and secret chambers echoes the Song of Songs, and is used to this effect in *Ancrene Wisse*. In Part II, the anchoress herself is described as God's silent chamber (36: 646-649).

self-sufficient meditative exercises.³² In Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum', for instance, the speaker's various salutations to Christ (as redemption, hope, and light), the account of the Passion, the agonised plea to Mary, and the speaker's engagement with the Resurrection are all usable as self-reliant meditative tools (6-8). In the *Wooing Group* meditations, the various accounts of the Passion, and the incantatory devotions to the name 'Ihesu' can function as discrete, independent meditative items.³³ After gaining a ruminative familiarity with the text as a whole, the anchoress could have isolated passages to use as discrete exercises in her meditation.

Anselm and the *Wooing Group*-authors both write in a language that is, quite literally, biblical. It has been well acknowledged that the language of Anselm's *Orationes sive meditationes* is infused with that of the Bible.³⁴ The *Wooing Group* texts are also suffused with biblical language, as with the sweetness imagery opening *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge*, and the gazing angels in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* and *Ureisun of God*, to be discussed later in this chapter. Elsewhere, however, they also quote and sign-post the biblical voice in use.³⁵ Such 'sign-posting' creates a barrier between the scriptural voice, and the voice of the meditator. This barrier is absent from the Anselmian prayers. Given that Mathilda and Adelaide were able to read Latin, they are also likely to have possessed greater familiarity with scripture than the anchoresses reading the *Wooing Group*. It may have been that these anchoresses required sign-posts to help locate themselves in the expansive territory of scripture.

³² Cole quotes the above Anselmian passage to underscore the possibility that the *Wooing Group* meditations may not have been used as whole texts. Cole (2003), 93.

³³ These will be highlighted later in the chapter.

³⁴ See Ward, trans. (1973), p. 46. For an example of this infusion of the Bible in language, see especially a passage in the 'Oratio ad Christum' (8-9).

³⁵ See, for example: p. 8, ll. 122-124; p. 12, ll. 67-69; p. 13, ll. 115-24; p. 14, ll. 139-144; pp. 21-22, ll. 63-67; p. 32, ll. 454-558; p. 31, ll. 403-411; pp. 36-37, ll. 580-585; p. 14, ll. 152-156.

However, it is important to stress that the *Wooing Group* texts cannot be reduced to mere translations of Anselmian or pseudo-Anselmian prayers. There are fundamental differences between the *Wooing Group* and the authentic Anselmian prayers in the nature of devotion they seek to inspire. There is, for example, no obviously sexual relationship with Christ in the Anselmian meditations. Christ is defined as the meditator's lover or bridegroom in the Prayers to Christ and Mary (9, 25), and a passage in the 'Oratio ad Christum' does approach a language of sexual desire, particularly with the verb *concupiscere* (7). But these references do not compare with the insistently romantic, and at times erotic, interaction with Christ in the *Wooing Group*. This is best exemplified by corresponding passages in *Ureisun of God* and Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum', on the remembrance of Christ's good deeds:³⁶

hwī ne cusse ich þe sweteliche ine goste. wīþ swete munegunge of þine god deden?
(fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 79-81)

Ad hoc, clementissime, tendit haec oratio mea, haec memoria et meditatio beneficiorum tuorum, ut accendam in me tuum amorem.
(7)

(To this, most merciful, does my prayer tend, that through remembrance and meditation on your good deeds, I may be inflamed with your love.)

This convergence of remembrance with spiritual kissing in *Ureisun of God* is nonexistent in the Anselmian prayer.³⁷ Whilst the *Wooing Group* authors may have

³⁶ Of all the *Wooing Group* texts, *Ureisun of God* is the prayer closest to Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum' in devotional focus and imagery.

³⁷ There are also other differences in emphasis and structure between *Ureisun of God* and Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum', principally in the use of imagery of the sweetness

used Anselmian and pseudo-Anselmian prayers as sources, the English meditations are not inferior renditions of Latin models; they are subtle tools of pain-cultivation.

Presence and Absence in Passion Meditation

In her recent monograph, which includes an extensive chapter on *Wohunge*, McNamer rightly observes that meditations from c. 1050-1530 demand the imaginative presence of the meditator.³⁸ As a past event, the Passion is irrecoverable, a fact that is not lost on the yearning meditator. Yet, through meditation, the meditator imagines herself present— both temporally and spatially— at Christ’s Passion. It is a presence that occurs in the seat of the meditator’s affections: her heart and soul. She uses her spiritual senses to see and hear the Passion, and attempts to gain affective access to each moment through intimacy with Christ and his Mother. She cultivates her affective pain in response to the pain she sees and hears. But in the *Wooing Group*, affective pain is also felt by the anchoress due to her absence. Like Psalmic speakers, the speakers of the *Wooing Group* meditations are situated between presence and absence, between desire and fulfilment.³⁹ The speakers of the *Wooing Group* partake in an incessant search for Christ and Mary, forced to shift between intimacy and distance. Before turning to the *Wooing Group* meditations themselves, it will be useful to touch on this preoccupation with presence and absence in Latin and

and light of Christ, the imagery of liquid, and the types of Passion remembrance embraced by the meditator. Due to constraints of space, these differences can only be mentioned here.

³⁸ McNamer (2010), p. 1. McNamer’s description of the texts as ‘drama’ is not followed in this thesis, as will be clarified in Chapter 4.

³⁹ Throughout the Psalms, the speakers are poised between sureness that God hears their prayers, and fear that their prayers fall on unhearing ears. See, for example: Psalms 4:3, 12:4, 26:7, 37:15, 54:1-2, 56:2, 56:7, 65:18, 68:13, 68:16, 68:17, 85:1, 101:1-2, 101:20, 107:6, 118:145, 118:149, 119:1, 137:3, 140:1, 142:1, 142:7.

vernacular meditations, studying Anselmian prayers in conjunction with other possible sources— and analogues— of the *Wooing Group*.

In the meditative section of the *De institutione inclusarum*, Aelred guides the anchoress through an intricate meditation on the past (Christ's conception, birth, childhood, and death upon the Cross), the present (Aelred's and his sister's lives), and the future (the terrifying Day of Judgement). Each event of the Passion coincides with the anchoress' and Aelred's affective presence and participation. Take, for instance, the Wounding of the Side:

Tunc unus ex militibus lancea latus eius aperuit, et exiuit sanguis et aqua. Festina, ne tardaueris, comede fauum cum melle tuo, bibe uinum tuum cum lacte tuo. Sanguis tibi in uinum uertitur ut inebrieris, in lac aqua mutatur ut nutriaris. Facta sunt tibi in petra flumina, in membris eius uulnera, et in maceria corporis eius cauerna, in quibus instar columbae latitans et deosculans singula ex sanguine eius fiant sicut uitta coccinea labia tua, et eloquium tuum dulce.
(671)

(Then one of the soldiers opened his side with a lance, and there exited blood and water. Hasten, tarry not, eat your honeycomb with your honey, drink your wine with your milk. The blood is altered to wine to intoxicate you, the water is changed to milk to nourish you. For you there are streams in the rock, in his limbs wounds, clefts in the wall of his body, in which like a dove you hide yourself and kiss each one; from his blood, your lips become just as a scarlet ribbon, and your utterance sweet.)

Aelred deliberately shifts his tenses, moving from the past ('aperuit', 'exiuit') to the imperative and present ('festina', 'comede', 'bibe', 'uertitur', 'mutatur', 'sunt'), enabling the anchoress' affective participation at the moment the imagined events occur. The meditator is present in her heart, and it is through her heart that she cultivates her affective pain to each imagined moment of the Passion.

In Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum' the orphaned speaker attaches herself to the Face as a possible point of contact, but continues to yearn most painfully.⁴⁰ It is a yearning expressed with a range of verbs:

Te sitio, te esurio, te desidero, ad te suspiro, te concupisco. Et sicut pupillus benignissimi patris orbatus praesentia, flens et eiulans, incessanter eius dilectam faciem toto corde amplectitur[.]
(7)

(I thirst for you, I hunger for you, I desire you, I sigh for you, I covet you: like an orphan who, bereaved of the presence of a most kind father, crying and wailing, unceasingly grasps the beloved face with his whole heart.)

In an extended description of the Passion, the speaker chastises herself for not being present, yet simultaneously invokes the scene of the Passion before her eyes. Lamenting her absence, the speaker paradoxically turns herself into a witness at the scene of Christ's anguish:

Cur, o anima mea, te praesentem non transfixit gladius doloris acutissimi, cum ferre non posses vulnerari lancea latus tui salvatoris? Cum videre nequires violari clavis manus et pedes tui plasmatoris? Cum horreres effundi sanguinem tui redemptoris?
(7)

(Why, oh my soul, were you not present to be pierced by a sword of most acute sorrow, when you could not endure to see the piercing of the side of your saviour with a lance? Why could you not endure to see the nails violate the hands and feet of your Creator? Why did you not see with horror the blood poured from your Redeemer?)

⁴⁰ The speaker of Anselmian prayers is never explicitly defined as female, but since Mathilda of Tuscany was a key user of the full collection, and Adelaide was a key user of other Anselmian meditations, this thesis assumes a female speaker.

Complete access to Christ is never granted in the course of this meditation. At its close, there is hope that He will come, but it is an eventuality that remains uncertain (9).

Such lack of fulfilment is also experienced with regard to the Virgin Mary.⁴¹ As attested in his letter to Gundolf, Anselm wrote three versions of his Prayer to Mary (135-136).⁴² In the first prayer, the speaker unequivocally expresses her longing for Mary's presence and gaze (13). Yet throughout the meditation, she is painfully aware of the obstacles to attaining her desire:

Sic enim, pia domina, alienata est a se immanitate stuporis, ut vix sensum habeat enormis languoris. Sic sordibus et foetore foedatur, ut timeat ne ab ipsa misericors vultus tuus avertatur. Sic tabescit desperando respectus tui conversionem, ut etiam os obmutescat ad orationem.
(13)

(Thus, dear Lady, there is a monstrous numbness, and my senses are scarcely aware of their great sickness. Such is the filth and stench that befouls me that I fear you will avert your merciful face. So I look to you to convert me, but I am dissolved by my despair, and still my lips are shut against prayer.)

In the third and final prayer, the speaker even interrupts the meditation itself to admit that she is unable to speak about the Mother. Her soul is an insufficient resource for such expression:

⁴¹ Giles Gasper has investigated the important position of Christology and Mariology in Anselm's theology, and includes the *Orationes sive meditationes* in his study. See Giles Gasper, *Anselm of Canterbury and his Theological Inheritance* (Aldershot, 2004), in particular pp. 144-153.

⁴² Although it is true that Anselm has been given an erroneous reputation as the champion of Marian devotion (as noted by Southern (1990), p. 107, and Gasper (2004), p. 144), the Prayers to Mary are testament to the Holy Mother's importance in his meditative practice.

Genitrix vitae animae meae, alitrix reparatoris carnis meae, lactatrix salvatoris totius substantiae meae! Sed quid dicam? Lingua mihi deficit, quia mens non sufficit.

(19)

(Mother of the life of my soul, nurse of the redeemer of my flesh, wet nurse of the salvation of my whole substance! But what say I? Language fails me, because my soul is not sufficient.)

The meditator later engages in a pursuit of Mary as an elusive love-object:

O nimis exaltata, quam sequi conatur affectus animae meae, quo aufugis aciem mentis meae? O pulchra ad intuendum, amabilis ad contemplandum, delectabilis ad amandum, quo evadis capacitatem cordis mei? Praestolare, domina, infirmam animam te sequentem. Ne abscondas te, domina, parum videnti animae te quaerenti. Miserare, domina, animam post te anhelando languentem.

(21)

(Oh greatly exalted, when the affection of my heart attempts to pursue you, where do you escape the sharpness of my soul? Oh beautiful to gaze upon, lovable to be contemplated, delightful to love, where do you evade the capacity of my heart? Lady, wait for the weakness of the soul who pursues you. Do not conceal yourself, Lady, seeing the insufficient soul which searches for you! Have mercy, Lady, on the soul behind you, panting and languishing.)

As the infirm meditator pants and languishes, Mary floats out of reach.

Taking the form of a lament by Mary, the thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman ‘Les lamentations Nostre Dame’, a useful analogue of the *Wooing Group*, also betrays a fascination with affective presence and absence. The text provides a detailed Passion narrative, inviting continual affective participation from the meditator.⁴³ The meditator requests direct affective access to the Passion, to the extent that Mary’s tears become concrete and quantifiable:

⁴³ See also *Plaintes de la Vierge en Anglo-Français*, ed. F. J. Tanquerey (Paris, 1921), constructed as a dialogue between Mary and Bernard, based on the Pseudo-Bernardine *Planctus*. The text is dated by its editor to 1250-1275 (pp. 55-56). See further McNamer (2010), p. 217, n. 12.

[*Vox contemplationis ad beatam Dei genitricem*] [...] jeo vus pri ke vus me donez aucunes des lermes ke vus eustes en sa passion.
(p. 182)

(*A Voice in contemplation to the blessed (one) who bore God...[...] I beg you that you give me some of the tears that you had in his passion*).

The text demands the meditator's affective engagement throughout, incorporating commonplace affective guidance on how an observer should feel. A cosmic anguish is evoked:

que fut cel angle ou archangle que ne ploreit cunte nature la ou Deux, qui ne poeit morir, giseit mort cunte nature? Qui fut si dur que ne ploreit qui veist le Saveur du monde si cruelement treiter, et veist la beneite Virge tute arusee de soen precieuse sang? Et qui est celui ou cele que veist cele seinte Dame si bone, si bele, tute douce, tute delitable, tormenté de si grant anguisse, pleine de si grant dolur, plorer si amerement? Certes, il n'y ad nul queor que peust suffrer a veer si grant anguisse come ele avoit, einz me merveillerei jeo si lui angle ne ploreient, neis en cele grant leesse lasus ou dolur ne poet estre.
(p. 194)

(What angel or archangel could not weep, against nature, there where God, who cannot die, lay dead, against nature? Who is so hard that (he) could not weep when he sees the Saviour of the world so cruelly treated, and sees the blessed Virgin all sprinkled with his precious blood? And who, man or woman, sees this holy Lady so good, so beautiful, all sweet, all delectable, tormented with such great anguish, full of such great sorrow, weeping so bitterly? Certainly there is no heart that could suffer to see as great an anguish as she had. So I would marvel if the angels were not weeping, even in the sky up there, (of) great joy where sorrow cannot be.)

Though this Anglo-Norman meditation claims that no heart could suffer to see Mary's tremendous anguish, it is this that the meditator repeatedly attempts. Meditators on the Passion are aware of the difficulty of their goal— unadulterated affective access to the most painful moment in Christian history. The anchoress reading the *Wooing Group* has the power to create imaginative affective access to the Passion, but her absence from the Passion continues to threaten the intimacy she gains. She is engaged in constant attempts to gain intimacy with Christ and his Mother. Her affective pain is

fostered both when she advances closer to this goal, and when she is distanced from it. Each text will be studied in turn, following the order of **N**, with *Wohunge* treated separately at the close.⁴⁴

II. The *Wooing Group* as Textual Tools

Ureisun of ure Lefdi

For so long eliminated from the *Wooing Group*, *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* is a meditation in verse on Mary as the resplendent queen of Heaven. George Kane surmises that this poem is ‘less an outburst of spontaneous spirituality than a deliberate form of worship, a full-scale devotional exercise designed to arouse religious emotion’.⁴⁵ It is a ‘full-scale devotional exercise’ that nurtures the meditator’s affective relationship to the Holy Mother in Her state of bliss. As Cole argues, *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* is significantly placed at the start of the meditations in **N**, commencing the methodical development of the anchoress-Mary relationship.⁴⁶ Although this thesis has reservations about the ‘holistic’ argument, the nurturance of the anchoress’ relationship to Mary, begun with such force in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, does become a central part of the anchoress’ suffering in the ensuing prose meditations. As will be seen, in *Ureisun of God*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and the Titus

⁴⁴ Despite reservations regarding the suggestion that the *Wooing Group* forms a ‘holistic entity’, the **N** order is followed here so that the inter-textual dialogue between the texts in this manuscript can be highlighted.

⁴⁵ George Kane, *Middle English Literature: A Critical Study of the Romances, the Religious Lyrics and Piers Plowman* (NY, 1951), p. 134.

⁴⁶ Cole (2003), 93.

Wohunge, this evolving relationship takes place not in the delights of Heaven, but in the harrowing arena of the Crucifixion.

In addition to her inherently paradoxical nature as both mother and maiden, there exists another tension throughout *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* concerning this resplendent Queen (p. 5, l. 69). At once an independent power and a figure of intercession, she is bound with her Son but also evokes adoration from her devotees. The Virgin meditated upon is defined at the start and the close as ‘Cristes milde moder seynte/seinte Marie’ (p. 3, l. 1; p. 8, l. 171). She does not eclipse her Son. The speaker asserts at later stages in the meditation:

Du ert mine soule wið-ute leasunge, / Efter þine leoue sune, leouest alre þinge[.]
(p. 5, ll. 75-76)

To þe one is al mi trust, efter þine leoue sune[.]
(p. 6, l. 125)

Her role as mediator between the wretched sinner and Christ is particularly clear in the statement on the Five Wounds: ‘Vor cristes fif wunden ðu 3if me milce & ore’ (p. 6, l. 102). Bestowed with the *Theotokos* identity, as in Anselm’s third Prayer to Mary (23), the Mother is also bound with God: ‘Swete Godes moder’ (p. 5, l. 67). Yet the speaker refers to the Virgin not merely as a vehicle for the sinner’s petition, but as a love-object. From the poem’s outset, the speaker’s love for Mary is pervasive. Differently from the other *Wooing Group* texts, it is constructed as a feudal relationship, the meditator a loyal and subservient retainer:

Mine liues leome, mi leoue lefdi, / To þe ich buwe & mine kneon ich beie, /
And al min heorte blod to ðe ich offrie.
(p. 3, ll. 2-4)

The ‘lofsong’ never ends:

þu ert mine soule liht & mine heorte blisse, / Mi lif & mi to-hope, min heale
mid iwisse. / Ich ouh wurðie ðe mid alle mine mihte, / And singge þe lofsong
bi daie & bi nihte.
(p. 3, ll. 5-8)

Both aspects of her identity in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*— intercessor and lover— form
the basis of the suffering cultivated in the later N meditations, and in *Wohunge*.⁴⁷

With adoration for the Virgin laid open in the meditative process, the focus
shifts to a visual apprehension of her as the Crowned Queen of Heaven. The precision
of the visual imagery is noticeable.⁴⁸

al þin hird is i-schrud mid hwite ciclatune, / And alle heo beoð ikruned mid
guldene krune; / Heo beoð so read so rose, so hwit so þe lilie, / and euer-more
heo beoð gled and singeð þuruhut murie.
(p. 4, ll. 51-54)

Prior to this passage with the gold, red and white in interplay, there is a mention of the
‘gold ringes’, the ‘blostmen hwite & reade’, and the ‘guldene chelle’ (p. 4, ll. 34, 37,
45). Colours, movements, and sounds merge into a deeply visual and aural meditative
experience of Paradise:

Mid brihte 3imstones hore krune is al biset, / And al heo doð þet ham likeð, so
þet no þing ham ne let. / Ði leoue sune is hore king & þu ert hore kwene. / Ne
beoð heo neuer i-dreaued mid winde ne mid reine; / Mid ham is euer more dei
wið-ute nihte, / Song wið-ute seoruwe & sib wið-ute uihte; / Mid ham is

⁴⁷ Whilst she is portrayed as a force for beauty and peace in the earthly lives of both
men and women, Mary is only a lover for men: ‘þu ert briht & blisful ouer alle
wummen, / and god ðu ert & gode leof ouer alle wepmen’ (p. 3, ll. 19-20). Mary is
never cast as the anchoress’ lover in the other *Wooing Group* meditations. Despite the
homoerotic desire felt by the author towards Christ, noted by Salih (2009), p. 152, a
lesbian desire for Mary is not an aspect of the *Wooing Group* meditations.

⁴⁸ See Kane (1951) on the passage (p. 135).

muruhðe moniuold wið-ute teone & treie, / Gleo-beames & gome inouh, liues
wil & eche pleie.
(p. 4, ll. 55-62)

Given the precision of this imagery, the anchoress' meditative use of this passage may have been reinforced by visual images— though the use of such images in meditation was burdened with anxiety in the Middle Ages.⁴⁹ It is an anxiety present in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century anchorhold. As mentioned in the introduction, Aelred warns his sister of an over-dependency on external images. Such dependency is symptomatic of an inner poverty, he claims:

Sint haec illorum qui nihil intus in quo gloriantur habentes, exterius sibi
comparant in quo delectantur.
(657)

(Leave be [visual images] to those who have nothing within themselves in which to glory, and so acquire things outside themselves in which to take pleasure.)

He nevertheless permits images of the Virgin Mother and the Virgin disciple to complement that of the Passion, as a stimulating presence within the plain anchorhold (659). Perhaps the anchoress reading *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* embraces the image of Mary, and of others, as part of her 'devotional literacy'; the images become texts, forming a dialogue with the meditative text in her hand.⁵⁰ Louis Réau notes that the cherubim and seraphim are 'essential and indispensable' figures in medieval artistic

⁴⁹ Gillespie has outlined this debate in the later Middle Ages. Vincent Gillespie, 'Strange Images of Death: The Passion in Later Medieval English Devotional and Mystical Writing', in *Looking in Holy Books* (2011), pp. 209-239. See also Margaret Aston on the place of images in the 'mystical ladder of learning': 'Devotional Literacy' in *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London, 1984), p. 115.

⁵⁰ See Millett (1996) on the anchoresses' knowledge of Scripture (pp. 94-96). The term 'devotional literacy' is Aston's (1984). As she argues on the Middle Ages, 'While there was a sense in which letters and books could be images, there was also an unquestionable manner in which images were books'. Aston (1984), p. 118.

depictions of the Coronation.⁵¹ Their presence is clear in this meditation: ‘Heih is þi kinestol / on-uppe cherubine, / Bi-uoren ðine leoue sune wiðinnen seraphine’ (p. 3, ll. 25-26). Angelic beings are an insistent aspect of the Heavenly landscape (p. 3, l. 27, p. 4, l. 47). Moreover, the angels and Mary are themselves engaged in the act of viewing (Matthew 18:10) in this visually evocative meditation: ‘Murie dreameð engles biuoren þin onsene, / Pleieð & sweieð & singeð bitweonen; / Swuðe wel ham likieð biuoren þe to beonne, / Vor heo neuer ne beoð sead þi ueir to iseonne’ (p. 3, ll. 27-30).⁵² The use of visual images in conjunction with the meditative text of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* may have brought the meditator closer to the Virgin Mother.

And yet, complete intimacy is far from achieved. The meditator considers humanity’s inability to comprehend the Mother’s bliss: ‘Þine blisse ne mei no wiht understonden’ (p. 4, l. 31). As the rapturous Queen of Heaven, she is experientially removed from the meditator. Mary’s distance from earthly sorrow is made explicit in ‘Les lamentations Nostre Dame’. Now the glorified (*glorifié*) Queen of Heaven, the Virgin affirms the pastness of the Passion; she can no longer weep:

O beu duz amis, ceo ke tu demandes si est comencement de tresgrant doel e de tresgrant plur, mes pur ceo que jeo sui glorifié ne puis plorer.
(p. 182)

(O my beautiful sweet friend, what you ask (about) is the beginning of very great sorrow and of very great weeping, but given that I am glorified I cannot weep.)

Mary’s sorrow is not entirely absent from *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*. The image of the sorrowful Mary standing near the Cross breaks through the texture of the meditation:

⁵¹ Louis Réau, ‘Le Couronnement de la Vierge’, in *Iconographie de l’art Chrétien*, 3 Vols, II (Paris, 1957), 621-626 (623).

⁵² ‘See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven’ (Matthew 18:10).

‘ðe muchele seoruwe ðet was o ðine mode / þo þu er ðe deaðe him bi-uore stode’ (p. 5, ll. 89-90). At this point in the meditation, the anchoress’ perspective fleetingly moves downwards and backwards. Below and before the jubilation of the Queen in Heaven, the anchoress moves to the Mother’s sorrow on Calvary. She glimpses the Mary to be seen in the later **N** meditations, situated not on the Heavenly throne in joy, but by the Cross in agony. The two Mary figures— one the joyous Queen in Heaven, the other the anguished mother by the Cross— exist parallel to one another in the meditative imagination. The meditator is given full access to neither.

The bliss granted to Mary’s devotees is also inconceivable and ineffable, expressed in commonplace Pauline language (1 Corinthians 2:9; also Isaiah 64:4): ‘ne mei non heorte þenchen ne nowiht arechen, / neo no muð imelen ne no tunge tegen / hu muchel god ðu 3eirkest wið-inne paradise / ham þet swinkeð dei & niht i ðine seruise’ (p. 4, ll. 47-50). The meditator’s sight of this joyful scene is expressed with the modal verb ‘schulen’:

Per heo schulen resten þe her ðe doð wurschipe, / 3if heo 3emeð hore lif
 cleane urom alle queadschipe; / þer ne schulen heo neuer karien ne swinken, /
 ne weopen, ne murnen, ne helle stanches stinken.
 (p. 4, ll. 41-44)

The attainment of this unspeakable joy becomes dependent on the mercy of Mary, the meditator’s virtue, and on the success of the meditative appeal itself. The male speaker entreats Mary at the close, ‘And nu ich þe biseche vor ðire holinesse / þet þu bringe þene Munuch to þire glednesse / þet funde ðesne song bi ðe, mi looue leafdi’

(p. 8, ll. 168-170).⁵³ As the meditation nears this end, the speaker attempts to fuse with the Virgin in her entirety: ‘Mi lif is þin, mi luue is þin, mine heorte blod is þin, / and 3if ich der seggen, mi leoue leafdi, þu ert min’, speaker and Mary blended together with the rhyme of the possessive pronouns ‘þin’ and ‘min’ (p. 7, ll. 157-158). Mary, however, has at no point in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* explicitly reciprocated the meditator’s love. The succeeding meditations in **N** do not yearn for fusion with Mary—in the way that fusion with Christ is desired in *Wohunge*—but the texts enkindle the desire for entrance into Mary’s and Christ’s affections. *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* has laid the foundation for both of these shifting and pain-inducing relationships.

Ureisun of God

Ureisun of God is a meditation devoted to a pursuit of intimacy with Christ; intimacy with the Holy Mother is also sought, but solely within the context of her attachment and privileged access to Christ. This meditation at once provides the anchoress with material to create intimate access to Christ, yet also underscores her lack of closeness to Him.⁵⁴ It does not provide a narrative; the anchoress does not progress steadily from distance to intimacy, nor is there a Passion sequence that she can follow. Rather, it is a collage of moments of possible intimacy with her Lover. Like *Wohunge*, *Ureisun of God* opens its meditative journey by an evocation of the honey and sweetness imagery in the Song of Songs (4:3, 4:11, 5: 1) and Psalm 18:11 (‘More to

⁵³ It is puzzling that there is still a reference to the ‘monk’ after this text was appropriated by a female readership. But, remembering Salih’s (2009) assertion of the anchorhold as ‘a repository for the excess of clerical affects’ (p. 158), it is not unfeasible that the meditations in **N** were also used by male religious.

⁵⁴ The distance between anchoress and Christ in *Ureisun of God* has also been touched upon by Cole (2003), 91.

be desired than gold and many precious stones: and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb’):

Iesu soð god soð godes sune. Iesu soð god. soð mon. 7 soð meidenes bern.
 Iesu min holi loue. mi sikere swetnesse. Iesu min heorte. mine soule hele.
 Swete iesu mi leof. mi lif. mi leome . min healewi . min huniter. Þu ert al þet
 ich hopie. Iesu mi weole. mi wunne. mi bliðe breostes blisse. Iesu teke þet þu
 ert so softe 7 so swete. 3et þerto þu ert so leoflich. so louelich. 7 so lufsum. þet
 te engles euer biholdeð þe. ne ne beoð heo neuer ful. forto logen on þe.
 (fol. 123v; p. 5, ll. 1-10)

The text first affirms the ‘soð’ doctrinal paradox of Christ’s nature. It is only then that it moves to affective interaction between the meditator and Christ. Christ is identified as the quality of sweetness itself: as he is ‘god’, ‘godes son’, ‘maidene bern’, ‘min hali loue’, he is also ‘mi sikere swetnesse’, and ‘min huniter’. This identification of Christ as sweetness is built up slowly as the incantatory opening progresses, enmeshing the anchoress within his all-embracing delectability. The image of the angels gazing avidly upon Christ, never feeling satiated by this sight (Matthew 18:10), echoes the image in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* of the angels’ rapt gazing upon Mary. In *Ureisun of God*, however, there is an increased sensuality in this viewing, bolstered by the cumulative imagery of sweetness. The repeated invocation of the Name is also a powerful meditative exercise: the meditator surrounds each ‘Iesu’ clause with a spectrum of her own associations of Christ as Lover and as Sweetness.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Vincent Gillespie demonstrates a similar flexibility at work a century later in Name devotion in Richard Rolle’s (c. 1290-1349) *The Song of Love Longing to Jesus*. See ‘Mystic’s Foot: Rolle and Affectivity’, in *Looking in Holy Books* (2011), p. 270. Renevey has shown ‘the growing enthusiasm for the Name from the thirteenth century onwards’ in his examination of several texts that are written in both Latin and vernacular languages. Denis Renevey, ‘Name Above Names: The Devotion to the Name of Jesus from Richard Rolle to Walter Hilton’s *Scale of Perfection I*’, in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition Exeter Symposium*, VI, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 103-121 (p. 104).

Building on the reference to the angels' gazing, the imagery of sweetness interacts with imagery of light and dark. Having awakened the anchoress' taste-related and tactile capacities, her visual sense now comes into operation: 'Iesu al feir. a3ein hwam þe sunne nis buten ase a scheidewe. ase þeo þat leoseð hire liht; 7 schinedð a3ein þine brihte leore uor hire þeosternesse'. This external brightness then gains entrance into the anchoress' darkest reaches, her cell and her soul: 'þu þet 3eouest hire light. 7 al ðet leome haueð. aliht mine þeostri heorte. 3if mi bur brihtnesse. 7 brihtte mine soule þet is suti. 7 make hire wurðe to þine swete wuninge.' (fols 123v-124r; p. 5, ll. 11-18). Such imagery of light-dark contrasts may have been intensified for the anchoress by liturgical practice with the Paschal Vigil.⁵⁶

Despite the anchoress' enmeshment within Christ's sweetness, and His entrance into her heart, she is keenly aware of her estrangement from him at this early point in *Ureisun of God*: 'woa is me þet ic am so freomede wi þe.' (fol. 124r; p. 5, l. 21). The question, 'hwi er tu me so freomede?' is posed again later in the meditation (fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 85-86). As Christ lightens the heart, the speaker becomes aware of the incompatibility of earthly and heavenly love. To allow Christ entrance into her heart, the anchoress must expunge fleshly desires from it: 'fleslich luue 7 gostlich. eorþlich luue 7 heouenliche; ne muhen onone wise bedden in one breoste' (fol. 124r;

⁵⁶ See the interplay of light and dark in the Blessing of the Paschal Candle: *The Daily Missal*, ed. and trans. Gaspar Lefebvre (London, 1924), pp. 829-833. In remarking on the influence of the Paschal Vigil on Middle English lyrics, Douglas Gray (1972) quotes part of this passage from the Vigil and observes that the 'imagery of light and darkness [...] is fundamental to this passage (and to its dramatic liturgical context of darkened church and Paschal candle)' (pp. 5-6). For the history of this ceremony, particularly the convergence of Roman and Gallic influences, see B. Capelle, 'La procession du *Lumen Christi* au Samedi-saint', *RB*, xlv (1932), 105-119.

p. 5, ll. 27-29).⁵⁷ This statement on the irreconcilability of the earthly and heavenly joy is then reformed imagistically, as honey ‘licked of þornes’ (fol. 124r; p. 6, ll. 35-36). A tactile quality of sharpness is brought into the softness that has permeated the opening part of the meditation. The honey of earthly pleasure is rendered bitter by the thorn, a sharpness made almost palpably present on the tongue.⁵⁸

The anchoress views, or asks why she cannot view, the stretching and spreading body of Christ: ‘hwi ne bihold ich hu þu streihtest þe for me on þe rode?’ (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 47-48). Christ is first a lover (‘lefmon’) illumining the anchoress’ dark heart and sooty soul (fols 123v-124r; p. 5, ll. 19, 26). Now, in this stretched position, He is likened to a mother.⁵⁹

hwi ne worpe ich me bitweonen þeoilke ermes so swiðe wide to spredde. 7
iopened so þe moder deð hire ermes. hire leoue child for to bicluppen? 3e
soðes. 7 þu deorwurðe louerd gostliche to us 7 to ðine deorelinges. wið þe ilke
spredunge 3eiest. ase þe moder to hire child.
(fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 48-54)

Situated within the deep-rooted tradition of Christ’s Motherhood, this image in *Ureisun of God* refers to the mother as a source of nurturance and tactile comfort.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Millett notes the presence of the phrase ‘beddin in a breoste’ in *Hali Meidhad*, and Renevey also draws attention to the dual literal-figurative significations of the term ‘beddin’. Millett, ed. (1982), p. xx; and Renevey (1993), pp. 98. As noted earlier, the irreconcilability of the two loves is also stressed in the pseudo-Anselmian ‘Ad Christum’.

⁵⁸ Millett observes a parallel image in *Hali Meidhad*. Millett, ed. (1982), p. xx.

⁵⁹ This juxtaposition of a language of romantic desire with a language of child-parent relations is also present in Anselm’s Prayer to Christ, as seen earlier.

⁶⁰ See Caroline Walker Bynum on the scriptural and patristic background to this tradition, in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982). The emphasis in *Ureisun of God* differs from Anselm’s Prayer to St Paul, which stresses that Christ’s self-sacrifice is evidence of his motherhood (40).

The anchoress reading *Ureisun of God* re-images herself in tactile intimacy with Christ as mother:

hwi nam ich i þin ermes so istreihte. 7 ispred on rode? 7 weneð ei to beon
 biclupped bitweonen þine blisfulle ermes in heouene. bute he worpe er him
 her; bitweonen þine rewðful ermes o ðe rode?
 (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 57-62).

Her movement into the Lover-Mother Christ's arms, and the sight of him stretched out, are imagined intimacies. They are intimacies she longs for but which are never in the course of this meditation fulfilled, a fact stressed by the negative statements prefaced by the interrogative 'hwi'. Her assertions refer to the fact that she is not in Christ's arms; yet in denying this position, she conversely creates the potential for such contact.

The touch, absent yet also imaginatively present, moves to the anchoress' heart: 'A swete iesu hwi mid ermes of luue ne cluppe ich þe so feste. þet no þing þeonne ne muwe breiden mine heorte?' (fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 77-79). The anchoress' desire for the imagined bodily embrace has been replaced by a desire for an even more powerful imaginative embrace, residing in her heart. She remains absent from this love-embrace with Christ, however, with her access to Him powerfully blocked: the 'attri sunnen' form 'þe lettunge'. These bitter sins become even more solid, imaged as a literal 'wal' bitterly placed between the anchoress and Christ, barring her from the embrace for which she so deeply yearns (fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 89-90). This palpable imagery of walls may, as Renevey suggests, be drawn from 'the world of the

anchorage'.⁶¹ The walls of the anchorhold are intended to insulate the anchoress from sin, and to facilitate her intimacy with Christ.⁶² But the wall placed between the anchoress and the Host may also reinforce the anchoress' distance from the Flesh of Christ. With the pyx constantly viewable to her, Christ's Flesh is nonetheless unreachable from her cell. As previously noted, she refers to kissing him in an act of remembrance: 'hwi ne cusse ich þe sweteliche ine goste. wiþ swete munegunge of þine god deden?' (fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 79-81). It is important that the kissing occurs in the 'goste', and not on the body. Building on the preceding statements of embracing with arms of love and holding within the heart, this reference moves the anchoress away from bodily contact, and towards a level of spiritual bonding; *Ureisun of God* continues to shift between the bodily and spiritual realms of intimacy. Yet again, it is a statement founded on the anchoress' or Christ's absence. She does not kiss Christ sweetly in the spirit, but asks why she does not. The remembrance of Christ is at once unattainable yet tantalisingly within reach.

The Virgin Mary then enters the meditation. As the anchoress is both lover and child, the Virgin is both mother and daughter to Christ, emphasized with the typical paradox of her dual identity as maiden and mother (p. 9, ll. 138-140). A profound intimacy is shown between Christ and his mother-daughter, an intimacy from which the anchoress is painfully barred. As she looks on, she is positioned to feel an unfulfilled yearning. She remarks to the Virgin 'owe muchele menske to boen moder of swich sune wið iholschipe of meiden' (fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 142-144). In its simplicity, this statement is an expression of the utmost longing—the Virgin shares a

⁶¹ Renevey (1993), p. 101.

⁶² Albeit not infallibly: Aelred emphasizes that literal walls alone are insufficient (638).

familiarity with Christ that the anchoress, a sinful human being, cannot. From this distance, the anchoress views an affectionate scene between mother and son. The incomplete version in **L** breaks off before this scene is played out, but the full text is found in **N**:

he streccheð þene riht erm uorð. ase he stont orode. 7 beieð adun toward þe.
his deorewurðe heued. ase þauh he seide. Moder al þet þu wult; al ich wulle.
(fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 146-149)

Christ actively reaches down to his mother in a way he never does to the anchoress, despite her many vehement requests. The anchoress also reads dialogue in Christ's movement towards his mother: He inclines his head closely to his mother's, 'ase þauh he seide' that their desires are united. Blocking the anchoress from participation, this moment also serves to remind her that it is not only Christ's suffering that she must 'bihold' in her heart:

a swete leafdi. hwi leafdi hwi; nabe ich euer biforen mine heorte eihen. þeo ilke þreo stondunges . þi sune was ituht on rode. þurh driuen fet 7 honden. wið dulte neiles. blodi his side. 7 þi stondunge leafdi. 7 sein iohanes ewangelistes weopinde otwo half wið sorhfule sikes? Hwi ne bihold ich þis euer in min heorte.
(fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 149-56)

As her heart allows her to embrace spiritually, her 'heorte eihen' give her the potential for spiritual sight. Through her heart-eyes she has the potential to see the suffering of Christ, the Virgin, and John the Evangelist; all types and loci of suffering merge in this spiritual lens. Whilst she asks why she does not see these three standing figures, she also conjures the image of their pain in her heart-eyes. The anchoress then once

again acknowledges the reasons for her lack of intimacy with Christ. She yearns for a burning ('brune') devotion in her heart, which would cast out all sins:

hwi ne bihold ich þis euer in mine heorte. 7 þenche ðet hit was for me. 7 for
oðre sunfule to aredden of helle. 7 forto 3iuen us heoueriche blisse? þis þoht
wolde sikerliche ontenden so soð luue on me. Nere þe heorte so cold. þet ne
schulde neuer sunne habben forðer in 3ong . þer þis brune were.
(fols 126r-126v; p. 9, ll. 157-160)

Here, the anchoress voices a common denunciation of lukewarm devotion.⁶³ The blazing devotion has not yet been enkindled in the anchoress, given the modal verb 'schulen'. It can still only be imagined. But the fact that this superior devotion can even be imagined is a meditative gift to the anchoress, allowing her to cultivate precious burns in her heart.

The meditation ends with movement, a flight from the pursuing devil to the arms of Christ: 'a iesu hwuder schal ich fleon hwon þe deouel hunted ð efter me bute to þine rode?' (fol. 126v; p. 9, ll. 162-164). This is set alongside the blessed stasis of the Holy Mother (fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 151, 154), her standing position invoking the haunting *stabat mater dolorosa*.⁶⁴ It is a stability of abode that the anchoress is elsewhere encouraged to emulate.⁶⁵ But *Ureisun of God* ends with an emphasis on the anchoress' movement. She herself must move towards Christ, on his static Cross, to gain His intimacy: He will not release his right arm to reach down towards her. Even by the end of *Ureisun of God*, the anchoress has still fallen short of closeness,

⁶³ See, for example, references to lukewarm love in Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum' (7), as well as Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse* (151: 236-242).

⁶⁴ The figure of the standing sorrowful mother forms the core of a popular hymn in this period. See Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (London, 2010), pp. 244-245.

⁶⁵ This will be argued later in the context of *Wohunge*.

questioning her failure to view Christ, his mother and the virgin disciple, and to think upon Christ's sacrifice (fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 150-159). In the following meditation in **N**, the anchoress prays to this Mother standing by the Cross.

Lofsong of ure Lefdi

Like *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* is encased as a prayer to the Virgin.

Yet, whilst it is presented as a prayer to and for the Virgin, it is not about her. Her role is intercessory and protective:

ich on sori sunfule þing; bidde þin ore. ðet tu beo mi motild a3eines mine soule fon. þet heo hire ne muwen bitellen. auh were me. 7 helpe me milzfule meiden; in alle mine neoden.
(fol. 126v; p. 16, ll. 6-10).

She is a conciliator between the confessing speaker and her abused Son. Transparent as the Virgin might be in this meditation— in contrast to *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *Ureisun of God*, *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and *Wohunge*, where she is a meditative focal point— she still has an undeniable presence.⁶⁶ As Innes-Parker describes it, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* is ‘a form of confession’.⁶⁷ This is clear in the first half, and the closing remarks. Thorough, contrite, self-accusatory and carefully expressed, the text encapsulates a worthy confession. The meditator shows an awareness of the Abelardian premise that consent, and not the deed itself, is the basis of sin:

þus ich am lodliche ihurt ine licame . 7 ine soule; wið alle cunnes sunnen. for þau þet werc nere i þe bodie; þe wil was in þe heorte
(fol. 127r; p. 17, ll. 31-34)

⁶⁶ Salih (2009) suggests that the meditation ‘looks straight through Mary’ to the suffering Christ (p. 153).

⁶⁷ Innes-Parker (2009), p. 107.

But a key passage on Christ's suffering departs markedly from the confessional mould of the meditation as a whole. After the speaker confesses her sins to Mary, she prays for the Holy Mother's intercession by invoking details of Christ's suffering upon Earth. The hallmarks of Anselmian meditation are unmistakable. The passage provides images for the anchoress to ingest in a slow-moving, peaceful, and deep meditation, of the kind Anselm outlines in his Preface and in the letter to Countess Mathilda (3-4):

Ich bide þe 7 biseche þe 7 halsi 3if me howeð hit; bi his flech founge of þine eadie bodie . bi his iborenesse. bi his eadi festunge iþe wildernesse . bi þe herde hurtes 7 þe unwurðe woves ðet he for us sunful willeliche þolede. bi his deað-fule grure. 7 bi his blodie swote. bi his eadi beoden in hulles him one. bi his nimunge . 7 bindunge. bis his ledunge forð. bi al þet me him demde. bi his cloðes wrixlunge. Nu red. nu hwit. him on hokerunge. bi his scornunge. 7 bi his spotlunge. 7 bufettunge. 7 his heliunge. bi þe þornene crununge. bi ðe kine3erde of rode. him of scornunge. bi his owune rode. on his softe schuldres. so herde druggunge. bi þe dulte neiles. bi þe sore wunden; bi þe holie rode. bi his side openunge . bi his blodi Rune þet ron inne monie studen . In umbe keoruunge . in his blod swetunge. in his pine þornene crununge. erest in his one hond 7 seoððen in his oðer. olast in his side þurlunge wið ute sore wunde. 3et ase halewen weneð. þet to-ðe blod-rune. was in his ereste. nimunge in þe feste bindunge. þet tet blod wrong ut et his eadie neiles. ich halsi þe þet ðu biseche him bi his schome. bi his sor. bi his deað on rode. bi al þet he seide wrohte 7 þolede in eorðe.
(fols 127r-127v; pp. 17-18, ll. 40-67)

There is a broad chronological framework to this passage. It begins with Christ's birth from Mary's blessed body, his fasting in the wilderness, his bloody sweat on the night of his capture (Luke 22: 44), and his solitary prayers on the hill. There is also a general chronological progression through the core events of the Passion, in addition to the unified syntactical framework through the repetition of 'bi'.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ This passage is one example of a potentially extractable part of the meditation, usable in isolation from the wider context.

And yet, this passage works towards breaking free from a chronological Passion narrative. The reference to Christ's 'umbe keoruunge', an exegetical commonplace foreshadowing the shedding of his blood on the Cross (Luke 2: 21, 35), appears after the speaker has dwelt on the Holy Cross and the Wounded Side; the speaker then returns to the details of the Crucifixion.⁶⁹ Aspects of torture are also repeated, notably the 'þornene crununge', the various manifestations of spilling blood, and the blood-sweat repeated after moments of the Crucifixion are imaged. After reaching the apparent climax of the Side Wound, the speaker actively returns to the first moment of Christ's capture, a meditative manoeuvre lent potency by invoking the testimonies of saints ('ase halewen wened'). The author gestures towards deconstructing the chronological narrative in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* in order to release the anchoress, and himself, from the 'syntax' of both thought and language that entraps the experience of these images 'within systems of linear causality and temporal sequence'.⁷⁰ Liberated, at least partly, from this syntax, the anchoress freely engages with the infinite detail forming Christ's life-long torment. The potentially isolable images allow a high level of flexibility within the meditative process. As Vincent Gillespie surmises:

The abstracted image in a literary text [...] is less dependent upon its place in the syntax of the text as a whole. It remains a signifier, but its signified is no longer determined by its immediate linguistic or narrative context. Thus it becomes possible to handle the image in more complex ways, to read into the image more profoundly by using it as a catalyst to a chain of significations

⁶⁹ Caroline Walker Bynum has explored the link in visual depictions between Christ's circumcision and his wounding at the Passion. See her *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (NY, 1991), pp. 86-87, and her 'Figure 3.3' on p. 89.

⁷⁰ These are Gillespie's terms for the later medieval English mystics. Vincent Gillespie, 'Postcards from the Edge: Interpreting the Ineffable in the Middle English Mystics', in *Interpretation: Medieval and Modern*, ed. Piero Boitani and Anna Torti (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 137-165 (p. 148).

related to but not predicated upon the imaginative decorum of the source or host image.⁷¹

Each image in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*— the circumcision, the pouring blood, the bloody sweat, the praying Christ, the Holy Mother’s body, the Cross, the soaked clothing— is a catalyst to a long ‘chain of significations’. Not entirely fettered by the narrative context, the anchoress can develop the signifying power of each image to its absolute potential. Disrupting chronology to embrace a series of potentially isolable images of the Passion, the text encourages the anchoress to experience ‘a shift from a diachronic to a synchronic perception of the temporal reality’.⁷² Although emphasizing that Christ died only once (Hebrews 9:27-28), liturgical celebration, in its cyclical nature, creates a perpetual cycle of Christ’s pain and rebirth. In *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, the anchoress is implicated in this ever-moving cycle, always suffering with Christ, and entering the depths of each image of his pain.⁷³

The anchoress has used her sight to gaze upon each image of Christ’s anguish. This same sense brings her close to the ultimate fulfilment, already enjoyed by the angels. Christ’s ascension (‘up ariste’) moves the anchoress upwards:

from heih 7 toherre euer ðet ich iseo in syon þe heie tur of heouene; þene
louerd of leome. þet te engles euer biholdeð . 7 euer so lengrre so heo 3irneð
hit
(fol. 128r; p. 18, ll. 78-83)

⁷¹ Gillespie, ‘Strange Images of Death’ (2011), p. 223.

⁷² Gillespie, ‘Strange Images of Death’ (2011), p. 220.

⁷³ Annie Sutherland spotlights ‘the dual linear and circular impetus of the liturgy’, which ‘reminds us of a God who, in his perpetual activity, lies beyond the conventions of linear time’. See Annie Sutherland, ‘Julian of Norwich and the Liturgy’, in *A Companion to Julian of Norwich*, ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 88-98 (pp. 92-93). Both Sutherland and Denise Nowakowski Baker demonstrate a comparable escape from chronology in Julian of Norwich’s works. See Sutherland (2008), particularly p. 95; and Denise Nowakowski Baker, *Julian of Norwich’s Showings: From Vision to Book* (Princeton, 1994), especially pp. 49, 55.

This visual exploration of Heaven recalls that in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*. But, as in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, the verbs are conditional. Whilst the anchoress is given this glimpse of Heaven to see her potential fulfilment, the meditation cannot in its own right grant her such a privilege. The experience of Paradise is also aural, with the heavenly ‘seli song’ bursting forth (fol. 128r; p. 18, l. 83).⁷⁴ The anchoress’ exposure in her cell to the singing of psalmody, and to liturgical sound, may have influenced her meditation. We might remember the *Ancrene Wisse*-author’s order in Part I to listen closely to the canonical hours whilst not singing along too loudly (18: 401-403).⁷⁵ The occurrence of this ‘seli song’ in an angelic context is of particular significance. In the seventh sermon of his *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, Bernard of Clairvaux suggests that when praising God in psalmody, the angels descend to human beings (I, 33). It is feasible that this reference to the ‘seli song’ in the meditative text was bolstered by music the anchoress heard regularly— a music that, she perhaps believed, could bring angels to her. The anchoress’ sight and hearing of Heaven develops into an understanding of God in the following meditation in **N**, *Lofsong of ure Louerde*.

⁷⁴ This is comparable with the singing of Heaven seen in Hugh of Saint-Victor’s (1096-1141) *De anima*. See Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De anima*, excerpted in Wilson, ed. (1938), p. 31.

⁷⁵ This is despite the fact that congregational participation in the music of the Ordinary and Proper of Mass decreased as the Middle Ages progressed. See Edward Foley, ‘The Song of the Assembly in the Medieval Eucharist’, in *Medieval Liturgy: A Book of Essays*, ed. Lizette Larson-Miller (NY, 1997), pp. 203-234.

Lofsong of ure Louerde

Lofsong of ure Louerde has received less critical attention than it deserves. This meditation enables a striking level of confidence in the anchoress, with her assurance of intimacy with the Lord growing as the meditation progresses.⁷⁶ To recall Southern's phrase on the Anselmian prayers, *Lofsong of ure Louerde* works within the secrecy of her soul: the speaker twice says she beseeches the Lord with 'inwarde heorte' (fols 128r, 130r; p. 10, l. 5, p. 13, ll. 112-3).⁷⁷ As in *Ureisun of God*, the anchoress brings into her heart the varying forms of suffering experienced by Christ, Mary, and John:

ich bidde 7 biseche þe wið inwarde heorte þurh þin akennednesse <ine>
meidenes licame of þe holi Goste. [...] þuruh al þet ðu tawhtest. 7 þoledest for
sunfulde in eorðe. þurh þine vif wunden. 7 þe eadie flod þet of ham fledde.
þuruh ðe irene neiles 7 þe þornene crune. 7 þuruh þe pinen 7 þe schomen 7 þi
deorewurðe deað o ðe rode 7 þuruh ðe ilke rode ihalewed of þine deorewurðe
limen. ðet þu on hire milde liche streihtest. 7 þine moderes ream 7 sein
i[o]hanes soruwe[.]
(fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 12-16)⁷⁸

This incantatory account of the Passion provides brief stock references that are used as meditative reflexes, stimulating the meditator's response to the agony on Calvary without recounting the details of the scene, presumably because the details are already familiar and imaginatively available to her. Despite its brief, incantatory nature, the

⁷⁶ This is one example of the problems with adopting uncritically an Anselmian meditative model, whereby any fragment of the text can be arbitrarily selected for meditation.

⁷⁷ *Lofsong of ure Louerde* begins by referring to 'iesu crist godes sune' (fol. 128r; p. 10, l. 1), but the remainder of the meditation shifts to addressing 'God' or 'Lord' throughout.

⁷⁸ The insertion of [o] in 'i[o]hanes' follows the emendation by Thompson, ed. (1958).

anchoress hears the sounds of pain resonating in the space of the anchorhold. The reference to the Virgin Mary's 'ream' describes an audible lamentation: in Middle English, 'ream' is particularly aligned with the release of sound in lament, horror, and agony, and in later texts (c. 1300) is even associated with loud animalistic noises.⁷⁹ As she obediently hears Mary's lament, the anchoress needs God to 'iher' her prayers, though this is only possible through his 'milde moder' and John the Evangelist (fol. 128v; p. 11, ll. 31-33). Both the Mother and John become listening intercessory figures, hearing the anchoress' supplications in reward for hearing the Virgin's pain. But the anchoress is still unable to speak to God directly.

At first, the speaker begs God not to look directly at her repulsive sins, due to her 'ugge' of His 'eie': 'ne bihold þu ham nout' (fol. 128v; p. 11, ll. 36-37). However, this attempt to conceal sins from the Lord begins to disintegrate, as his sufferings are mapped onto the speaker. The blood he sheds on the Cross washes the anchoress' sinful soul; his 'passiun' quenches the 'passiun' of the anchoress' sins; his 'pinen' buy the anchoress from the 'pinen of helle'; and finally, his death 'adeadie þe deaðliche lustes of mine licame' (fols 128v-129r; pp. 11-12, ll. 43-61). Each term of Christ's suffering is connected with an equivalent term of sin. This paradox of concealment-connection is followed by two other paradoxes. First, the anchoress is both dead and alive, speaking with Paul (Galatians 2:20): 'ich muwe siggen wið seinte powel þet seið. ich liuie nout ich; auh crist liueð in me' (fol. 129r; p. 12, ll. 67-

⁷⁹ Cited from the entry for 'rem' in the *MED* [accessed 16th February 2010]. In Part II of *Ancrene Wisse*, the Virgin's silence is famously praised; but in the C version of the same Part, the Holy Mother's 'ream' is also referred to when defining the three sorrow-swords piercing Christ's heart. (*The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe edited from B. M. Cotton MS. Cleopatra C. vi*, ed. E. J. Dobson, EETS O.S. 267 (1972), p. 87, l. 20).

69).⁸⁰ Secondly, she is both high and low. The anchoress imagines Christ's ascension pulling up her own soul, debased in sin: 'ich ham heie iclumben wið þis ilke bone. þet ligge so lowe. 7 uor eorðliche luren so mucche mislicunge habbe in mine heorte.' (fol. 129r; p. 12, ll. 69-72). The dynamics of the Lord-anchoress relationship have delicately altered. Having been too afraid to reveal herself to God, she now speaks with the voice of Paul, acknowledging that she is alive to the Lord but dead to the world, and is at least partly 'high' with him.

She now directly requests that the gentle Christ both looks at and hears her:

leoue louerd iesu crist loke toward me ase ich ligge lowe. 7 mone to ðe of þinge þet me derueð mest nuðe efte mine sunnen. heie helinde beih þe to me . 7 buh to mine bonen.
(fols 129r-129v; p. 12, ll. 76-79).

In *Ureison of God*, the anchoress only watches as Christ bends down towards his mother. Here, the anchoress requests the same movement towards her ('beih þe to me'). Under Christ's gaze and attentively listening ear, she now casts herself as a pitiful sight, cultivating in herself an utter sense of worthlessness:

Nabbich nowðer in me wisdom ne wurschipe 7 am redleas nab ich
<[h]waremide le[de]n mi lif iþis[se] worlde 7 am> helples. ich habbe on monie wise mislicunge of þonke 7 heorte sec of sorwe 7 nabbe hwoa me froure. Deorewurðe drihten ase þu ert redlease red. red me þet am helples 7 redles. hu ich schule leden me 7 liuien on eorðe wið meidhod 7 ine clennesses of soule. 7 of bodie boðe.
(fol. 129v; p. 12, ll. 79-88)⁸¹

⁸⁰ As noted in Chapter 1, this Pauline reference is also used in Part VI of *Ancrene Wisse*.

⁸¹ The words in angular brackets follow the reconstruction of this line by Thompson, ed. (1958); the line is in the margins of the manuscript and is not fully legible.

She becomes like the cunning vagrant who shows her sores to the Lord in order to gain His mercy in Part V of *Ancrene Wisse* (124-125: 409-33). This passage in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* echoes the techniques of self-abnegation employed in the Anselmian meditations, with the speaker in Anselm's second Prayer to St John the Evangelist casting herself as a beggar (45-49). In Anselm's Prayer to St John the Baptist, the meditator cannot bear the interior horror of her face, yet feels unable to examine or flee from herself (28). Regardless of her all-consuming self-hatred, the speaker of *Lofsong of ure Louerde* does not flee, but rather tolerates, examines, and presents to Christ her own self— a meditative act that is testament to her mounting confidence. As she grows closer to him, Christ's voice is heard and spoken: 'uor þeo hwile ðet ich truste uppo mon þu seidest. hold þe to ham 7 lettest me al iwurden wið þeo þet ich truste uppon.' (fol. 129v; pp. 12-13, ll. 93-96). Though it is reported speech, the absorption of Christ's voice into the anchoress' own as she speaks the meditation aloud is a sign of her growing confidence in Christ's presence. With this increased assurance, the Song of Songs— that most challenging and dangerous of biblical books— is brought openly into the texture of the meditation. In a bold gesture of vernacular appropriation, the speaker assumes the voice of the Bride in Canticles 2:6 and 8:3 ('His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me'):

Mi leofmonnes luft erm halt up mine heaued heo seið. 7 his riht erm schal biclupen me abuten. let me beo þi leouemon 7 siggen ase heo seið. leof wið þi luft erm. þet is. wið þine worldliche 3eouen hold up min heauwed ðet ich þuruh to mucche wone ne falle i fulðe of sunne. 7 leof wið þin riht erm. þet is in heuene wið endelease blissen biclupe me abuten.
(fol. 130r; p. 13, ll. 117-124)

In Bernard's fifty-first sermon, the Bride's statement is characterized by confidence (II, 86-87). Like the Bride whose voice she assumes, the anchoress has nurtured her affections to the extent that she can request Christ's right arm with self-assurance.

As the meditation draws nearer to its end, the anchoress more insistently appropriates biblical and patristic voices. They occur in quick succession, almost entering into a dialogue in the anchoress' soul. She cites the voice of David in the Psalter, seemingly based on Psalm 26:10 ('For my father and my mother have left me, but the Lord hath taken me up'), and then 20:3 ('Thou has given him his heart's desire: and hast not withholden from him the will of his lips.')

uor þus seið þe salmwruhte dauid i þe sawter. þe world haueð forlet me. 7
godd haweð underfo me. eft elleshwar he seið. haue þi licung ine godd . 7 he
wule 3iuen þe bonen of þine heorte. vnwrih him þene wei þet is þi wilnunge .
7 he wule hit forðen.
(fol. 130v; p. 14, ll. 139-144)

Through David's voice, the speaker shows her trust in God's reception of her, and in his capacity to grant the 'bonen' and 'wilnunge' of her heart. She now becomes gladly aware of God's knowledge of her affective space, speaking to him without the need of a mediator: 'þu wost hwat ich wilni al weldinde Godd [...]'. The bending of the meditator's will to God is followed by a statement of trust in God's capacity for protection and goodness (fol. 130v; p. 14, ll. 144-147). Through a vernacular gloss of Augustine's words, she expresses her newfound understanding of the need to surrender earthly loves:⁸²

⁸² The source, as identified by Millett, is Augustine's *Confessiones* (PL xxxii, 697, 699). The same image is used in *Hali Meidhad* (p. 14, ll. 4-10). On this passage shared in *Hali Meidhad* and *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, see Millett, ed. (1982), pp. xx-xxi, and p. 42, n. 14/4-10.

uor nu ich understonde hu soð hit is ðet seint austin seið in his boc. uniseli is ðet is wið luue to eni eorðlich þing iteied. uor euer bið ðet swete; abouht mid twofold of bittre.
(fol. 130v; p. 14, ll. 152-159)

In *Ureisun of God*, the joy of heaven is honey that must be licked off the thorn of earthly suffering. Here in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, each earthly pleasure is burdened with a twofold bitterness. It is an Augustinian precept that the anchoress comprehends ('ich understonde') and repeats assuredly. The meditation ends with a lucid petition to God, spoken by a self-assured anchoress who trusts in His mercy— entirely different from the fearful, self-concealing speaker earlier in the meditation (fols 130v-131r; pp. 14-15, ll. 160-182). *Lofsong of ure Louerde* is the last of the meditations in N. Cole convincingly argues that in this manuscript, the speaker of *Lofsong of ure Louerde* 'reworks the previous meditations to look forward to the final assertive statement of belief'.⁸³ The assertive statement of belief also runs into the following text in N, the Apostle's Creed. As the Creed-speaker declares: 'I bileue on ðe holi goste 7 on holi chirche' (fols 131r-131v). Speaking with a series of different biblical and patristic voices throughout *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, the anchoress is subsequently transported into the realm of communal devotion in the Creed.⁸⁴ Though the anchoress cannot participate directly in the communal service, she is here situated within this wider community, all joined in love of Christ. It is love of Christ that forms the core of the longest of the *Wooing Group* meditations, *Wohunge*, found in T.

⁸³ Cole (2003), 91.

⁸⁴ Cole (2003) makes a similar argument on the development of the texts (93).

Wohunge

At its heart, *Wohunge* is a meditation on Christ's lovability. This is encapsulated in the incantatory refrain repeated by the anchoress throughout the meditation: 'A iesu mi swete iesu leue þat te luue of þe beo al mi likinge.' (fol. 127vb; p. 21, ll. 55-57ff). As Millett notes, it has a twofold structure in line with this focus: first, an outline of Christ's 'luuewurði' qualities, and second, an account of the sufferings he undertakes to deserve the anchoress' love (fol. 127rbff; p. 20, ll. 12-13).⁸⁵ Whilst the anchoress does not achieve comfortable intimacy with Christ or his mother, *Wohunge* does bring her closest to intimacy with Him. Like the opening of *Ureisun of God*, the incantatory opening of *Wohunge* uses imagery from the Canticles (4:3, 4:11, 5:1) and Psalm 18:10 to invoke Christ's sweetness: 'Iesu swete iesu. mi druð. mi derling. mi drihtin. mi healend. mi huniter. mi haliwei. Swetter is munegunge of þe þen mildeu o muðe.' (fol. 127rb; p. 20, ll. 1-5). As Rosemary Woolf notes, the opening also 'echoes successfully' the hymn entitled *Dulcis Iesu memoria*, which laces the imagery of sweetness with an aural quality.⁸⁶ The isolated images of love and sweetness—'mi derling', 'mi huniter', 'mi haliwei'—allow the anchoress to attach and build up associations for the images, at once self-contained yet also interconnected. A similar meditative flexibility is evident later in the text, with the various identities of Christ as lover: he is 'mi luue . mi lif . mi leof . mi luueleuest', and 'mi luue . mi lef . mi lif' (fols 127va, 132vb; p. 21, ll. 33-34, p. 37, ll. 635-6). This meditative exercise enables the anchoress to develop and interweave her own associations of Christ within each isolable term of his lover-identity.

⁸⁵ Millett (2009), p. 26.

⁸⁶ Woolf (1968), p. 173-174.

The first half of the meditation engages with the deep-rooted tradition of Christ's 'conditions of eligibility'.⁸⁷ Jennifer Brown is right to note the ambiguity of wooing subject/wooed object in the incipit of **T**: 'Her biginnes þe wohunge of ure lauerd' (fol. 127rb; p. 20).⁸⁸ As the text unfolds, however, there are few instances of Christ himself wooing the anchoress. The conditions of eligibility do construct Christ as a 'wooer', enticing the anchoress to love him, but this is all imagined and spoken by the anchoress herself. She first enumerates the reasons why a person might be loved, and subsequently demonstrates Christ's fulfilment of each criterion at length (fol. 127rbff; pp. 20-27, ll. 13- 251). Her arguments are then summarised, leading onto the next section of Christ's 'harde atele hurtes' as the greatest condition of his love-worthiness:

Þenne þu wið þi fairnesse. þu wið richesce. þu wið wit 7 wisdom. þu wið maht 7 strengðe. þu wið noblesce 7 hendeleic. þu wið meknesse 7 mildeschipe 7 mikel debonairte. þu wið sibnesse. þu wið alle þe þinges þat man mai luue wið bugge; haues mi luue chepet. Ah ouer alle oðre þinges makes te luuewurði to me þa harde atele hurtes.
(fol. 129va; p. 27, ll. 252-262)

Christ himself does not speak here. Compare this with the Lover-Christ of *Ancrene Wisse*, who actively voices his own eligibility:

Nam Ich þinge feherest? Nam Ich kinge richest? Nam Ich hest icunnet? Nam Ich weolie wisest? Nam Ich monne hendest? Nam Ich þinge freoest? [...] Nam Ich alre þinge swotest ant swetest?
(149: 187-191)

⁸⁷ Millett (2009) traces its roots to patristic writings, and clarifies that the eight- or nine- point list in *Wohunge* is evidence of a late stage in this long-lasting tradition (pp. 32, 43).

⁸⁸ Jennifer Brown, 'Subject, Object and Mantra in *De Wohunge of ure Lauerd*', in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 66-83 (p. 66).

The *Ancrene Wisse*-Christ directly woos the anchoress, albeit threateningly; the *Wohunge*-Christ is only constructed as a wooer in the anchoress' meditative imagination.

Christ is not constructed purely as a wooer, however. He satisfies a range of interpersonal roles for the anchoress, being 'mare þen fader. mare þen moder'. He is also said to be more than a brother, sister, or friend (fol. 129va; pp. 26-27, ll. 248-251). When recounting Christ's poverty, the anchoress images the tender body of the baby Christ, with his 'nesche childes limes' (fol. 130ra; p. 29, ll. 324-5). She images this baby suckling from his mother to ease his hunger: 'i þi childhad hafdes tu þe pappe to þi fode. 7 ti moder readi hwen þu pappe 3erndes' (fol. 130rb; p. 29, ll. 331-334). This fleeting scene parallels that on Calvary in *Ureisun of God*, where the anchoress observes— but does not partake in— the affectionate scene between Mary and Christ. Here in *Wohunge*, she is once again able to detect familiarity and responsiveness between Christ and his mother. The baby Christ is hungry, and his mother is ready to feed him; both share a physical and affective link. And here again, the anchoress herself cannot participate in the scene.

Poverty is not the worst of Christ's sufferings, says the speaker: 'Pouerte wið menske is eað forto þolien.' (fol. 130va; p. 30, ll. 366-367). This leads the speaker into a meditation on the shame Christ endures. As he is shamefully condemned, the words of the condemners are spoken; the anchoress assumes these voices in her meditation, becoming both Christ's defender yet also, as a sinful human being, a contributor to his shame. The voices speak with insistent repetition: 'heng

heng þat treitur iesus on rode. Heng him o rode. 7 lese us Baraban' (fol. 130va; p. 30, ll. 384-386). This meditative exploration of Christ's shame includes a close-up of his face as the 'sunefule men' in his 'neb spitted' (fol. 130vb; p. 30, l. 390). Working within the wider tradition of devotion to the Face, with Christ as the unique and perfect image of the Godhead, the meditator focuses repeatedly on the desecrated face:⁸⁹

A iesu hwa mihte mare þolen cristen oðer heaðen; þen mon him for schendlac i þe beard spitted. And tu i þi welefulle wlite . i þat lufsume leor swuche schome þoledes. And al þe menske þuhte for þe luue of me. þat tu mihtes wið þat spatel þat swa biclaried ti leor wasche mi sawle.
(fol. 130vb; pp. 30-31, ll. 391-400)

The anchoress is given fleeting, unclear glimpses of the Face, and is never permitted a full perception of its details or contours: she is kept at a remove from complete sight of Christ. But Christ's voice is imagined and spoken by the anchoress within her meditation, based on a Christological interpretation of Psalm 68:8:

Scito quoniam propter te sustinui opprobrium operuit confusio faciem meam.
[You may be sure since for you I suffered reproach, shame covered my face.]
Vnderstond þu seist 7 herteliche þenke þat i for þe luue of þe þolede schome 7 bismere . 7 schomeliche spateling of unwurði ribauz þa heaðene hundes hilede mi neb for þe. As tah he seide. ne dred tu nawt for þe i of me to þole schome of worlde wiðute þine Gulte.
(fol. 130vb; p. 31, ll. 402-414)

Hearing Christ's voice speaking directly to and for her, the anchoress is closer to Him than she has been so far in *Wohunge*. This is the only instance in the *Wooing Group*

⁸⁹ For an account of the history of the devotion to the Face, see Jean-Augustin Robilliard, 'Face (dévotion à la Sainte Face)', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, ed. Viller et al, V (1962), 26-33.

that scripture is quoted in Latin: in this moment, the anchoress draws nearer to the scriptural voice of her Lover. She seems to respond directly to Christ's statement in her subsequent assertion: 'Bote schome ouer schomes þoledes tu hwen þu wes hinged bituhhe twa þeofes' (fols 130vb-131ra; p. 31, ll. 415-417). The Latin scripture facilitates a brief moment of dialogue between Lover and Beloved.

Her Lover's torment during the Crucifixion is recreated and acted in exhaustive detail. Unlike *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, his torture takes place chronologically. The speaker draws herself into the machinations of torture at the moment that they unfold 'bifore þe princes':

Siðen bifore pilat hu þu was naket bunden faste to þe piler. [...] þer þu wes for mi luue wið cnotti swepes swungen swa þat ti luueliche lich mihte beo to torn 7 to rent. [...] Siðen o þin heaued wes set te crune of scharpe þornes. þat wið eaueriche þorn wrang utte reade blod of þin heali heaued. Siðen 3ette buffetet 7 to dunet i þe heaued wið þe red 3erde þat te was ear in honde giuen þe on hokerringe. A hwat schal i nu don? Nu min herte mai tobreke. min ehne flowen al o water. A nu is mi lefmon demd for to deien. A nu mon ledes him forð to munte caluarie to þe cwalm stowe. A lo he beres his rode up on his bare schuldres.
(fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 472-495)

The parataxis of 'siðen' ensures that no facet of Christ's torture— whether the thorns, the buffeting, the mocking, the bearing of the Cross on his 'bare schuldres'— is relegated to an inferior position in the anchoress' meditation. Beyond this consistent parataxis, however, there is deliberate inconsistency of tense. Christ's Passion is expressed at first through the past simple tense: 'was', 'wes', 'wrang'. After the anchoress' heart breaks at the sight, the Passion is subsequently expressed in the present tense: 'Nu min herte mai tobreke. [...] A nu is mi lefmon demd for to deien. A nu mon ledes him forð to munte caluarie to þe cwalm stowe. A lo he beres his rode up on his bare schuldres.' The scene has moved temporally closer to the anchoress. She

becomes implicated as a witness, present at the moment the events occur. The chronological framework, and with it the anchoress' diachronic temporal perception, continue after the change of tense. But the gap of time separating the anchoress from her Lover is made smaller, the immediacy of his pain heightened. As this scene takes place, the speaker's affective response occurs in direct conjunction with the events—in contrast to the incantatory Passion sequence of *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and the Passion passage of *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, where affective response is delayed until the imagery of Christ's suffering has been exhausted. The anchoress seems to be among those weeping friends who accompany Christ: 'A lefmon hu mon folhes te. þine frend sariliche wið reming 7 sorhe.' (fol. 131vb; p. 33, ll. 498-500). However, she moves from direct expression to Christ ('þu') to speaking about him in the third person ('him', 'his'). Having been brought close enough to imagine Christ's voice and speak directly to him, she is now pushed back into an observational role.⁹⁰

The culmination of this painfully vivid scene comes at the moment of his death. His dead body is still not free from violation:

A hu schal i nu liue for nu deies mi lef for me upo þe deore rode? Henges dun his heued 7 sendes his sawle. Bote ne þinche ham nawt 3et þat he is ful pinet. ne þat rewfulde deade bodi nulen ha nawt friðie. Bringen forð longis wið þat brade scharpe spere. he þurles his side cleues tat herte. 7 cumes flowinde ut of þat wide wunde. þe blod þat bohte. þe water þat te world wesch of sake 7 of sunne.
(fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 536-544)

The cumulative agony of the observing anchoress reaches its apex in this final act of senseless abuse. Her intense affective suffering at this point is emphasized by the shift

⁹⁰ This will be studied in more detail in Chapter 4.

away from the rhythmic ‘A hu’/ ‘A nu’ conjunctions that have been accumulating tension. Once the moment of death is reached, she describes the action in short statements replete with active verbs. It is at this moment of incomparable pain, however, that she also reaches absolute clarity. She gains a profound intimacy with Christ, unparalleled in any of the *Wooing Group* texts. The Side Wound formed by Longinus’ spear is immediately linked with the accessibility of the heart it cleaves (fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 543-4). The Wounded Heart enables the anchoress’ entrance, and we witness a spectacular gesture towards *Brautmystik*:

A swete iesu þu oppnes me þin herte for to cnawe witerliche 7 in to redder trewe luue lettres. for þer i mai openlich seo hu muchel þu me luuedes.
(fol. 132ra; p. 35, ll. 546-551)

In *The Book of the Heart*, Eric Jaeger suggests that this image in *Wohunge* is inspired by the romance motif of epistles shared between lovers.⁹¹ Given the centrality to *Wohunge* of the romance motif of Christ as wooer, romance texts are most probably the ultimate source. However, it is not certain that the *Wohunge*-author is dependent on romance traditions directly; he may be using an image found in the common source he shares with the Parisian sermons. Christ’s ‘herte’ in *Wohunge* becomes a space that nurtures sophisticated reading skills, invoking the unique spatial world of the anchorhold. The anchoress’ home is recast as a space in which she can read— and reach— Christ’s love.⁹² This moment in *Wohunge* is famously paralleled in Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse*:

⁹¹ Eric Jaeger, *The Book of the Heart* (Chicago, 2000), p. 91. Jaeger’s description of *Wohunge* as a ‘mystical text’ is not adopted in this thesis.

⁹² See further Renevey (1993), p. 91.

His leofmon bihalde þron hu he bohte hire luue: lette þurlin his scheld, openin his side, to schawin hire his heorte, to schawin hire openliche hu inwardliche he luuede hire [...].
(148: 125-127)

Both these images engage with the tradition in which the ‘wound of Christ caused by the lance of Longinus was interpreted as the gateway to his heart and as a precondition for the union with God.’⁹³ The emphasis in the anchoritic texts is not on mystical union, but on affective entrance into Christ’s body.⁹⁴ There is no *annihilatio*: the anchoress is still present within her self and her love, bound with pain, inside this space. Both texts refer to Christ’s love being shown ‘openlich’ — an adverb with a range of possible meanings. In both cases it could mean ‘unobstructedly’, which is supported in *Wohunge* with the use of the adverb ‘witerliche’. The sense of ‘visibly’ is also possible, as in *Wohunge* it is coupled with the act of seeing (‘seo’), and in *Ancrene Wisse* with the act of showing (‘shawin’). Yet there is also the possible sense of ‘publicly’ in both cases, in *Ancrene Wisse* juxtaposed with the adverb

⁹³ Wolfgang Riehle, *The Middle English Mystics*, trans. Bernard Standring (London, 1981), p. 46.

⁹⁴ This thesis differs from Brown’s suggestion that *Wohunge* is ‘meant to produce a mystical experience for the anchoress who holds it in her hands’. See Brown (2009), p. 66. The fact that mystical union is not the goal of the *Wooing Group* has already been argued by Renevey (1993), chapter 3, especially p. 70. ‘Mystical union’ is understood in this thesis to refer to out-of-body fusion with Christ. *Ancrene Wisse* also refuses to encourage mystical union. One passage that gestures towards mystical ‘sight’ is in Part II (36-38: 631-702). Another passage that has been interpreted as mystical is found in Part I, on the Kiss of Peace: ‘Efter þe measse cos, hwen þe preost sacreð—þer for3eoteð al þe world, þer beoð al ut of bodi, þer i sperclinde luue bicluppeð ower leofmon, þe into ower breostes bur is iliht of heouene, ant haldeð him heteuste aþet he habbe i3ettet ow al þet 3e eauer easkið.’ (13: 241-244). But Millett disagrees: ‘the author’s use of the imperative (which would hardly be appropriate for an experience granted rarely, and then only by divine grace) suggests that he sees it rather as a meditative exercise suitable for any anchoress.’ Millett, trans. (2009), p. 178, n. I. 100. See Kane (1951) on the distinction between the mystical and meditative domains in devotion (p. 129, n. 1).

‘inwardliche’. With this sense, Christ’s ‘inward’ love, and the anchoress’ ‘inward’ meditation on this love, is opened up for public view.⁹⁵

A crucial difference between the two images is also apparent. In *Wohunge*, the Heart itself is wounded; in *Ancrene Wisse*, it is not itself wounded, only visible through the Wounded Side. Whilst one explanation may be that the two texts are appealing to different points in the transition from devotion to the Wounded Side to the Wounded Heart, this divergence is of a greater significance.⁹⁶ In *Ancrene Wisse*, though the love within the Wound is ‘openliche’ available to her, the anchoress remains external to the Heart. *Wohunge* moves her a step further. The Lover no longer shows his heart from the shield of his body, but now invites her to infiltrate it. The *Wohunge*-image also refers to the act of reading (whereas in *Ancrene Wisse* it is only *beholding*), dependent upon the tradition of Christ as a book.⁹⁷ Unlike the later Charters of Christ, these love letters in *Wohunge* are amorous documents that foster an intimate interaction between Bridegroom and Bride. The anchoress is invited to read the amatory inscription with the same insight as the speaker in the thirteenth-century *Stimulus amoris*, blinded by the flowing blood of the Wounded Heart.⁹⁸ As Innes-Parker hypothesises, *Wohunge*’s account of the lover-knight ‘represents its author’s perception of the way in which an anchoress would read the parable’, a

⁹⁵ These are all cited among the possible senses in the *MED* entry for ‘openli’.

⁹⁶ On the two traditions, see Louis Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques ascétiques du moyen âge* (Paris, 1925), pp. 98-99.

⁹⁷ For this tradition, see Gillespie, ‘*Lukyng in haly bukes*’ (2011), pp. 124-126. See also Jaeger (2000), p. 108.

⁹⁸ Cited from Walter Hilton’s († 1396) translation and adaptation of the original text. See *The Goad of Love*, ed. and trans. Clare Kirchberger (London, 1952), p. 51 (Latin given in n. 1).

representation that significantly involves a higher level of participation from the anchoress.⁹⁹

There do remain limits to the anchoress' intimacy in *Wohunge*. It is unclear to what extent these love letters can be 'openlich' (whether unobstructedly, visibly, or publicly) read. The anchoress' discovery of Christ's love in the epistles is expressed not as a certainty, but as a possibility, with the modal verb 'mai': 'for þer i *mai* openlich seo hu muchel þu me luuedes' (emphasis added). Moreover, the entrance into Christ is short-lived. There is a slight distancing in the anchoress' subsequent exclamation: 'Wið wrange schuld i þe min heorte wearren siðen þat tu bohtes herte for herte.' (fol. 132ra; p. 35, ll. 551-3). The speaker seems to have withdrawn slightly from the ecstatic submersion in Christ's Heart; she is now able to perceive her own heart in relation to Christ's, and to imagine a possible exchange of hearts. And after this comment, the anchoress abruptly turns outwards from the Heart to the Virgin Mary, outside Christ's body: 'Laudei moder 7 meiden þu stod here ful neh 7 seh al þis sorhe vpo þi deorewurðe sune' (fol. 132ra; p. 35, ll. 554-6).

Almost cinematically, the perspective again shifts back to Christ, with the anchoress and her Lamb sealed together in an erotic enclosure. Christ has especially brought the anchoress 'fra þe world' to the 'bur' of his 'burðe' (fol. 132rb; p. 35, ll. 573-4). This echoes the Bride's assertion in Song of Songs 3:4, though here it is

⁹⁹ Catherine Innes-Parker, 'Ancrene Wisse and *Pe Wohunge of Ure Lauerd*: The Thirteenth-Century Female Reader and the Lover Knight', in *Women, the Book and the Godly*, ed. Lesley Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 137-48 (p. 138).

Christ's place of birth.¹⁰⁰ Together 'steaked' in the confined chamber— a place of birth and sexual discovery— the anchoress, along with the author writing the text, imagines a comfortably intimate sexual encounter with Christ: 'I mai þer þe swa sweteli kissen 7 cluppen' (fol. 132rb; p. 35, ll. 574-576). The anchoress does not report Christ's response, however, and the intimacy is again presented as a possibility with the modal verb 'mai'. Not entirely fulfilled in her erotic embrace of Christ, the anchoress acknowledges her inadequacy, here assuming the voice of the 'salmewrihte' in Psalm 115:12: 'Lauerd hwat mai i 3elde þe for al þat tu haues 3iuen me' (fol. 132rb; p. 36, ll. 582-3). The anchoress attempts to give Him her entire self; she and Christ are 'spered' together on the cross:

Mi bodi henge wið þi bodi neiled o rode. Sperred querfaste wiðinne fowr wahes 7 henge i wile wið þe 7 neauer mare of mi rode cume til þat i deie. [...] A iesu swa swet hit is wið þe to henge.
(fol. 132va; p. 36, ll. 590-602)

As shown earlier, the fleeting gesture towards *Brautmystik* cannot be seen as a full mystical union. Moreover, it is now usurped by a shared bodily hanging on the cross. Instead of fusing with Christ, the anchoress wishes to embrace him bodily.¹⁰¹ Whether or not the anchoress imaginatively fulfils this desire is unclear. She continues to shuttle between yearning and fulfillment. The use of the subjunctive mood and future tense ('Mi bodi henge', and 'henge i wile') creates a sense of the anchoress not being there, of her intimacy with Christ not being fact. Yet this is followed by the indicative

¹⁰⁰ 'When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him: and I will not let him go, till I bring him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that bore me.' (Song of Songs 3:4)

¹⁰¹ As Renevey (1993) argues of the *Wooing Group* as a whole, '[t]he mystical union [...] is replaced as the main goal of the anchorite by the union with Christ on the cross' (p. 70).

tense: ‘A. iesu swa swet hit *is* wið þe to henge’ (emphasis added). Moving away from the uncertain realm of the subjunctive and future, the anchoress uses the indicative tense to assert her fulfilment of a shared crucifixion. For this moment, she has reached her Lover, and hangs beside him in pain.

The final testament from the author summarises the affective aims of this meditation, as he entreats the anchoress to pray for him:

Prei for me mi leue suster. þis haue i writen þe for þi þat wordes ofte quemen þe heorte to þenken on ure lauerd [...] 7 þenc as tah he heng beside þe blodi up o rode. And he þurh his grace opne þin heorte to his luue 7 to reowðe of his pine.
(fol. 133ra; pp. 37-38, ll. 645-658)

These closing remarks are oddly muted when compared to the meditation itself. Like all the *Wooing Group* texts, *Wohunge* is a tool— a generator of affective pain created by the author for use by the anchoress, as she re-creates herself in meditation. The *Wooing Group* meditations are necessary tools with which the anchoress tills the land of her heart, cultivating sophisticated affective stirrings in her attempts to gain intimacy with her Lover. Each meditation carefully shapes its language to enable the nurturance of affective pain in the anchoress. Like the psalmist of Psalm 38:4, the anchoress reads the texts to kindle meditation within her heart. Once ignited, she searches, like the Bride in Canticles 5:17, for the Beloved she cannot yet fully find.

Chapter 3

Wound Imagery in the *Ancrene Wisse* Group

Chapter 1 demonstrated the necessity of both physical and affective pain in the anchoress' penitence, and Chapter 2 examined the anchoress' use of meditations to stimulate and nurture her affective stirrings. Chapter 3 studies imagery of wounds as sources and expressions of physical and affective pain, and as manifestations of the inner movements of sin; it provides an insight into the anchoress' imaginative engagement with wounds as an aspect of her penitential and devotional activity. Despite its prominence in the anchoress' meditation, the image of the Wounded Heart in *Wohunge* is far from the only image of woundedness. Images of wounds pervade the anchoritic existence constructed in the texts of this thesis. The anchoress meditates upon images of wounds, inflicts wound-images on herself when she sins, writes wound-images on her body and soul in acts of penitence, envisages the power to erase wound-images, wields the wound-images as weaponry to combat the demons of Hell, glimpses the potential for *Brautmystik* as she enters into wound-images, exits out of the wound-images to observe the surrounding environment, and inhabits wound-images. Wound-images are at once signifiers, permanent marks, thresholds, bodily 'effluvia', weapons, apertures, protective alcoves carved into the landscape of the body, and points of intersection.¹ They form the borderline between outer touch and

¹ The description of wounds as bodily 'effluvia' is Karma Lochrie's. See her *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh* (Philadelphia, 1991), p. 40.

inner sensation— between weapon and agony— yet also identify with the weapon itself.²

Physical wounds are those wounds inflicted on the flesh, visible and easily identifiable as wounds. Affective wounds signify the sensation of affective pain— whether in the form of sadness, love, fear, anger, or other affective stirrings. Both types of wounds are characterized by their potency, even their aggression. Apart from its basis in pathology, Kristeva's *Soleil noir* has a pressing relevance to the thirteenth-century anchoress reading these texts. It is through a language of 'woundedness' that Kristeva defines the experience of affective pain, of sorrow, in the depressed person:

Je vis une mort vivante, chair coupée, saignante, cadavérisée, rythme ralenti ou suspendu, temps effacé ou boursoufflé, résorbé dans la peine...³

(I live a living death, my flesh is butchered, bloody, cadaverised, rhythm slowed down or suspended, time effaced or swollen, absorbed in sorrow...)

The flesh is *coupée*, or 'cut up'.⁴ She also refers earlier to a basic wound (*la blessure*) after suffering an affectively painful event— a loss or setback in love, profession, or family.⁵ In Kristeva's vocabulary, the wound is not an arbitrary signifier for affective pain; it is part of the sensation of affective pain itself. A sufferer of affective pain feels wounded, as a sufferer of physical pain feels the wound as the focus of her pain. As remarked in the introduction, the anchoress feels in the language she uses. The

² The body can become a weapon against itself. See Scarry's comment on torture (1985): 'What atrocities one's own body, muscle and bone structure can inflict on oneself.' (p. 48).

³ Kristeva (1987), p. 14.

⁴ Roudiez's authoritative translation (1989) renders 'chair coupée' as 'my flesh is wounded' (p. 4). 'Butchered' or 'cut up' more fully captures the powerful expression of woundedness in the original French, however.

⁵ Kristeva (1987), p. 13.

case for a neurological connection between physical and affective pain has been strengthened by recent scientific research. The authors of a 2003 neuroimaging study found that ‘some of the same neural machinery recruited in the experience of physical pain may also be involved in the experience of pain associated with social separation or rejection’.⁶ This 2003 study focuses only on the pain caused by social exclusion, and as such its findings cannot be uncritically applied to all affective movements. But the broad argument, of a link between physical and affective pain, remains germane to this chapter.

To say ‘my flesh is wounded in sorrow’, then, is crucial to the sensation of this sorrow. The cognitive/conceptual theory of metaphor, pioneered by Mark Johnson and George Lakoff, affirms that metaphors are not unnecessary ornamentation of meaning, but are central to the creation of this meaning. This is closely related to Paul Ricoeur’s work.⁷ Sarah Covington aligns herself with the Ricoeurian conceptualisation of metaphor in her recent monograph on the imagery of wounds in the seventeenth century, and crystallises his arguments:

A linguistic imagination ‘generates and regenerates meaning through the living power of metaphoricity,’ revealing new ways of seeing; where Hobbes and Locke saw metaphor as deceiving linguistic ornamentation, Ricoeur claimed its cognitive importance in producing new meaning.⁸

⁶ Naomi I. Eisenberger, Matthew D. Lieberman and Kipling D. Williams, ‘Does Rejection Hurt? An fMRI Study of Social Exclusion’, *Science*, cccii, no. 5643 (10 October 2003), 290-292.

⁷ For key works on the cognitive/conceptual theory of metaphor, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s classic *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, 1980); Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (NY, 2002); and Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (London, 2003).

⁸ Sarah Covington, *Wounds, Flesh, and Metaphor in Seventeenth-Century England* (NY, 2009), p. 5. Her fourth and fifth chapters are especially relevant to this thesis.

In seeking to answer the question, ‘Do metaphors simply reflect a pre-existing, literal reality, or do they actually create or constitute our emotional reality?’, Zoltán Kövecses essentially argues for the latter. He puts forward a compelling model revealing that affective stirrings are formed collectively by physiology, culture, and the language used to express/describe it.⁹ Medieval writers were not oblivious to the notion that metaphors create meaning, rather than simply adorn a meaning already in existence. Although he implies that spiritual meaning is hidden beneath the disguise of metaphor, Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) still defends the use of body-based metaphor in sacred writing:

Dicendum quod conveniens est sacræ Scripturæ divina et spiritualia sub similitudine corporalium tradere. Deus enim omnibus providet secundum quod competit eorum naturæ. Est autem naturale homini ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia veniat, quia omnis nostra cognitio a sensu initium habet. Unde convenienter in sacra Scriptura traduntur nobis spiritualia sub metaphoris corporalium.¹⁰

(It must be said that it is appropriate for sacred writing to teach that which is divine and spiritual under the guise of comparison with corporeal objects. For God makes provision for all things in a way that suits their nature. It is natural for man to reach intellectual things by means of sensible things, because all our knowledge originates in sensation. So it is quite appropriate that in Holy Scripture spiritual things are imparted to us under the guise of metaphors taken from corporeal things.)¹¹

⁹ See Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 1ff. Given that Kövecses is examining modern-day languages, his model is not designed for medieval affections, and there are important distinctions in terminology. Where Kövecses uses ‘emotion’, this thesis uses ‘affection’. His distinction between words that ‘express’ emotion versus words and phrases that ‘describe’ emotion (p. 2ff) is not carried into this thesis. See also Leslie Lockett’s recent interrogation of the use of conceptual metaphors in *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies in the Vernacular and Latin Traditions* (Toronto, 2011), especially chapter 3, p. 110ff.

¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ*, ed. T. Gilby, i (1 a I) (London, 1964), 32-34.

¹¹ *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c. 1100-1375: The Commentary Tradition*, revised edition, ed. A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott, with the assistance of David Wallace (Oxford, 1988; repr. 1991), p. 239.

As he goes on to say, ‘sacred instruction uses metaphors because they are necessary and useful’.¹² A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott note the emergence of the fourteenth-century term *duplex sensus litteralis*. This ‘paradoxical term’, as they call it, is a clear indication that metaphor is not mere adornment of language. As the editors explain the term:

There is a ‘proper’ literal sense, which arises from the initial signification of the language; there is also a ‘figurative’ literal sense, which comes from the secondary or metaphorical signification of the language, and this too is a meaning which the author intended or which can be elicited from his intention.¹³

The work of Johnson, Lakoff, and Ricoeur would not have been unthinkable to medieval writers.

The potency of wound-images in the anchoritic texts is indisputable. Elaine Scarry writes on physical pain:

The feeling of pain entails the feeling of being acted upon, and the person may either express this in terms of the world acting on him [...] or in terms of his own body acting on him. Thus, though the phrase ‘language of agency’ refers primarily to the image of the weapon, its meaning also extends to the image of the wound.¹⁴

As Scarry indicates, the wound is a focal point in the self’s quest to express physical pain. This ‘agency’ of wounds can be extended: in the anchoritic texts, wound imagery is crucial not only to the experience and expression of physical and affective pain, but also to the anchoress’ broader programme of spiritual growth.

¹² *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism*, p. 240.

¹³ *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism*, pp. 205- 206.

¹⁴ Scarry (1985), p. 16.

Chapter 3 is the first chapter to conflate all the texts of the ‘*Ancrene Wisse* Group’, and the first to study the *Katherine Group*. The chapter begins by examining the imagery of Christ’s wounds in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*. The anchoress nurtures her Love by engaging affectively with Christ’s physical and affective woundedness, cultivating her own affective wounds as a result of Christ’s pain. This is followed by an assessment of sin-wounds and penitential wound imagery in these texts. With the metaphor of sin-wounds, the anchoress builds within her self the sensation of being wounded in sin, reinforcing the aggression and danger of sinful activity. She further develops this imagery in a penitential context; though she should not literally wound herself in penitence, she uses wound-images as metaphors for her general self-mortification, which emphasizes the potency of her penitential procedures. Finally, the chapter scrutinizes the saints’ wounding in the *Katherine Group*.¹⁵ Through these three hagiographic legends, the anchoress learns to distinguish between senseless, destructive wound imagery on the one hand, and the wound imagery that enables her to destroy the devil and gain salvation on the other.¹⁶

¹⁵ There is a small strain of wound imagery in *Ancrene Wisse* that relates to wounding as the result of an insult. In Part IV, wounds express the affective pain born from criticism or humiliation, based on Proverbs 27:6: ‘3ef ha ne luuede me, nalde ha nawt warni me i misericorde; leouere me beoð hire wunden þen fikiende cosses’ (97-98: 1122-1125).

¹⁶ Grayson (1974) has analysed wound imagery in *Ancrene Wisse*, remarking on the link between wind and wound imagery in the Guide (p. 83).

I. Love-Wounds: Christ and the anchoress

At the heart of the anchoress' existence was a body that was beautiful and nurturing in its woundedness.¹⁷ By the time the texts of the *Ancrene Wisse* Group were composed, Christ's body was imaged in both textual and visual cultures as being utterly scarred and rent apart, his body covered in blood pouring from his many wounds.¹⁸ From this Wounded Body emerged five of special significance. This unique devotion to the Five Wounds—in the two feet, two hands, and Side—did not originate in the thirteenth century; the five jewels adorning the Cross in *The Dream of the Rood* should not be forgotten.¹⁹ *The Dream of the Rood* was a fraction of the wider use of the Wounds in Anglo-Saxon textual and visual imagery.²⁰ But devotion based on the Five Wounds intensified in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Bernard of Clairvaux was centrally

¹⁷ Despite the immense devotional importance attached to Christ's Wounds in the Middle Ages, it is only John 19: 33-34 that specifically mentions a wound on Christ's body, inflicted on his side by the soldier's lance. As Bynum observes, the only reference to literal bleeding from Christ's body in the Gospels is his bloody sweat during his prayer on the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:43). She also notes that this reference 'is missing in some early manuscripts.' Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia, 2007), p. 1.

¹⁸ Bynum has rightly cautioned against carelessly combining wound and blood devotion since, she notes, 'we find that what flows from Christ's side in mystical visions, prayers and hymns is often the sweetness of milk and honey, not blood.' Bynum (2007), p. 14. The two are studied in conjunction in this thesis, since blood is frequently the liquid seeping from Christ's wounds in these anchoritic texts. It should also be noted that Bynum's perception of the 'sweeter, sunnier piety' of thirteenth-century devotion in Germany, one that does not 'appeal to blood', is not applicable to *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*. (Bynum (2007), p. 15). For later examples of manuscript illuminations and church wall paintings depicting the wounded body of Christ (particularly from the fourteenth century), see chapter 2 of Ross (1997).

¹⁹ *The Vercelli Book*, ed. G. P. Krapp, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, II (London, 1932), p. 61, ll. 7-9.

²⁰ Barbara Raw has researched Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion iconography more broadly, with numerous examples of the nailed hands and feet of Christ: *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge, 1990); see, for example, plates ii, ivb, vb, viii, ix, xi, and xiv.

involved in this process.²¹ Louis Gougaud also notes that this devotion was encouraged and propagated by Francis of Assisi's (1182-1226) stigmatization on Mount Alverna in September 1224.²² As Robert W. Ackerman and Roger Dahood observe, evidence in thirteenth-century lyrics shows absorption of Five Wound-devotion.²³ One of the examples they give comes from *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*: 'Vor cristes fif wunden ðu 3if me milce & ore' (p. 6, l. 102). The other comes from the lyric editorially entitled 'The Five Blisses', found in Oxford, Jesus College, MS 29: 'He make vs clene and bryhte / for his wundes fyue' (p. 66, ll. 23-24).

The most cataclysmic and precious Wound became that inflicted on Christ's Heart due to the Side Wound. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* notes that '[l]ittle by little devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus became something fully distinct from the devotion to the Five Sacred Wounds', as devotion to the Heart entered the Benedictine, Cistercian, Carthusian, Franciscan, and Dominican orders.²⁴ Devotion to the Heart grew in the thirteenth century, and the two Helfta nuns Gertrude the Great († 1301/2) and Mechthild of Hackeborn († 1298) were major players in the development of this devotion.²⁵ John Bainvel posits that it is in the writings of these two women, along with Bonaventure's *Vitis mystica*, that devotion to the Heart 'seems to acquire substance'.²⁶

²¹ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, second edition, 15 Vols, ed. Berard L. Marthaler et al (Detroit, 2003), XIV, 860: cols. 1-2.

²² Gougaud (1925), pp. 79-80.

²³ Robert W. Ackerman and Roger Dahood, ed. and trans., *Ancrene Riwe: Introduction and Part I* (Binghamton, 1984), p. 97, n. 55.

²⁴ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. Marthaler et al, XII, 499.

²⁵ Bynum (2007), p. 14.

²⁶ John Bainvel, *Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: The Doctrine and its History*, trans. E. Leahy (London, 1924), p. 134. For a detailed assessment of the religious of Helfta, see Mary Jeremy Finnegan, *The Women of Helfta: Scholars and Mystics* (Athens, Georgia, 1991); see especially chapter 9.

The two texts by the Helfta women are important indicators of the climate of Wound devotion, though they would have been unavailable as sources for any of the *Ancrene Wisse* Group authors. In Book III, Chapter 25 of the *Legatus divinae pietatis*, Gertrude receives Christ's Heart in the likeness of a burning lamp ('in similitudine lampadis ardentis') when she feels sadness at her limited capacity for prayer; Christ says that he holds it in front of 'oculis mentis tuae' (the eyes of your heart [or, soul]).²⁷ The Lamp of Christ's Heart shows itself to the eyes of Gertrude's heart or soul, like the anchoress' 'heorte eihen' (fol. 126r; p. 9, l. 151), and latches itself on to her heart as permanent protection and nourishment. In the subsequent chapter, Christ stresses the lasting connection between heart and Heart (III, 122-124). Gertrude drinks the pleasures through something like a golden tube ('quasi auream quamdam fistulam'), eventually drawing herself into the space of the Heart (III, 124-126; pp. 190-191). In Chapter 51 of Book III, she feels and hears the heartbeats of Christ's Heart as spoken messages (III, 224-226).²⁸ Mechthild, in her *Liber specialis gratiae*, also hears and feels ('audiret et sentiret') the pulsations of Christ's Heart (Part I, Chapter V).²⁹ In Part I, Chapter 19, Mechthild has a vision in which her heart, as a mass of gold ('massam auri') melts or liquifies into Christ's Heart (70). In Part III,

²⁷ Gertrude the Great, *Œuvres spirituelles*, ed. Pierre Doyère, 5 Vols (Paris: 1967-1986), III, 120; all subsequent references are to this edition.

²⁸ Alexandra Barratt draws attention to the Heart as a womb-like space: Gertrude 'finds its [the Wounded Heart's] closest human analogy in the child's dimly-remembered uterine experience of its mother's heart-beats that constantly soothe and reassure'. See Alexandra Barratt, trans. *The Herald of God's Loving Kindness: Books One and Two* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1991), p. 25. This relates to the devotion to Christ as Mother, a recurring point in this thesis.

²⁹ *Revelationes Gertrudianæ ac Mechtildianæ*, 2 Vols, II: *Sanctæ Mechtildis: Virginis Ordinis Sancti Benedicti Liber specialis gratiæ; accedit sororis Mechtildis ejusdem ordinis Lux divinitatis*, ed. the monks of Solesmes (Poitiers, 1877), 18-19; all subsequent references are to this edition.

Chapter 27, Christ takes her heart and compresses ('comprimeret') it into his own (230).

Written during this period of intensifying devotion to Christ's Wounds and the Wounded Heart, the texts of the *Ancrene Wisse* Group show unmistakable marks of influence from this climate. First of all, Christ's wounded body permeates the anchoress' prayer-routine. Early on in Part I of *Ancrene Wisse*, the anchoress is told to 'falleð o cneon to ower crucifix wið þeos fif gretunges ine munegunge of Godes fif wunden: *Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi quia per sanctam Crucem redemisti mundum*. [*We adore you, Christ, and bless you because through the sanctified Cross you redeemed the world*] [...]', etc (7-8: 34-55). A simplified version is also provided: 'Hwa-se ne con þeose fiue segge þe earste, *Adoramus te* [*We adore you*], cneolinde fif siðen' (8: 56-57).³⁰

It is also likely that Christ's wounded body was visually prominent for the anchoress. As already noted in Chapter 2, the pyx containing Christ's Flesh, ingested once a week in Eucharistic devotion, would have been visible to the anchoress from her church window.³¹ Beyond this, church wall paintings may have contributed to her

³⁰ Quoting E. J. Dobson, Millett clarifies the liturgical context of these salutations: 'the first salutation here, *Adoramus te... mundum*, is the first antiphon of Matins for the feast of the Invention of the Cross and the respond after the third lesson of Matins for the Exaltation of the Cross, and the second, from *Tuam crucem* to *passionem*, is the versicle following this respond'. Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 18: 1/37-40. See also Ackerman and Dahood (1984) for the liturgical context (p. 93, n. 13ff).

³¹ Bynum has noted that many female religious figures of the Middle Ages experienced Christ's blood in relation to the Eucharistic wafer. As she describes it, 'Mystics (especially women mystics) who were denied access to the cup at mass repeatedly experienced both the flooding of ecstasy through their limbs and the taste of the wafer in their mouths as blood.' For examples, see Bynum (2007), pp. 4-5. It is unlikely that the *Ancrene Wisse*-author would approve of such extremities. But the connection Bynum makes between Christ's blood-filled Wounds and the consumption

affective literacy. Ellen Ross suggests that church paintings created a ‘Christological Space’.³² The clearest examples of a Wounded Christ are found in church wall paintings of several major cathedrals.³³ Thirteenth-century wall-paintings depicting Passion sequences do survive in small parish churches, however, as will be seen in Chapter 4. The attrition of time has resulted in damage to these paintings, but it is possible that Christ’s Wounds were clearly visible in these parish churches also. The anchoress may have used her sight of the ‘Christological Space’ of church wall paintings— whether seen before entering the anchorhold or through her anchorhold window— to nurture her devotion to the Wounds.

There is scant surviving information on the visual images available inside the anchorhold of the thirteenth century. Neither *Ancrene Wisse* nor the *Wooing Group* texts specify explicitly that an image of the Passion, showing Christ’s wounds, should be placed in the anchorhold.³⁴ Nonetheless, it is highly likely that just such an image of the Passion was there. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Aelred allows an

of his Flesh via the Eucharistic wafer is an intriguing aspect of much female devotion in the thirteenth century and onwards.

³² Ross (1997), p. 53.

³³ The Chapel of St Faith in Westminster Abbey has a depiction of the Crucifixion with Christ’s arms painfully stretched out and a dark nail piercing his feet (c. 1270-1300). This is reprinted in Tancred Borenius and E. W. Tristram, *English Medieval Painting* (NY, 1976), plate 20. Another depiction of the Crucifixion in St Albans Cathedral (this one c. 1250), with two female figures on either side of Christ, shows a disproportionately large nail piercing his feet (Borenius and Tristram (1976), plate 14). The depiction of the descent from the Cross and deposition of Christ in Winchester Cathedral, Chapel of Holy Sepulchre (c. 1225) shows a bearded man pulling out the nail from Christ’s foot with a long wrench. (Borenius and Tristram (1976), plate 7). The dates for all the plates are Borenius’ and Tristram’s.

³⁴ There is a wealth of material on visual images used by other female religious, however. The later ascetic Jane Mary of Maillé (1331-1414) carried images of Christ’s suffering on and around her, and the beguine Beatrice of Nazareth (1200-1268) surrounded herself with images of the Cross during her activities. See Jeffrey Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: the Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 177-178, and p. 192.

image of Christ's body stretched on the Cross, situated between images of the Virgin Mother and Virgin Disciple.³⁵ Given that Christ's wounds became more prominent in artistic depictions over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whether of the Passion or Last Judgement, it is also likely that the depiction of the Passion in the anchorhold indicated Christ's Five Wounds.³⁶ The anchoress' potential use of these visual images is not dissimilar to the meditative use of the passage in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, which breaks down images to be digested in a deep, slow, and quiet meditation, in Anselmian terms. As already discussed, each isolated image becomes, as Gillespie suggests on later medieval writing, 'a catalyst to a chain of significations related to but not predicated upon the imaginative decorum of the source or host image'.³⁷ Like these textual images in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, the visual images of Christ's Wounds within the anchorhold could also have an infinite signifying potential. The source or host visual image, isolated from a wider context of images due to the bareness of the anchorhold, becomes usable in various ways.³⁸ Visual images of Christ's wounds combine with the texts to expand the anchoress' devotional vocabularies.

There are references in the English anchoritic texts to imaginative visualisation of Christ's woundedness. As seen in Chapter 2, the anchoress' heart- or breast-eyes facilitate her witnessing of the Passion. Near the close of Part IV of *Ancrene Wisse*, after an exploration of Christ's Wounded Side as a protective alcove,

³⁵ The coupling of the Virgin Mother and Disciple is an important aspect of twelfth-century devotion. See Gougaud (1925), p. 77.

³⁶ See, for example, Gertrude Schiller on post-eleventh-century images of the Last Judgement, where 'Christ as Judge displays his wounds and angels bring the instruments of the Passion as a mark of accusation': *Iconography of Christian Art*, 2 Vols, II: *The Passion of Jesus Christ*, trans. Janet Seligman (London, 1968), 10:2.

³⁷ Gillespie (2011), 'Strange Images of Death', p. 223.

³⁸ Visual images could also be used as part of a sequence; this will be investigated in the context of church wall paintings in Chapter 4.

the author tells the anchoress to maintain the Passion in her ‘breoste ehen’ (111: 1653); in *Ureisun of God*, the meditator attempts to keep the Passion and all the figures in Calvary in her ‘heorte eihen’ (fol. 126r; p. 9, l. 151). And in the final *envoi* of *Wohunge*, the author advises the anchoress to imaginatively visualise Christ, to ‘þenc as tah he heng biside þe blodi upo rode’ (fol. 133ra; p. 38, ll. 651-655). Aelred also makes reference to the anchoress’ eyes (‘tuis oculis’) when observing Christ’s scourging (670). Notably, the focus on ‘seeing’ these Passion images is absent from Anselm’s ‘Oratio ad Christum’:

sic et ego non quantum debeo, sed quantum queo, memor passionis tuae,
 memor alaparum tuarum, memor flagellorum, memor crucis, memor vulnorum
 tuorum [...]
 (7)

(So as much as I am able, though not as much as I should, I am mindful of
 your passion, mindful of your blows, mindful of your scourges, mindful of
 your cross, mindful of your wounds [...])

In the Anselmian prayer, the focus is on a broad mindfulness (*memor*) of the Passion; the references in the English and Latin anchoritic texts, on the other hand, seem attached to a process of visualisation.³⁹

A more direct reference to visual resources of woundedness appears in Part III of *Ancrene Wisse*. The author adjures the anchoress to kiss the ‘wundestuden’ on the crucifix she has accessible in the anchorhold:

Bihalde ofte þron, ant cusse þe wunde studen i swote munegunge of þe soðe
 wunden þe he o þe soðe rode þuldliche þolede.
 (54: 250-252)

³⁹ Ward’s (1973) translation of ‘mindful’ is adopted here (p. 95, ll. 62-64).

Though the author makes clear that these are not the ‘soðe wunden’— merely the empty spaces marking the place of those true wounds— the wounds are still invoked as physical reality in the anchorhold, and inspire the intimate affective and somatic response of the anchoress’ kissing. Despite the anchoress’ inability to kiss the actual lesions, the author encourages her to achieve a semi-witnessing of the wounds. He seems to respond to Anselm, though he does not cite him at this point. In the ‘Oratio ad Christum’, the Anselmian meditator also desires to kiss the ‘loca vulnerum’ on Christ’s body:

Benignissime, suavissime, serenissime: quando restaurabis mihi quia non vidi illam beatam tuae carnis incorruptionem? Quia non sum deosculatus loca vulnerum, fixuras clavorum? Quia non respersi lacrimis gaudii cicatrices testes veri corporis?
(8)

(Kindest, most charming, most serene: will you not restore (my relationship with you) for not seeing the blessed incorruption of your flesh? For not having kissed the place of the wounds, the piercing-points of the nails? For not having sprinkled with tears of joy the scars that witnessed the truth of your body?)

In neither case are the meditators granted direct access to the wounds themselves; instead, they are provided with the *loca vulnerum* / ‘wundestuden’. Unlike Anselm, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author attaches the wound-places to an actual crucifix available to the anchoress. But in both cases, the true wounds are made conspicuous in their absence.

Christ's Physical-Affective Wounds

Christ's physical wounds were pervasive in the anchoress' existence, both visually and in the prayers dominating her daily routine. And yet, as seen in Chapters 1 and 2, Christ's wounding on the Cross is portrayed in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* as both physical and affective in nature. The most explicit physical-affective wounding appears in Part II of *Ancrene Wisse*, studied in Chapter 1:

Vre Laverd i þis wit nefde nawt in a stude, ah hefde oueral pine; nawt ane 3ond al his bodi, ah hefde 3et inwið his seli sawle. In hire he felde þe stiche of sari sorhe ant sorhful, þet dude him sike sare. Þis stiche wes þreouald, þe ase þreo speren smat him to þe heorte.
(45: 958-962)

Christ's soul is attacked by three 'speren': the affection of sorrow is here likened ('þe ase') to a process of wounding. After imaging Christ's sorrow-wounded soul, the author portrays Christ crying through his entire body, based closely on Bernard's third sermon *In Ramis Palmarum*:⁴⁰

Ant her seið Sein Beornard þet he ne weop nawt ane wið ehnen, ah dude as wið alle his limen. *Quasi, inquit, membris omnibus fleuisse uidetur.* [*It seems as though, he says, he wept with all limbs.*] For se ful of ango[i]sse wes þet ilke ned-swat þet lihte of his licome, agein the angoisuse deað þet he schulde þolien, þet hit þuhte read blod. [...] On oðer half, swa largeliche ant swa swiðe fleaw þet ilke blodi swat of his blisfule bodi, þet te streames urnen dun to þer eorðe.
(45: 971-978)

⁴⁰ 'Ubi quidem non solis oculis, sed quasi membris omnibus fleuisse videtur, ut totum corpus eius, quod est Ecclesia, totius corporis lacrimis purgaretur.' (V, 54-55) (Where it seemed not only his eyes, but also all the members of his body appeared to weep, and his entire body itself, which is Church, the whole body was purged of tears.)

Sweat, blood, and tears converge.⁴¹ Releasing moistures from all the orifices of his body, Christ's porous physicality is aligned with his affective vulnerability. Such an image is a perfect recreation of Christ's sacrifice, since his blood and his shame both give succour to humanity. The Church itself was born from his Wounded Side.⁴² In his commentary on St John's Gospel, Augustine affirms:

Dormit Adam, ut fiat Eva: moritur Christus ut fiat Ecclesia. Dormiente Adam, fit Eva de latere: mortuo Christo, lancea perforatur latus, ut profluant Sacramenta, quibus formetur Ecclesia.⁴³

(Adam sleeps so that Eve may exist; Christ dies so that the Church may exist. Eve is born from the side of the sleeping Adam; the side of the dead Christ is pierced so that the sacraments may flow forth, from which the Church is formed.)

We have also seen that a passage in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* deconstructs the chronology of the Passion to form an array of multivalent images. The 'hokerunge' (fol. 127r; p. 17, l. 49) and the 'scornunge', repeated twice (fols 127r-127v; p. 17, ll. 50, 52), develop into more direct expressions of affective pain: 'bi hi schome', 'bi his sor' (fol. 127v; p. 18, l. 65). These affective phenomena are interspersed among the references to his bodily wounds. In this imagistic submersion in Christ's suffering, His affective pain becomes merged with and indistinguishable from his wounded

⁴¹ This merging evokes medieval physiological theory, which perceived all bodily fluids as essentially interchangeable. See Elizabeth Robertson, 'Medieval Medical Views of Women and Female Spirituality in the *Ancrene Wisse* and Julian of Norwich's *Showings*', in *Feminist Approaches to the Body in Medieval Literature*, ed. Linda Lomperis and Sarah Stanbury (Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 142-167 (p. 150).

⁴² See Gougaud (1925), p. 93. As Caroline Walker Bynum also points out, an illumination in the mid-thirteenth century Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS 270b shows Christ giving birth to the Church on the Cross from his side. See her *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (NY, 1991), pp. 92-101.

⁴³ *PL* xlv, 1888. See further Raw (1990), p. 119, and n. 53.

anatomy (fols 127r-127v; pp. 17-18, ll. 40-67), as Kristeva's depressed figure is 'butchered' and 'wounded' in depression.⁴⁴

In *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, Christ's physical-affective wounds are not simply marks or sites of a painless attack, as Hilary of Poitiers (c. 315-367) attempted to suggest in his *De Trinitate*.⁴⁵ Christ's passible nature is unquestionable in the anchoritic texts. As seen in the passage on the spears of sorrow, His sorrow-wounded soul feels 'pine', and he suffers a pang ('stiche'). In Part IV, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author explores the depth and breadth of Christ's physical wounds:

ant he, o Munt Caluaire, steah 3et o rode herre, ne ne swong neauer mon se swiðe ne se sare as he dude þet ilke dei þet he bledde o fif half brokes of ful brade wunden ant deope, wiðuten þe eþren capitale þe bledden on his heaued under þe kene þornene crune, ant wiðuten þe ilke reowfule garces of þe luðere scurgunge 3ont al his leofliche lich, nawt ane o þe schonken.
(98: 1147- 1153)

Apart from His wounds being 'brade' and 'deope', Christ toils 'sare'; the thorn-crown is 'kene', and the gashes of the scourging are 'reowfule'. The author stresses Christ's

⁴⁴ A similar merging, on a smaller scale, can be seen in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* (fols 128r-128v; pp. 10-11, ll. 1-30).

⁴⁵ For an analysis of twelfth- and thirteenth-century scholars' responses to patristic writers on Christ's passibility, see Kevin Madigan, *The Passions of Christ in High-Medieval Thought: An Essay on Christological Development* (Oxford, 2007), particularly chapters 5 and 6. Madigan succinctly describes Hilary's anti-Arian standpoint: 'Because the body of the Son of God had its origins in a spiritual conception (*ex conceptu Spiritus*), it had a different nature that did not and could not experience the weakness of ordinary human bodies. In particular, it had a nature that made it incapable of feeling pain (*non tamen natural dolendi*). [...] Hilary recognizes that harsh blows really struck Christ and wounds really pierced his flesh. Nonetheless, because of the unique quality of that flesh, Christ felt only the force of the suffering (*inpetus passionis*) but not the pain of the passion (*non tamen dolorem passionis*).' (pp. 54-55). This is in exact contradiction to the emphasis on Christ's sensitivity in Part II of *Ancrene Wisse*. In the anchoritic text, Christ's flesh is unique not in its insusceptibility to pain, but rather in its agonising sensitivity. The tenderness of Christ's flesh represents the difference, as the *Ancrene Wisse*-author would put it, between the pain experienced in an eye and a heel.

sensation of pain in these physical wounds. In the images of the Passion in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, Christ's wounds are modified with the adjective 'sore' (fol. 127v; p. 17, l. 54-55, p. 18, ll. 60-61). And in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, the speaker explicitly mentions Christ's pains and shames after mentioning the five wounds in her incantatory list of Passion moments: 'þurh þine vif wunden. 7 þe eadie flod þet of ham fledde. þuruh ðe irene neiles 7 þe þornene crune. 7 þuruh þe pinen 7 þe schomen [...] ' (fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 9-12).

Wohunge, in particular, focuses on Christ's pain in his wounding. The meditator observes the nailed hands on the Cross (fol. 128va; p. 23, ll. 137-138), only to be brought closer to this portrayal of wounding: 'ha nu driuen irnene neiles þurh þine feire hondes i to hard rode þurh þine freoliche fet.' (fol. 131vb; p. 34, ll. 511-514). Christ's agony is made plain. He does not utter a word in self-defence, says the speaker in an invocation of Isaiah 53:7, despite his '*pinfule wundes*' (emphasis added): 'For a3aines al þe woh 7 te schome þat tu þoledest. 7 a3aines al þe wa 7 te pinfule wundes; neauer neh opnedes ti muð to grucchen a3aines' (fol. 129ra; p. 25, ll. 199-205). The wounds are 'pinfule' and Christ experiences 'wa'. Notably, 'schome' and 'pinfule wundes' are juxtaposed in this wounding process, interlinking affective and physical pain once again. The scourging is enacted, with the outflow of blood: 'cnotti swepes swungen swa þat ti luueliche lich mihte beo to torn 7 to rent. 7 al þi blisfule bodi streamed on a girre blod.' (fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 477-481). The meditator also watches the blood issuing from Christ's nails as they are bound fast, invoking the testimony of saints to ratify this image: 'ha þe bunden swa hetelifaste þat te blod wrang ut at tine fingerneiles as halhes bileuen' (fols 131rb-131va; pp. 32-33, ll. 467-

470).⁴⁶ The anchoress also sees the blood pouring from his head as the crown of thorns is placed upon it: ‘Siðen o þin heued wes set te crune of scharpe þornes. þat wið eauriche þorn wrang utte reade blod of þin heali heued’ (fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 481-485). Later, the anchoress images Longinus cleaving Christ’s side. Like the *Ancrene Wisse*-author’s focus on the breadth and depth of Christ’s wounds, here Longinus creates a ‘wide wunde’ (fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 541-543, emphasis added). Though immersed in the pain of the Wounds, the meditator of *Wohunge* cannot forget the reason for His pain. It is a process of wounding which reveals the means by which the healing balm of Christ’s blood is gained: ‘cumes flowinde ut of þat wide wunde. þe blod þat bohte. þe water þat te world wesch of sake 7 of sunne’ (fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 543-546).

On Calvary, Christ is not alone in his vulnerability to painful wounds. Those who observe his wounds, though physically whole, are susceptible to violent affective wounding. The greatest sufferer of affective wounding is the Holy Mother, the key observer at Calvary. The Virgin’s affective wounding is made explicit in *Wohunge*, where her ‘moderliche herte’ suffers a wound in conjunction with her Son’s. A direct pain is charted from Christ’s torn Heart to Mary’s ‘martird’ one (fol. 132rb; p. 35, ll. 557-558), a powerful recollection of Simeon’s Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35):

⁴⁶ In *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, the meditator again calls on saintly confirmation for this image of the blood coming out from Christ’s nails (p. 18, ll. 61-64). Despite the usefulness of this image of Christ’s bleeding nails in the anchoress’ meditation, its inclusion needs justification; the authors have no scriptural reference to support it. Aelred also takes precautions in the story of the thief crucified at Christ’s right, who encountered Christ in His infancy and is overcome with affection. Aelred remarks: ‘Itaque ad incentium amoris haud inutile arbitror hac uti opinione, remota omni affirmandi temeritate.’ (664) (‘So, in order to kindle love I consider it worthwhile to accept this legend as true, without making any rash assertions as to its authority.’) This translation is that of Mary Paul Macpherson, ‘A Rule for the Life of a Recluse’, in *Treatises: the Pastoral Prayer*, ed. M. Basil Pennington (Kalamazoo, MI, 1982), pp. 41-102 (p. 82).

Lauedi moder 7 meiden þu stod here ful neh 7 seh al þis sorhe vpo þi
 deorewurðe sune. was wiðinne martird i þi moderliche herte. þat seh to cleue
 his heorte wið þe speres ord.
 (fols 132ra-132rb; p. 35, ll. 554-559)

Sorrow ('sorhe') is *upon* Christ, yet the Virgin is wounded *within*. Sorrow becomes externalised, apparently visible upon Christ's skin, whilst the 'wounding' takes place far below the skin, within the deep recesses of the Mother's soul. This direct transferral of wounding, Christ's flesh-wound to Mary's wounded soul, is demonstrated perfectly in an image on fol. 53 of Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 231 (U. 3. 4), though it is admittedly later in date than *Wohunge* (c. 1325- c. 1335).⁴⁷ The image is available in Appendix II of this thesis. It is a decorated initial beginning a tract on Mary's compassion ascribed to Bernard (though likely to be pseudo-Bernard), and is opposite a page of anonymous hymns on Mary's sorrows. In this image, a sword protrudes from Christ's Side Wound, piercing through Mary's chest at the place of her heart, opening a hole there. Mary's sorrow is conveyed through her hand gestures: one hand clutches at the place where the Sword struck, the other is opened up by her side with her arm dangling, in a gesture of agony. Her head is tilted to one side, making it unclear whether she is looking at or looking away from her wounded son. She also seems about to collapse, as she is supported upright by the other women attending the Crucifixion. One of the women holds Mary's arm; the other is situated close behind her and appears to be resting her arm on Mary's chest.⁴⁸ The connection between Christ's and Mary's wounds in *Wohunge* also features in an

⁴⁷ This is a deluxe compendium of devotional and philosophical writings. Its contents include works by Augustine, Anselm, and Hugh of Saint-Victor, as well as work by Seneca and Aristotle.

⁴⁸ I became aware of the image through Ross (1997), p. 52; dating given in Ross' footnotes (p. 149, n. 50).

anonymous thirteenth-century English lyric. Dated to the second half of the thirteenth century by Carleton Brown, the lyric is given the editorial title ‘A Light is Come to the World’. It is found in Trinity College, Cambridge, MS 323, fols 32b-33a, a trilingual ‘miscellany’ to use Brown’s term.⁴⁹ Mary’s heart bleeds as she is forced to see the wounding of her Son:

Ha isei þe rode stonden,
 Hire sone þer-to ibunden
 Hoe wroinc hire honden,
 Bi-heild his suete wunden.
 Þe gyues to him leden
 On him for-to greden
 Asse þat hoe weren wod.
 Hire þucte a miste aweden,
Hire herte bi-gon to bleden,
Teres hoe wep of blod.
 (p. 36, ll. 81-90, emphasis added)

Her heart is so severely wounded that she weeps blood, much like Bernard’s and the *Ancrene Wisse*-author’s Christ whose body weeps both tears and blood. In this image, the boundary separating physical wounding and affective wounding is blurred. Tears are one somatic response to affective suffering, and blood is the sign of physical trauma. But in the realm of Mary’s pain, the two coalesce.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Brown remarks on Trinity College, Cambridge MS 323: ‘The fact that in the pages of this book a considerable number of hands appear and reappear suggests that it was compiled in a religious house, whose members entered in it from time to time material which they wished to preserve for their common use.’ Brown, ed. (1932), p. xx.

⁵⁰ Mary’s near-insanity in this lyric (‘Asse þat hoe weren wod. / Hire þucte a miste aweden’) also finds expression in the Anglo-Norman ‘Les lamentations Nostre Dame’, where Mary longs to commit suicide (p. 192).

The anchoress' own affective wounding is less explicit.⁵¹ No meditator can experience the Mother's Sword of Sorrows; this affective wound is preserved for Her alone. Goscelin affirms the uniqueness of the Mother's experience as the Sword pierces her, merging the voices of Psalm 142:4, Jeremiah 23:9, Lamentations 2:11, and Lamentations 1:12 into one anguished statement by Mary of her unparalleled sorrow (31). As seen in Chapter 2, 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame' also emphasizes the unsurpassable nature of Mary's pain. Aelred does not even suggest that the anchoress should be pierced by a sword of sorrows, only that she should weep in response to the Lady's Sword (671). The uniqueness of Mary's Sword does not entirely deter the Anselmian meditator of 'Oratio ad Christum'. The meditator's agonised spectatorship of Christ's piercing is referred to as an affective wounding, as seen in a passage quoted in Chapter 2:

Cur, o anima mea, te praesentem non transfixit gladius doloris acutissimi,
cum ferre non posses vulnerari lancea latus tui salvatoris?
(7)

But this meditator only imagines her own sword of sorrow, admitting that she has not yet been wounded by it, and lamenting this fact. The meditator engages, instead, in a two-layered viewing, witnessing the butchering of Christ from Mary's anguished viewpoint (8). This passage is uncomfortably voyeuristic, preoccupied as the meditator is with gazing on Mary's beautiful face. But in this viewing of Mary viewing Christ, the meditator attempts, at least in part, to capture Mary's own affective response to the Passion— possibly to come closer to her affective wound.

⁵¹ Furthermore, the anchoress is never shown to receive stigmata, and her heart is never said to be emblazoned with the sign of the Passion, as was Clare of Montefalco's († 1308). See Bynum (1991), p. 187, n. 28; and also Lochrie (1991), p. 13.

In the *Wooing Group* also, the anchoress imagines her own affective wounding by adopting Mary's perspective. The meditator observes the nails being driven into Christ in *Ureisun of God*, seen from the perspective of his Mother: 'þi sune was ituht on rode. þurh driuen fet 7 honden. wið dulte neiles. blodi his side.' (fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 152-153).⁵² The fact that the anchoress attempts to see Christ's wounding through Mary's eyes in this instance in *Ureisun of God* suggests that she is expected to feel closer to the Holy Mother's own Sword of Sorrows. In *Wohunge*, as the anchoress watches Christ's torture, her heart breaks and her eyes flow water: 'Nu min herte mai to breke. min ehne flowen al o water' (fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 489-491). Situated within the pervasive imagery of the breaking and tearing Christ, with blood streaming from his body, the anchoress' affective response is presented as a kind of 'wounding'. Her heart breaks/is wounded—causing, instead of the flow of blood, the flow of tears from her eyes.

Love-Wounds

Like (if also unlike) the Holy Mother who endures the Sword of Sorrows, the anchoress is susceptible to affective wounding in her imaginative participation at Calvary. Both are affectively wounded through love. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author in Part VII cites as an example of immense love the human mother who is willing to offer a salvific 'beað of blod' to save her dying child, as Christ did (149: 156).⁵³ The Mother-Christ's blood is shed from Love and carries the potential for life; hewn from

⁵² The anchoress' cultivation of compassion through the figure of the Virgin Mary in the *Wooing Group* will be studied in the final chapter of this thesis.

⁵³ This is one of a few instances in *Ancrene Wisse* where Christ is likened to a mother. As noted in earlier chapters, in Part IV, the Lord is a Mother playing games with her unknowing child (88: 743-52), and in Part VI, Christ is a Mother shielding sinful humanity from the beating of the angry Father (138: 261-263).

Love, Christ's Wounds are imbued with Love's potency. Throughout *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, the pain suffered by Christ and the anchoress through his Wounds is bound with love, delectable and nurturing. In emphasizing the 'transformative potential' of love across a range of religions, Nancy M. Martin and Joseph Runzo have stressed its anguish and violence:

love at times bewilders and overwhelms the soul, overtaking it in an experience of piercing pain or burning conflagration. St. Teresa of Avila speaks of such love piercing her like 'an arrow... driven into the very depths of the entrails, and sometimes into the heart [...]'.⁵⁴

For the anchoress also, love and pain cannot be disentangled: love is painful, and the way to love is pain. As the author of *Ureisun of God* puts it, no soul can be embraced by Christ in Heaven unless she has first embraced Christ on the Cross. However, whilst Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) may have been pierced by the arrow of Love, our anchoresses are not. Although *Lofsong of ure Louerde* does cite the Song of Songs (2:6/8:3), and both *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge* are infused with the Canticles' imagery of sweetness, Song of Songs 4:9 ('Thou hast wounded my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast wounded my heart [...]') is never directly quoted as a description of the anchoress' affective response in *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*. Though love and pain are melded for the anchoress within Christ's wounds, this *sponsa Christi* language of being wounded in Love not applied to her.

The precise meaning of being 'wounded in Love' in a range of medieval spiritual writings— and the reasons why some texts refer to Love-wounds whilst

⁵⁴ Nancy M. Martin and Joseph Runzo, 'Love', in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. John Corrigan (Oxford, 2008), pp. 310-332 (p. 319). The term 'transformative potential' is Martin and Runzo's (p. 318).

others do not— warrants further attention. Gertrude has an entire chapter entitled ‘De Vulnere Amoris’ (On the Wound of Love), Book II, Chapter 5. She recounts the moment she receives it. In a painting of the crucified Christ in a book (‘depicti in folio’), a ray of sunlight with a sharp point like an arrow (‘in modum sagittae acuatus’) spreads out and then draws back:

[...] et sic per moram durans, affectum meum blande allexit. Sed nec sic quidem satisfactum est desiderio meo usque in feriam quartam dum post Missam a fidelibus recolitur tuae adorandae Incarnationis et Annuntiationis dignatio; cui et ego quamvis minus digne intendebam; et ecce tu aderas velut ex improviseo infigens vulnus cordi meo cum his verbis: <<Hic confluat tumor omnium affectionum tuarum verbi gratia: summa delectationis, spei, gaudii, doloris, timoris, caeterarumque affectionum tuarum stabiliantur in amore meo.>>
(II, 250)

(It continued like this for a while and affected me gently but deeply. But even so my desire was not fully satisfied until the Wednesday when, after Mass, the faithful venerate the mystery of your adorable Incarnation and Annunciation. I too tried to apply myself to this devotion, but less worthily. Suddenly you appeared, inflicting a wound in my heart, and saying: ‘May all the affections of your heart be concentrated here: all pleasure, hope, joy, sorrow, fear, and the rest; may they all be fixed in my love.’)⁵⁵

For Gertrude, the Wound of Love is a higher step in her evolving relationship with Christ; after receiving the Love-Wound, her Love for Christ reaches a greater level of confidence and maturity. Wounded love is less likely to falter, and it also becomes the springboard for her spiritual evolution: the Love-Wound is a focal point of all her affections, a place where she nurtures them all. Through the Wound, she ensures that all the stirrings of her heart are ‘fixed’ in Christ’s love, and are not a disorganised muddle of affections. Goscelin also envisages love-wounding at the core of Eva’s anchoritic existence:

⁵⁵ This translation is from *The Herald of Divine Love*, trans. Margaret Winkworth (NY, 1993), p. 102.

<<Plora coram Domino>>, utque unam tantum petitionem peteres a domino id est, ut solum Christum uulnerata caritate concupisceres, ipsumque solum in directione cordis et in tota anima tua in dotem expeteres[.]
(28)

(‘Weep before the Lord’. That is, only one thing you should desire as petition to the Lord, which is that you may desire Christ alone in wounded love, and him alone you may with the full concentration of your heart and your whole soul wish for as your dowry.)

Like Gertrude, Goscelin understands wounded love as an intense, mature, unending love for Christ, and an impetus for spiritual development. He recognises Eva’s sensitivity to affective response: her heart is ready to feel such soreness of wounded love (‘caritatis uulnerata’), as he does. Her heart, full of the Lord’s arrows (‘plenum sagittis Domini pectus’), is characterized by raw sensitivity (41). He also says that she was wounded in love for those on Earth (42). Aelred, on the other hand, never cites Canticles 4:9 or refers to being ‘wounded’ in love. There is also no reference to this Song of Songs verse in the writings of Julian of Norwich (b. 1343). But she does ask for three wounds near the beginning of her *Revelations*, in both the long and short versions:

[...] I conceived a mighty desire to receive thre woundes in my life: that is to say, the wound of very contrition, the wound of kind compassion, and the wound of wilful longing to God.⁵⁶

Like Aelred, the *Ancrene Wisse*- and *Wooing Group*-authors never refer to Love-Wounds. But love is not devoid of power in the early Middle English texts. In Part

⁵⁶ *The Writings of Julian of Norwich: A Vision Showed to a Devout Woman and A Revelation of Love*, ed. Nicholas Watson and Jacqueline Jenkins (University Park, PA, 2006), p. 129; see also p. 65; all subsequent references are to this edition.

VII of *Ancrene Wisse*, love has the power to subsume every entity into itself and make it its own, in a passage based on Deuteronomy 11:24:

Luue haueð a meistrie biuoren alle opre, for al þet ha rineð, al ha turned to hire ant makeð al hire ahne. *Quemcumque locum calcauerit pes uester—pes uidelicet amoris—uester erit.* [*Whichever place your foot treads on—that is to say, the foot of love—will be yours.*] [...] Stretche þi luue to Iesu Crist, þu hauest him iwunnen. Rin him wið ase muche luue as þu hauest sum mon sumchearre, he is þin to don wið al þet tu wilnest. (153: 325-335)

Focused on this all-powerful love, Part VII reveals the many actions of love within the heart. Love ‘schireð’ and ‘brihteð’ the heart; the anchoress can ‘tilie’ love in her heart; love bestows the heart with ‘briht sihðe’ (145: 3, 14-15, 20); the anchoress can ‘ontenden’ love within her heart, repeated in an extensive passage which likens God’s Love to Greek Fire (151: 232, 249ff); and despite all this tumult, love can even make the heart ‘griðful’ and ‘cleane’ (153: 325). The anchoress’ love can do all this— and yet, it is never said to wound.

Perhaps Love-Wounds are too closely aligned for these early Middle English writers with visionary experience, of which the *Ancrene Wisse*-author is deeply suspicious (IV, 86: 660-661). A reference to being ‘wounded in Love’ seems out of place in the consciously moderate, tempered devotion they seek to cultivate in the anchoress. She is nevertheless encouraged to seek out Christ’s own wounds. In her affective engagement with Christ’s wounds, the anchoress propels herself imaginatively towards them. She enters into these areas of love, and once inside or nearly inside, nurtures her own powerful affection for her Spouse. After the *Ancrene Wisse*-author galvanises the anchoress to banish the flea-bitten ‘helle-dogge’ (110:

1614) in Part IV, Christ's wounds are invoked as protective alcoves in which she can hide. The author encourages the anchoress to fly to the wounds as she continues her offensive against that 'dogge-deouel':

Nempne ofte Iesu; cleope his passiunes help; halse bi his pine, bi his
deorewurðe blod, bi his deað o rode; flih to his wunden.
(111: 1627-1629)

Christ's broken body is imaged as a landscape offering protection from a harsh external environment. It is cultivated with wounds born from love:

Muchel he luuede us þe lette makien swucche þurles in him forte huden us in.
Creop in ham wið þi þoht—ne beoð ha al opene?—ant wið his deorewurðe
blod biblod[g]e þin heorte.
(111: 1629-1631)

The homilist of Trinity 31 images a fivefold penance ('fif-folde pine') as an entrance into Christ's Five Wounds. The sinner who has denounced her or his sins 'cumeð to þe stone þe haeð fif hole narewe þat is ure helende crist þe þolede his holie fif wunden for us'. Into these protective spaces, the penitent 'arueðliche crepeð' (p. 201). The Trinity-homilist uses the same verb as the *Ancrene Wisse*-author, of 'creeping' into Christ's Wounds. Whilst suggesting the penitent's weakness, this verb also emphasizes the boundless protection of the wounds. The anchoress harnesses her 'þoht' as she enters these spaces, a noun underscoring her affective engagement with the Wounds. With her 'thought', she 'bloodies' herself with Christ's blood. Though it has been translated as 'drench', the verb 'biblodge' can more literally be translated as 'bloody'.⁵⁷ Placed directly after the 'blod' of Christ, this verb appears to explicitly

⁵⁷ Millett, trans. (2009), p. 111.

merge the anchoress with Christ in the arena of his Wounds; she becomes bloodied by her blood-immersed Lover.⁵⁸ Unlike the speaker in the thirteenth-century *Stimulus amoris*, noted in Chapter 2, Christ's betrothed is not blinded by the blood pouring from the Wounded Heart, but she is united bloodily with her Lover in this space.

This image of Christ's Wounds— especially his Wounded Side— as indestructible refuges 'al opene' for the anchoress finds its source in Canticles 2:14: 'My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow places of the wall'. *Ancrene Wisse* employs this well-known image in the post-Bernardine sense of Christ's Wound, in lieu of Origen's general 'rock of Christ'.⁵⁹ In his sixty-first sermon of the *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, Bernard describes the protection and nurturance of Christ's Wounds, invoking Psalm 83:4:

In his passer invenit sibi domum, et turtur nidum ubi reponat pullos suos; in his se columba tutatur, et circumvolitantem intrepida intuetur accipitrem.
(II, 149)

(Within them the sparrow finds a home, and the turtle-dove a nest where she may rest her chicks; in them the dove is protected, and fearlessly observes the circling hawk.)

Canticles 2:14 is also appropriated to this effect by Aelred (671). Isaiah 2:10 is used in *Ancrene Wisse* to illustrate the protection offered by Christ's wounded body, immediately following the 'bloodying' of the anchoress' heart:

⁵⁸ Instances cited in the *MED* of the verb 'biblodge' are all from the *Ancrene Wisse* Group [accessed 14th October 2011].

⁵⁹ See E. Ann Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1990), p. 137.

Ingrederere in petram, abscondere fossa humo. [Enter in the rock, hide in the buried trench.] ‘Ga into þe stan,’ seið þe prophete, ‘ant hud te i þe doluen eorðe’, þet is, i þe wunden of ure Lauertes flesch [...]. (111: 1631-1634)⁶⁰

From the basis of Psalm 21:17, the author delineates the spatial dimensions of the Wounds. Through this Psalm, he emphasizes two key aspects of the wounds: their nature as habitable spaces, and the agony that Christ suffers in them. The painful process of wounding is made worse through the verb *duluen*:

Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos [They dug my hands and my feet], þet is, ‘Ha duluen me baðe þe vet ant te honden.’ Ne seide he nawt ‘þurleden’; for efter þis leattre, as ure meistres seggeð, swa weren þe neiles dulle þet ha duluen his flesch ant tobreken þe ban mare þen þurleden, to pinin him sarre. (111: 1635-1639).⁶¹

Based on both Isaiah 2:10 and Psalm 21:17, Christ’s agony and the anchoress’ protection within these wounds become inextricably joined. He suffers greater pain— with the holes *duluen* (dug) rather than *þurleden* (pierced) in his body— for the anchoress’ sake. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author quotes and translates Canticles 2:14, informing the anchoress that Christ ‘calls’ her to these wounds, in an apparent invocation of Canticles 1:3:⁶²

⁶⁰ As Millett notes, Isaiah 2:10 and Psalm 21:17 are also connected in Bernard’s sixty-second sermon of his *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* in the context of Christ’s wounds. See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 197/4 1631-2. For the source-text, see *Bernardi Opera*, II, 159.

⁶¹ Millett notes that Dobson (1976) draws a parallel with a Lombardian gloss: ‘However, both Peter Lombard and Bernard of Clairvaux [...] interpret *foderunt* allegorically; the literal interpretation here is not part of the standard exegetical tradition, and may, as the following clause suggests [i.e. ‘as ure meistres seggeð’], have been derived from the oral teaching of the schools rather than a written source.’ Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 197: 4/1636-1639. The author’s literal interpretation of Psalm 21:17 emphasizes the spaciousness of his wounds.

⁶² In Thomas of Cantimpré’s *Vita* of the Benedictine/Cistercian Lutgarde of Aywières (c. 1182-1246), included here as an analogue, Lutgarde hears Christ’s wounds calling to her and draws near to drink in their sweetness (*AASS*, III June 16, 239E, 244F).

He him seolf cleopeð þe toward teose wunden. *Columba mea, in foraminibus petre, in cauernis macerie* [*My dove, in the cleft of the rock, in the hollows of the wall*]: ‘Mi culure,’ he seið, ‘cum hud te i mine limen þurles, i þe hole of mi side.’
(111: 1639-1642)

The love contained in these speaking sites of pain is clear: ‘Muche luue he cudde to his leoue culure, þet he swuch hudles madeð’ (111: 1642-1643). Like Bernard’s sparrow and turtle dove, the dove- anchoress envelopes herself in the protective and love-generated space of the Wounds, alcoves in which she can enable her spiritual evolution.

The Side Wound as a gateway to Christ’s Heart— that richest of spiritual arenas— is seen in *Wohunge* with Longinus’ violence: ‘he þurles his side cleues tat herte [...]’ (fol. 132ra; p. 34-35, ll. 542-543).⁶³ In the vocabulary of Christ’s wounded body in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, His agony and His self-disclosure become inseparable.⁶⁴ As seen in Chapter 2, the Wounded Heart becomes a space for

Unlike Lutgarde and, over a century later, Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), the anchoress reading *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* does not drink from the Wound. But given that she is implored to ‘biblod[g]e’ her heart with Christ’s blood, she receives the moisture’s nurturance by other means (111: 1631).

⁶³ Gougoud (1925) quotes this passage from *Wohunge* to demonstrate ‘que la mystique de la plaie du côté, et même quelque connaissance des amoureux mystères du Coeur étaient devenues familières aux contemplatifs longtemps avant le complet épanouissement de la dévotion aux cinq plaies.’ (p. 106) (that the mysticism of the Side Wound, and even some knowledge of the love mysteries of the heart had become familiar to contemplatives a long time before the complete fulfilment of the devotion to the five wounds.) As noted in Chapter 2, caution is needed when applying the label of ‘mysticism’ to this passage.

⁶⁴ This coupling of agony and self-disclosure within the vocabulary of Christ’s wounded body is evident in texts throughout the Middle Ages. See, for example, the message of ‘liues luue’ in *Sawles Warde*: ‘ich iseh etscene þe studen of his wunden. 7 hu he schaweð ham his feader to cuðen hu he luuede us’ (p. 28, ll. 256-258). In Chapter 75 of Catherine of Siena’s *Dialogue*, Christ informs Catherine that it was necessary for his heart to be wounded since he could not fully reveal his love without

reading ‘luue lettres’ in *Wohunge*, revealing to the anchoress the extent of Christ’s love. And in the parallel image in Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse*, after telling the cold-hearted maiden that he is prepared to receive gladly ‘deaðes wunde’ for her love (147: 87-88), the lover-knight opens the shield of his body to display the love in his heart (148: 125-127).⁶⁵ In both images of the Wounded Heart, love and woundedness become intertwined: the point of Christ’s most extreme wounding is also the site where the most profound mysteries of his Love can be sought. A parallel can be drawn with a passage in Bonaventure’s *Vitis Mystica*. Given that Bonaventure lived slightly later than the assumed compositional date of the *Ancrene Wisse* Group, he is not treated as a source here, but as an important indication of the broad climate of affective devotion to the Wounded Side and Heart.⁶⁶ Three reasons are given for the wounding of Christ’s side: access to Christ, the formation of a protective space of habitation, and finally and most crucially, the ability to perceive beyond the visible wound, what Bonaventure calls the ‘invisible wound of love’. Lover and Beloved are united in a vocabulary of woundedness, not unlike the Lover who is bloody and the Beloved who is bloodied in *Ancrene Wisse*:

Quis illud cor tam vulneratum non diligit? Quis tam amantem non redamet?
 Quis tam castum non amplexetur? Diligit profector vulneratum quae mutuo

this wound: *The Dialogue*, trans. Suzanne Noffke (NY, 1980), p. 138. See also Gougaud (1925), p. 95.

⁶⁵ As already discussed in Chapter 2, though in *Wohunge* the anchoress is granted a higher degree of access than in the image in *Ancrene Wisse*, in neither case is full access to Christ’s Heart given to her.

⁶⁶ Bonaventure has only been accepted as the author of the *Vitis Mystica* since the early twentieth century. As Gougaud (1925) notes, passages from the *Vitis Mystica* entered the celebration of the Sacred Heart in the nineteenth century and were presumed to have been composed by Bernard of Clairvaux (p. 98). An 1889 translator of the *Vitis Mystica* remarks: ‘The name of the pious author of the Treatise here translated is unknown. His work has sometimes been printed with those of Bernard of Clairvaux. But it is evident to anyone who has only a moderate acquaintance with the style of that Saint, that the present Tract is from some other pen.’ *The Mystic Vine (Vitis Mystica)*, trans. Samuel John Eales (London, 1889), p. iii.

illius amore vulnerata clamat: *Vulnerata caritate ego sum*. Redamat Sponsum amantem quae dicit: *Nuntiate dilecto, quia amore languedo*. Nos igitur adhuc in carne manentes, quantum possumus, amantem redamemus; amplectamur vulneratum nostrum, cuius impii agricolae *foderunt manus et pedes*, latus et cor; oremusque, ut cor nostrum adhuc durum et impenitens amoris sui vinculo constringere et iaculo vulnerare dignetur.⁶⁷

(Who would not love a heart so wounded? Who could forbear to respond to a heart so loving? Who would not embrace a heart so chaste? The lover thus wounded can only accept as true a love that proceeds from one who is herself wounded by love, who can cry *I am wounded with love*. The loving Bridegroom accepts a return of love from one who says, *Tell my beloved that I languish for love*. So we who are yet carnal must give back as much love as we can to our Lover. We will embrace our wounded Bridegroom, whose feet and hands, as also his side and heart, have been dug into by those wicked husbandmen. Let us pray that our hearts, still so hard and impenitent, may be found worthy to be bound by the chain of his love, and to be wounded by his spear.)⁶⁸

For Bonaventure, woundedness and true love are indistinguishable. Prior to the contemplative's wounding by the spear, she or he has not gained entrance into the intricacies of Christ's Heart. Christ is unable to love an un-wounded self— and vice-versa—, since His nature is defined by His wounds: 'Diligit profector vulneratum quae mutuo illius amore vulnerata clamat: *Vulnerata caritate ego sum*'. Notably, the anchoress who enters Christ's Heart in *Wohunge* does not aim for such woundedness: her nature is perhaps, as Bonaventure would suggest, 'adhuc in carne'. She briefly glimpses the love letters inscribed within Christ's Heart, and envisages the potential to decipher these love epistles, but she is never said to receive a Love-Wound. Slightly later, she hangs with Christ on the Cross, looking forward to being crucified within her enclosure (fol. 132va; p. 36, ll. 590-5). Nailed/wounded bodily on the Cross with Christ, she nevertheless remains un-wounded in Love.

⁶⁷ *Vitis Mystica*, in *S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia*, 10 Vols, ed. A. Lauer, PP. Collegii a S. Bonaventura, VIII (Quaracchi, Florence, 1898), 164-165.

⁶⁸ This translation is from *The Mystical Vine: A Treatise on the Passion of our Lord* by S. Bonaventure, trans. a friar of S. S. F (London, 1955), pp. 21-22.

II. Sin-Wounds and Penitential Wounding

Christ's Wounds to Sinner's Wounds

Although she is not wounded in Love in these texts, the anchoress is indubitably wounded in sin. Far from unique to these anchoritic texts, this imagery of sin-wounds is nurtured by the Fourth Lateran of 1215. The mandatory confession laid down in Canon 21 is expressed through a simile/metaphor of wounding and surgical healing:

Sacerdos autem sit discretus et cautus, ut more periti medici superinfundat vinum et oleum vulneribus sauciati, diligenter inquirens et peccatoris circumstantias et peccati, per quas prudenter intelligat, quale illi consilium debeat exhibere et cuiusmodi remedium adhibere, diversis experimentis utendo ad sanandum aegrotum.⁶⁹

(The priest shall be discreet and cautious, so that like a doctor he may pour wine and oil on the wounds of the wounded one. Let him diligently inquire about the circumstances of both the sinner and the sin, so that he may prudently discern what sort of council he must give and what remedy to apply, using diverse experiments to heal the diseased person.)

This medicinal discourse for sin and confession, bolstered though by no means invented by Canon 21, also permeates the Lambeth and Trinity homilies. In Lambeth 3, the preacher uses a language of wounds to warn that the brevity of sin is not indicative of its harmlessness: ‘On enelpi luttele hwile mon mei underfon ane wunde on his licome þet ne mei beon longe hwile hal’ (p. 29). When clarifying the need for confession to be complete, the preacher in Lambeth 2 questions: ‘Hu mei þe leche þe lechnien þa hwile þet iren sticat in þine wunde?’ (p. 23). The apparently incomplete

⁶⁹ ‘Concilium Lateranense IV 1215’, in Giuseppe, ed. (1962), p. 221. Pre-1215 penitential or theological texts also contain images of sin-wounds and priest-doctors, as does Hugh of Saint-Victor’s *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*. As Hugh states, ‘Peccata sunt quasi vulnera’ (Sins are like wounds): *PL* clxxvi, 1150C. But it is an imagery given impetus by the Fourth Lateran of 1215.

sermon Trinity 10 opens by paralleling the domain of physical medicine with spiritual healing (p. 57).⁷⁰ Sins as wounds and illnesses, cured by soul-physicians, also form the principal theme of Trinity 13. In this sermon, the sickness of the soul and the priest as a soul-doctor are clarified in the Lenten context (pp. 77-79). In Lambeth 8, Adam and all his progeny are wounded with the ‘spere’ of the seven cardinal sins. Adam is ‘ilechned þurh god almihti solf’, whereas contemporary sinners, the preacher says, must be healed ‘þurh prestes muð’ (p. 83). The ‘smertinge’ of wine causes the wound to be cleansed, imaging confession as a painful process (p. 83). In Trinity 6, the devil is described as inflicting wounds on Adam; the first man is ‘wounded’ in all five organs as he takes and consumes the forbidden fruit:

Þe wundes þat hie on him makeden ben þe manifeald synnes þe hie on him brohten þo þe hie openeden hi[s] earen to luste þe defles lore and his eien to bihealden þe forbodene appel and hef his honde hit to nimen and mid þe nose þarto te smullen and mid his muð þarof et.
(pp. 33-35)

Christ comes to Earth so that he may heal the burdened sinner of his or her ‘synwunden’, a term occurring twice in this sermon (pp. 35, 41). This is a crucial compound word of Old English origin.⁷¹ By it, sin is no longer simply likened to a wound, whether by metaphor, metonymy, or simile; sin becomes a wound.

⁷⁰ See Morris, ed. (1873), p. 57.

⁷¹ This compound word occurs in the Old English *Christ II* and in a late Old English confessor’s handbook. *Christ II* expands on the sin-wound metaphor: *The Exeter Book*, ed. George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, III (NY, 1936), 24: 756-757; for the full development of the sin-wound image, see ll. 756-771a. See also Roger Fowler, ‘A Late Old English Handbook For the Use of a Confessor’, *Anglia*, lxxxiii (1965), 1-34 (27: 319).

Indeed, wounds are not arbitrary signifiers of sin. Contained within the ‘sin-wound’ image is a range of conceptual metaphors, in turn revealing the cognitive processes behind the image: sin is an injury, sin is something actively inflicted on the self, and sin is treatable. In the ‘sin-wound’ image, sin is a painful, life-threatening and aggressive illness, yet also an ailment that can be remedied. Moreover, as Jeremy J. Citrome remarks, the image of sin-wounds did have a basis in medieval interpretations of physiology. For a medieval patient, ‘wounds and other signs of illness are not merely metaphors for spiritual corruption, but they are the material substance of sin manifest upon the flesh’.⁷² As he rightly notes, the confessor ‘encourages the internalization of a pained and wounded self-image’.⁷³ In employing the sin-wound image, the texts encourage the anchoress to develop a ‘wounded self-image’ when conceptualising her sins. She is meant to feel the pain of her sin-wounds, and to regard these sin-wounds with the same urgency as wounds suffered on her flesh.

In the anchoritic texts, there is a connection between Christ’s woundedness and the anchoress wounded in sin. Karma Lochrie has said of Part II of *Ancrene*

Wisse:

Christ’s wounds, far from signifying the perviousness of the female body, serve to remind women of the need to dam up their own vulnerable bodies. Instead of glorifying the feminine, imitation of Christ forces the recluse to internalize the association of the feminine with the breached flesh. The sealed body finds its spiritual complement in seclusion and silence.⁷⁴

⁷² Jeremy J. Citrome, *The Surgeon in Medieval English Literature* (NY, 2006), p. 7.

⁷³ Citrome (2006), p. 17.

⁷⁴ Lochrie (1991), pp. 23-27, 26.

But as Jocelyn Wogan-Browne rightly asserts in response to Lochrie's work, there is no consistent gap between the anchoress' permeable body and 'the exudings and openings' of Christ's. She cites in particular the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's connection of Christ's bleeding on the Cross to the anchoress' bloodletting, partly quoted earlier in this chapter:⁷⁵

Opre habbeð reste, fleoð liht, i chambre hudeð ham hwen ha beoð ilete blod
on an earm-eðre; ant he, o Munt Caluaire, steah 3et o rode herre, ne ne swong
neauer mon se swiðe ne se sare as he dude þet ilke dei þet he bledde o fif half
brokes of ful brade wunden ant deope [...].
(98: 1146-1150)

Wogan-Browne's case for connection is fundamental. In both *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, there is a transactional mapping from one wounded body to the other: Christ's wounds heal the anchoress' sin-wounds.

In Part I of *Ancrene Wisse*, Christ's five wounds are said to cleanse the 'blodi sawle' of all the sins with which it is 'iwundet' (11: 152-153). In *Ureisun of God*, Christ's lesions harbour the indispensable healing balm. The meditator also observes 'þe large broc' flowing down his 'softe side' (fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 98-99). By emphasising Christ's softness, the speaker draws attention not only to Christ's woundedness, but also to the ease with which he can be wounded. As in Part II of *Ancrene Wisse*, he suffers wounds due to the raw tactility and sensitivity inherent in

⁷⁵ Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, 'Chaste Bodies: Frames and Experiences', in *Framing Medieval Bodies*, ed. Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin (Manchester, 1994), pp. 24- 42 (p. 30). This thesis does not adhere to the argument that the anchoress straightforwardly maps Christ's bleeding onto her own menstrual bleeding. For the counter-argument, see, for example, Kristen McQuinn, "'Crepe into that blessed syde': Enclosure Imagery in Aelred of Rievaulx's *De Institutione Inclusarum*", in *Anchorites, Wombs and Tombs*, ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy and Mari Hughes Edwards (Cardiff, 2005), especially p. 99.

his flesh and soul. From his tender side, the brook of blood becomes an infallible healing liquid:

nes hit forto waschen sunifule soulen? nes hit forto saluen seke ine sunnen?
 hwoa is þeonne unweaschen. þet aueð þis halwende wet inwið his heorte?
 hwoa þerf beon unsalued . þet haueð so mihti salue. ase ofte ase he þerto
 haueð treoue bileue?
 (fols 125r-125v; pp. 7-8, ll. 100-102)

God is referred to as the anchoress' 'heouenliche leche', even transforming himself into a form of medicine ('makedest us of þi seolf so mihti medicine' (fol. 125v; p. 8, ll. 106-107)).⁷⁶ It is a medicine of the highest potency, for 'a drope of þine deorewurðe blode. muh te waschen awei alle folkes fulðe.' (fol. 125v; p. 8, ll. 111-112). From this crowd of people, the anchoress emerges to reveal the transactional wounding from Christ to her permeable body:

þeoilke fif wellen of þine blisfule bodie sprungen 7 striken dun strundes of
 blode. weasch mine fif wittes; of alle blodie sunnen. of al þet ich habbe
 misiseien mid eien 7 mid min earen iherd. wið muðe ispeken. oðer ismauht 7
 wið noese ismelled . wið eni lim mis iueld. 7 wið fleschs isuneged.
 (fol. 125v; p. 8, ll. 113-119)

The wounds of Christ's body, the source of a medicinal balm, are mapped onto the anchoress' body, appallingly burdened with sins. Christ's wounds are directly and unambiguously transferred onto the wounded soul: 'þine wunden helen þe wunden of mine soule' (fol. 125v; p. 8, ll. 119-20).

⁷⁶ The Virgin Mary is also credited with healing powers in the *Wooing Group*: Mary is the 'leche' in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* (fol. 126v; p. 16, l. 15), and in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, the speaker implores Mary to heal his wounds (p. 6, l. 124), though he also makes mention of Christ's precious blood in the fleeting image of the Crucifixion (p. 5, ll. 87-88).

Several of these images also occur in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*. In the incantatory opening, Christ's 'iblescede blode' is one of the images by which the meditator pleads (fol. 128v; p. 10, ll. 25-26), stressing the medicinal value of Christ's wounds:

[as]e a drope of þine deorewurðe blode þet tu o rode scheddest were inouh to weaschen alle folkes fulðe. þeo sterke stremes 7 þet flod þet fleaw of þine wunden. moncun uor to helen; clense 7 weasch mine sunfule soule þuruh þine fif wunden iopened o rode . wið neiled uor driuene 7 seoruhfulliche forduhte. hel me uor-wunded þuruh mine fif wittes wið deadliche sunnen. 7 opene ham heouenliche king touward heouenliche þinges.
(fol. 129r; p. 11, ll. 43-53)

Christ's 'eadie flod' (fol. 128r; p. 10, l. 10) of blood is directly placed on the sin-wounds of the anchoress in a process of healing: 'þeo sterke stremes 7 þet flod þet fleaw of þine wunden. moncun uor to helen'. The meditator implores Christ to cleanse her soul through his five wounds 'iopened o rode', to heal she who is 'uor-wunded þuruh mine fif wittes wið deadliche sunnen'. Through the opening of the wounds on the Cross, the dangerous openings of the senses/organs are instead opened to 'heouenliche þinges'.⁷⁷ Christ's blood is never presented as a form of food or sustenance in the *Wooing Group* or *Ancrene Wisse*, as it is, for instance, for the later Catherine of Siena (1347-1380). Once Catherine had drunk from the blood of the

⁷⁷ Christ's blood is also connected to the anchoress' body/soul in the common language of monetary value; Christ buys souls through his bloodshed. It is a language of accountancy evident in Part IV of *Ancrene Wisse*: '[...] þi sawle, Godes deore bune, þet he bohte mid his blod [...]' (110: 1618-1619). This is comparable with the statement in *Wohunge*, 'A swete iesu mi liues luue wið þi blod þu haues me boht' (p. 35, ll. 577-579). In this typical analogy, however, there is no connection of two wounded bodies.

Wounded Side, she no longer felt any hunger.⁷⁸ In the *Wooing Group* and *Ancrene Wisse*, however, the emphasis is on Christ's body as the source of healing liquid, rather than nourishment.

Aggression and Agency

Christ's Wounds are mapped onto the sinner's wounds in a process of healing. But the sin-wounds hacked into the anchoress' body are not easy to heal. The aggression inherent in this imagery is partly fuelled by contemporary understanding of bodily wounds. In Part IV, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author proclaims that a God-sent sickness heals the wounds of sin: 'Þus is secnesse sawlene heale, salue of hire wunden, scheld þet ha ne kecche ma, as Godd sið þet ha schulde 3ef secnesse hit ne lette' (69: 68-70). This concept of infection as a shield against a graver sickness resonates with modern medical understanding of inoculation. However, it is unlikely that medical theory is influencing the *Ancrene Wisse*-author here. The earliest kind of inoculation— called variolation— came to Britain from Asia in 1717-1721.⁷⁹ For the *Ancrene Wisse*-author, bodily sickness becomes a shield to prevent sin-wounds, infinitely more perilous than any physical ailment.

⁷⁸ See Rudolph M. Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago, 1985), p. 25; and Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: the Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, 1987), pp. 177-179. In the *Liber de Vere Fidelium Experientia*, Angelina of Foligno (1248-1309) enjoys the same drink (*Medieval Women's Visionary Literature*, trans. Elizabeth Alvilda Petroff (NY, 1986), p. 257). This is not to suggest it is a particularly Italian phenomenon: as seen in Chapter 2, Aelred also encourages the anchoress to imagine herself consuming Christ's blood (671). Ross (1997) explores Christ's blood as nourishment in later medieval visual cultures (p. 50).

⁷⁹ Variolation came via Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the wife of the British ambassador in Constantinople. Cited from the US National Library of Medicine, 'Smallpox: A Great and Terrible Scourge' (Online): http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/smallpox/sp_variolation.html [accessed 16th October 2011].

As Part IV progresses, the author formulates a taxonomy of sin-woundedness. He differentiates bodily and spiritual temptations/sins as a ‘fot-wunde’ and ‘breost-wunde’ respectively (74: 204-206). This conveys not only the greater danger in the latter— its ‘peril’ as the author says (74: 205)—, but also its increased pain. The taxonomy is later expanded:

Prude ant onde ant wreaððe, heorte sar for worltlich þing, dreori of longunge,
ant 3isceunge of ahte—þeose beoð heorte wunden, ant al þet of ham floweð,
ant 3eoueð deaðes dunt anan buten ha beon isaluet.
(104-105: 1398-1402)

The author has moved from breast-wounds to ‘heorte wunden’, inching closer to the point of fatality. It is also in Part IV that the author investigates the possibility of rotting or infecting wounds, based on the well-known third penitential Psalm, 37:6:⁸⁰

Putruerunt, et cetera [*They rot, etc*]. ‘Weilawei! mine wunden, þe weren feire
ihealet, gederið neowe wursum, ant foð on eft to rotien.’
(104: 1373-1374)

Whilst carnal temptation is imaged as the enemy hurting the anchoress ‘o þe vet’, there is still the risk of inflammation ‘up toward te heorte’ (104: 1392-1394), due to renewed sin (104: 1368-75) and failure to confess (V, 124: 373-374). This image reminds the anchoress that a bodily wound is not simply a passive mark, a sign of pain already inflicted and passed. A wound can be infected and thus harbour further danger in itself. Virtues potentially protect the self from being ‘i-wundet’, a protection

⁸⁰ Psalm 37 brims with imagery of wounds and woundedness. See also verse 3 (‘For thy arrows are fastened in me’), and verse 18 (‘For I am ready for scourges’).

that can be shunned at the risk of the sinner: ‘Þe his wepnen warpeð awei, him luste beon iwundet’ (91: 873-874).

As is clear in this statement, the sinner’s agency is essential both to sin and to its remedy. All sin is harmless without the agency of the sinning self, as studied in Chapter 1. Just as the sinner wounds herself in sin, so she must harness the agency of confession to reveal the wounds. The emphasis on the revelation of sin-wounds during confessional procedures is particularly strong in Part V of *Ancrene Wisse*, as would be expected. The second dimension to the Lateran image— the priest-doctor— is invoked in the condition of confession as ‘ihal’. The confessant who does not disclose all her sins places herself in mortal peril, becoming ‘ilich þe mon þe haueð on him monie deadliche wunden, ant schaweð þe leche alle ant let healen buten an, þet he deieð upon as he schulde on alle’ (119: 220-222). The Pharisee is presented as the epitome of an unsuccessful confessant, due to his failure to reveal ‘hise wunden’ (124: 409-411).

The speaker in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* draws attention to the wounds of sin being ‘fastened’ onto her, an image with no obvious epistemology: ‘[...] luðre men and deoflen. heo habbeð monie wunden on me ifestned; þet acwelleð mine soule’ (fol. 126v; p. 16, ll. 12-14). This unusual use of the verb ‘ifestned’ seems to show a sinner lacking in agency. She is wounded by her inattentiveness rather than her active creation of sin in her soul. But the sinner’s agency in wounding herself is not entirely absent from this meditation, as seen in the passage quoted in Chapter 2:

‘[...] flesches fulðe ifuled me. þus ich am lodliche ihurt ine licame. 7 ine soule; wið alles cunnes sunnen. for þauh þet werc nere in þe bodie; þe wil was in þe heorte’ (fol.

127r; p. 17, ll. 30-4). The will that exists in the heart, urging the meditator on to forbidden thought or deed, plummets her into mortal sin. This erases any possibility of a passive ‘fastening’; the anchoress’ own will causes her sin-wounds. The reference to being hurt ‘in body and in soul’ alludes to bodily and spiritual sins, both committed by the workings of the will. The centrality of her will in turn underscores the need for agency in the counter route of confession; the anchoritic speaker immediately affirms to the Virgin Mary, ‘þis ich i *cnouelechie*’ (fol. 127r; p. 17, l. 34, emphasis added).⁸¹ In the confessional passage of *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, the anchoress admits that she has enabled her five senses— those gateways of iniquity— to facilitate her wounding. Sins have wounded her: ‘prude 7 wilnunge of pris; me habbeð sore iwunded’ (fol. 126v; p. 16, ll. 21-22). It is a wounding with particular reference to the pain of sin; she is ‘*sore iwunded*’ (emphasis added). Aggressive sin-wounds are pervasive in these texts. The penitential procedures which abolish sin, examined in Chapter 1, are also depicted as a ‘wounding’.

The anchoress’ Penitence

As noted in Chapter 1, despite the *Ancrene Wisse*-author’s imagery in Part VI of ‘tearing’ the self, self-mutilation without clerical approval is expressly prohibited in Part VIII, particularly in its revised version:

Nest lich nan ne gurde hire wið na cunne gurdles bute þurh schriftes leaue, ne beore nan irn ne here ne ilespiles felles, ne ne beate here þer-wið, ne wið scurge ileadet, wið holin ne wið breres, ne biblodgi hire seolf, wiðute schriftes

⁸¹ The incomplete version of *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *Her cumseð Þe Oreisun of Seinte Marie*, includes words that intensify the pain of sin: ‘pinen of sunnen sor’ (p. 19, l. 23). Despite such intensification, the full version in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* offers a more focused locus of pain to stimulate the anchoress to confession: ‘ihurt ine licame 7 ine soule’.

leae. Nohwer ne binetli hire, ne ne beate biuoren, ne na keoruunge ne keorue,
ne ne neome ed eanes to luðere disceplines, temptatiuns forte acwenchen [...].
(158: 121-127)

The author detracts from actual physical wounding in order to avoid over-exuberant self-mortification. Yet this does not stop him from reaching to wound-images to describe the potency of the anchoress' penitence. In Part III, confession is figured as a kind of wounding with the image of the 'wreaðful' pelican. After slaying its 'ahne briddes', the pelican is so overcome by remorse that it resorts to wounding itself, 'ant draheð blod of his breoste, ant wið þet blod acwikeð eft his briddes isleine' (48: 7-11).

Like the enraged pelican, the anchoress must 'wið hire ahne bile beaki hire breoste':

þet is, wið schrift of hire muð þet ha sunegede wið, ant sloh hire gode werkes,
drahe þet blod of sunne ut of hire breoste, þet is, of þe heorte, þet sawle lif is
inne; ant swa schulen eft acwikien hire isleine briddes, þet beoð hire gode
werkes. Blod bitacneð sunne; for alswa as a mon bibles is grislich ant eatelich
i monnes ehe, alswa is þe sunfule biuore Godes ehe. On oðer half, na mon ne
mei iuggi wel blod ear hit beo icolet. Alswa is of sunne.
(48: 14-21)

Wounding herself in confession, the anchoress heals herself by removing the blood of sin. Through its unattractiveness and its heat, blood is associated with sin and death, set against Christ's blood, defined by its curative and resuscitative powers.⁸²

⁸² As stated earlier, this thesis does not suggest that the anchoress maps Christ's bleeding onto her own menstrual bleeding. However, this association of blood with sin and death in Part III may have some connection with medieval attitudes to menstrual blood. Menstrual blood was considered a lack of cleanliness, but not a sin. On this point, see Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 174. Moreover, menstrual blood was feared as a deadly substance. Lotario dei Segni accused menstrual blood of destroying plants and crops, and cited the Mosaic Law by which close contact with a menstrual woman must result in execution. See Lotario dei Segni, *De miseria condicionis humane*, ed. and trans. Robert E. Lewis (Athens, 1978), pp. 100-101. Later, anxiety about the morbid potential of menstruating women is evoked in *De secretis mulierum*, incorrectly

The imagistic wounding is also used to express penitence more broadly, beyond spoken confession. As studied in Chapter 1, the imagery of ‘tearing’ in Part VI of *Ancrene Wisse* pertains both to rigorous bodily discipline and the affection of shame. The anchoress does not literally ‘tear’ herself, but metaphorically tears her soul with shame and ‘tears’ her body through fasting, vigils, and other self-mortification. Within the wider imagery of the ‘totoren folc’, the author forms an image of ‘þornes’ of hardships. These thorns cradle the promise of wholesome, penitential ‘wounds’ on the anchoress. It is a wounding that protects her from the devil’s schemes: ‘þet te beast of helle, hwen he snakereð toward ow forte biten on ow, hurte him o þe scharpschipe ant schunche a3einwardes’ (143: 436-440). Although the anchoress is among those torn people ripped apart by penitence, the thorns actually face the attacking devil. The thorns’ reversal of direction here adds to their functionality, forming, as Wogan-Browne says, ‘a protective girdle turned *outwards* [...]’.⁸³ The thorn-wounds of penitence are thus not only a form of protection, but also a form of weaponry. And the anchoress does not passively withdraw into a pre-prepared space. Both Wogan-Browne and Lochrie have spotlighted the concept of ‘sealing’ as male control of the dangerous excretions and entrances in the female’s porous bodily spaces.⁸⁴ The anchorhold itself has been reinterpreted as a representation of the undamaged hymen of the virginal body, sealed or ‘opened’ as

attributed to Albert Magnus. See Commentary A, *Albertus Magnus de secretis mulierum: item de virtutibus herbarum lapidum et animalium* (Amsterdam, 1655), p. 4.

⁸³ Jocelyn Price ‘“Inner” and “Outer”: Conceptualising the Body in *Ancrene Wisse* and Aelred’s *De Institutione Inclusarum*’, in *Medieval English Religious and Ethical Literature: Essays in Honour of G. H. Russell*, ed. G. Kratzmann and J. Simpson (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 192-208 (p. 205), emphasis added.

⁸⁴ Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, ‘The Virgin’s Tale’, in *Feminist Readings in Middle English Literature: the Wife of Bath and All Her Sect*, ed. Ruth Evans and Lesley Johnson (London, 1994), pp. 165-194 (pp. 168-169); Lochrie (1991), p. 127.

desired by a man.⁸⁵ In this wounding space safeguarded by thorns, however, the anchoress herself devises and enforces the sealing. Like two of the handmaidens of the *Katherine Group*, St Juliana and St Margaret, the penitent anchoress has the power to wound the devil to his death.

III. Battle Wounds: The Hagiographies

Potency of Wounds

Up to this point, the thesis has concentrated exclusively on the ‘guidebook’ *Ancrene Wisse*, and the meditations of the *Wooing Group*. Here, it turns to the anchoress’ use of hagiographies. Hagiographical writings are not divorced from the other elements of the anchoress’ reading programme; the *Ancrene Wisse*-author himself advises the reading of various saints’ lives, notably ‘ower Englische boc of Seinte Margarete’ (93: 931-932). And yet, whilst the three hagiographic legends in the *Katherine Group*— *Seinte Katerine*, *Seinte Marherete*, and *Seinte Iuliene*— are relevant to the anchoritic reader, they also jar with both *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* in their deliberate minimisation of pain-sensation.

Wounds abound in the three hagiographic legends. The bodies of Katherine, Juliana, and Margaret are mutilated in their respective tortures, and all are finally murdered by decapitation. Heathens and Christian martyrs alike are also butchered. The mutilation of the saints in the *Katherine Group* is not a topic that has evaded critical attention. In particular, Wogan-Browne and Salih have both argued convincingly that the *Katherine Group* saints are not passive victims of voyeuristic

⁸⁵ Wogan-Browne (1994), pp. 168-169.

violence, objects of pornography ripped apart at the will of the male torturers. As Salih states, '[t]he immunity of Juliana and her fellow martyrs to violent dismemberment proves their virginity; they emerge from every form of violence "whole, as whole maidens."' ⁸⁶ If she read these hagiographies in conjunction with *Ancrene Wisse*, the anchoress should have known that she must not wound herself to glorify Christ. As will be explored more fully in Chapter 4, she is not expected to imitate the saints literally, but to apply critical reading skills to the hagiographic legends. The hagiographies teach her to harness the power of wound images, highlighting the danger of erratic and uncontrolled wounding. Building on the findings of this and the previous chapters, this section first examines the phenomenon of physical-affective wounding, and then turns to the question of pain-sensation.

Early on in both *Seinte Katerine* and *Seinte Iulienne*, there are references to affective wounding. Katherine's heart is wounded by her anger at the heathens' idolatry; she is wounded inwardly ('heorte iwundet inwið' (p. 10, l. 61)). The early Middle English version of the life is much-altered from the Vulgate Latin of Katherine's *passio*, with extensive passages 'not represented [...] whether by translation, paraphrase, summary, or expansion.' ⁸⁷ In the Vulgate version, on visiting the temple and seeing the heathens' idolatry and the Christians' sorrow, Katherine is said to feel pain or sorrow in her heart (*dolore cordis*), but is not wounded there (p.

⁸⁶ Sarah Salih, 'Performing Virginity: Sex and Violence in the *Katherine Group*', in *Constructions of Widowhood and Virginity in the Middle Ages*, ed. Cindy L. Carlson and Angela Jane Weisl (Houndmills, Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 95-112 (p. 106).

⁸⁷ See d'Ardenne and Dobson, eds. (1981), p. 132.

149, ll. 97-99).⁸⁸ And early in the narrative of *Seinte Iuliene*, the heathen Eleusius' heart is twice 'iwundet' by infatuation:

felde him iwundet in wið in his heorte wið þe flan of luue [...].
(p. 5)

ant under hire nebscheft al se freoliche ischapet, weorp a sic as a wiht þet sare were iwundet—his heorte feng to heaten, ant his meari mealten [...].
(p. 19)

The related Latin text, found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 285, refers to Eleusius' general desire and cupidity (pp. 5-6, ll. 14-15), but does not use the verb *vulnerare*.⁸⁹ The affective wounding of both Katherine and Eleusius in the early Middle English legends takes place inwardly, and in the heart. Yet as both legends progress, wounds become physical and visible, particularly in the case of *Seint Iuliene*. Wogan-Browne notes that Eleusius' "'courtly" wounds of love are externalised into assaults on Juliana's body'.⁹⁰ Despite his attempt at forcing physical wounds on Juliana, however, it is Eleusius who is ultimately torn to shreds.

⁸⁸ For all Katherine's exemplarity, her anger is, peculiarly, on the verge of making her insane—the same type of anger that so unnerves the *Ancrene Wisse*-author in Part III (49: 39ff). For a study on another saint's anger, see Peyroux (2004), pp. 305-325. As Peyroux notes on the use of the noun *furor*, 'The problematic implications of the violent, even potentially sinful excess of angry emotion inherent in the term perhaps explain the author's insertion of the qualifying adverb *quasi*' (p. 314). Assuming that the anchoress read *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Katherine Group* and the *Wooing Group* in conjunction, this image of a wounded heart could have been the cause of tension in her reading.

⁸⁹ As S. R. T. O. d'Ardenne demonstrates, 'MS Bodl. 285 is not the direct source of the early ME. version but it is more closely connected with it than any other Latin version yet discovered, standing in about the same relationship to it as does the treatise of Hugh of S. Victor to *Sawles Warde*, or the nearest Latin version to *Katerine*.' See d'Ardenne, ed. (1961 for 1960), p. xxiv. For a discussion and proposed stemma of the early Middle English text's descent, see pp. xxii-xxiv.

⁹⁰ Wogan-Browne (1994), p. 181.

His susceptibility to self-wounding is clear from the start. At first, on seeing Juliana, his heart is wounded by lust; through his own eyes, he allows himself to be wounded affectively.⁹¹ Then, at the moment of his collapse, immediately preceding his final, defeated pronouncement of execution on Juliana, he enacts his own self-laceration. On seeing the way in which his torturous lava has been divinely transformed into a pleasant bath, he moves from wounding Juliana to wounding himself. Completely torn inside, he rips himself to pieces— first his clothes and then his body, which is finally dismembered as carrion (pp. 63, 69-71).⁹² Wogan-Browne succinctly describes the defeat of the torturers in all three saints' lives:

The hectic masculinity, the bullying, bashing, beating, burning and technological ingenuity by which they express their will, rebounds on them, and they end up mad, self-lacerating, stripped of their power, emotionally bruised to pieces, or even dead and dismembered. For all their ambitions of scopic and literal possession, their gaze makes no impression on the heroine or her body even when extended by clawing hooks, lathering whips and knife-studded wheels.⁹³

Whilst Eleusius only wounds himself by his gaze, Juliana uses her gaze to wound the henchman of Hell. As Belial urges on Juliana's executioners, she wounds him by a single glance. When she opens her eyes to look at him, he retreats behind the shoulders of the masses as though shot by an 'arewe' (p. 65): Belial is apparently 'wounded' by fear. The demon defeated by Margaret unwillingly informs her of the various virtues that destroy his companions; he specifically calls these 'þe wepnen þet me wurst wundið' (p. 32, l. 32). In forcing this confession from the devil, Margaret equips the anchoress with the means to mortally wound the devil. Whilst this wounding leaves no physical marks on the devil, it can kill him. The anchoress learns

⁹¹ As Salih (2001) says, in remarking on a link with the 'counter-genre' of romance: 'the courtly voyeur is himself penetrated by the dangerously beautiful object' (p. 80).

⁹² Salih (1999) has also emphasized the tearing apart of Eleusius (p. 106).

⁹³ Wogan-Browne (1994), p. 178.

to avoid Eleusius' lust-fuelled wounding, a kind of wounding that is self-destructive and useless, and in its place enables her capacity to wound the devil.

Pain-Sensation

For all the saints' agency, it is unavoidable that they are wounded. Differently from the Wounded Christ and the wounded anchoress, however, the saints remain curiously detached from the sensation of pain in their wounds; they are comparable with Hilary's conception of the sensation-less Christ. In this respect, the hagiographic legends cannot be comfortably reconciled with the anchoritic existence, in which the anchoress must nurture her capacity to feel pain. The saints' detachment from pain-sensation can partly be explained by the texts' nature as hagiographic legends.⁹⁴ If the hagiographers were to enter into the felt experience of pain caused by the laceration, it would render these untouchable saints vulnerable. The martyrdom would no longer be a glorious spectacle of God-assertion, but rather an experience of pure agony. The text would make itself unbearable for the reader: perhaps the anchoress would also have to hide underneath her mantle, as Margaret's spectators are forced to do (p. 16, ll. 23-28).⁹⁵

⁹⁴ See especially Cohen (2010), pp. 227-256.

⁹⁵ This is not to argue that all hagiographies evade mention of pain-sensation: Christina of Markyate's *Vita* is evidence that hagiographies can explore the agony of the saints. See in particular the passage describing Christina's physical suffering in the hermit Roger's abode: *The Life of Christina of Markyate: a Twelfth Century Recluse*, ed. and trans. C. H. Talbot (Oxford, 1959), pp. 102-105; all subsequent references are to this edition. Clay quotes part of this passage before declaring: 'The description of physical agony is too painful to repeat [...].' Clay (1914; repr. 1968), p. 119.

Nevertheless, there are some indications of pain-sensation in these texts.⁹⁶

Margaret shows an awareness of the pain she is about to experience, submitting her body to whatever ‘bitternesse’ comes from Olibrius’ cruel ingenuity, regardless of how ‘sare’ it bites into her (p. 12, ll. 7-10). She again implies her experience of pain as she is scourged, praying that the wounds and other signs of agony may be wiped clean from her countenance:

Lauerd, loke to me ant haue merci of me. Softe me mi sar swa, 7 salue mine wunden, þet hit ne seme nohwer, ne suteli o mi samblant, þet ich derf drehe. (p. 14, ll. 1-4)

She feels pain, but asks only that the pain does not reveal itself. A thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman text, editorially titled ‘The Minstrels’ Passion’, included in this thesis as an analogue, emphasizes this intriguing disengagement between observer and sufferer in the context of Christ’s Passion.⁹⁷ While He is on the Cross, the torturers wrongly believe Christ to be without pain, an illusion created by his silence:

As chefs de bastuns encloes / La gloriuse char Jesu / Bateient il a grand vertu,
/ Mut le ferent asprement, / Chascun dit que il ne le sent, / Kar il ne vult crier
merci / N’il ne gette brai ne cri.⁹⁸

(With heads of staves, nailed / The glorious body of Jesus / They beat with great strength. / Much (they beat him) harshly and cruelly. / Everyone said that he did not feel it / because he would not cry for mercy. / Nor did he shout or cry out.)

⁹⁶ As Cohen (2010) has remarked: ‘Within martyrological literature, late medieval authors contradicted themselves continually. The stories are full of pain infliction, but pain itself is sometimes simultaneously affirmed and denied in the same text.’ (p. 229).

⁹⁷ This text is ‘from Cambridge, Trinity College MS B. 14. 39 (323) (s.xiii³/₄), ff. 74ra-80vb.’ Hunt, ed. and Bliss, trans. (2010), p. 199.

⁹⁸ Hunt, ed. and Bliss, trans. (2010), p. 222, ll. 740-746.

Christ clearly feels pain, but conceals this from the onlookers and torturers. Like the Christ of this Anglo-Norman Passion narrative, Margaret controls the perception of her own spectators. Hers is also the most reductive view of wounds found anywhere in the *Ancrene Wisse* Group: wounds are simply signs of pain to be wiped clean with the other giveaways of her suffering. In imaging wounds as marks that can be erased, the wounds are reduced in aggression. As Salih observes, this is far from a case of ‘feminine vanity’:

If Margaret were to show pain, she would allow her persecutor, Olibrius, to dictate the terms of the spectacle, displaying his power and her vulnerability. To appear invulnerable is to engage in a contest of signification.⁹⁹

The pain in the wounds does not defeat Margaret. She controls the spectacle, removing the marks of wounds when they hinder her spiritual quest.

Katherine’s martyred empress also senses pain in her wounding. As she is about to experience the horrific torture of having her breasts torn off from the roots before being beheaded, the empress admits that for Christ she suffers (‘ich þolie’) and is maimed (‘me bilim[eð]’ (p. 112, l. 779)). She refers to her ‘wa’, ‘wene’, and ‘pine’ (p. 47, ll. 14, 3), and in response, Katherine also makes clear that her torture will be painful:

for þis lute *pine* þe alið i lute hwile, endelese reste i þe riche of heouene; for þis swifte [*sar*] þe aswikeð se sone, blissen buten ende[.]
(p. 112, ll. 787-789, emphases added)

The empress’ torture has been read as a reductive sexualisation, in contrast to the torture of the saints themselves.¹⁰⁰ This is not the full story, however. It is true that the

⁹⁹ Salih (1999), p. 100.

empress is not as vocal as St Agatha, on whom the ripping up of the breasts is based. Unlike Agatha, Empress Augusta does not confront the torturers with the fact that they are destroying the source of their own nurturance. But Katherine speaks for her, emphasising the empress' achievement through her painful wounding. The empress herself is emboldened by Katherine's speech, encouraging the torturers to hurry on with their task (p. 114, ll. 792-793). The pain of wounding does not defeat the women who suffer it. Even when feeling the pain of the physical wounds, the saints remain the agents of the wounding processes: a clear message of agency for the anchoress. In her reading of the potent wound imagery in these texts, the anchoress has enriched her sophisticated affective stirrings. She nurtures her capacity to be affectively wounded; she enters into Christ's Love-Wounds to enable her intimacy with him; she feels sins as wounds in her soul, but also heals these wounds with her penitential thorns; and in the hagiographic legends, she learns to wield the wound-imagery to fend off the enemies of her Lover. In clearing the wounds from her skin, Margaret is a performer-of-pain who defines the spectacle she performs. The permeable borderline between spectatorship and performance, and the anchoress' agency in her spectatorship of pain, is the focus of the next chapter.

¹⁰⁰ Salih (1999), p. 104.

Chapter 4

Spectatorship and Performance of Suffering in the *Ancrene Wisse* Group

I. Spectatorship and Performance

Spectatorship and performance are not easily separable positions for the anchoress, and it is this contention that underpins this fourth chapter of the thesis. The term ‘performance’ has persisted from the beginning, with Chapter 1 defining the anchoress’ penitential procedures as a rehearsed performance. Her rite of enclosure was also a performance observed by a multitude of spectators.¹ The critical vocabulary used in this chapter privileges ‘performance’ over ‘theatre’ or ‘drama’, whilst still making parallels with modern theatre. Such a decision requires explanation. The usurpation of a theatrical terminology to describe the ‘theatre’ of devotional lives is based on the assumption that there has always been a close association between liturgical performance and drama, proposed in O. B. Hardison Jr’s important work.² Lawrence Clopper, however, cautions against the non-critical use of ‘theatrical language’:

¹ See Chapter 1, n. 104.

² O. B. Hardison Jr. *Christian Rite and Christian Drama: Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama* (Baltimore, 1965); see especially p. 79. Gail McMurray Gibson has also contributed to expanding the terms of ‘theatre of devotion’, using surviving wills to document the ‘devotional theatre’ of medieval lives, including that of Anne Harling. Jill Stevenson also incorporates this line of enquiry into her recent study, using wills to trace the ways in which medieval figures use devotional objects to stage performances in their day-to-day lives. See Gail McMurray Gibson, *The Theatre of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1989), pp. 96-106; and Jill Stevenson, *Performance, Cognitive Theory and Devotional Culture: Sensual Piety in Late Medieval York* (NY, 2010), p. 58ff.

[...] we have applied modern senses of theatrical terms to medieval texts and documents with the result that we have ‘theatricalized’—made into theatre—activities that do not properly belong in that category as we understand it.³

Although this thesis agrees, with Hardison Jr, that there are close associations between liturgical performance and what will later flourish into ‘theatre’, it also accepts the problems of terminology that Clopper highlights. The thirteenth-century anchoritic existence cannot be unthinkingly defined as ‘theatrical’. The Middle English noun ‘theatre’ has the specific meaning of an area designated for dramatic performances, and citations of its usage in the *MED* all date from the late fourteenth century onwards.⁴ Nowhere in *Ancrene Wisse* is the anchorhold figured as an amphitheatre or proscenium, and nowhere is the anchoress figured as an actress. Such characterization would likely seem perverse to the *Ancrene Wisse*-author.⁵ This is not to mention the fact that the anchoress is also kept separate from the liturgical ‘theatre’ Hardison describes, as will be explored later. With this sensitivity to terminology in mind, it would nevertheless be a loss to dispense entirely with the modes and languages of theatre. Theatrical techniques and models provide invaluable analogies for understanding the techniques of spectatorship and performance in the anchoritic texts. Whilst being careful not to define the anchoritic texts themselves as ‘dramatic’ or ‘theatrical’, Chapter 4 draws parallels with modern theatre, and uses such terms as ‘scenes’ and *tableaux*.

³ Lawrence M. Clopper, *Drama, Play and Game: English Festive Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Period* (Chicago, 2001), p. 4.

⁴ See the entry ‘theatre’ (n.) in the *MED*.

⁵ See Rosemary Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* (London, 1972) for a discussion of deep-seated religious anxieties about theatre.

The anchoress as Performer

Given the nebulosity of the term ‘performance’, this opening section seeks to clarify how the anchoress performs in her anchorhold.⁶ That performance is inherent in the anchoritic vocation has been well acknowledged, most powerfully by Sarah Salih.⁷ As performer, the anchoress’ heart, body, and anchorhold— all intimately connected— form the arena in which she performs.⁸ Chapter 1 studied the performance of the anchoress’ confessional procedures, undertaken under the scrutiny of her confessor and of God. The erasure of sin effected by confessional performance is expressed in very literal terms. In an addition in **A** in Part V, mentioned in Chapter 1, sin-remission is played out as a beating of the devil-‘hund’:

Beat alswa mid ti tunge schrift þe hund of helle ananriht, ant he wule beon
ofdred to do þe eft swuch þucke. [...] Ah ananriht beat— beat, beat ananriht!
(124: 395-399)

⁶ On the term performance as ‘one of those voracious master categories’, see Bruce W. Holsinger, ‘Analytical Survey 6: Medieval Literature and Cultures of Performance’, in *New Medieval Literatures*, VI, ed. David Lawton, Wendy Scase and Rita Copeland (Oxford, 2003), 274. For a discussion of the complexities of the term ‘performative’ and how it relates to ‘performance’, see Andrew Parker’s and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s introduction to *Performativity and Performance* (NY, 1995), ed. Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, pp. 1-18. ‘Performative’ is a term avoided here, since this chapter is not specifically concerned with ‘doing by saying’, as explored in J. L. Austin’s seminal work. This central definition of ‘performative’ is more relevant to Chapter 1, with the speech-act of confession bringing about absolution.

⁷ See her comments on the *Katherine Group* hagiographic legends, and AB texts more broadly: Sarah Salih, *Versions of Virginity in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 74, 76. Differently to Salih, this thesis would avoid the terms ‘theatrical’, ‘actor’, ‘drama’, and ‘stage directions’.

⁸ On the body as a ‘potential theatrical site’ in medieval rhetoric and mnemotechnics, see Jody Enders, *The Medieval Theatre of Cruelty: Rhetoric, Memory, Violence* (Ithaca, 1999), pp. 97-98.

As he describes this violent performance, the author seems to relish his position as a witness, becoming momentarily lost in the scene: ‘Ah ananriht beat— beat, beat ananriht!’⁹

In addition to confession, the anchoress also performs her prayer. Although scholarship on Part I of *Ancrene Wisse*, outlining the anchoress’ prayers and devotions, has not been as extensive as that carried out on other parts, there have been several important contributions to this subject. Millett investigates the relationship of this Part to later religious written traditions, particularly Books of Hours. Eamon Duffy has also argued that material in Part I of *Ancrene Wisse* went on ‘to dominate the core contents of the Book of Hours for the rest of the Middle Ages’. Barbara Raw reveals the remnants of Anglo-Saxon models in *Ancrene Wisse*’s prayers and devotions. Robert Ackerman provides a structure of the anchoress’ ‘liturgical day’ based on the evidence of Part I, stressing the significant amount of time and energy demanded by her prayers and devotions. Roger Dahood emphasizes the coherence and organisation of the part.¹⁰ The performance of the anchoress’ prayer has also been touched upon. As Salih notes, the author scripts the anchoress’ prayers so that she can

⁹ As mentioned in Chapter 1, the performance of beating the devil is also figured earlier in Part IV, when the anchoress beats the flea-bitten dog with her crucifix. The author envisages the anchoress as an active combatant (110: 1596-1604). On the Cassianic imagery in this passage, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 195:4/1596-1627.

¹⁰ Bella Millett, ‘*Ancrene Wisse* and the Book of Hours’, in *Writing Religious Women: Female Spiritual and Textual Practices in Late Mediaeval England*, ed. Denis Renevey and Christiania Whitehead (Cardiff, 2000), pp. 21-40. Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People and their Prayers, 1240-1570* (New Haven and London, 2006), p. 7. Barbara Raw, ‘The Prayers and Devotions in the *Ancrene Wisse*’, in *Chaucer and Middle English Studies in Honour of Rossell Hope Robbins*, ed. Beryl Rowland (London, 1974), pp. 260-71. Robert W. Ackerman ‘The Liturgical Day in *Ancrene Riwle*’, *Speculum*, liii (1978), 734-744. Roger Dahood, ‘Design in Part I of the *Ancrene Riwle*’, *Medium Ævum*, lvi (1987), 1-11.

undertake a complete devotional performance.¹¹ He offers her not only the words she must recite, but also the gestures and bodily movements to accompany them. Amsler draws attention to what he terms a ‘constellation of gesture, prayer, and vocalized reading’ formulated by the *Ancrene Wisse*-author in Part I.¹² It is a performance spectated by God, angels, and also the devil; indeed, the devil in *Seinte Marherete* moans that her prayer causes him literal pain (p. 26, ll. 32-34). Part I’s ‘scripts’ are not intended to encourage the anchoress to churn out meaningless prayers. She uses a ‘heart-mind-voice trilogy’ in the performance of her intercessions, to use Joseph Dyer’s term.¹³

The anchoress’ performance of private prayer may have been keyed to wider liturgical observances, as suggested in N with the Creed following *Lofsong of ure Louerde*. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author curtails her overt participation in any liturgical performances within the church. As referenced in Chapter 2, he reminds the anchoress of her absence from the world of the living. She must be unseen and unheard: ‘Toward te preostes Tiden hercnið se forð se 3e mahen, ah wið him ne schule 3e nowðer uerseilin ne singen þet he hit mahe iheren’ (18: 401-403). But this is not an attempt to sever the anchoress from the wider worshipping community. In her article on prayer in eleventh- and twelfth-century monastic psalters, Susan Boynton reinforces the fact that ‘[a]n individual could experience the liturgy as a personal devotion, and prayers that were evidently intended for individuals to recite can be

¹¹ Salih (2001), p. 76.

¹² Amsler (2001), 90.

¹³ Joseph Dyer has investigated this ‘trilogy’ in the context of the psalms in monastic prayer. See Joseph Dyer, ‘The Psalms in Monastic Prayer’, in *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. Nancy Van Deusen (Albany, 1999), pp. 59-89 (p. 63).

liturgically structured'.¹⁴ And as Monika Otter asserts, in the context of psalmody and 'private' prayer, the intended result of 'all the additional silent prayers, the suffrages, the voluntary personal devotions traded among religious' is 'not to split the individual off from the group [...] but to tie him or her back into it.'¹⁵ Even if the anchoress must remain invisible and inaudible to the congregation, dead to the world as she is, her performance of prayer cements her bond with the wider community.

Closely related to the performance of prayer is the act of reading. As noted in the introduction, the anchoress is an active reader— demonstrated in Amsler's study on affective literacy.¹⁶ It is worth pausing on Amsler's first and most straightforward category of affective literacy: that of reading aloud. Tempting as it is to imagine the anchoress in her enclosed cell as an entirely silent and solitary reader, in line with Hugh of Saint-Victor's *inspicere*, this is not the full story.¹⁷ Searching within *Ancrene Wisse* itself, there is evidence of a more communal readership, covering Hugh of Saint-Victor's other two types— reading to another, and hearing another read.¹⁸ There is a direct reference in Part VIII to the anchoress performing readings aloud to her maids on a weekly basis: '3e ances ahen þis leaste [lutle] stucche reden to ower wummen euche wike eanes aþet ha hit cunnen' (163: 297-298). Watched and heard by her maids during this performance, she is also watched and assessed by God. The author reminds the anchoress that she will be held accountable for her maids' sins

¹⁴ Susan Boynton, 'Prayer as Liturgical Performance in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Monastic Psalters', *Speculum*, lxxxii (2007), 896-931 (896-897).

¹⁵ Monika Otter, 'Entrances and Exits: Performing the Psalmis in Goscelin's *Liber confortatorius*', *Speculum*, lxxxiii (2008), 283-302 (292-293).

¹⁶ Amsler (2001), 89.

¹⁷ See Paul Saenger, *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford, 1997), p. 245. See also Jessica Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion and Public Performance in Late Medieval England* (Chicago, 2007), p. 2.

¹⁸ See Saenger (1997), p. 244.

(163: 300-301). *Ancrene Wisse* is also permeated with homiletic language, lending itself to spoken performance.¹⁹

As for the lyrical meditations of the *Wooing Group*, they are certainly intended to be read aloud. At the close of *Wohunge*, the author tells the anchoress to ‘*carpe toward iesu 7 seie þise wordes*’ (fol. 133ra; p. 38, ll. 651-653, emphasis added). As investigated in Chapter 2, these lyrical meditations are reliant on the speaker’s performance for their existence. The *Wooing Group* meditations are also texts which draw attention to their own sensuality as spoken words, inviting the anchoress to luxuriate in the alliterative and rhythmical sounds. Such reliance on the spoken voice begs a key question: whom does the anchoress voice when she speaks the meditations aloud? The voice constructed by the author of each *Wooing Group* meditation is meant to be the anchoress’ on the one hand, and the author’s on the other. Yet it is also a voice that is separate from both author and anchoress, a transparent voice waiting to be assumed by a speaker — a voice that is voiceless when it is not used. Furthermore, the speaker is frequently required to assume the voice of biblical or patristic figures, including Christ himself, St Paul, the Beloved of the Song of Songs, Augustine, and the ‘Psalmist’, which is in itself an example of multivocality, emphasized in studies by Otter and Annie Sutherland.²⁰ The adaptable ‘ich’ of the *Wooing Group* meditations carries the potential for a range of speakers.

¹⁹ See especially Part VI, with the hypothetical questions answered by the author (137ff).

²⁰ Otter studies the multilayered ‘I’ of the Psalms apparent in Goscelin’s *Liber confortatorius*, and Annie Sutherland observes a comparable complexity of the ‘I’ in late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century paraphrases of the penitential psalms. Otter (2008), 284; and Annie Sutherland, ‘Performing the Penitential Psalms in the Middle Ages: Maidstone and Brampton’, in *Aspects of the Performative in Medieval Culture*, ed. Manuele Gagnolati and Almut Suerbaum (Berlin, 2010), pp. 15-37 (especially p. 32).

To use Otter's adjectives for Goscelin's constructed 'I', the 'ich' of the *Wooing Group* is 'capacious' and 'elastic'.²¹

Constantly under scrutiny in her performances, the anchoress is also constantly scrutinizing. She spectates a spectrum of realities, in a range of spatial and temporal spheres: Doomsday, the bliss of Heaven, the pain of Hell, Christ's Passion on Calvary, and the various saints as they undertake their martyrdom. The anchoress spectates through her 'breoste ehen' (111: 1653) or 'heorte eihen' (fol. 126r; p. 9, l. 151). These eyes of her heart are also aided by the images within her anchorhold: the crucifix, the symbolically coloured curtains on the anchorhold windows, saints' images and relics, and possibly an image of the crucified Christ flanked by images of the Virgin Mary and John the Evangelist. The chapter now turns to the nature of the anchoress' spectatorship.

The anchoress as Spectator

In a narrative about a Clairvaux monk, part of a collection of *exempla* compiled in the 1170s, we have a rare surviving account of the anchoress' view from her cell.²² After being sent to England, this monk—the nephew of Walter Espech, founder of the Rievaulx monastery—, stops at a church to celebrate mass. An anchoress in the adjoining cell is startled by an unusual sight:

Peracto itaque misterio aduocat ad se quempiam de sociis predicti monachi religiosa quedam femina, que iuxta ecclesiam habebat cellam suam, ita ut per

²¹ Otter (2008), 302.

²² On the provenance of this collection, see Brian Patrick McGuire, 'c. 1080-1215: culture and history', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Mysticism*, ed. Samuel Fanous and Vincent Gillespie (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 29-47.

fenestram suam uidere poterat quicquid agebatur ad altare, sciscitans quis uel unde monachus esset qui missam celebrarat. Quo cognito, dicenti sibi ait: 'Ex quo, inquit, hic habitare cepi, nemo ad altare illud accessit sacra celebraturus misteria, cuius actiones circa sancta non uidissem et quicquid agebatur manifeste non aspexissem. Verum hodie non ita factum est, quia tanta fuit circa sacrificem istum dum sacrificaret multitudo ciuium supernorum ut pre multitudine sanctorum angelorum, ut semper uidere solita fueram uidere modo non potui que fiebant.'²³

(When he had finished, a certain religious woman called on one of the companions of the monk. She had her own cell adjoining the church, so that through its window she could see whatever was happening at the altar. She asked who might be the monk who had celebrated mass and from where he came. When she was told, she said to her respondent: 'From the time when I began to live here, no one has gone to this altar to celebrate the holy mysteries, whose movements amid the holy rites I have failed to see. Whatever was going on, I have been able to see clearly. But today this was not the case, for there was such a collection of heavenly dwellers around the priest while he offered the sacrifice that because of the multitude of holy angels I could not at all see what was taking place in the manner that I am used to seeing it all.'²⁴)

The anchoress' visual access to the altar is regular and consistent, disrupted this one time by the appearance of the heavenly bodies. Her cell is situated so that she can see all the events at the altar ('*uidere poterat quicquid agebatur ad altare*'), and she herself stresses that nothing escapes her gaze ('*nemo ad altare illud accessit sacra celebraturus misteria, cuius actiones circa sancta non uidissem et quicquid agebatur manifeste non aspexissem*' (emphases added)). The anchoress is fully aware of the activities in the church, able to spectate its liturgical performances in full. In the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's Bernardine model of holy lives on earth, the anchoress is distinguished from the 'dead' by her sensitisation to pain (133-134), as detailed in Chapter 1. In this narrative about the Clairvaux monk, the anchoress is not dead to the church beyond her window; she is fully sensitised to all the occurrences within it.

²³ *Collectaneum exemplorum et visionum clarevallense*, ed. Olivier Legendre (Turnhout, 2005), Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, ccviii, 144.

²⁴ This translation is that of McGuire (2011), p. 29.

As the anchoress is sensitive to actual occurrences within the church, so is she sensitised to the scenes of pain she encounters in her meditative activity. A study of affective response to theatre provides an indispensable analogy to understanding the anchoress' own spectatorship. In order to assess Western affective response to theatre, it is necessary to look back to Augustine. In his *Confessiones*, Augustine expresses anxiety and disgust about the ineffectuality of theatrical shows. He perceives spectatorship of these shows to be a 'miserable insanity':

Rapiebant me spectacula theatra, plena imaginibus miseriarum mearum et fomitibus ignis mei. Quid est quod ibi homo vult dolere, cum spectat luctuosa atque tragica, quae tamen pati ipse nolle? Et tamen pati vult ex eis dolorem spectator, et dolor ipse est voluptas ejus. Quid est, nisi miserabilis insania? Nam eo magis eis movetur quisque, quo minus a talibus affectibus sanus est: quamquam cum ipse patitur, miseria; cum aliis compatitur, misericordia dici solet. Sed qualis tandem misericordia in rebus fictis et scenicis? Non enim ad subveniendum provocatur auditor, sed tantum ad dolendum invitatur [...]. Et si calamitates illae hominum vel antiquae vel falsae sic agantur, ut qui spectat noleat; abscedit inde fastidians et reprehendens: si autem doleat, manet intentus, et gaudens lacrymatur.²⁵

(Theatrical shows enthralled me, full of images of my miseries, and kindle for my flame. Why is it that there a man wants to feel sorrow, while spectating mournful and moreover tragic stories, which he himself would not wish to suffer? And yet he wants to suffer the sorrow from being a spectator, and sorrow itself is his pleasure. What is this but miserable insanity? For the more anyone is moved, the less healthy he is from such affections: except when he himself suffers it is called misery, when he feels the suffering of others it is called compassion. But what quality of compassion is there, in the end, in fictitious and theatrical events? A member of the audience is not provoked to offer support, but only invited to feel sorrow [...]. And if the calamities of mankind, whether old histories or false myths, are so delivered that the spectator does not feel sorrow, he withdraws from there, scornful and accusing. If however he feels sorrow, he remains, eager and rejoicing to weep.)

The spectator of a theatrical piece feels pointless emotion, remaining inactive and also de-activated as he sits watching scenes take place before his eyes; affective response seems to replace action. He is drawn back to the spectacles, almost as an addiction,

²⁵ *PL* xxxii, 683.

wanting to feel more and more intensely— yet all the time unable to help, to intervene, to act. Augustine’s spectator experiences what could be termed an emotional masturbation: a self-centred, unproductive, and inconsequential emotional response to scenes in which he cannot participate.

As foregrounded in the introduction, the anchoress’ nourishment of pain is not the passive ‘emotional masturbation’ implied by Augustine. For the medieval anchoress, passive spectatorship is a contradiction in terms. Although Augustine fears affectivity as a usurper of action, the anchoress’ important work in Passion meditation itself resides in her affective movements. This is demonstrable by a striking moment in Aelred’s *De institutione inclusarum*, when the Cistercian author reconstructs each moment of Christ’s torture— the flagellation, the buffeting, the thorn-crowning, the mocking— with the awareness that each moment is being watched:

Scio non potes ulterius sustinere, nec dulcissimum dorsum eius flagellis atteri, nec faciem alapis caedi, nec tremendam illud caput spinis coronari, nec dexteram quae caelum fecit et terram arundine dehonestari, tuis oculis aspicere poteris.
(670)

(I know that you can endure it no more, your eyes will not be able to look on: not his most sweet back chafed away with scourges, nor his face struck with blows, nor his wonderful head crowned with thorns, nor his right hand which made heaven and earth dishonoured with a reed.)

This scene of torture is defined by the fact that it is under the scrutiny of spectators. It is, in other words, a performance of pain. Christ undergoes both physical and affective pain, lacerated in his flesh but also seared in his soul by the mockery. The anchoress(es) for whom this text is written, the author, and all other implicit spectators (the inhabitants of the ‘caelum [...] et terram’) feel unbearable affective

agony in viewing His pain. The author shares the anchoress' horror of the sight: *Scio*. Yet the author is also watching the anchoress' pain; he sees her and acknowledges the extent of her suffering. With him, the reading anchoress watches herself in her role as anguished spectator of the Crucifixion. We, the modern readers, also become implicated as spectators, spectating both Christ's pain, and the excruciating agony of the anchoress and the author. Aelred uses the text itself to force the anchoress back to observe the scene of Christ's torment, restraining her from a possible attempt to flee the unbearable scene she beholds.

Augustine mocks the ease with which moving images and stories unfold before the eyes, with the spectator remaining comfortable in and pleased by his pain. But as made apparent in this moment in the *De institutione inclusarum*, the anchoress is not safely separate from the scene: the boundary between her and the suffering body and soul of Christ disintegrates. Stanton B. Garner Jr, writing on the twentieth-century dramatist Edward Bond, remarks:

Even in its dramatized (or simulated) forms, pain violates the perceptual demarcations and the differential spheres of otherness essential to representation, including the audience in its discomfort through a kind of neuromimetic transferral [...].

This 'witnessing', he says, 'is itself a vicarious reexperiencing of pain, a mimetic inhabiting of the suffering body'.²⁶ The past five years have seen the emergence of powerful scholarship engaging with the concept of an unstable borderline between spectator and suffering body or soul in medieval textual, dramatic, and visual cultures. Robert Mills investigates the ways in which a spectator can 'bypass perceptions of

²⁶ Stanton B. Garner, Jr, *Bodied Spaces: Phenomenology and Performance in Contemporary Drama* (NY, 1994), pp. 180-181, 183.

historical alterity and feel the vibration or intensity of the imagery, “touching” affectively bodies supposedly located in the past’.²⁷ Stevenson uses Garner’s work and cognitive theory to assess the ways in which the York Cycle impacted its audience. One element of her thinking is informed by ‘mirror neurons’, which, as she explains, ‘are cells in the brain that fire both when we observe an action and when we execute that same action’, in addition to ‘when we just imagine the action’: ‘Seeing pain inflicted on a person, or simply imagining someone’s experience of pain triggers embodied simulation of the same pain’.²⁸

The present chapter now turns, however, to consideration of a group of texts that contradict the anchoress’ usual affective receptivity: the *Katherine Group* hagiographic legends. Her spectatorship in the hagiographic legends is based on defamiliarization. The three texts encourage the anchoress to disengage affectively from the pain she spectates; she is invited instead to constructively read these bodies-in-pain, progressing beyond the pagan voyeurism.²⁹ Subsequently, the chapter moves to the anchoress’ spectatorship of the Crucifixion scene in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, where her sensitivity to pain is cultivated. Her spectatorship frequently blurs into performance through internalising and digesting images of Christ’s pain in a non-mimetic imitation of His suffering, through pursuing tactile contact with his pained body, and through intent observation of the key spectators of the Passion. Finally, the chapter studies female spectatorship in *Hali Meiohad*. In this

²⁷ Robert Mills, *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture* (London, 2005), p. 31. This particular comment is in reference to François Villon (b. 1431).

²⁸ Stevenson (2010), pp. 23-24, 145.

²⁹ This argument is in close affiliation with Salih’s important work (2001), but the concept of defamiliarization does not feature prominently in her scholarship.

text, the reading woman is never free from the threat of experiencing the suffering she spectates.

II. Watching Sanctity

The Suffering of Saints

When he likens the humble confessant to a beggar in Part V, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author encourages the anchoress to appeal to God's love not only through His suffering, His Holy Mother, and His love for the soul and Holy Church, but also through the love of all His saints ('on alle his halhene luue' (125: 420-425)). Saints were constantly visible within the anchorhold of the anchoress reading *Ancrene Wisse*. In Part I, the author informs the anchoress that, after kneeling for her Lady:

aleast to þe oþre ymagnes ant to ower relikes luteð oþer cneolið, nomeliche to þe halhen þe 3e habbeð to þurh luue iturnd ower weofdes, swa muche þe reaðere 3ef ei is ihalhet.
(8: 60-63)

As Millett notes, Aelred's austere rejection of most outward images was not consistently followed, and 'in 1268 the Gilbertine nuns of Sixhills Priory appealed successfully against a similar limitation imposed after a visitation in 1238, and were permitted to add images of saints to the altars dedicated to those saints'.³⁰ Like these Gilbertine nuns, the anchoress reading *Ancrene Wisse* clearly had frequent and direct visual access to saints, though the exact form of these 'ymagnes' is not clarified in the

³⁰ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 19: 1/60-3.

text.³¹ The presence of the ‘reliques’ would have facilitated a touch-based access to complement her sight of the ‘ymagnes’.³²

The saints’ suffering is not hidden from the anchoress. Descriptions of their trials are provided, first in Part III (49: 68-73), and then in Part VI, a passage already cited in Chapter 1 (137: 201-204). The author offers the anchoress a skeletal version of the hagiographic narratives available on these saints. She is not intended to identify with the saints’ suffering, and certainly not to recreate it literally: the *Ancrene Wisse*-author, as seen in Chapter 1, is very clear on this point (Part VIII, 158: 118-27; and Part V, 129-30: 599-604).³³ And yet, she has to be aware of the intricacies of the saints’ suffering, since, as noted in Chapter 3, the author advises the reading of saints’ lives.³⁴ It is not immediately clear how the gruesome violence of hagiographies would have been relevant to an anchoress, beyond the fact that the saints’ suffering is relevant to their martyrdom and sanctity. In comparing various saints’ legends with the life of Christina of Markyate, Jocelyn Wogan-Browne suggests a relevance to

³¹ Apart from her possible view of wall paintings depicting saints, she may have had rich and detailed pictorial representations in her cell, like those ‘exquisite pictures’ of the Virgin Mary and John the Evangelist in the cell discussed in the *Rites of Durham* (1593), noted by Clay (1914; repr. 1968), p. 80.

³² For a survey of the role of relics and reliquaries in medieval devotion, see the British Museum exhibition catalogue, *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, ed. Martina Bagnoli, Holger A. Klein, C. Griffith Mann and James Robinson (The British Museum Press, 2010; exhibitions in 2011).

³³ *Ancrene Wisse* is also peppered with holy figures apparently known to the author—though probably drawn from the *Vitae Patrum*—who suffer on a level that is both impossible and inadvisable for the anchoress. Examples include the unnamed man and woman mentioned at the close of Part VI, whose severe bodily trauma is recounted to the anchoress (144: 479-490).

³⁴ Whilst the *Katherine Group* hagiographies are, as Millett (1988) has shown, ‘part of a style intended primarily for listeners rather than readers’ and intended for ‘public delivery’ (29, 33-34), an anchoress is likely to have read, and not heard, these saints’ lives. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author refers to the ‘boc’ about Saint Margaret, and then refers to reading about Saint Bartholomew (93: 931-932).

religious women in the context of ‘violence to the volition of young women’.³⁵ Other religious women, like Christina, could read a grander and exaggerated version of their own suffering in saints’ lives. Salih’s (2001) work has also revealed the creative reading skills an anchoress employs in confronting the savagery of the *Katherine Group* hagiographic legends. Though they are directed at an uneducated audience, as noted in the introduction, these legends are not simplistic texts, nor is the anchoress a simplistic reader.

Defamiliarization in the Hagiographies of the *Katherine Group*

Building on the foundation laid by Salih, this chapter offers a new reading of the *Katherine Group* hagiographic legends. The three legends militate against the reader’s affective engagement with the saints’ pain. The shortage of references to the saints’ sensation of pain, as touched upon in Chapter 3, results in affective disengagement between spectator and performer. Deliberately discouraging their readers from uncritical affective stirrings for the saints, the legends invite the anchoress to see beyond this bodily trauma to the heavenly purpose of the suffering. The saints’ lives are not devoid of any affective stirrings: references to the saints’ pain are present. But the anchoress must not succumb to a spectatorship that looks only at pain; this, the legends say, is a pagan way of looking. *Seinte Katerine* focuses on the spectator’s translation of scenes of violence into scenes of beauty; *Seinte Marherete* reveals the impotency of the pagan gaze which focuses so inadvisedly on bodily pain-pleasure; and *Seinte Iuliene*, much like *Seinte Katerine*, asks the spectator to transform scenes of brokenness into scenes of healing.

³⁵ Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, ‘Saints’ Lives and the Female Reader’, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, xxvii no. 4 (1991), 314-332 (315, 321).

It remains unclear what the anchoress is meant to do with the residual imagery of horror that permeates the texts. Writing on Passion narratives in the Middle Ages, Thomas H. Bestul has raised the question of whether the graphic Passion scenes would have numbed the audience to violence. He notes that ‘judging by what we know of how the Passion texts were received, [...] the effect was not to desensitize their audiences to violence or anesthetize them to brutality’.³⁶ It is also unlikely that an anchoress is meant to become desensitized from this overload of grisly imagery in the hagiographies, as this would devastate her acutely sensitive and careful response to the Passion. The violence that pervades the saints’ lives is perhaps an expression of the authors’ own morbid fascinations, or what they believed would entertain a less educated audience. Either way, a sophisticated anchoritic spectator is not meant to settle her gaze on the violence. Each legend will now be studied in turn, in the order in which they appear in **B**.

Seinte Katerine is a text engaged in a battle of perspectives. It attempts to translate scenes of violence into scenes of beauty, and the capacity to effect this transformation is in the hands of the viewer. The text itself is cluttered with scenes of violence and agony, but the anchoress is meant to read beyond this savagery to the potential beauty signified within it. The Middle English version preserves from the Latin source Katherine’s vocality, and the importance of her gaze— both elements which contribute to the emphasis on translating violence into beauty. To deal with the mass conversion brought about by Katherine’s debate, Maxentius orders the converts

³⁶ Thomas H. Bestul, *Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society* (Philadelphia, 1996), pp. 160-161.

to be bound by the feet and hands, and burnt: ‘þet ha [w]rungen a3ein, ant i þe reade lei ant i þe leitinde fur het warpen euch fot’ (pp. 70-72, ll. 497-500). This desire to have the bodies struggle against their bonds in the fire might be intended both to maximise the converts’ pain and to provide a sight for the sadistic Maxentius to enjoy. Nevertheless, his attempt to orchestrate this scene of agony falls through:

Ah þet wes miracle muchel, þet nowðer nes iwe[m]met clað þet ha hefden ne her of hare heafden; ah wið se swið l[u]fsume leores ha leien, se rudie ant se reade ilitet eauereuch leor as lilie ileid to rose, þet nawt ne þuhte hit þet ha weren deade ah þet ha slepten swoteliche a sweouete, swa þet feole tur[n]den to treowe bileaue ant þoleden anan deað i þe nome of drihtin.
(p. 74, ll. 518-524)

Maxentius’ imagined spectacle is replaced by an image of angelic bodies, likened to floral arrangements. Seen as lilies upon roses, the sight of the bodies brings about conversions; and it is not the last case of conversion through sight in this text.

The violence against Katherine herself has been well acknowledged. Like Margaret and Juliana, Katherine is ‘stripped stark-naked’ and scourged so that her body is soaked in blood:

Þe king ne cuðe na wit ah bigon to cwakien ant nuste hwet seggen. Het o wod[e] wise strupen hire steort-naket ant beaten hire beare flesch ant hire freoliche bodi wið cnottede schurgen, ant [swa me] dude sone, þet hire leofliche lich liðerede al [o] blode; ah heo [hit lihtliche] aber ant lahinde þolede. Het hire blode; ah heo [hit lihtlice] aber ant lahinde þolede. Het hire þrefter kesten i cwalmhus, ant bed halden hire þrin þet ha now[ð]er ne ete [ne drunke,] leasse ne mare, tweolf dahes fulle.
(p. 80, ll. 563-569)

Without wishing to unearth an old question, it is necessary to pause here on the ‘hagiographic pornography debate’ in the scholarship of the past two decades.³⁷ The gaze theory models of John Berger and Laura Mulvey have problematized the act of looking. According to these theoretical models, the fetishized and itemized body of the female is scrutinized by a male gaze, hostile and overpowering, which attempts to reduce the female to a ‘commodity ready for consumption’ by male sexual and social appetites.³⁸ At first glance, Katherine— stark-naked and bleeding, with sexually voracious men observing her— appears to be an obvious example of a fetishized and itemized female scrutinized by a male gaze. But Wogan-Browne and Salih have both argued that the *Katherine Group* saints are not mere objects of ‘pious pornography’ destroyed by men.³⁹ Whilst the spectacle of female nakedness and torture invites a pornographic reading, the reader who enjoys the text in such a way is, as Salih expresses it, ‘endangered by his own inadequacy as a reader of the spectacle of the body’.⁴⁰ Katherine laughs (‘lahinde’) through this spectacle, apparently finding humour in the horror, as does St Lawrence with his culinary jest.⁴¹ Her laughter

³⁷ ‘Pornography’ is defined here as images and texts used for the express purpose of sexual titillation.

³⁸ Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures*, second edn (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 57. See also John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London, 2008).

³⁹ See Chapter 3 of this thesis. The term ‘pious pornography’ is Robert Mills’ (2005), p. 106.

⁴⁰ Salih (2001), p. 81. See also pp. 83, 85.

⁴¹ Goscelin is one writer who refers to Lawrence’s macabre humour while being burned on the coals (63). As Monika Otter describes it: ‘The famous story is that Lawrence said, in the middle of the torture, “I am done on this side, turn me over.”’ See *The Book of Encouragement and Consolation*, trans. Monika Otter (Cambridge, 2004), p. 72, and n. 75. This joke is also included in the Anglo-Norman version of his life (c. 1170): *La vie de Saint Laurent: An Anglo-Norman Poem of the Twelfth Century*, ed. D. W. Russell (London, 1976), p. 57, ll. 897-898. For dating, see pp. 22-23 of this edition, and also *Virgin Lives and Holy Deaths: Two Exemplary Biographies for Anglo-Norman Women*, trans. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Glyn S. Burgess (London, 1996), p. xxxix. The earliest recorded instance of Lawrence’s defiant humour is in Ambrose of Milan (d. 397). See Wogan-Browne and Burgess, trans. (1996), p. xxxvi.

undercuts the effectiveness of this spectacle as pornographic enjoyment for a male, or more broadly a pagan, gaze. The anchoress who reads Katherine's ordeal in such a way becomes the object of ridicule by the saint herself.

Katherine's scourging is unquestionably a horrific torture scene. But once cast into the prison cell, Katherine's damaged flesh is healed in a spectacle observed by Porphirius and Empress Augusta, along with the nursing angels who become implicated as spectators:

Pa ha weren iseten up, sehen as þe engles wið smirles of aromaz smireden hire wunden ant bieoden swa þe bruchen of hire bodi, al tobroken of þe beatunge, þet tet flesch ant tet fel worðen se feire þet ha awundreden ham swiðe of þet sihðe.
(p. 84, ll. 585-589)

What was a scene of brutality is transformed into an angelic vision.⁴² These 'sihðen of heouene' embolden the empress and leader of knights:

Porphire ant Auguste worðen of þeos wordes se swiðe wilcweme ant se hardi, forþi þet ha hefden isehen sihðen of heouene, þet ha wenden from hire, abute þe midniht, 3arowe to al þet wa þet ei mon mahte ham 3arki to drehe for drihtin.
(p. 90, ll. 630-633)

Porphirius talks to two hundred knights, implicitly inviting their spectatorship of this beauty in turn (pp. 90-94, ll. 633-661). The spectating anchoress is included in this widening community of spectators of the beauty effected by Katherine.

The wheel of torture also demands from the anchoress a correct spectatorship. At first eager to watch bodies writhe against flames, Maxentius

⁴² On this scene in the dungeon, see further Salih (2001), p. 75.

subsequently devises a wheel to cause maximum pain. He is fascinated with the machine of torture before it has been used to inflict pain. Cursates, hired by Maxentius to wear down Katherine's will, imagines the scene of agony before it has occurred:

3et ne seh Katerine nanes cunnes pine þet ha oht dredde. Do ido dede. Nu ha þus þreatedð ant þrepedð a3ein þe, hat, hwil ha wed tus, inwið þe[os] þreo dahes 3arkin fowr hweoles; ant let þurhdriuen þrefter þe spaken ant te uelien wið irnene gadien, swa þet te pikes ant te irnene preones se scharpe ant se sterke borien þurh ant beore forð feor o þet oðer half þet al þe hweoles beon þurhspitet mid [spikes] kenre þen [eni] cnif, rawe bi rawe. Let þenne turnen hit tidliche abuten, swa þet Katerine wið þet grisliche rune, hwen ha þerbi sit ant bisið þerupon, [swike] hire sotschipes ant ure wil [wurche]; oðer, 3ef þet ha nule no, ha schal beo tohwiðeret wið þe hweoles swa, in an honthwile, þet alle þe hit bihaldeð schule grure habben.
(pp. 100-102, ll. 697-709)

Even in the absence of a body-in-pain, the reader can easily imagine the potential pain caused by the wheel. Cursates emphasizes from the outset the importance of Katherine seeing the torture. Katherine is bold because she has not seen her torture instrument, he claims. This is a claim preserved from the Vulgate Latin, as is the prelude to the wheel's horror before a body has been placed inside it (pp. 191-192).⁴³ He imagines (and beyond him, Maxentius and the readers of the text imagine) a body-

⁴³ In the Anglo-Norman version of Lawrence's life, Decius also uses the horror of sight, prior to the torture itself: 'Devant lui fait puis aporter / Fors tormenz de totes manieres, / De fust, de fer, de plun, de pieres. / Onques ne fu nul torment fait / Que al feel Deu mostré nen ait. / Decius dit a saint Lorenz: "Et ne veis tu toz ces tormenz / Ke por tei sunt ci aporté? / Tu ieres en chascun tormenté / Se ne veus nos deus aorer / Et ta fole eror delaisser.'" Russell, ed. (1976), p. 47, ll. 539-549. ('[Lawrence] had brought before him cruel instruments of torture of all kinds, made from wood, from iron, from lead and from stones. Never had any instrument been made which he did not have shown to God's faithful servant. Decius said to St Lawrence: "Do you not see all these instruments of torture which have been brought out here for you? You will be tortured by each one if you refuse to worship our gods and to abandon your foolish error.')" This translation is that in Wogan-Browne and Burgess, trans. (1996), p. 53.

in-pain and the spectators' response to the pain they see. The wheel is then constructed in accordance with this barbaric fantasy:

Þis pinfule gin wes o swu[ch] wise iginet, þet te twa tur[n]den ei[ð]er wiðward
oðer ant anes weis baðe, þe oðer twa tur[n]den anes weis als wa ah to 3ein þe
oðre (swa þet, hwenne þe twa walden keasten uppart þing þet ha [c]ahten, þe
o[ð]re walden drahen hit ant dusten dunewarðes)—se grisliche igreiðet þet
grure grap euch mon hwen he lokede þron. Her amid[heapes] wes þis meiden
iset forte al torenden reowliche ant reowðfulliche toronðin 3ef ha nalde hare
read heren ne hercnin. Ah heo keaste up hire ehnen ant cleopede towart
heouene, ful heh wið hire heorte ah wið [stille] steuene [...]
(pp. 102-104, ll. 713-722)

The anchoritic reader is invited temptingly to look at it, 'se grisliche igreiðet þet grure grap euch mon hwen he lokede þron'. Katherine, however, focuses her gaze correctly once in the wheel. Unlike the torturers and the pagan spectators, she looks not at the wheel and the potential for violence it holds, but rather at Heaven: 'Ah heo keaste up hire ehnen ant cleopede towart heouene'. The Vulgate Katherine does the same ('erectis in celum oculis' (p. 193)). If the anchoress has become distracted, gazing in horrified fascination with the pagans at the wheel of torture, she is abruptly reminded of where she should, in fact, be looking. The spectators who have been incorrectly gazing at the wheel in its irresistible horror turn into spectacles of pain themselves, watched in turn by Christian people. An angel destroys the wheel after Katherine's prayer, killing four thousand pagans:

[...] ruten forð wið swuch rune þe stucchen of [baðe], bimong ham as ha
stoden ant seten þerabuten, þet ter weren isleine of þet awariede uolc fowr
þusent fulle. Þear me mahte iheren þe heaðene hundes 3ellen ant 3eien ant
3uren on euch half, þe cristene kenchen ant herie þen healent þe helped hire
oueral.
(p. 104, ll. 730-735)

The Latin likewise contrasts the pain and confusion of the pagans with the exultation of the Christians (p. 193). The reference to the ‘cristene kenchen’, the Christians laughing at the misery of the pagans, brings to the foreground a community of Christian spectators within the text. It is an anonymous, almost absent community of spectators. This community implicitly appears in the illicit burials of the bodies: first the converted martyrs (p. 74, ll. 524-526), then the empress (p. 114, ll. 799-803), and finally Porphirius and his knights (p. 118, ll. 821-824). Not as visible or as vocal as the wailing pagans, these Christian spectators are the anchoress’ closest point of correspondence for her own spectatorship.

As the hagiographic legend approaches its close, the anchoress is still being asked to spectate correctly. An overwhelmed Maxentius again imagines the response of spectators, before the spectacle of pain has taken place:

Ne [let] tu us na lengre ah loke nu biliue hweðer þe beo leouere don þet ich þe leare ant libben 3ef þu swa dest, oðer þis ilke dei se dreoriliche deien þet ham schal agrisen alle þe hit bihaldeð.
(p. 120, ll. 834-837)

Katherine, however, disagrees with Maxentius’ definition of the sight:

nis nawt grislich sihðe to seon falle þing þe[t] schal [stihen], þurh þet fal, a þusentfalt te fehere, of deað to lif undeaðlich, ant to arise from ream to a leastinde lahtre, from bale to eche blisse, from wa to wunne ant to weole þurhwuniende.
(p. 120, ll. 838-841)

She translates the ‘grislich sihðe’ into something ‘a þusentfalt te fehere’. Engaging in a battle for meaning, she insists on her right to define her own spectacle. This re-definition closely follows the Latin:

‘Non est,’ inquit, ‘miserabile spectaculum cui de occasu ortus succedit gloriosus, de morte immortalitas, de merore iocunditas, de tristitia gaudia mercantur eterna.’
(p. 200)

(‘It is not’, she said, ‘a miserable spectacle in which: from a fall is born a glorious ascension, from death immortality, from grief delight, from sadness eternal joy is bought.’)

Both the Latin and English emphasize her death as a spectacle, but one that is not ‘grisly’ or ‘miserable’. There is a close correspondence between the Latin and early Middle English on the transformation taking place at the point of her death, a transformation put on display by the spectacle of the execution. The spectators who follow her to the execution cannot see this beauty:

Heo, as me ledde hire, lokede a3einwart for ludinge þet ha herde, ant seh [sihen] efter hire heaðene monie, wepmen ant wummen, wið wringinde honden, wepinde sare; ah þe meidnes alre meast, wið sari mod ant sorhful, ant te riche leafdis letten teares trondlin. Ant heo biwende hire a3ein, sum[hwet] iwreadet, ant [e]dwat ham hare wop wið þulliche wordes [...]
(p. 122, ll. 849-855)

Only able to see the violence, the pagan spectators descend into a sore/painful (‘sari’ and ‘sorhful’) mood, released through rolling tears (‘teares trondlin’) and wringing hands (‘wringinde honden’). Katherine looks back at these morose spectators, as clarified three times in this passage (‘lokede’, ‘seh’, ‘biwende’), becoming gazer rather than object gazed upon. She demands, ‘somewhat angered’ in the speech which follows, an interpretation of beauty rather than horror (pp. 122-124, ll. 855-864). One could forgive the anchoress for being confused as to how she is meant to spectate. In a climate of Passion devotion that treasured intense weeping, the anchoress would have

cherished her ability to cry.⁴⁴ Yet here, to weep is to align oneself with frail pagan souls. A thirteenth-century anchoress would have been deeply familiar with physical violence, pervasive in her reading of and meditation on Christ's Passion. But Katherine aids the anchoress in polishing her interpretative skills through defamiliarization. As crystallized in Lamentations 1:12 ('O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow'), no suffering is comparable with Christ's on Calvary. The anchoress learns not to uncritically transfer her weeping for the Crucifixion, that most unique of events, to the sensationalism of this event. She rejects the ineptitude and hysteria of the pagan gaze, training her eyes to see the beauty inscribed within the anguish.

Seinte Marherete is preoccupied with revealing the impotency of the pagan gaze. The author stresses the suffering of those who view Margaret's torture, as does the author of Katherine's legend with the rolling tears and wringing hands: 'wa is us þet we seoð þi softe leofliche lich to-luken se ladliche!', they cry (p. 14, ll. 14-15). The procedures of torture are also amplified from the Mombritius version.⁴⁵ But in all their suffering, they gain voyeuristic pleasure, eagerly returning for more visual consumption of Margaret's traumatized body: 'Striken men þiderward of eauereuch strete, for to seo þet sorhe þet me walde leggen on hire leofliche bodi 3ef ha to þe

⁴⁴ The Desert Mother of Brabant-Liège, Mary D'Oignies (c. 1177-1213), is one of the great weepers of Christian history. In her *Vita* by James of Vitry, she is said to weep so copiously in response to the Passion that the ground of the church beneath her becomes muddy. Close to Good Friday, a priest gently chastises her for her lack of self-control. Later that day, in the middle of the celebration of mass, the unfortunate man is struck by a fit of weeping so extreme that he nearly chokes, and drowns the book and altar cloths with tears. He manages to complete the mass, but does not escape Mary's reproach. James also tells us that Mary attempted to catch her tears in veils, and consequently used up many of these as each got soaked through in turn (AASS, IV June 23, 640C-641A).

⁴⁵ See Mack, ed. (1934), p. xxxii.

reues read ne buhe ne ne beide' (p. 40, ll. 28-31). Margaret's suffering body feeds pain and pleasure into the spectators:

Hwil þet ha spec þus, me to-lec hire swa, þet te luðere reue for þe stronge rune of þe blodi stream, ne nan oðer þet ter wes, ne mahte for mucho grure lokin þiderwardes; ah hudden hare heafden þe heardeste-iheortet under hare mantles, for þet seorfulu sar þet heo on hire isehen.
(p. 16, ll. 23-28)

Despite the widening vocabulary for spectatorship ('to-luken' / 'lokin', 'seo' / 'isehen'), the pagans' potential 'looking' remains uncomplex, a desire for the kind of pleasurable, passive spectatorship that Augustine so detests. And differently from Augustine's scenario, these spectators fail to spectate, preferring to hide under their mantles. Even the 'heardeste-iheortet', including the gruesome Olibrius himself, are unable to gaze upon her lacerated flesh, the sheer agony of this gaze conquering the pleasure. Olibrius later claims that he will count all of Margaret's sinews, in a bodily reduction echoing Psalm 21:18 ('They have numbered all my bones. And they have looked and stared upon me.'):

Ah buh nu 7 bei to me ear þen þu deie o dreori deð 7 derf; for 3ef þu ne dest no, þu schalt swelten þurh sweord 7 al beo limmel to-loken; ant ich wulle tellen, hwen þu al to-toren art in euchanes sihðe þe sit nu 7 sið þe, alle þine seonewwen.
(p. 16, l. 32- p. 18, l. 4)

He configures an imagined spectatorship of suffering, where a safe enjoyment of her suffering body can be pursued. In doing so, he defuses the threat of overwhelming pain. This reeve is powerless and emasculated, all possible agency in his spectatorship disarmed. For the anchoress, he is the model of impotent spectatorship.

Juliana's Eleusius is equally impotent in his spectatorship, as will be seen. Like *Seinte Katerine*, *Seinte Iuliane* is engaged in efforts to translate brokenness into healing, and it emphasizes the pagan spectators as spectacles of pain themselves. The early Middle English life of Juliana also stresses Juliana's vocality, as does its related Latin text, found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 285. Like Maxentius and Olibrius, Juliana's father Africanus attempts to terrorize his daughter through imagined spectatorship of her pain before it has occurred:

[...] for þu schalt on alre earst as on ernesse swa beon ibeaten wið bittere besmen, þet tu [wani þet tu] were wummon of wummone bosum to wraðer heale eauer iboren i þe world.
(p. 15)

Once this bitter beating does occur, Juliana speaks in the midst of her pain, disabling the potential for her spectacle to degenerate into a form of pornographic pleasure for her onlookers:

Ant het swiðe heatterliche strupen hire streornaket ant leggen se luðerliche on hire leofliche lich þet hit liðeri o blode. Me nom hire ant dude swa þet hit 3eat adun of þe 3erden, ant heo bigon to 3eien: 'Beaten se 3e beaten, 3e Beliales budeles, ne mahe 3e nowðer mi luue ne mi bileaue lutlin towart te liuiende godd, mi leofsume leofmon þe luuewurðe lauerd [...]'
(p. 15)

Her use of voice is a crucial act of agency, as Salih has affirmed.⁴⁶ It is true that, as Robert Mills has argued, female voices in saints' lives are not necessarily pure and unpolluted vehicles of agency.⁴⁷ In this instance, Juliana's voice is not entirely her own; she is a mouthpiece for her 'leofsume leofmon þe luuewurðe lauerd'. But

⁴⁶ Salih (2001), p. 82.

⁴⁷ Robert Mills, 'Can the Virgin Martyr Speak?', in *Medieval Virginites*, ed. Anke Bernau, Ruth Evans and Sarah Salih (Cardiff, 2003), pp. 187-213 (see especially p. 207).

keeping this qualification in mind, Juliana's agency, enabled by her love-worthy lord, is apparent in her very use of voice. Salih and Mills both cite Scarry in her central premise that intense physical pain destroys language. Juliana's resistance, or to use Salih's term 'immunity', to this degeneration of language is particularly important in her case. Though *Seinte Iulienne* is a text that discloses very little about the sensation of pain, it does contain one explicit expression of Juliana's sensation of pain, even more explicit than those few and brief references in *Seinte Katerine* and *Seinte Marherete* explored in the final section of Chapter 3:

Per wes sorhe to seon on hire freoliche flesch hu ha ferden þer-wið. Ah heo hit al þuleliche þolede for drihtin, ant hwen ha felde meast sar, sikerlukest seide: 'Haldeð on longe, ne leaue 3e neauer! For nulle ich leauen his luue þet ich on leue, ne for luue nowðer ne for luðer eie.'
(pp. 23-25)

It remains unclear for whom this sight is 'sorhe to seon': it could refer to the author as witness, Eleusius, the torturers, the spectators, or the readers of the text. The perspective moves from the observers to Juliana's own sensation of pain: 'hwen *ha felde meast sar*' (emphasis added). Even in the depths of this pain, however, Juliana speaks. The extent of the pain she feels is directly proportionate to her use of voice: she speaks when she feels 'meast sar'. In Juliana's case, language does not crumble in the face of physical pain; rather, it is strengthened. The anchoress shifts her focus from Juliana's felt pain to the potency of Juliana's voice.

Juliana's agency in defining her spectacle persists. As in *Seinte Katerine*, a torture-wheel is devised, and its potential for agony is spectated before a body experiences pain inside it (p. 51). Unlike Katherine, however, Juliana experiences the horrors of the wheel. Her body reaches the ultimate state of brokenness:

Ant heo, as þe deouel spured ham to donne, duden hit unsperliche; þet ha bigon to breoken al as þet isteledde irn strac hire in oueral, from þe top to þe tan, áá as hit turnde, tolimedde hire ant leac lið ba ant lire; bursten hire banes ant þet meari bearst ut, imenget wið blode. Þer me mahte iseon alre sorhene meast, þe i þet stude stode.
(pp. 51-53)

Again, there is a reference to Juliana's pain, though here it is from the witness' perspective, and not her own sensation: to the viewers who 'i þet stude stode', she experiences the worst possible human suffering. Such brokenness is not the anchoritic reader's final sight of Juliana, however. Juliana's body is broken only to be reformed, reassembled after its horrific disintegration, with all her pain wiped away. An 'engel of heouene' sweeps down, and 'bursten hire bondes, ant breken alle clane'. Juliana emerges 'fisch-hal': 'ant heo, ase fisch-hal as þah ha nefde nohwer hurtes ifelet, feng to þonki þus godd wið honden up aheuene' (p. 53). The early Middle English author's striking 'fish-whole' image does not seem to be in the Latin version in MS Bodley 285 (p. 52). Fishes would have been pervasive in the anchoress' image-based vocabulary, given that this is mentioned as a staple food in her diet in Aelred's regime (648-649). A fish-body is characterized by its symmetry and unbroken skin, emphasizing Juliana's wholeness.⁴⁸ And, much like a slippery fish, Juliana slips out of the grasp of any spectator who attempts to define her spectacle of torture. Christ's body is an open dovecote; Juliana's fish-whole body, on the other hand, does not invite affective entrance.

⁴⁸ The thirteenth-century anchoress' potential use of fish imagery resonates with Julian of Norwich's image of the spreading blood on Christ's forehead as herring scales (p. 147). Julian draws attention to the rough texture of a fish's body, whereas the author of *Seinte Iuliane* foregrounds the fish-body's wholeness. For more on Julian's use of this imagery, see Laurie A. Finke, *Feminist Theory, Women's Writing* (Ithaca, 1992), p. 97.

The wholeness of Juliana's body is again threatened, this time by fire.

Juliana sees the fire while she is bound within it. But, like Katherine, she turns her gaze to Heaven, and speaks to Christ:

Eleusius þe hwile, lette his men makien a muche fur mid alle, ant bed binden hire swa þe fet ant te honden ant keasten hire into þe brune cwic to forbearnen. As ha lokede up ant seh þis lei leiten, biheolt towart heouene, wið honden aheuene, ant þus to Crist cleopede [...]
(pp. 59-61)

She uses her voice to implore Jesus to keep her within 'ehsiðe': 'Thesu, mi selhðe, ne warp þu me nawt ut of þin ehsiðe; bihald me ant help me' (p. 61). Juliana knows that, unlike the impotent Eleusius, Christ always maintains his lovers within his sight. In response, she gazes up at him, implicitly enticing the anchoress to do the same.⁴⁹ If this enticement by the saint herself is not enough, the anchoress also sees the horrifying results of incorrect spectatorship. Although Christ cools the boiling pot for Juliana after she calls to Him, it remains hot enough to kill the pagan spectators (p. 63).⁵⁰ This passage on the boiling liquid has a powerful correspondence to *Sainte Katherine*, when the pieces of broken wheel fly into the masses, slaughtering the pagans. An even stronger deterrent to weak spectatorship is Eleusius himself. Throughout the legend, the reeve Eleusius is vulnerable to pain and dismemberment, vulnerable to the spectacle of Juliana. From his first view of Juliana, he is hurt by the sight of her beauty:

As he biseh ant biheold hire lufsume leor, lilies ilicnesse ant rudi ase rose, ant under hire nebscheft al se freolice ischapel, weorp a sic as a wiht þet sare were iwundet—his heorte feng to heaten, ant his meari mealten; þe rawen rahten of

⁴⁹ In the Latin version, the Juliana who speaks is tearful (p. 60); the absence of tears in the early Middle English version further underscores her composure in the midst of torture.

⁵⁰ See further Salih (2001), pp. 79-80.

luue þurh euch lið of his limes—ant inwið bearnde of brune swa ant cwakede
as of calde, þet him þuhte in his þonc þet ne bede he i þe worlt nanes cunnes
blisse bute hire bodi ane, to wealden hire wið wil efter þet he walde [...]
(pp. 17-19)

As noted in Chapter 3, he is wounded by lust, an erratic wounding that contrasts with the power of the anchoress' penitential self-wounding. This passage in *Seinte Iulienne* is intriguing in its description of the sensations of desire: Eleusius is at once wounded, hot, melted, and shivering. His affective and physical wholeness is already in jeopardy. The mere sight of Juliana begins the steady destruction of his body, his heart, and, eventually, his soul in the throes of Hell. As she continues to refuse his advances, Eleusius attempts to see Juliana in pain. But it is his own agony and self-annihilation that the anchoritic reader sees.

When Juliana is unaffected by the 'brune-wallinde bres' (p. 25), Eleusius demands that she be taken out of his sight:

Eleusius warð þa wod, ant nuste hwet seggen; ah hehte swiðe don hire ut of
his eh-sihðe, ant dreaien into dorc-hus to prisunes pine.
(p. 27)

Eleusius needs Juliana to be taken out of sight 'swiðe'.⁵¹ He even orders men to 'lokin' to check that Juliana is still alive in the dungeon, apparently unable to bear this sight himself (p. 45). The suffering inflicted on Eleusius by the spectacle of Juliana becomes even more obvious as the legend progresses towards its end. As mentioned in Chapter 3, he himself is torn apart, first ripping his clothes (p. 63), and then being literally dismembered by animals feasting on carrion (pp. 69-71).⁵² The ripping apart

⁵¹ See further Salih (2001), p. 81.

⁵² See further Wogan-Browne (1994), p. 178; Salih (1999), p. 106, and (2001), p. 92.

of his clothes notably coincides with a plea for Juliana to be taken out of his ‘ehsihðe’, unable to bear the sight of her any longer.

The *Katherine Group* hagiographies are texts which hermetically seal themselves from affective penetration. They repel any attempt at passive affective engagement with the pain in the texts. Through this spectatorship based on defamiliarization, the anchoress reading the hagiographies translates pain into bliss, violence into beauty, and brokenness into healing. She reads the indications of God’s beauty signified within the handmaidens’ torture, from the image of burnt bodies as lilies upon roses, to the mouthpiece of God speaking out in the midst of agony. Such reading techniques are inevitably disturbing for the modern reader. But the thirteenth-century anchoress uses these legends to learn to spectate correctly, and in so doing, to learn how to perform her Lover’s will on earth. This brings the chapter to its next section, on the spectatorship and performance of the Crucifixion. Whilst the hagiographies push the anchoress away, scenes of the Crucifixion compel her in.

III. The Crucifixion Scene

There was a profound desire among medieval devotees not only to spectate the Crucifixion from a distance, but also to communicate and to participate with Christ in his pain.⁵³ For the thirteenth-century anchoress, Christ’s betrothed, such participation and communication with Christ was of pressing importance. The anchorhold was a

⁵³ Gibson has observed that the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries saw the existence of a crucifix that was designed to respond to penitents. The ‘Rood of Grace’, ‘from the Cistercian Abbey of Boxley in Kent [...] had been designed by means of “certain engines and old wires” to nod its head, move its eyes, and to shed tears in response to the prayers of penitents’. See Gibson (1989), p. 15.

space that immersed the anchoress in the suffering body of Christ. Chapter 2 noted that the pyx containing Christ's Flesh, embodied in the Eucharistic wafer, was visually accessible to the anchoress, yet remained out of reach. The visual presence of His flesh is alluded to early in Part I of *Ancrene Wisse*, when the author tells the anchoress to 'þenche[ð] o Godes flesch ant on his deorewurðe blod, þet is abuuþe þe hehe weoued' (7: 14-15). Christ's flesh is constantly in the anchoress' sight: the author refers to the moment the priest 'heueð up Godes licome' (12: 207), an allusion to the priest raising the host above his head.⁵⁴ The signified shines through the *sacramentum* in this incarnational image: it is Christ's very 'licome' that is raised above the priest's head. Visual sights are reinforced by the anchoress' imaginative construction of his suffering flesh. She must imagine his blood-soaked body on the Cross (11: 151-152), and she must 'þenche o Godes rode, ase muchel as ha eauer con mest oðer mei, ant of his derue pine' (13-14: 248-249). As mentioned in previous chapters, the *Wohunge*-author tells the anchoress to 'þenc as tah he heng biside þe blodi upo rode' (fol. 133ra; p. 38, ll. 653-654). Through both her physical eyes and the eyes of the heart, the anchoress always sees Christ in his pain.

Seeing Christ's tormented body everywhere she looks, she also has a need to participate in His pain. Her participation in His suffering, encapsulated in the Crucifixion scene, is the definition of her penitential existence. The anchoresses form the third and best category of holy life on earth in Part VI of *Ancrene Wisse*: those who hang with Christ on the Cross (134: 82-84). The *Ancrene Wisse*-author envisages the anchoress' penitential existence as one where she feels the same pain as Christ,

⁵⁴ See Stevenson (2010), p. 72. Millett suggests that 'the reference is to the solemn elevation of the consecrated Host in the sight of the congregation (as opposed to the small elevation before the consecration), a practice first sanctioned by a synod of Paris in 1215'. See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II: 1/ 207.

beside Him. The anchoress must always see Christ's pain throughout her liturgical and penitential performances; but more than this, she must strive towards feeling His pain with him, as this is the key to her salvation. Her penitence involves a non-literal mimetic experience of His suffering. Spectatorship transforms into attempted participation and communication with Christ, the greatest performer-of-pain.

Unlike Aelred, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author does not dedicate a significant proportion of the guide to portraying the Crucifixion. He must assume that the anchoress receives such portrayals elsewhere: liturgical performance, sermons, conversations with her confessor, and meditations. *Ancrene Wisse* is only a small fraction of the anchoress' much wider reading programme. But he does offer her some portrayals of the Crucifixion, the most chronological of which is in Part IV:

Ouer alle oþre þohtes, in alle ower passius þencheð eauer in wardliche upo Godes pinen, þet te worldes wealdent walde for his þrealles þolien swucche schendlikes: hokeres, buffez, spatlunge, blindfeallunge, þornene crununge þet set him i þe heued swa þet te blodi strundes striken adun ant leueden dun to þer eorðe; his swete bodi ibunden naket to þe hearde piler, ant ibeate swa þet tet deorewurðe blod ron on euche halue; þet attri drunch þet me him 3ef þa him þurste o rode; hare heafde sturunge upon him þa heo on hokerunge gredden se lude, 'Lo her þe healde oþre; lo hu he healeð nu ant helpeð him seoluen!'
(71: 139-148)

This is a compact Crucifixion scene. It enumerates Christ's pains and the visual effect on his body with an insistent absence of conjunctions ('hokeres, buffez, spatlunge, blindfeallunge, þornene crununge þet set him i þe heued swa þet te blodi strundes striken adun ant leueden dun to þer eorð'). It situates the naked Christ bound on the pillar, and then describes briefly the beating with the resultant running blood, and the bitter gall he is forced to drink to quench his thirst. The passage also voices the words

of the mockers: ‘Lo her þe healde oþre; lo hu he healeð nu ant helpað him seoluen!’ Pivotal moments, such as Christ being raised on to the Cross, Longinus’ wounding and the Saviour’s death, are left out of this portrayal. This condensed passage aims only to maintain the Crucifixion within the anchoress’ thinking: ‘þencheð eauer inwardliche upo Godes pinen’. Situated in Part IV, the part dedicated to rationalizing and categorizing her various temptations, this passage places the Crucifixion scene and the anchoress’ penitential existence in close proximity to one another. She ruminates upon and uses this brief Crucifixion scene as part of her penitential progression.

The *Ancrene Wisse*-author had already encouraged the anchoress to apply the Crucifixion scene to her penitential existence in Part II. As discussed in Chapter 1, the author invokes Christ’s suffering on Calvary in an apparent tangential discussion. Since the author progresses through Christ’s suffering via each sense, the ‘scene’ created is necessarily fragmented and non-chronological. Beginning with smell, the author recounts Christ’s suffering through his ‘nease’: ‘þer leien ofte licomes irotet buuen eorðe, ant stunken swiðe stronge; he, as he hongede, mahte habben hare bread, wið al his oðer wa, riht amidden his nease’ (42: 847-850). This is followed by the suffering through his ‘sihðe’, by which ‘he seh his deorewurðe moder teares, ant Sein Iuhanes Euuangeliste, ant te oðre Maries’, along with the flight of his disciples. He also weeps through his eyes, and has them ‘schendlac iblintfeallet’ (42: 854-856). His mouth is beaten by the ‘Giws’, with ‘hare dreori fustes’, and ‘Amid þe muð me gurde him sumcheare inohreaðe as me tobeot his cheken ant spitte him o scarne’ (42: 860-

863); his tongue ‘smahte galle’ (42: 866).⁵⁵ Through his ears, he hears ‘al þe edwit ant te upbrud, al þe scarn ant al þe scheome þet eare mahte iheren’ (44: 941-942). The author finally reaches that most central sense of ‘felunge’, which, as investigated in Chapter 1, is understood to be of both a physical and affective nature. The spear pierces the Lord on his skin, but also in his ‘seli sawle’ (45: 959). As seen in Chapter 1, Christ’s senses are mapped onto the anchoress’ senses. The bodies of Christ-the-performer and anchoress-the-spectator, if not unified, are aligned, as the anchoress attempts to create a sophisticated, non-literal imitation of His suffering.

Such portrayal of Christ’s suffering through a series of textual *tableaux* is also evident in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* and *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*. These texts enumerate a series of particular moments of Christ’s pain. Whilst the images are part of a wider syntactical framework, each image also has its own signifying potential. In *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, the anchoress uses these images to pray, to ‘bidde’, in a passage partly quoted in Chapter 2:

ich bidde 7 biseche þe wið inwarde heorte þurh þin akennednesse ine meidenes licame of þe holi Goste. 7 þuruh þin iborenesse wið uten bruche of hire bodie þurh al þet ðu tawhtest. 7 þoledest for sunfule in eorðe. þurh þine vif wunden. 7 þe eadie flode þet of ham fledde. þurh ðe irene neies 7 þe þornene crune. 7 þuruh þe pinen 7 þe schomen 7 þi deorewurðe deað o ðe rode 7 þurh þe ilke rode ihalewed of þine deorewurðe limen. ðet þu on hire milde liche streihtest. 7 þine moderes ream 7 sein i[o]hanes soruwe þo þu somnedest ham ase sune 7 moder. uor rewðe of þine pinen 7 þuruh þine blisfule ariste þe þridde dai of deaðe. [...]
(fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 4-18)

Through (‘þuruh’) each moment of pain, the anchoress attempts to gain forgiveness for her sins. She sees each image of pain, but also looks beyond it, through it, towards

⁵⁵ For a discussion of the representation of Jews in medieval Passion narratives, see Bestul (1996), pp. 69-110.

Christ and her potential salvation. A more extensive passage in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, also quoted in Chapter 2, creates a series of textual *tableaux* for the anchoress to view and appropriate:

Ich bide þe 7 biseche þe 7 halsi 3if me howeð hit; bi his flech founge of þine eadie bodie . bi his iborenesse. bi his eadi festunge iþe wildernesse . bi þe herde hurtes 7 þe unwurðe woves ðet he for us sunful willeliche þolede. bi his deað-fule grure. 7 bi his blodie swote. bi his eadi beoden in hulles him one. bi his nimunge . 7 bindunge. bis his ledunge forð. bi al þet me him demde. bi his cloðes wrixlung. Nu red. nu hwit. him on hokerunge. bi his scornunge. 7 bi his spotlung. 7 bufettunge. 7 his heliunge. bi þe þornene crununge. bi ðe kine3erde of rode. him of scornunge. bi his owune rode. on his softe schuldres. so herde druggunge. bi þe dulte neiles. bi þe sore wunden; bi þe holie rode. bi his side openunge . bi his blodi Rune þet ron inne monie studen . In umbe keoruunge . in his blod swetunge. in his pine þornene crununge. erest in his one hond 7 seoððen in his oðer. olast in his side þurlunge wið ute sore wunde. 3et ase halewen weneð. þet to-ðe blod-rune. was in his ereste. nimunge in þe feste bindunge. þet tet blod wrong ut et his eadie neiles. ich halsi þe þet ðu biseche him bi his schome. bi his sor. bi his deað on rode. bi al þet he seide wrohte 7 þolede in eorðe .
(fols 127r-127v; pp. 17-18, ll. 40-67)

Each moment of bodily and affective agony is again formed by a single *tableau*.

Whereas in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* the command is ‘þuruh’, here it is ‘bi’. Each moment of pain is seen by the anchoress; each image is then consumed ruminatively, so that ‘bi’ it she can gain absolution for her sins from Christ. Denise Nowakowski Baker’s commentary on Julian of Norwich is applicable to these passages in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* and *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*. As Baker remarks: ‘Julian reads her vision like a picture rather than a story’, and her ‘style’, Baker says, ‘achieves the intimacy of a photographic close-up’.⁵⁶ In these two *Wooing Group* texts, the anchoress is given a series of photographic, static images for her spiritual use; they are not detailed enough to be ‘close-ups’, but are comparable with photographic still images of pain. A parallel can be drawn here with the Passion Cycles in thirteenth-century wall

⁵⁶ Baker (1994), p. 49.

paintings. The church wall may have provided a wealth of still images of pain for the anchoress to ruminate upon: the anguish of her Lover's capture and torture, his Crucifixion, and the torment of the spectators of his Passion within the painting. Like *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooring Group*, wall paintings offered a series of *tableaux* telling the story of the Passion, documenting the pain of each moment. Whilst the images were often placed collectively to form a continuous narrative, each image could also be contemplated separately, ruminated upon in the place of a text. Wall paintings did offer aids to 'harassed' parish priests trying to accommodate the illiterate masses, but it cannot then be assumed that all wall paintings were 'intended for quick visual assimilation and not for serious digestion'.⁵⁷ This was dependent on the spectator: an anchoress, trained in ruminative reading, in Anselmian 'deep and slow' prayer, could have derived a wealth of meditative detail from any wall paintings she saw before entering the anchorhold, or any she may have been able to see through her window to the church; as seen in the narrative about the Clairvaux monk, she enjoyed a clear view.

The continuous narrative formed from individual, isolable *tableaux* is best exemplified by the wall paintings in the chancel of St. Mary's Church in Brook, Kent (c. 1260-1280); part of the Passion Cycle on the East Wall is available in this thesis as Appendix III.⁵⁸ The Cycle is formed by individual scenes of the Passion, each

⁵⁷ E. Clive Rouse, *Medieval Wall Paintings* (Buckinghamshire, 1991), p. 13.

⁵⁸ The commentary on these wall paintings and the photographs in Appendix III are my own. The approximate dates for all these wall-paintings follow those given by Anne Marshall in her 'Painted Church' project: <www.paintedchurch.org/> [accessed 18th August 2012]. None of the churches discussed here had anchorholds. They are cited only as examples of the kind of wall paintings a thirteenth-century anchoress may have seen.

enclosed in a roundel and organized in four tiers.⁵⁹ Each roundel portrays a painful moment in the narrative of the Passion: the Agony in the Garden (on the south side of the East Wall); the Betrayal (beginning on the north side of the East Wall); possibly Christ's trials; the Flagellation; the Carrying of the Cross; possibly the Crucifixion itself; Joseph of Arimathea asking Pilate for Christ's body; possibly the Deposition; the Entombment; and the Three Marys by Christ's tomb. As can be seen in Appendix III, each roundel functions as its own signifying unit, but simultaneously connects to the other roundels to form a web narrative.

The panel on the South Wall in St Michael's Church in Great Tew, Oxfordshire (c. 1290), also available in Appendix III, shows a Passion sequence in layers, taking the viewer progressively through the Passion narrative: the Betrayal, the Crowning with Thorns, the Flagellation, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion, the Deposition, and the Entombment, followed by the Harrowing of Hell, the Resurrection, and the 'Noli me Tangere' episode (John 20:17).⁶⁰ The South Wall in St Michael's of Great Tew enables a spectatorship that moves in more than one direction: the viewer can follow the chronological Passion narrative across the layers, but she can also move seamlessly from one layer to another.⁶¹ For example, the Crucifixion scene is placed directly below the Flagellation, and the Flagellation scene in turn is placed across from the Crowning with Thorns. The viewer can move from

⁵⁹ The wall paintings on the East Wall were partially damaged when the window was enlarged in 1280, noted in Roger Rosewell, 'A Guide to the Medieval Wall Paintings of St Mary's Church Brook, Kent' (unpublished pamphlet), pp. 4-5.

⁶⁰ Marshall notes that the 'Noli me Tangere' image is 'rare': <www.paintedchurch.org/>. See also Ross (1997), pp. 58-59.

⁶¹ Preceding the Betrayal, there are also *tableaux* showing the Entry into Jerusalem, and possibly, the Washing of the Feet. At the top of the South Wall there may have been an image of St Michael Weighing Souls (derived from information provided in the church).

one moment of Christ's torture to another without strict adherence to the narrative sequence. The Deposition is also directly underneath the Carrying of the Cross. Instead of reading from left to right to follow the story, the viewer could also move downwards, from Christ's slow and painful walk immediately to the point that his dead body is removed from the Cross.

The South Wall of the nave of St Mary's Church in West Chiltington, Sussex (c. 1250-1275) moves the viewer progressively through the Passion narrative along one layer, through a series of *tableaux* of pain: after the Entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, and Christ's washing of the disciples' feet, there is the Betrayal depicting Judas giving Christ the kiss, the Flagellation, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion itself, and ending with the angel at the tomb. Part of this linear, one-layer Passion narrative is also available in Appendix III. Underneath the Carrying of the Cross, however, is a painting of the Resurrection, allowing the viewer to forge a connection between the two separate moments of Christian history. As discussed in Chapter 2, the anchoress reading *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* has both joyful Queen and grieving mother parallel in her meditative imagination. A viewer of the West Chiltington nave internalizes Christ's anguish and glory in the same sight.⁶²

The affective impact of these wall paintings must not be underestimated. The Deposition *tableau* on the Great Tew wall conveys a female figure's tenderness as she holds the dead body of Christ; a male figure seems to almost embrace Him as he

⁶² Marshall, <www.paintedchurch.org/>.

lowers the body.⁶³ The painting has been partially damaged, but on one side there is an open palm, suggesting a grieving figure, possibly John the Evangelist. In the Entombment *tableau* of the same Church, the male figures — likely to be Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus holding the lid of the tomb — have bowed and tilted heads; the Joseph figure, in particular, gently touches Christ's Feet, and his eyes are unmistakably sorrowful. In the Betrayal image in St Mary's Church in West Chiltington, Jesus's eyes clearly communicate fear and sorrow; the sadness in the Crucifixion image is made clear by the limp figure of Christ flanked by the Mary and John, also with drooping postures. As Marshall has further remarked, the Passion narrative in West Chiltington is 'one of the most accomplished, not merely in terms of technical mastery, but also in the immediacy of its emotional impact'. The 'large eyes and severely downturned mouth' in the Carrying of the Cross, for instance, show the 'sense of painful, forced progress', as can be seen in Appendix III.⁶⁴ The process of viewing the pain in wall paintings may be mapped onto the anchoress' use of the *Wooing Group*: individual moments of pain, within a wider narrative framework, are absorbed by the anchoress, as she moves towards Christ and the possibility of redemption. Each roundel or panel, like each textual image, becomes a *tableau* of pain on which the anchoress focuses. The anchoress takes the *tableau* into her heart, and nurtures her affective stirrings in response to the pain inscribed in the meditative image or on the church wall.

Ureisun of God does not provide a series of *tableaux* to be appropriated in the same way, but it is dominated by one major *tableau vivant*, possibly supported by a

⁶³ Based on information provided in the Church itself and on Marshall's website, these figures are likely to be the Virgin Mary or the Magdalene, and Joseph of Arimathea.

⁶⁴ Marshall, <www.paintedchurch.org/>.

physical image in the anchorhold: Christ hanging on the Cross.⁶⁵ The entire meditation centres on the anchoress' pursuit of Christ's touch as he hangs there. She does not remain a stationary spectator of his outstretched body, but attempts to move towards him. First, she only views Christ's beauty along with the angels, in the invocation of Matthew 18:10 quoted in Chapter 2: 'te engles euer biholdeð þe. ne ne beoð heo neuer ful. forto logen on þe.' (fol. 123v; p. 5, ll. 1-10). The term 'scheawen' is also later used (fol. 126r; p. 9, l. 146). Established as a spectator beholding/looking at the images shown to her, the anchoress imagines watching Christ stretching out on the Cross: 'hwi ne bihold ich hu þu streihtest þe for me on þe rode?' (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 47-48). She then imagines tactile contact: 'hwi ne worpe ich me bitweonen þeoilke ermes so swiðe wide to spredde [...]' (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 48-50). The act of viewing might now grow into an act of touching; the anchoress desires to leave behind her role as spectator of the stretching Christ, and to enclose herself in his arms. With the likening of Christ to a mother, the anchoress is cast as a child among many others. The anchoress acknowledges the presence of 'deorelinges', all involved in this desire for tactile contact with Christ (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 48-54).

Christ himself does not remain stationary on the Cross, a *tableau vivant* unmoving in front of the anchoress. The anchoress watches him reach down towards the Virgin Mary, and imagines Christ's tormented figure speaking out in the short passage quoted in Chapter 2 (fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 147-9). She observes the performer Christ reach down and speak to his mother, the key spectator of his torture. At this moment, the anchoress' focus also shifts from the performer to the spectators. In both *Ureisun of God* and *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, the anchoress watches John the

⁶⁵ As noted in earlier chapters, Aelred allows such an image in the anchorhold (659).

Evangelist in his own tearful spectatorship. In *Ureisun of God*, the anchoress sees ‘sein iohanes ewangelistes weopinde otwo half wið sorhfule sikes’ (fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 154-155). As with the image of the pained spectators in the Deposition and Entombment panels in Great Tew, the anchoress views and hears John’s weeping and his sorrowful sighs. And in the anchoress’ reading of *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, the sights and sounds of the spectators’ agony reverberate in the anchorhold: ‘[...] þine moderes ream 7 sein i[o]hanes soruwe þo þu somnedest ham ase sune 7 moder’ (fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 15-17). The enclosed, sealed anchorhold provides not only the physical space in which pain occurs, but also the place in which the sound of pain resonates—not unlike a theatrical stage. The anchoress must absorb not only the visual and tactile elements of the suffering scene, but also the sounds of pain. She undergoes an almost complete sensory immersion in the Passion, attempting to see and touch the crucified Christ, and hear the sounds of pain surrounding him.⁶⁶ In seeing and hearing the anguished spectators of the Passion, the anchoress learns to adopt their despairing gestures and their agonised cries. As asserted by Paul Binski on visual images in the later medieval centuries, with the Crucifixion as a ‘barometer of changing attitudes to Christ’s incarnation and suffering’, the ‘affective gestures and expressions of despair’ of the multiplying witnesses ‘marked out a mode of response relevant to the audiences of such images’.⁶⁷ She learns to imitate John’s ‘weeping’ and ‘sorrowful sighs’ as she immerses herself in the pain of the Passion.

Wohunge provides the most detailed and visually explicit chronological sequence of the Crucifixion found anywhere in the *Ancrene Wisse* Group. It combines

⁶⁶ As noted in Chapter 3, she does not taste his blood during the Passion, though she does taste his sweetness at the opening of both *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge*.

⁶⁷ Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (London, 1996), p. 45.

all the aspects of the anchoress' spectatorship of Christ's pain studied so far in this chapter: images and *tableaux* of his pain, tactile contact with his body, and the observation of other spectators. Before entering into the chronological sequence of the Crucifixion, the meditation includes images of Christ's suffering for the anchoress to absorb in her meditation, foreshadowing the more explicit and detailed scene in the meditation's second half.⁶⁸ One example is in the anchoress' meditation on lovability. Christ supersedes all in his magnanimity, since he gave his own heart's blood: 'þu swete iesu for me 3ef þeseluen. þat tin ahne heorte blod ne cuðes tu wiðhalde' (fol. 128ra; p. 22, ll. 92-96). There is also the tender moment in which the anchoress images the *tableau* of the infant Christ feeling hunger, suckling from his responsive mother (fol. 130rb; p. 29, ll. 331-334). The anchoress then images his worsening 'hunger-pangs' and poverty as a man:

Bote hwen þu eldere was. þu þat fuhel ofluht. fisch iflod folc on eorð fedes;
þoledes for wone of mete moni hat hungre as clerkes witerliche in godspel
reden. 7 tu þat heuene 7 eorðe 7 al þis werld wrahtes. nauedes in al þis werld
hwer þu o þin ahen þi heaued mihtes reste.
(fol. 130rb; p. 29, ll. 334-342)

Images of his poverty then transfer onto the Cross. He hangs with nowhere to hide, as in his poverty he found nowhere to rest (fol. 130rb; p. 29, ll. 345-350). Moments of Christ's pain are given to the anchoress for affective absorption. From the contemplation of Christ's shame (fols 130va-131rb; pp. 30-32, ll. 365-450), the anchoress then enters the chronological Crucifixion narrative discussed in Chapter 2. Christ's torment during the Crucifixion is recreated in exhaustive detail. The anchoress spectates, and imaginatively participates, in every moment of the Passion:

⁶⁸ Chapter 2 referred to Millett's remark on the two-fold structure of *Wohunge*. See Millett in Chewning, ed. (2009), pp. 26-47 (p. 26).

from Christ's blood-sweat in the Garden of Gethsemane and the 'earst niminge' when 'iudas scharioth brohte þa helle bearnes', up to His death and violation by Longinus' spear (fols 131rb-132ra; p. 32, ll. 451-467 - p. 35, l. 546).

The anchoress watches and hears this entire coherent sequence— differently from the rapid series of images and tableaux she views and consumes in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* and *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*—, and her affective participation in each moment is clear. But where, and who, is she? As the wide and vivid sequence progresses, it becomes apparent that the anchoress constantly shifts position. On the one hand, in the section on shame immediately preceding the chronological Crucifixion scene, she assumes the voices in Luke 23:18, of those taunting and jeering Christ: 'heng heng þat treitur iesus on rode. Heng him o rode. 7 lese us Baraban' (fol. 130va; p. 30, ll. 384-386).⁶⁹ Yet on the other, she seems to be among the weeping friends who accompany Him, since she also weeps as she observes his pain, her eyes overflowing with water (fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 498-500).

As touched upon in Chapter 2, there is also a persistent adjustment in pronoun use between 'þu' and 'he', suggesting that she is engaged in a kind of wave motion in her spectatorship, constantly moving forwards to Christ only to be forcibly pushed back.⁷⁰ At first, she refers to her lover as 'þu' (fols 130rb-130vb; pp. 29-31, ll. 345-402), except when she assumes the voice of his torturers. When she quotes Christ's voice in Scripture (fol. 130vb; p. 31, ll. 403-404), she first addresses Christ as 'þu', but then states, 'As tah *he* seide' (fol. 130vb; p. 31, l. 412, emphasis added), using a

⁶⁹ See also Mark 15 and Matthew 27.

⁷⁰ This change in pronoun use has also been noted by Brown (2009), pp. 76-77.

common formula for the glossing of scripture found frequently in *Ancrene Wisse*.⁷¹ After this use of the third-person, the anchoress returns to ‘þu’, until referring to Christ as the king who hangs between two thieves (fol. 131ra; pp. 31-32, ll. 427-436). Returning to ‘tu’ (fol. 131ra; pp. 32, l. 438), she later reverts back to the third person after her heart breaks (fol. 131va; p. 33, l. 491). A brief use of the second person (‘te’, ‘þine’, ‘þe’ (fol. 131vb; p. 33, ll. 499-502)) changes back to ‘him’ (fol. 131vb; p. 33, l. 503). This particular return to ‘he’ also coincides with the anchoress’ observation of the mechanics of torture. Christ’s body is almost reduced to an item handled by the torturers, in an invocation of Psalm 21:18:

A nu haue þai broht him þider. A nu raise þai up þe rode. Setis up þe warh treo. A nu nacnes mon mi lef A. nu driuen ha him up wið swepes 7 wið schurges. A hu liue i for reowðe þat seo mi mi lefmon up o rode. 7 swa to drahen hise limes þat i mai in his bodi euch ban tellen.
(fol. 131vb; pp. 33-34, ll. 502-511)

The anchoress then again returns to the second person (fol. 131vb; p. 34, l. 511), though this is followed by a rapid alternation: third person, second person, then third person again (fols 131vb, 132ra; p. 34, ll. 517, 523, 534). Finally, on entering the Wounded Heart, the anchoress can mercifully again refer to her lover directly, as ‘þu’ (fol. 132ra; p. 35, l. 547).

As studied in Chapter 2, after the anchoress’ brief entrance into the Heart, she is famously transported to the physical, touchable Cross (fol. 132va; p. 36, ll. 590-3). Watson has noted the etymology-based punning of ‘sperred’ on both the Old English

⁷¹ See, for example, II, 32: 466; III, 50: 112; IV, 70: 106; VI, 133: 62, VII, 153: 350.

‘sparrian’ and the early Middle English ‘speren’.⁷² This melds pain and enclosure in a replication of the anchoress’ existence. Echoing the penitential imagery of Bernard and Part VI of *Ancrene Wisse*, this moment in the meditation allows the anchoress to progress imaginatively towards a bodily hanging with Christ on the Cross, the place where she can most readily feel his pain by his side. This is her ultimate penitential goal, underpinning her constant attempts to look at her Lover, watch his torture, feel his flesh, and penetrate the secrets of his body. Though crucified, the anchoress finds that in seeing her Lover hanging beside her, expressed in the indicative tense, she is relieved of her pain: ‘þe muchele swetnesse of þe; reaues me fele of pine’ (fol. 132va; p. 36, ll. 600-602). In progressing from a spectator of the Passion to a performer of it, she finds relief.

IV. Fallen Souls

Hanging with Christ, the anchoress is in a privileged, exclusive penitential position, a pinnacle of spiritual attainment that few can reach.⁷³ Mills has drawn attention to the ways in which medieval texts can construct and refer to ‘penitential communities’.⁷⁴ The anchoress assumes a unique role in the wider lay penitential community. She is part of the community, situated within a town and praying for its members.⁷⁵ Yet she is also more susceptible to a sinful fall than the lay population which demands her intercession: as the *Ancrene Wisse*-author warns her, there is always a stronger wind

⁷² Nicholas Watson, ‘The Methods and Objectives of Thirteenth-Century Anchoritic Devotion’, *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England*, IV, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 132-153 (p. 150, n. 37).

⁷³ However, as explored in Chapter 3, she is not wounded in love.

⁷⁴ Mills (2005), p. 31ff.

⁷⁵ The anchoress’ unique position in town life has been beautifully portrayed in Chris Newby’s 1993 film, *Anchoress*.

higher up a mountain (68: 1-3). In her uniquely marginal position, the anchoress is both superior interlocutor and degraded sinner. When the *Ancrene Wisse*-author provides a scene of Hell's pain in Part IV, the anchoress is kept safely separate from the sinner who tormented her on Earth. God's voice is heard enticing the anchoress to 'loke' at the suffering of that wretched soul as he is beaten with the devil's hammers. It is a safe, protected form of spectatorship; safer and more comfortable, in fact, than her spectatorship of/performance in the Crucifixion. She becomes an infant spectator. In an elaboration of Psalm 57:11, her spectatorship of Hell is likened to that of a child who, after bumping into something, becomes overjoyed when an adult indulgently hits the object (71: 128-131). God is said to use these parenting techniques in the Hereafter:

Godd schal o Domesdei don as þah he seide, 'Dohter, hurte þes þe? Dude he þe spurnen i wreaððe, oðer in heorte sar, i scheome, oðer in eani teone? Loke, dohter, loke!' he seið, 'hu he hit schal abuggen!' Ant þer 3e schule seon bunkin him wið þes deofles betles þet wa bið him þes liues. 3e schulen beo wel ipaiet þrof [...].
(71: 131-136)

He controls the perception of the infantilised anchoress, and she is securely sealed in Heaven, insulated from the sufferers in Hell. Unlike the Crucifixion scene, there is no danger of the anchoress' participation in the Hell-based suffering.

But she is not always so safe. In *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, the terrified anchoress declares her incomparable sinfulness: 'ich of alle sunfulle am on mest ifuled of sunne ase ich drede' (fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 3-4). As seen in Chapter 2, she also retreats from God's 'ehsihðe' early in this meditation, since her 'ateliche' and 'grisliche' sins give her fear ('ugge') of His gaze (fol. 128v; p. 11, ll. 35-37). She and God spectate her degradation in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*: as a sinner, the anchoress is

rendered utterly inferior, and she, Christ's betrothed, is not spared any sense of worthlessness. Regardless of her status as Christ's betrothed and God's child, the threat of pain is always with her, imaged in Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse* as Christ's sword held menacingly above her head (150: 220-222). It is this threat of pain that underpins female spectatorship in *Hali Meiðhad*.⁷⁶

The anchoress participates with Christ's pain through affective immersion in and absorption of his suffering. In *Hali Meiðhad*, the female readers are invited to participate in the pain of an entirely different figure: a woman trapped in marriage and motherhood. In this text, the reader witnesses secular pain: unlike the pain of Christ and his devotees in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, and unlike the pain of the saints and the converts in the hagiographies, the pain in *Hali Meiðhad* has no redemptive value. And whereas the hagiographic legends estrange the anchoress so that she can look beyond pain, *Hali Meiðhad* immerses the spectator in the sensation of pain so fully that she can no longer easily distinguish herself from the pained woman she spectates. In this epistle on virginity, the spectator is intended to undergo an embodied simulation of the pain she spectates. As Stanton Garner Jr might say, the spectators 'vicariously reexperience that pain through "a mimetic inhabiting of the suffering body."' In reexperiencing the fallen woman's pain through mimetically inhabiting her body, the spectator is powerfully dissuaded from returning to a life of marriage and child-bearing. The female spectator of *Hali Meiðhad* is unsafe. Unlike Augustine's spectators, she is not seated comfortably and pleasurably. She is

⁷⁶ As discussed in the introduction, a broader audience should be assumed for this text; the ensuing discussion will refer to a 'female reader', rather than to an 'anchoress'.

continually threatened with the possibility that she herself will feel the pain before her.⁷⁷

Hali Meiðhad is devoted to an erasure of the affective borderline between spectator and sufferer, in order to deter the reader from subjecting herself to wedlock and motherhood.⁷⁸ The skill of the author in evoking affective pain stems from his indebtedness to the genre and rhetorical techniques with which he works. Millett has already addressed the issue of *Hali Meiðhad*'s sources. As she cautions, the text's 'originality' has been 'overestimated': 'like *Ancrene Wisse*, it is a skilful rehandling of commonplaces rather than an independent contribution to its subject'.⁷⁹ After establishing various cautions on assuming direct dependency, Millett notes several possible contenders for direct sources.⁸⁰ More broadly, the *Hali Meiðhad*-author works within a 'genre' of virginity literature exposing the *molestiae nuptiarum*, going

⁷⁷ *Hali Meiðhad* has been identified as homiletic or sermonic, as noted in the introduction to this thesis. In his unpublished dissertation on *Hali Meiðhad*, James Edwin Gage suggests: 'one must conclude that it is in a literary form and was intended to be read, though it may actually have been preached from a pulpit either in its present or in some earlier form': '*Hali Meiðhad* and kindred Herefordshire works' (unpublished dissertation, University of Indiana, 1977), p. 136. Hearing the text from a pulpit is likely to have made such embodied simulation of suffering all the more powerful. However, as Gage himself indicates, there is no concrete evidence for this. As Millett observes, it is the only text of the *Katherine Group* to refer to readers rather than listeners. Bella Millett, 'Some Editorial Problems in the Katherine Group', *English Studies*, lxxi (1990), 386-394 (390).

⁷⁸ The female reader of *Hali Meiðhad* does not spectate the suffering of a sinner; sexual sinners are blotted out both of the text and, the author says, from 'liues writ in heouene' (p. 12, ll. 2-6). Apart from a brief reference to the utter dismemberment of women who engage in extramarital sex (p. 10, ll. 23-31), the text's principal concern is in evoking the suffering of married women. As Millett notes, whilst the author at times seems to equate premarital sex with sex in marriage, there is ultimately, in the author's orthodox notions, a difference between the two. Millett, ed. (1982), pp. xxxiii. The *Hali Meiðhad*-author also suggests that sexual sinners can regain salvation through confession and penitence (see p. 10, ll. 23-34).

⁷⁹ Millett, ed. (1982), pp. xxiv. See also Savage and Watson, trans. (1991), p. 224.

⁸⁰ Millett, ed. (1982), xlvi.

back as far as the Church Fathers, and given new impetus in eleventh- and twelfth-century writings.⁸¹ Specific sources will be noted in the course of this analysis.

As the defiled virgin falls, she is subject to a universal gaze:

Pet dreori dede on ende 3eueð þet deaðes dunt. Weila, þet reowðe! Ne acwikeð neauer meiðhad efter þet wunde. Wei! Þe sehe þenne hu þe engles beoð isweamet, þe seoð hare suster se seorhful[l]iche aueallet, ant te deoflen hoppin ant kenchinde beaten honden to[g]ederes, stani were his heorte 3ef ha ne mealte i teares.
(p. 8, ll. 20-25)

Salih has crystallized the uncomfortable level of exposure threatening the concupiscent woman.⁸² This suffocating visibility reveals an array of spectators: not only sorrowful angels who weep and gleeful devils who cackle and hop, but also the reader. There is a parallel passage in *Seinte Marherete* which also draws attention to the affective response of the angelic spectators when a woman loses her virginity: ‘makieð þe engles murne 7 us of mucche murhðe to lahhe se lude, þe seoð ham lihte se lah of se swiðe hehe, from þe heste in heouene to þe laheste in helle’ (p. 34, ll. 14-17).⁸³ The female reader joins the mourning angels in watching this fall. And the author defines the correct affective response of the spectator: the heart must melt in viewing this fall. Otherwise, it is an unfeeling, ‘stani’, heart— recalling the unimpressionable heart made of ‘stone of adamant’ earlier in the text (p. 18, ll. 28-32). *Wohunge* refers to the hardness of a heart that does not melt in remembrance of Christ: ‘Hwat herte is swa hard þet ne mei to melte i þe munegunge of þe?’ (fol. 127rb; p. 20, ll. 6-8). The parallel imagery of stony hearts versus tear-melting is also

⁸¹ Millett, ed. (1982), p. xlvi.

⁸² ‘*Hali Meiðhad* puts the anchoress on stage in a holy theatre: should she fall, she will be cosmically visible’. Salih (2001), p. 76. This thesis would alter the references to ‘theatre’, ‘stage’, and ‘anchoress’.

⁸³ See further Millett, ed. (1982), p. 35, 8/21-5.

found in ‘Les lamentations Nostre Dame’. The failure of affective participation is figured as having a heart harder than rock or stone: ‘Allas! Nu poums ben dire que nus avoms les quers plus durs ke pere’ (Alas! We could well say that we have hearts harder than stone (p. 190)). The anguished Mary, on the other hand, is said to ‘liquify’ or ‘melt’ in tears, using the verbs *moiller* and *fundrer*:

plureit si parfundement ke sembleit qu’ele deveit tute fundrer en lermes e
qu’ele moillout tut le cors sun enfant e la pere en ert tute moillé.
(p. 192)

([she] was weeping so deeply that it seemed that she must be melting in tears; she wetted all the body of her child, and the rocks were all wet.)

The currency of this devotional imagery does not reduce its significance. As studied in the introduction, the heart is a shapeshifter in twelfth- and thirteenth-century devotional texts. A reader of *Hali Meiðhad* is taught to image her heart in different forms: on the one hand, made of stone, and, on the other, liquescent in anguish— like the pourable heart and soul in the *Liber confortatorius*, the alabaster heart broken upon Jesus’s head in the *De institutione inclusarum*, and the heart spilt as water in confessional performance in *Ancrene Wisse*. The reader of *Hali Meiðhad* imagines herself melting in pain as she spectates the suffering of the falling woman; she floods into the performance, as the performance floods outwards, submerging her in pain.

In portraying the pain of lovers’ separation, the author emphasizes their sorrow (‘sorhe’) particularly: ‘Ant eauer, se hare murhðe wes mare to[g]ederes, se þe sorhe is sarre ed te twinnunge’ (p. 14, ll. 2-4). When he portrays the daily drudgery of the married woman, however, he reveals her varied sufferings:

Vnder monnes help, þu schalt sare beon ideruet for his ant for þe worldes luue,
 þe beoð ba swikele; ant wakien i moni care, nawt ane for þe seolf, ase þearf
 Godes spuse, ah schalt for monie oþre, ase wel for þe laðe ofte as for þe leoue;
 ant mare beon idrechet þen ei driuel i þe hus oðer ei ihuret hine; ant tin anes
 dale bruken ofte wið bale ant bitterliche abuggen.
 (p. 14, ll. 18-23)

This all-pervasive anxiety and physical toil occurs within a fixed location, creating a concentrated space for the reader in which pain resonates:

For beo hit nu þet te beo richedom riue, ant tine wide wahes wlonke ant
 weolefule, ant habbe monie vnder þe hirdmen in halle, ant ti were beo þe
 wrað, oðher iwurðe þe lað, swa þet inker eiðer heasci wið oþer, hwet wortlich
 weole mei beo þe wunne? Hwen he bið ute, hauest a3ein his [ham]cume sar
 care ant eie. Hwil he bið et hame, alle þine wide wanes þunched þe to
 nearewe. [...] Hwuch shal beo þe sompnunge bituhen ow i bedde?
 (p. 15, ll. 20-33)

This delineated spatial arena creates a sense of suffocation: ‘wide wahes’ become ‘nearewe’ after a marital dispute. In this constricted space, the married woman, and the reader with her, experience an array of pains:

Þine banes akeð þe ant ti flesch smeorteð þe, þin heorte wiðinne þe swelleð of
 sar grome, ant ti neb utewið tendreð ut of teone.
 (p. 15, ll. 30-32)

Bone-aching and flesh-smarting are combined with a heart swelling in sorrow and a face flushing in anger. And in answering the sardonic question ‘Hwuch shal beo þe sompnunge bituhen ow i bedde?’, the author also expresses the married woman’s slavery into incessant self-disgust and self-annihilation (p. 16, ll. 2-13).⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Her painful entrapment with an undesirable husband is closely based on a parallel passage, noted by Millett, in Jerome’s *Adversus Jovinianum*, quoting Theophrastus. See Millett, ed. (1982), p. 45, 16/11-13.

After portraying the suffering of flesh-defilement, the author images the woman's intricate suffering in pregnancy and childbirth:

Ga we nu forðre, ant loki we hwuch wunne ariseð þrefter i burðerne of bearn,
 hwen þet streon in þe awakeneð ant waxeð, ant hu monie earmðen anan
 awaken[i]ð þerwið, þe wurcheð þe wa inoh, fehteð o þi seolue flesch, ant
 weorrið wið feole weanen o þin ahne cunde. Ði rudie neb schal leanin, ant ase
 gres grenin; þine ehnen schule doskin, ant underneoðe wonnin, ant of þi
 breines turnunge þin heaued aken sare. Inwið i þi wombe, swel in þi butte þe
 bereð þe forð as a weater-bulge, þine þearmes þralunge ant stiches i þi lonke,
 ant i þe lendene sar eche riue; heuinesse in euch lim; þine breostes burþerne o
 þine twa pappes, ant te milc-strunden þe þe[r]of strikeð. Al is wið a
 weolewunge þi wlite ouerwarpen; þi muð is bitter, ant walh al þet tu cheowest;
 ant hwet [mete] se þi mahe hokerliche underueð—þet is, wið unlust—warpeð
 hit eft ut. Inwið al þi weole ant ti weres wunne, forwurðest a wrecche. Þe cares
 aþein þe pinunge þra[h]en bineomeð þe ahtes slepes. Hwen hit þenne þerto
 kimeð, þet sore sorhfulle angoise, þet stronge ant stikinde stiche, þet unroles
 uuel, þet pine ouer pine, þet wondrinde þeomerunge; hwil þu swenchest
 terwið, ant þine deaðes dute, scheome teke þet sar wið [alle] þe alde wifes
 scheome creft þe cunnen of þet wa-sið, hwas help þe bihoueð, ne beo hit
 neauer se uncumelich; ant nede most hit þolien þet te þerin itimeð.
 (p. 17, l. 23 –p. 18, l. 12)

The author seems to have carried, almost verbatim, passages from both Hildebert of Lavardin's (c. 1056- 1133) letter to a recluse, and Osbert of Clare's (fl. 1136) two letters to his niece Cecilia and Ida the nun (Epistles 22 and 40):⁸⁵

His accedunt innumerae formandi seminis molestiae, quae conceptum nuntiant, natura persequuntur. Vultum pallor indicit, caput vertigine fatigatur, renum dolor assiduus, stomachi frequens indignatio. Esuritur etiam inter delicias, et quibusdam nubeculis circumvolitantibus oculi tenebescunt [...].⁸⁶

(Added to this there will form the seed of innumerable annoyances, which announce the foetus, and persecute one's nature. The face is shown to be pale, the head is tired out with dizziness, unceasing pain in the kidneys, the stomach frequently upset. Still hunger for foods, and with a certain troubled look whirling around, the eyes darken [...].)

intuere quot feminae perierunt violato pudore, et quot sibi coemerunt mortis periculum dotalibus tabulis nuptiarum. dum namque intumescit uterus,

⁸⁵ Millett has already noted the parallel with Hildebert and Osbert. See Millett, ed. (1982), p. 46, 17/23-18/4.

⁸⁶ Hildebert of Lavardin, *Epistola XXI Athalisae Reclusae*, PL clxxi, 194C-195A.

pallescit facies, vena grossescit, cavantur oculi, macrescunt digiti, cutis nigrescit, ubera distenduntur, scinduntur interiora, et exteriora in partu fiunt cuncta deformia [...].⁸⁷

(Look at how many women are destroyed, violated by shame, and how many of them buy death by the danger of a dowry document [written at] marriage, while, for instance, the womb swells out, the face becomes pale, veins become thick, eyes are made hollow, fingers grow thin, skin grows dark, breasts stretch apart, splitting [pain] inside, and outside, in giving birth the whole body is disfigured.)

Other sources expressing similar pain include Alain of Lille in his *Summa de arte praedicatoria* and Peter of Blois, who describes the unending and varied pain engendered by children:

[...] in peccato concipiunt, in dolore pariunt, in timore nutriunt, de viventibus semper sollicitae sunt, de morientibus inconsolabiliter affliguntur. [...]⁸⁸

(conceived in sin, born in pain, nourished in fear; in its living continuous care, in its dying crushed by inconsolable sorrow.)

Through this source material, the *Hali Meidhad*-author carefully emphasizes the woman's sensation of pain as her body engages in what Liz Herbert McAvoy has termed its 'hideous self-consumption'.⁸⁹ As in Hildebert's and Osbert's texts, every part of the woman's body in *Hali Meidhad* goes through a painful transformation: her face changes shape and colour, her eyes darken, her breasts become sore, and every limb of her body aches with the burden; the reader undergoes an embodied simulation of this physical exhaustion. The agony of childbirth, 'that pain over pain', can only be fully expressed through tautology. The sensation of pain during childbirth is

⁸⁷ Epistle 22 in *The Letters of Osbert of Clare, Prior of Westminster*, ed. E. W. Williamson (London, 1929), pp. 92-93. See the similar description in Epistle 40, p. 136.

⁸⁸ Alain of Lille, *Summa de arte praedicatoria*, PL ccx, 194A; Peter of Blois, *Epistola LV: Ad Adelitiam Monialene*, PL ccvii, 167B-167C.

⁸⁹ Liz Herbert McAvoy, *Medieval Anchoritisms: Gender, Space and the Solitary Life* (Woodbridge, 2011), p. 99.

hammered into birthing mother and spectator alike: ‘Hwen his þenne þerto kimeð, þet sore sorhfule angoise, þet stronge ant stikinde stiche, þet unroles uuel, þet pine ouer pine, þet wondrinde 3eomerunge ant þine deaðes dute’. The *Hali Meiðhad*-author also takes from his source-material an emphasis on the woman’s painful emotions, whether fear of the physical pain (‘cares a3ein þe pinunge’), or the ‘scheome’ in the midwife’s ‘scheome creft’, for the female reader to feel along with the woman’s bodily disintegration. Shame (*pudor*) and fear (*timor*) also figure in Hildebert and Osbert, as do fear and sorrow in the cited passage from Peter of Blois.⁹⁰ The Middle English author insistently uses the second person—a departure from the Latin sources. In *Wohunge*, the anchoress is brought closer to Christ’s suffering with the second person; here in *Hali Meiðhad*, the second-person pronoun, used repeatedly and emphatically throughout the passage, brings the pain of this woman ever closer to the spectator. Pain continually threatens the spectator of *Hali Meiðhad*, who is immersed in the suffering she views. In Passion meditation, the anchoress attempts to absorb and engage with the pervasive anguish, and to touch the pained body of her Lover. In the hagiographies, however, pain ricochets off the anchoress. Her heart becomes harder than a stone of adamant—even though in her use of other texts, she must cultivate affective malleability. It is the malleability and penetrability of the anchoress’ heart to which the final chapter returns, focusing on her capacity to feel compassion.

⁹⁰ Hildebert, *PL* clxxi, 194A, 196B; and Williamson, ed. (1929), p. 93.

Chapter 5

The Mother's Pain: Compassion and the Virgin Mary in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*

In *Wohunge*, the anchoress asks Mary if she might ‘felen sumhwat of þe sorhe þat tu þa hefdes’ (fol. 132rb; p. 35, ll. 562-563)). She asks, in other words, to co-feel with the Holy Mother, to share in some of her pain. The final chapter of this thesis explores compassion, a crucial affection cultivated in the anchorhold. The Virgin Mary has an important role in this process.¹ For the brides of her Son, Mary is a model for emulation in her virginity, her solitude, her silence— and in her role as the mother of compassion.² As Richard Kieckhefer puts it, Mary is ‘the source as well as the model of compassion’, experiencing exquisitely painful compassion on Calvary whilst also stimulating stirrings of compassion in her devotees.³ It is not an exaggeration to postulate, as Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker has done in the context of Guibert of

¹ See Table in Appendix I for the various Latin and Anglo-Norman equivalents of this English term.

² She is, in Anselmian terms, a ‘temple of compassion’. This is in the first prayer to Mary: ‘templum pietatis et misericordiae’ (13). Ward (1973) translates this as ‘shrine of goodness and mercy’ (p. 107, l. 11), but ‘pietatis’ could also be translated as ‘of pity/compassion’. See further references to Mary’s compassion/mercy in the first prayer (13-14), and in the second prayer (15). Whether Anselm means ‘mercy’ or ‘compassion’ by *miseriordia* is a subject beyond the scope of this thesis. Ward consistently translates it as ‘mercy’, and this thesis accepts her translation as authoritative in the Anselmian context. In other Latin texts to be mentioned later in this chapter, *miseriordia* seems to have the meaning of ‘compassion’, and is translated thus in those cases.

³ Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and Their Religious Milieu* (Chicago, 1984), p. 106.

Nogent's (1053-c. 1124) *Liber de laude Sancte Mariae*, that compassion is Mary's 'profession'.⁴

Scholarship on medieval compassion has flourished in the past two years. In her monograph, McNamer makes the claim that '[c]ompassion, as scripted in and through Middle English meditations on the Passion, is largely a function of gender performance: to perform compassion is to feel like a woman'. And writing on the early fifteenth-century text *A Revelation of Purgatory* by an anchoress of Winchester, Liz Herbert McAvoy asserts:

[...] its female author is clearly overwriting a well-established male tradition of purgatorial examination such as we find in *The Pricke of Conscience* (which was evidently one of her primary sources), with an affective *compassioun* predicated on the bodies of two women occupying liminal spaces: one the anchorhold, the other Purgatory.

The significance of sensory perception in the feeling of compassion, particularly sight and touch, has figured prominently in the work of both these scholars.⁵ As examined in the previous chapter, sight and touch are crucial senses through which the anchoress participates in the anguish of the Passion. A forthcoming volume of essays on 'medieval empathies' seeks to cross interdisciplinary boundaries to understand

⁴ See Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses: The Rise of the Urban Recluse in Medieval Europe*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz (Philadelphia, 2005), p. 224, n. 57.

⁵ McNamer (2010), p. 119. Liz Herbert McAvoy, 'Envisioning Reform: *A Revelation of Purgatory* and Anchoritic *Compassioun* in the Later Middle Ages', forthcoming, p. 10; quoted in its unpublished form by kind permission of the author. McAvoy stresses the association between compassion and touch; McNamer examines the word 'beholding' (see n. 89 later in this chapter).

‘empathy in the Middle Ages, before it had a name’.⁶ Compassion in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* is a complex ‘co-feeling’, using Milan Kundera’s term from *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984). It is an affection vigorously nourished and carefully structured. In feeling compassion, the anchoress shares her affective space with other selves. She does not only observe others’ pain, but brings this pain into her heart, feeling it as her own. There is an interconnected web of relationships based upon compassion in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*.⁷ All are inseparable in the anchoritic existence, although the compassion shared between the anchoress, Christ, and Mary is the most dominant.

I. Compassion

Co-feeling: ‘I would that His paines were my paines’

Compassion is described in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* with the native term ‘reowðe’, deriving from Old Norse via the Old Icelandic word *hrygð* and influenced by Old English *hreow*, ‘repentance’.⁸ The semantic expansiveness of ‘reowðe’ is clear in *Ancrene Wisse*, and it must be stressed that in its various uses, the

⁶ *Studies on Medieval Empathies*, ed. K. F. Morrison and R. Bell (forthcoming); information accessed on Brepols website: <www.brepols.net> [accessed 5th April 2012].

⁷ This thicket of relationships can be summarized as follows: the anchoress’ compassion for Christ; the anchoress’ compassion for humanity; Christ’s compassion for the anchoress; Christ’s compassion for humanity more broadly; Mary’s compassion for the anchoress; Mary’s compassion for humanity more broadly; Mary’s compassion for Christ; Christ’s compassion for Mary; and, finally, the anchoress’ compassion for Mary. In Christ’s case, his position as feeler of compassion, and also a self eliciting compassion, is at times deliberately ambiguous, as will be seen.

⁸ See *MED* entry for ‘reuth’.

word does not consistently signify the affective phenomenon of compassion.⁹ In particular, the word is frequently used to denote a broader sense of suffering.¹⁰ ‘Reowðe’ is also used in exclamations with the sense of ‘what a pity!’. With this sense, a pity that is superficial and almost thoughtless seems to supplant the anchoress’ capacity for a richer compassion. It is ‘pitiable’, for example, that an anchoress might fall through pride, in a Gregorian interpretation of Joel 1:7:¹¹

Ant nis þis mucche reowðe þet te fier þe schulde wið hire swete frut (þet is, goddede) fede Godd gasteliche, þe Lauerd of heouene, schal adruhien rindeles þurh þet hit is unhulet, ant wurðen buten ende helle fures fode?
(III, 59: 438-441)

‘Reowðe’ is also used twice in the exclamation ‘reowðe ouer reowðe’, both times in Part IV. The first instance refers to pity for those anchoresses who have fallen prey to the devil’s tricks (IV, 85: 656) and the second to pity for Christ’s spouse, the soul, becoming the devil’s ‘whore’:

Ne sule þu neauer se eðeliche his fa, ant þin eiðer, his deorewurðe spuse, þet costnede him se deore. Makie deofles hore of hire is reowðe ouer reowðe.
(110-111: 1621-1623)

There is no sense in any of these citations that the anchoress feels compassion. She is disengaged from the suffering and the sufferer, and is put in an unquestionable position of superiority. Furthermore, in one of the ‘Vitas Patrum’ anecdotes, the disciple feels ‘reowðe’, preventing him from waking his master (IV, 90: 824, 833-

⁹ The noun ‘reowðe’ occurs thirteen times in the entire **A** text of *Ancrene Wisse*. The adjective ‘reowful(e)’ is used eight times. See *Concordance to Ancrene Wisse*, pp. 603-604. The semantic expansiveness of ‘reowðe’ is also demonstrable by the range of meanings attested in the *MED*.

¹⁰ See: 22: 82-83, 104:1370-1373, 123: 365-366.

¹¹ See Millett, trans. (2009), p. 203, n. 3. 76.

834).¹² The pity that stops one from disrupting another's sleep is clearly not the anchoress' spiritual goal. It is her more sophisticated compassion which is the focus here.

The word 'compassion', stemming from Latin *compati*, is not recorded in English until the fourteenth century.¹³ Its etymology has been much remarked on: combining the prefix *com* with *pati/passion*, the created word means 'to suffer with'.¹⁴ Julian enacts this etymology when she longs for the second wound, of 'kinde compassion':

Then cam sodenly to my minde that I should desire the second wound of our lordes gifte and of his grace: *that my body might be fulfilled with mind and feeling of his blessed passion [...]. For I would that His paines were my paines, with compassion* and afterward langing to God. But in this I desired never no bodily sight ne no maner shewing of God, but compassion, as methought that a kind soule might have with our lord Jesu, that for love would become a deadly man. *With him I desired to suffer*, living in my deadly body, as God would give me grace.

(pp. 133-135; emphases added)

Its etymology embodies perfectly the function of compassion for the anchoress reading *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, especially in her compassion for Christ. The anchoress does not simply observe the suffering in another self, but suffuses her body with 'mind and feeling of the Passion'; she makes Christ's pains her own, desiring to suffer with Him. 'Pity' has an earlier history in the English language, recorded first in the thirteenth century. It stems from the Old French *pit * (pity), ultimately the Latin *pietas*, with related forms in Provençal (*pietat*), Spanish

¹² Differently, the noun 'reow e' denotes mercy in the case of the Doomsday trial of Part V, where it is used to describe the personified Justice's lack of mercy (116: 89-91).

¹³ *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 197.

¹⁴ *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 193, and p. 656.

(*piEDAD*), and Italian (*pieta*).¹⁵ ‘Pite’ is never used in the **A** version of *Ancrene Wisse*, nor in the *Wooing Group*. It is used only once in the **N** version of *Ancrene Wisse*, Part VI, in the list of Aelredian virtues: ‘heorte þeauwes. deuociun. reoufulnessse. merci. pite of heorte. luue. edmodnesse. 7 oðre swuche uertuz’. This ‘pite of heorte’ denotes an affective movement, listed alongside compassion— ‘reoufulnessse’.¹⁶ This use of ‘pite’ in **N**, and how the list of virtues compares to **A**, will be discussed later in the chapter.

It would be incorrect to suggest that ‘pity’ and ‘compassion’ are clearly distinguished in medieval vocabularies.¹⁷ But the term ‘compassion’ is preferred in this chapter, first for the pertinence of its etymology, and second due to the unhelpful connotations carried by ‘pity’ in its modern usage. Feeling pity suggests an affective disengagement from the sufferer: the pitier only observes, and is unable to feel the suffering as her own.¹⁸ Both premises are entirely in discordance with compassion in our thirteenth-century texts.¹⁹ In contrast to a ‘pitier’, the anchoress masters the art of

¹⁵ *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 684.

¹⁶ Quoted from *The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe: Cotton Nero A. xiv*, ed. Mabel Day (London, 1952), p. 167, ll. 17-19; all subsequent references to the *Nero Ancrene Wisse* are to this edition.

¹⁷ McNamer (2010) has already remarked on the blurring of ‘compassion’ and ‘pity’ (p. 11). In the Latin texts most relevant to this thesis, the nouns *pietas*, *compassio*, *miser cordia*, and *miseratio*, and the verbs *miserere* and *compatere* are all used to describe the affective phenomena of compassion.

¹⁸ In his work on ‘pity’ in classical writings, David Konstan argues that the same is true for ancient Greek: ‘the subject and object of pity do not merge but rather maintain distinct emotions— that of the pitier is precisely pity— and perspectives: the pitier is always to some extent in the situation of an observer rather than a participant in the experience of the other, and views the suffering of the pitied from the outside, as it were’ (*Pity Transformed* (London, 2001), p. 60).

¹⁹ This thesis agrees with McNamer that the connotations of superiority in *pitee* are evident from the late fourteenth century (p. 212, n. 43). It should be noted that usage can change rapidly, even in the twentieth century. Konstan (2001) quotes an entry in a dictionary of 1968 which suggests that compassion ‘implies a greater detachment in the subject’ than pity (pp. 105-106).

‘co-suffering’, to use Miri Rubin’s helpful term in the context of the Virgin Mary.²⁰ The question of ‘pity versus compassion’ is at the centre of Carol Gilligan and Grant Wiggins’ developmental psychology study on the roots of morality.²¹ They quote a passage from Milan Kundera’s 1984 novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which, due to its importance to this chapter, is also quoted in full here. Kundera’s narrator states:

In languages that derive from Latin, ‘compassion’ means: we cannot look on coolly as others suffer; or, we sympathize with those who suffer. Another word with approximately the same meaning, ‘pity’ (*French pitie*; Italian *pieta*, etc.), connotes a certain condescension towards the sufferer. ‘To take pity on a woman’ means that we are better off than she, that we stoop to her level, lower ourselves.

That is why the word ‘compassion’ generally inspires suspicion; it designates what is considered an inferior, second-rate sentiment that has little to do with love. To love someone out of compassion means not really to love.

In languages that form the word ‘compassion’ not from the root ‘suffering’ but from the root ‘feeling’, the word is used in approximately the same way, but... The secret strength of its etymology floods the word with another light and gives it a broader meaning: to have compassion (co-feeling) means not only to be able to live with the other’s misfortune but also to feel with him any emotion— joy, anxiety, happiness, pain. This kind of compassion... therefore signifies the maximal capacity of affective imagination, the art of emotional telepathy.²²

Despite the suspicions of Kundera’s narrator, this thesis does use the terms ‘compassion’ and ‘co-suffering’, but firmly with Kundera’s sense of ‘co-feeling’. When understood as co-feeling, compassion does not simply indicate ‘pity’ for another, in the sense of maintaining a comfortable and superior distance from the sufferer. Rather, the term ‘compassion’ in this sense of co-feeling suggests a sharing

²⁰ Rubin (2010), pp. 245, 247.

²¹ Carol Gilligan and Grant Wiggins, ‘The Origins of Morality in Early Childhood Relationships’, in *Mapping the Moral Domain: A Contribution of Women’s Thinking to Psychological Theory and Education*, ed. Carol Gilligan, Janie Victoria Ward, Jill McLean Taylor, with Betty Bardige (Cambridge, MA, 1988), pp. 111-137.

²² Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, trans. Michael Henry Heim (NY, 1985; repr. 1995), p. 19. See also Gilligan and Wiggins (1988), p. 121.

of affective space. The anchoress harnesses her ‘capacity of affective imagination’, to use Kundera’s terms, to inhabit an affective space that is not solely hers.²³ To return to Julian’s words, the anchoress does not only observe pain; she desires that ‘His peines were my peines’.

As a co-feeler, the anchoress participates in an affective realm in which self and other become intermingled, though it would be an overstatement to suggest that co-feeling effaces the self-other boundary in these texts. McAvoy has powerfully revealed this connection of self and other at the heart of medieval

compassio/compassioun:

[...] *compassioun* can be read as an affect of touch which enacts a type of ‘doubling’: it reaches both inwards and outwards in its attempt to unite self and the other through a physical and emotional synthesis of suffering [...].²⁴

The anchoress’ compassion is an attempt at this ‘doubling’, a mingling of self and other. In his major work, Karl F. Morrison affirms that the need for connection, the basis of ‘empathy’, is fuelled by human separateness:

²³ ‘Compassion’ and ‘pity’ are the terms most germane to the present thesis, but this is not to ignore the constellation of terms relevant to the definition of compassion, including mercy, sympathy, empathy, and pathos. The terms ‘sympathy’, ‘empathy’, and ‘pathos’ were unavailable to authors of early Middle English. See *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, pp. 896, 310, and 657. Although French-derived ‘mercy’ is the oldest of all these English terms, recorded from as early as the twelfth century, it suggests in modern English (and frequently in Middle English) an actual offering to the recipient, rather than affective stirrings (see citations in *MED* from *Ancrene Wisse*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *Seinte Marherete*, and *Seinte Iulienne*). See also *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 570. Other instances where ‘merci’ clearly describes the offering of pardon can be found in the ending of the first version of the lyric Brown 32 (p. 57, ll. 41-50). ‘Milce’ is even earlier, deriving from Old English *milds*. Due to constraints of space, it has not been possible to assess the various meanings of ‘merci’, nor how it identifies with or differs from ‘milce’ (see, for example, the fragmented version of *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* in the Royal manuscript: ‘Milce. Merci. are’ (p. 19, l. 1 27)).

²⁴ McAvoy, ‘Envisioning Reform’, p. 8.

The point of departure must be the estrangement between the individuals that is the precondition of all communication. Without distance identity would prevail, and there would be neither the need nor the possibility of communication, of bridging the gap between partners in the human dialogue. Need is implicit in this estrangement, need that can be satisfied by participating in the lives of others.²⁵

A need for communication, co-communication (from the Latin verb *communicare*, ‘to share’) is essential to compassion in the anchorhold. Language of fusion and immersion with/in self and other is certainly present in Bernard and Aelred, as Morrison examines.²⁶ Such language of fusion/immersion is not as prominent in *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*, with the notable exception of the Latin passage in Part I, based on Augustine’s *Confessiones*, where the anchoress asks God to enter inside her (13: 223-240).²⁷ Co-feeling in these texts does not eradicate the barriers separating self and other. It does, however, offer a gateway between the two.²⁸ Suffering selves enter into the anchoress and populate her heart; she also, in her co-feeling, attempts to penetrate the mysterious pain of Mary and Christ.

In both *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, co-feeling is interlinked with the affective phenomena of love and sorrow, but is not synonymous with either. On Christ’s compassion, Julian remarks: ‘For love suffereth him never to be without pite’ (p. 373). As regards *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, we might rephrase this to

²⁵ Karl F. Morrison, *‘I Am You’: The Hermeneutics of Empathy in Western Literature, Theology, and Art* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 34-35. See also p. xxiv.

²⁶ Morrison (1988), p. 36.

²⁷ See Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 34: I/223-5ff.

²⁸ For discussion of the self-other boundary in various studies of compassion, sympathy, and empathy, see Gilligan and Wiggins (1988), pp. 120-122; Robert Mills, ‘A Man is Being Beaten’, in *New Medieval Literatures V*, ed. Rita Copeland, David Lawton and Wendy Scase (Oxford, 2002), pp. 115-53 (p. 136); and Theodore Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity* (London, 1998), p. 252.

read: ‘For the anchoress’ pity suffers her never to be without love’. The anchoress’ compassion, especially in relation to Christ and Mary, cannot occur without a basis of love, and it is this that creates her rich co-feeling. Love and compassion are coupled together as joint efforts in both *Ancrene Wisse* and *Wohunge*, as will be seen.²⁹ Nor is sorrow synonymous with compassion in these texts: it is only taken on as part of compassion when the anchoress feels sorrow for another.³⁰ As seen in the quotation at the start of this chapter, she requests to feel the Mother’s sorrow as part of her co-feeling. The co-feeler experiences both suffering and joy, pleasure and pain: distinctions which are in themselves inapplicable to early thirteenth-century anchoritic texts.³¹ The stern Augustinian dismissal of pleasure in true Christian compassion for others cannot be straightforwardly applied to *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*.³² Whilst an anchoress who feels pleasure at the misfortune of her fellow Christians would certainly be committing a sin, it is difficult to rule out the experience of pleasure in her compassion for them. Pleasure and pain exist so intimately in the world of the thirteenth-century anchorhold that firm distinctions like Augustine’s are difficult to sustain.

²⁹ In the Pepys version of *Ancrene Wisse* (dating to the second half of the fourteenth century) the Aelredian virtues in Part VI are listed as follows: ‘deuocioun. rewfuls loue. þolemodenesse 7 oþer swich vertuez.’ Here, ‘reowfulness’ and ‘luue’ become ‘rewfuls loue’ — evidence that later adapters of the text also saw the affective movements of compassion and love as being intimately connected. See *The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe, Edited from Magdalene College, Cambridge, MS. Pepys 2498*, ed. Arne Zettersten, EETS O.S. 274 (1976), p. 160, ll. 5-6. For dating of this manuscript, see p. xix.

³⁰ McNamer (2010) suggests that ‘*compassioun*, *reuthe*, and *sorwe* frequently function as near synonyms’ in Middle English, apparently referring to Chaucerian usage (p. 11). This is not true for *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Wooing Group*, however.

³¹ Morrison demonstrates the merging of pleasure and pain in the work of Bernard and Aelred. See Morrison (1988), p. 36.

³² Like the thirteenth-century anchoritic texts, Augustine’s *miser cordia* (compassion) is connected closely with *dolor* (sorrow), and, also like these texts, the compassion is guided by *caritas*. But Augustine’s suggestion that the co-feeler should not delight in the sorrow, or be pleased by the sorrow (*PL* xxxii, 684), is not easily reconciled with our anchoritic texts.

Compassion in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*

Aelred's *pietas* and the act of feeling compassion (expressed through the verb *compatere*) figure as crucial spiritual activities within the anchorhold:

Quid humanius pietate? Hanc impende. Itaque totum mundum uno dilectionis sinu complectere, ibi simul omnes qui boni sunt considera et gratulare, ibi malos intueri et luge. Ibi afflictos conspice et oppressos, et compatere. Ibi occurrant animo miseria pauperum, orphanorum gemitus, uiduarum desolatio, tristium maestitudo, necessitates peregrinantium, pericula nauigantium, uota uirginum, tentationes monachorum, praelatorum sollicitudo, labor militantium. Omnibus pectus tuae dilectionis aperias, his tuas impende lacrymas, pro his tuas preces effundas.

Haec eleemosyna Deo gratior, Christo acceptior, tuae professioni aptior, his quibus impenditur fructuosior. Huius munus beneficii tuum propositum adiuvat, non perturbat; dilectionem proximi auget, non minuit; mentis quietem seruat, non impedit.

(661-662)

(What is more humane than compassion? Devote (yourself) to this. So, embrace the whole world at once with the bosom of your love. There, all at once, consider and congratulate all the good; there, look on and mourn the bad. There, gaze on the afflicted and the oppressed, and feel compassion for them. There, let occur in your soul the misery of the poor, the groans of orphans, the desolation of widows, the sadness of the sorrowful, the necessities of travellers/pilgrims, the perils of those at sea, the prayers of virgins, the temptations of monks, the responsibilities of prelates, the labour of soldiers. Take them all into your chest with your love; devote your tears to them; effuse prayers for them.

These alms are more gratifying to God, more acceptable to Christ, more apt for your profession, more fruitful to those to whom they are devoted. The service of these good things sustains your profession, and perturbs you not; increases the love for your neighbour, and does not diminish it; preserves the quiet of your mind, and does not impede it.)

The anchoress must somehow accommodate in her heart or breast (*pectus*) a multitude of wretched masses. The verbs in this passage also reveal the variety of actions she takes as she feels compassion; it is far from a single affective movement.

The anchoress embraces (*complectere*) with her love ('dilectionis'), she considers (*considerare*), looks upon (*conspicere*), feels compassion (*compatere*), she brings into

her soul ('occurrent animo'), takes into her heart with love (*pectus*, 'dilectionis aperias'), weeps tears ('lacrymas'), and offers prayers ('preces effundas'). Despite the intensity of this affective process of *pietas*, it leads to a calm mind ('mentis quietem'), and increases love for her neighbour ('dilectionem proximi auget'). She co-feels with sufferers and sinners, as well as bringing into her heart the good ('qui boni sunt') to consider and congratulate them ('considera et gratulare').

Aelred's anchoress invites a wretched mass to march into her heart. In the twelfth of his *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, Bernard suggests a similar entrance into the heart, though less explicitly than Aelred. After mentioning the first two ointments of a devout Christian life, contrition and devotion, Bernard details the third superior ointment, compassion (*pietas*) for suffering:

Sed est unguentum, quod ambobus longe antecellit, et hoc appellaverim pietatis, eo quod fiat de necessitatibus pauperum, de anxietatibus oppressorum, de perturbationibus tristium, de culpis delinquentium, et postremo de omnibus quorumlibet miserorum aerumnis, etiamsi fuerint inimici. Despicabilis videntur species istae; sed est super omnia aromata unguentum quod ex eis conficitur. Sanativum est: Beati enim misericordes, quoniam ipsi misericordiam consequentur.
(I, 60)

(But there is an ointment, which surpasses the other two by far, and which I call compassion, because what forms it are the necessities of the poor, the anxieties of the oppressed, the perturbations of the sad, the guilts of sinners, and at last, all manner of hardships of wretched people, even if they be enemies. Horrible do these types seem; but the ointment made from them is more fragrant than all sweet odours. It is healing-power: Blessed are the merciful/compassionate, because they themselves shall have mercy/compassion (shown to them) as a consequence.)

As with Aelred, *pietas* for Bernard also involves a participation in the affective needs of a spectrum of other selves. But unlike Aelred, he does not foreground the need to

actively bring the unfortunate ones into the heart. The term ‘reuwe’ in the Lambeth and Trinity homilies also does not indicate that the woeful fellow Christians should enter into the heart of the co-feeler. This is clear in the Lambeth 15/Trinity 32 homily (on Mark):

Reuwe for his emcristenes wawe haueð þe mon þet isich his emcristene in sunne bi-falle, oðer mid sicnesse bi-gan, and ne mei buten helpe þer cume. If he ne mei wid worldliche echte his neode ibete, þet him sare roweþ, and his emcristenes wawe sare bi-murneð.
(Lambeth 15, p. 149)

The Trinity 32 version of this homily asserts that compassion is a form of crucifixion, but does not suggest that the co-feeler has an open heart:

3if he seð his emcristene þolien wosið and him þat on his heorte sore reuweð and wereð his emcristene wið pine bi his mihte he mai ben ure helendes cniht for he bereð his rode.
(Trinity 32, p. 209)

The Lambeth 17 homily on Psalm 125:6 also invokes compassion for ‘emcristene wawe’, without asserting that the heart is opened in this process:

Oðer hwile þe halie men scedden hare teres for hore emcristene wawe. hwenne ho ise3en hore emcristene wandrede þolie oðer in seknesse bifalle and þet hom sare rowð and bi heore mihte hore node bette.
(p. 157)

Goscelin alludes to the invasiveness of compassion with the suggestion that *compassio*, as a form of crucifixion, wounds the heart (42). But even Goscelin, that master of the heart and all its movements, does not describe compassion as an active collecting into the heart.

It is Aelred's heart-invasion that the *Ancrene Wisse*-author adopts, in a key passage on compassion in Part I:

Bi dei sum time o[ð]er bi niht gederið in ower heorte alle seke ant sarie, [þe wa þet pouere] þolieð, þe pinen þe prisuns habbeð þer ha liggeð wið irn heuie ifeðeret (nomeliche of þe Cristene þe beoð in heaðenesse, summe i prisun, summe in ase mucche þeowdom as oxe is oðer asse); habbeð reowðe of þeo þe beoð i stronge temptatiuns. Alle hare sares setteð in ower heorte ant sikeð to ure Lauerd, þet he neome reowðe of ham ant bihalde toward wið þe ehe of his are; ant 3ef 3e habbeð hwile, seggeð þe salm *Leuau i oculos. Pater noster*. Verset: *Conuertere, Domine, usquequo? Et deprecabilis esto super seruos tuos. Oremus. Pretende, Domine, famulis et famulabus. [I have lifted up (my) eyes. Our Father. Versicle: 'I have lifted up [my] eyes. Our Father. Versicle: Turn, Lord, how long? And be accessible to your servants' prayers. Let us pray. Stretch out, Lord, to your maid-servants and handmaidens.]* (12: 197-206).

The Vitellius French translates this passage word-for-word, with 'reowðe' rendered 'pite' in both cases, clearly equating 'reowðe' with the affective movement of 'pite'.³³ As in *De institutione inclusarum*, this cultivation of compassion is a deeply active process, involving a range of affective movements: gathering an array of people into the heart ('gederið in ower heorte'), setting into the heart ('setteð in ower heorte'), which appears to indicate an imprinting or engraving of sorrows upon the anchoress' malleable insides. This process must involve the raw feeling of compassion itself ('habbeð reowðe'), and ultimately the attempt to harness the Lord's compassion

³³ See Herbert, ed. (1944), p. 22, ll. 3-22. Part I is not included in the other French 'version' of *Ancrene Wisse*. As its editor describes it: 'here the original text is broken up, rearranged, inflated, and embedded in a lengthy "Compilation", or series of treatises constituting a sort of handbook or manual of religious living'. (W. H. Trethewey, ed. *The French Text of the Ancrene Riwe: Trinity College Cambridge MS. R. 14. 7*, EETS O.S. 240 (1958), p. ix). The Merton Latin omits this passage.

through sighing and thereby catching his ‘eye of mercy’.³⁴ The *Ancrene Wisse*-author adds to his Aelredian source a layering of compassion: in feeling compassion, the anchoress has the power to engage Christ’s compassion in turn. Whereas Aelred refers generally to the pouring forth of prayers, the affective process in *Ancrene Wisse* culminates in the recitation of two specific Psalms (120 and 89:13), and a collect used in Mass.³⁵ It is important, however, not to overemphasize this activity in the anchorhold. After all, the anchoress’ day and night is dominated by her liturgical and devotional observances. The author here simply asks her to find a moment during her routine (‘Bi dei sum time o[ð]er bi niht’) to stimulate her and Christ’s compassion for the anguished humanity existing outside her cell. She is not expected to spend her entire liturgical day cultivating compassion for all humankind.

And yet, the anchoress’ compassion continues to feature throughout *Ancrene Wisse*. As mentioned, ‘reowfulnesse’ is cited in Part VI as one of the key Aelredian inner virtues (139: 288), echoed in *Hali Meiðhad* with the mention of ‘þol[e]modnesse ant reowfulnesse of euch monnes sorhe’ (p. 20, ll. 22-23). As quoted earlier, the N version of *Ancrene Wisse* lists these virtues as:

heorte þeauwes. deuociun. reoufulnesse. merci. pite of heorte. luue.
edmodnesse. 7 oðre swuche uertuz.
(p. 167, ll. 17-19)

It is the only English version of *Ancrene Wisse* to include ‘pite of heorte’ and ‘merci’ among the virtues. At this point, the A version reads:

³⁴ This command, ‘have/feel compassion’, is also used to encourage the anchoress’ compassion for other anchoresses who have fallen into sexual sin (see IV, 79: 417-418).

³⁵ See Millett, trans. (2009), p. 177, ns. I. 89, I. 90 and I. 91.

heorte þeawas: deuotiun, reowfulnessse, riht luue, eadmodnesse, ant uertuz
 oþre swucche.
 (139: 288-289).

The ‘reowfulnessse’, ‘merci’, and ‘pite of heorte’ of **N** all seem to coalesce in the term ‘reowfulnessse’ in **A** (139: 288), which implies that early Middle English writers may not have recognized a major difference in meaning between the three.³⁶ The later French and Latin renditions of *Ancrene Wisse* clearly indicate that ‘reowfulnessse’ encompasses the affective phenomenon of compassion. The Vitellius French lists the devotions as in **A**, rendering ‘reowfulnessse’ as ‘pite’: ‘Laltre chose est vertue de queor. deuocion. pitee. amour. humilitee. et altres tieles vertues’ (p. 266, ll. 15-17). The Merton Latin gives a similar list, where ‘reowfulnessse’ is ‘misericordia’: ‘Aliud est morigeratio mentis, cuiusmodi sunt deuocio, misericordia, recta caritas, humilitas et alie huiusmodi virtutes’ (p. 143, ll. 28-30). Given the inclusion of ‘reowfulnessse’ among the prized inner virtues, the capacity to cultivate compassion signifies an important spiritual skill.

This ‘reowfulnessse’ is not without its dangers, however. Its adjectival form is used in Part IV to refer to the devil’s manipulation of the compassionate anchoress:

He bihalt anoþer þet he ne mei nanes weis makien luðere iþoncket, se luueful
 ant se reowðful is hire heorte. ‘Ich chulle makien hire’, he seið, ‘to reowðful

³⁶ A century later, Julian also uses the words *compassiun*, *pite*, *ruthe*, and *merci* together, though this thesis hesitates to suggest she uses the words interchangeably. In her work on Julian’s mercy and compassion, Margaret Ann Palliser, O.P has noted that: ‘While Julian uses “compassion”, “ruth”, and “pity” as equivalent terms in reference to Christ, she restricts herself to the use of the words “ruth” and “pity” when she describes God’s attitude towards humankind, consistently reserving the word “compassion” to refer to Christ or to the human person inserted into Christ [...].’ (*Christ, Our Mother of Mercy: Divine Mercy and Compassion in the Theology of the Shewings of Julian of Norwich* (Berlin, 1992), pp. 165-166).

mid alle; Ich schal don hire se muchel þet ha schal luuien ahte, þenchen leasse
of Godd, ant leosen hire fame.’
(85: 641-645)

In its second instance here, ‘reowðful’ has been translated as ‘charitable’.³⁷

‘Compassionate’ is an alternative translation, supported by the fact that the Vitellius French translates the two instances of ‘reowðful’ as ‘de pitee’ and ‘pitouse’ (p. 148, ll. 14, 16-17).³⁸ Love and compassion are intimately connected in her heart. Those are the heart’s two defining features: ‘se luueful ant se reowðful is hire heorte’.

The anchoress’ Lover is an exquisite model for her own co-feeling. Aelred’s *miseratio* (translated here as ‘compassion’) is one of the delicacies with which Christ feeds the self-denying anchoress, along with *affectus* and *caritas*:

Sed iam illa in quibus tibi sola conscia es diuinae bonitatis inspice munera:
quam iucunda facie abrenuntianti saeculo Christus occurrit, quibus esurientem
deliciis paut, quas miserationum suarum diuitias ostendit, quos inspirauit
affectus, quo te caritatis poculo debriauit. Nam si fugituum seruum suum et
rebellem sola sua miseratione uocatum spiritualium consolationum non reliquit
expertem, quid dulcedinis crediderim eum uirgini contulisse?
(676)

(But now inspect those gifts of God’s goodness, of which you alone are aware:
with how delighted a face Christ runs to meet one who renounces the world;
with what delicacies he feeds the hungry one; what vitalities of his own
compassion he shows her, what affection he inspires in her, with what a cup of
love he inebriates her. If he did not relinquish his fugitive and rebellious slave,
called solely in his compassion, without spiritual consolations, what sweetness
shall I not believe he bestowed on a virgin?)

For Aelred, compassion forms part of Christ’s sumptuous banquet of affections. For the *Ancrene Wisse*-author, however, there are no feasts of compassion. The

³⁷ Millett, trans. (2009), p. 85.

³⁸ The Merton Latin translates them both as ‘misericordem’ (p. 80, ll. 29, 30). For the close association between ‘charity’ and ‘compassion’ in early Latin terminology (particularly with the term *miser cordia*), see Konstan (2001), p. 106.

overwhelming focus is on the anguish of Christ's compassion, like the Christ who weeps for Mary Magdalene in the Trinity 25 homily (p. 145). The pain of Christ's compassion immediately destabilizes the boundary between Christ as subject and object of compassion: as compassionate Lord, and a man eliciting the anchoress' own compassion. In Part V, 'reowðe' is used in the analogy for humble confession; it refers to rich men pitying resourceful beggars (125: 415), and then it is applied directly to the Lord's unparalleled capacity for compassion:

Ant ure Lauerde, ihalset swa, ne mei for reowðe wearnen hire ne sweamen
hire wið warne, nomeliche swa as he is se unimete large þet him nis na þing
leouere þen þet he mahe ifinden acheisun fote 3eouene.
(125: 427-430)

There is the sense here that Christ gives himself away through his compassion, as a rich man is stripped of all his wealth. In Part VI, the adjective *reowðfule/reowðful* is used twice in the passage describing Christ as the Mother shielding humanity from the enraged Father. It refers first to Christ's voice as 'reowðfule', inviting the anchoress' compassion:³⁹

[...] he bigon to greden wið reowðfule steuene, *Heloy, Heloy, lama zabatani?*
'Mi Godd, mi Godd, mi deorewurðe feader, hauest tu al forwarpe me, þin
anlepi sune, þe beatest me se hearde?'
(138: 255-257)

The Lord's voice is later described as 'reowðfule' in Part VII: '[...] seide he þet reowðfule word, *Consumatum est [It is finished]*. "Neauer", quod he, "ear nu nes Ich

³⁹ The Vitellius French translates 'reowðfule steuene' as 'pitouse voiz' (pitiful voice (p. 264, ll. 17-18)); the Merton Latin, however, seems to translate 'reowðfule' as 'lamentable' or 'tearful' ('flebili voce' (p. 142, ll. 24-25)).

ful pinet” (152: 275-276).⁴⁰ The anchoress’ co-feeling is carefully aroused for Christ’s voice, as it is in Part IV for his ‘reowfule’ wounds:

þe ilke reowfule garces of þe luðere scurgunge 3ont al his leofliche lich, nawt
ane o þe schonken.
(98: 1151-1153)⁴¹

The anchoress cultivates compassion for Christ, but Christ is ‘reowfule’ also in the sense that he feels compassion for her. ‘Reowðe’ is an affection of ‘doubling’, to return to McAvoy’s terms: an affection that faces outwards yet also within. Christ’s voice and wounds spark the anchoress’ compassion in their awfulness, but they are also, in a sense, ‘full of compassion’ (*reowð-fule*). His pained voice resounds in the midst of the most compassionate act in Christian history. And his wounds, filled with blood, also brim with compassion for humankind. As seen in Chapter 3, it is in these ‘pitiable/compassionate’ wounds that the anchoress finds true refuge.

In the same passage in Part VI on the Mother-Christ, the second use of the adjective refers to Christ as compassionate Mother protecting her child:

[...] he dude him seoluen bitweonen us ant his feader, þe þreatte us forte
smiten, ase moder þet is reowðful deð hire bitweonen hire child ant te wraðe,
sturne feader hwen he hit wule beaten.
(138: 260-263)

The Vitellius French retains the sense of compassionate mother, with the translation of ‘mere qest pitouse’ (p. 264, l. 31).⁴² The alliance between compassion and

⁴⁰ Job also makes a ‘reulice meninge’ in Trinity 28 (p. 169).

⁴¹ Millett, trans. (2009) translates ‘reowfule’ as ‘grievous’ (p. 98), but ‘pitiful’ or ‘compassionate’ is equally suitable.

⁴² The Merton Latin, somewhat oddly, chooses to describe the Mother Christ only as a ‘mater propicia’ (mother favourable (to us) (p. 142, l. 32)).

motherhood is not unique to *Ancrene Wisse*, nor indeed is it unique to medieval literature.⁴³ Whilst this thesis is not convinced that compassion is ‘insistently gendered as feminine’ in the Middle Ages, an association between maternal nurturance and compassion is undeniable.⁴⁴ McNamer demonstrates this in the fifteenth-century text *De arte lacrimandi*, with ‘its insistence that assuming the character of a mother is the best way to learn this art [of compassion]’.⁴⁵ She also emphasizes the importance of the compassionate Mary as mother, a subject that will be returned to later in this chapter.⁴⁶ In his tenth sermon on the Canticles, Bernard defines the Bride’s two breasts as ‘compassion’ and ‘joyful sympathy’ in Mother Church, from a basis in Romans 12:15:⁴⁷

Gaudere, inquit, cum gaudentibus, flere cum flentibus. Materni breviter exprimuntur affectus, quia nec dolere parvuli, nec valere queunt absque illa quae genuit: utrobique necesse est suis eam conformari visceribus. Igitur, iuxta Pauli sapientiam, duas illas affectiones duobus sponsae uberibus assignabo, compassionem uni, et congratulationem alteri.
(I, 48-49)

(*Rejoice*, he [Paul] said, *with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep*. These brief words express a mother’s affections, because she both suffers and is healthy with her children, those she gave birth to. It is necessary for her to conform with them in both, from her very insides. Therefore, following Paul’s wisdom, I will assign these two affections to the bride’s two breasts: compassion to one, joyful sympathy to the other.)

The two breasts encapsulate ‘co-feeling’: sharing and being affectively moved by a range of affections in another human being. And crucially, this rich co-feeling is

⁴³ On Christ as compassionate mother in Julian, see Palliser (1992), pp. 186-189.

⁴⁴ This is McNamer’s (2010) main argument; see p. 3 for quotation. Whilst McNamer is right to emphasize the pivotal role played by female readers of affective meditation, this should not eclipse the contribution of the male authors. It is perhaps more productive to focus on the co-operation of male author and female reader in the development of compassion. McNamer herself gestures towards this stance (p. 84).

⁴⁵ McNamer (2010), p. 127.

⁴⁶ McNamer (2010), pp. 160-162.

⁴⁷ ‘Joyful sympathy’ is Kilian Walsh’s translation, adopted here: *On the Song of Songs*, 4 Vols, I, trans. Kilian Walsh (Shannon, 1971), 61.

aligned with motherhood. As a mother gives breast milk, so does Mother Church co-feel with humanity, in its sorrow and in its joy. Here in *Ancrene Wisse*, the Father's anger seems to disable his capacity for co-feeling. The Mother-Christ, however, has such sophisticated co-feeling that he co-feels with humanity almost pre-emptively, preventing its pain before the Father has had the chance to strike it.

Moving to the *Wooing Group*, the use of 'reowðe' and its related adjectives and adverbs is focused overwhelmingly on this 'double' compassion: Christ's own opulent reserves of compassion, and Christ as a figure with whom the anchoress co-feels.⁴⁸ *Lofsong of ure Louerde* emphasizes the potency of compassion for Christ. The compassion of Mary and John the Evangelist results in their coupling as mother and son, in an invocation of John 19:26-27:

[...] 7 þine moderes ream 7 sein i[o]hanes soruwe þo þu somnedest ham ase
sune 7 moder. uor rewðe of þine pinen[.]
(fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 15-18)

Whereas *Lofsong of ure Louerde* clearly specifies Mary/John/the anchoress feeling compassion for Christ, *Ureisun of God* enters into the realm of word play. The

⁴⁸ There are two exceptions. The first is in *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, when the text refers to the meditator's painful sensation of 'pity' with the sense of regret or disappointment, caused by Mary's possible displeasure:

Vor þine luue ich uorsoc al þet me leof was / And 3ef ðe al mi suluen, looue
lif, iþench þu þes. / Þet ich ðe wreðede sume siðe hit me reoweð sore, / Vor
cristes fif wunden ðu 3if me milce & ore; / 3if þu milce nauest of me þet ich
wot wel 3eorne, / þet ine helle pine swelten ich schal & beornen.
(p. 6, ll. 99-104)

The second is in *Wohunge*, where the meditator rues the destruction she caused to the Lord's creation through her sins: 'Bote ich hit rewli for dide þurhhut mine sunnes'
(fol. 128ra; p. 22, ll. 86-87).

meditator describes Christ's arms with the adjective 'rewðful': '7 weneð ei to beon biclupped bitweonen þine blisfulle ermes in heouene. bute he worpe er him her; bitweonen þine rewðful ermes o ðe rode?' (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 58-62). On the one hand, the anchoress nurses her compassion for the arms of Christ, so painfully stretched out before her heart-eyes. On the other, she throws herself imaginatively into his arms filled with compassion. He embraces her as a Mother would her small child (fol. 124v; p. 6, ll. 48-54), as explored in Chapter 2. As in *Ancrene Wisse*, compassion and motherhood are closely intertwined. Here in *Ureisun*, the Mother-Christ feels compassion, but also seems to request compassion from the children who huddle in His arms.

The last statement of the authorial *envoi* in *Wohunge* emphasizes the role of the meditation itself in stimulating compassion: 'And he þurh his grace opn[e] þin heorte to his luue 7 to reowðe of his pine.' (fol. 133ra; p. 38, ll. 655-658).⁴⁹ 'Luue' and 'reowðe' are again combined, the two together forming the anchoress' meditative focus. In her use of *Wohunge*, the anchoress fosters her co-feeling for her Lover. Like everything else in the anchoritic existence, the process is not any easy one. Late in the meditation, the meditator asserts that her compassion is unbearable: 'A hu liue i for reowðe þat seo mi mi lefmon up o rode [...]' (fol. 131vb; pp. 33-34, ll. 507-509). Compassion works so powerfully in her soul that she feels unable to sustain herself. Unbearable as it is, compassion for Christ's pain is also ineffable. Compassion, closely related to sorrow ('sorhe') here, attacks speech and cognition:

Bute hwat tun3e mai hit telle. hwat heorte mai hit þenche for sorhe 7 for reowðe of alle þa buffetes 7 ta bali dundes þat tu þoledest [...]

⁴⁹ The insertion of [e] in 'opn[e]' follows the emendation by Thompson, ed. (1958).

(fol. 131rb; p. 32, ll. 458-462)

Like the ineffability of the anchoress' compassion here in *Wohunge*, Mary's compassion militates against speech in 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame':

Certes ço me turmentoit trop grefment ke jeo vi que mun duz enfes, que jeo aveie porté en mes flauncs, me lesseit sule e esgarree. Ne ne me remaneit nul autre, kar jo n'aveie plus. E pur ceo ne poei jeo oblier ma dolur e la voiz m'esteit faillie, si ne poei fors gemir e suspirer quant jeo voleie parler, si me perneit une dolur que me rumpeit la parole. E quant jeo voleie crier, lors me veneit un anguisse ke me perceit le quer e une voiz doleruse iseit hors que mustreit ben l'anguisse q'esteit dedenz. Ha, beaus quers amerus! purquei ne crevez vus de pité quant la mestrie de parole avez perdue de compassion de mon enfant?
(p. 184)

(Certainly, it tormented me too grievously when I saw that my sweet son, whom I had carried in my belly, was leaving me alone and lost. Nor was another left to me, because I have no other. And for this I could not forget my sorrow, and voice failed me: I could only groan and sigh when I would speak, for I was taken by a pain which ruptured speech. And when I would cry out, then came to me a pain that pierced my heart and a painful voice came out that showed well the anguish that I had. Ah, beautiful loving heart! Why do you not break from pity, when you have lost the mastery of speech for compassion of my child?)

We have here a glimpse of the extreme suffering which, as Scarry would put it, 'does not simply resist language but actively destroys it'.⁵⁰ Although Scarry applies this concept purely to physical pain, believing affective pain to be fully expressible, the Virgin Mary of this text would seem to disagree.⁵¹ Despite her will to speak ('jeo voleie parler'), her pain ruptures, or as Jane Bliss translates it, 'shatters' (p. 185) her speech: 'une dolur que me rumpeit la parole'. She resorts to using a body-based language, asking her heart why it does not break from the *pité* accumulating inside it, now that it has lost the ability to speak ('la mestrie de parole perdue') because of

⁵⁰ Scarry (1985), p. 4.

⁵¹ See Scarry (1985), p. 11.

compassion for her son. The anchoress of *Wohunge*, unable to express her compassion for Christ in words, shares with Mary a heart that might break in its co-feeling (fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 489-490).

The word ‘reowðe’ remains a useful meditative reflex, acting as an insistent reminder for the anchoress to cultivate her compassion as she uses the Passion scene in her meditative work. As McNamer rightly notes, *Wohunge* ‘harnesses the power of the native alliterative style to build a driving rhythm that has profound somatic effects’.⁵² The insistent use of ‘reowðe’ has its own rhythm, encouraging the anchoress’ affective engagement with the Passion scene, and aiding the continuing nourishment of her compassion. As in *Ureisun of God*, Christ’s hanging on the Cross induces compassion in others, yet also exudes compassion for others. The adverb is used in this instance, reminding the anchoress to feel compassion for Christ (‘Ah atte laste of þi lif hwen þu for me swa rewliche henges on rode’ (fol. 130rb; p. 29, ll. 345-347)), as in the Trinity 4 homily where Christ is ‘piteously’ abused/shamed (‘on fele wise rewliche tuked’ (p. 21)). ‘Rewðe’ and its related terms then become more frequent as the Passion scene progresses. Christ is lead forth ‘rewli’: ‘hu ha þe bunden swa hetelifaste þat te blod wrang ut at tine finger neiles as halhes bileuen 7 bunden ledden rewli’ (fol. 131va; pp. 32-33, ll. 467-472). There is also the pitiful streaming of blood: ‘A nu of þa honden 7 of þa fet swa luueli. streames te blod swa rewli.’ (fol. 131vb; p. 34, ll. 514-517). Christ is defined as a cause of pity for the righteous especially: ‘þu mi luueliche lef þer þu wið strahte earmes henges o rode; was reowðe to rihtwise’ (fols 131vb-132ra; p. 34, ll. 526-529). Subsequently, Christ’s hanging is once again described as ‘rewli’: ‘A þat luuelike bodi þat henges swa rewli swa blodi 7

⁵² McNamer (2010), p. 30.

swa kalde' (fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 532-534). Here, Christ's pitifulness becomes an intrinsic quality of his hanging body, merged with the physical characteristics of bloodiness and coldness — a technique also embraced by Julian, as in her Tenth Revelation: 'Of the brownhead and the blackhead, rewlyhad and leenhead of this image, many marveyled how that might be [...]' (p. 159).

When it comes to the dead body itself, this too induces and emits compassion: 'Bote ne þinche ham nawt 3et þat he is ful pinet. ne þat rewfulde deade bodi nulen ha nawt friðie.' (fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 538-540). Immediately after this sight of the 'pitiful' dead body, the anchoress enters into the Heart through Longinus' wound (fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 541ff). Compassion for Christ enables the unfastening of the anchoress' own heart, as the *Wohunge*-author tells her in his *envoi*. And after being cultivated so intently in the meditation— with the anchoress reminded to feel compassion through incantation of the term 'rewðe' and its related words —, compassion also has the power to open up Christ's Heart to her. She does not attain mystical fusion with Christ. But through her compassion, she has invaded his heart. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author tells her to collect all pitiable humankind into her heart; the *Wohunge*-author tells her to open her heart so that love and compassion for Christ can enter it. Compassion is linked in these texts with a process of unlocking the heart, making it vulnerable to external stimuli. It is not surprising that Augustine explained *miseriordia* as *miseria* + *cor*, a bringing of misery into the heart, for this is precisely what the anchoress does.⁵³ The perfect model for such a spiritual exercise is the Virgin Mary, whose heart is cleaved open by the Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35). The chapter now turns to the Mother of Compassion herself.

⁵³ *Contra Adimantum* (PL xlii, 142). For more on early etymologists' understanding of *miseriordia*, see Konstan (2001), p. 112.

II. The Virgin Mary

Ancrene Wisse and the *Wooing Group* plumb the depths of Mary's affections on seeing her only son tortured and crucified. The anchoress' bond of compassion with the Lady of Sorrows is nurtured in the context of her growing intimacy with the Lady's Son. That is not to deny the devotional importance of the anchoress-Mary bond, but rather to stress that in these texts, Mary does not develop a significance that is separate from or superior to her Son's. As in Anselm's second prayer to Mary, both Mother and Son are needed to feel compassion for the wretched sinner. The terrified Anselmian meditator envisages herself being tossed from side to side in a whirlwind of divine rejection:

Quid ergo facies, peccator? Quo igitur fugies, peccator? Quis enim me reconciliabit filio inimica matre? Quis mihi placabit matrem irato filio? Sed etsi pariter ambo offensi estis: nonne et ambo clementes estis? Fugiat ergo reus iusti dei ad piam matrem misericordis dei. Refugiat reus offensae matris ad pium filium benignae matris. Ingerat se reus utriusque inter utrumque. Iniciat se inter pium filium et piam matrem.

(16)

(What will you do then, sinner? How will you flee then, sinner? Who may reconcile me to the son if the mother is my enemy? Who will make peace with the mother if I have angered the son? But even though I have offended both of you equally, will not both of you show clemency? Thus flees the defendant from the just God to the tender mother of the merciful/ compassionate God. Refuge finds the defendant with the pious son, kind mother. The defendant is thrown from one to the other. The defendant thrusts himself between the good son and the good mother.)

Intercession, mercy, and compassion are identified as joint efforts, Mary and Christ co-operating in these endeavours (16). At the end of Anselm's magnificent third Prayer to Mary, 'pro impetrando eius et Christi amore' (to procure her and Christ's

love (18)), the meditator asks Christ and Mary in turn for their love. The joining of Mother and Son forms the ending of this intricate meditation as the meditator embraces both (25).

This joining of Christ and Mary is also present in early English lyrics. Given the *Wooing Group*'s close association with religious lyrics, the array of surviving thirteenth-century English Marian lyrics are important for contextualizing Marian devotion in the anchoritic texts. The lyric Brown 55 is a prayer dedicated to veneration of Mary, begging for her powers of intercession so that she may, through her 'milde mod', 'bringe me out of sunne' (p. 111, l. 8). It ends, however, with an address to the sweet Son. The speaker explains that her/his case is being made in front of His mother, and implores Him to listen to Her (pp. 112- 113, ll. 32-36). Devotion to the Mary of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* is also inseparable from devotion to the Son. It is through the Mother's affective movements during the Passion that the anchoress can move closer, affectively, to her Lover. By the time *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* were composed, there was a wealth of Passion material that appealed to Mary's position as the compassionate Mother, expressed as 'Mater Dolorosa', 'Maria Compatiens', and 'Stabat Mater'.⁵⁴ Yet in our texts, the Virgin Mary's presence in the Passion is less prominent than might be expected. This does not undermine the potency of her appearances, but reveals that devotion to Mary remains in these texts firmly tied with devotion to the Son, even on the hills of Calvary.

⁵⁴ Marina Warner, Rachel Fulton, and Julia Kristeva respectively. See Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London, 2000), Chapter 14; Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200* (NY, 2002), Part II, p. 193; and Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (NY, 1987), p. 234ff.

Before turning to the Mary of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, it will be useful to touch on some of the relationships that the women religious of Europe were said to share with Mary, followed by a summary of the treatment in medieval textual and visual cultures of Mary's suffering. In her famous study of the urban recluse of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Mulder-Bakker emphasizes the vitality and versatility of the Mother of God's role in the lives of several anchoresses.⁵⁵ Mary frequently plays the role of intercessor, as she does for the French anchoress Yvette of Huy (c. 1158-1228).⁵⁶ And indeed, Mary is also an active guide and inspiration for many anchoresses and semi-recluses. The visions of Guibert of Nogent's mother (b. c. 1030) and Christina of Markyate (c. 1096-1160) bolster their religious vocations. The former's dream of the Virgin encouraged Guibert to remain at the church of Saint-Germer.⁵⁷

God's Mother also has a close pedagogical bond with the child anchoress Margaret of Magdeburg (c. 1210 - c. 1250).⁵⁸ Mary not only teaches Margaret the basics of reading ('apposuit eam ad litteras'), but also cultivates in her the more complex Christian truths. She is a 'mistress' or instructor (*magistra*) and teacher

⁵⁵ Mulder-Bakker (2005), p. 191. Regarding male visions of the Virgin, see Rubin (2010), pp. 258-259. Rubin notes the highly eroticised language of many male-based visions of the Virgin (p. 258); on the difference between male and female devotion to the Virgin, see p. 268. This thesis does not assume any direct relationship between the Middle English anchoritic texts and the following Latin texts.

⁵⁶ See Mulder-Bakker (2005), p. 52.

⁵⁷ See *A Monk's Confession: The Memoirs of Guibert of Nogent*, trans. Paul J. Archambault (Pennsylvania, 1996), pp. 56-57. Sharon K. Elkins has elucidated the versatile bond shared by the Virgin Mary and Christina of Markyate. See *Holy Women of Twelfth-Century England* (Chapel Hill, London, 1988), pp. 41-42.

⁵⁸ Johannes von Magdeburg, O. P., *Die Vita der Margareta contracta, einer Magdeburger Rekluse des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Paul Gerhard Schmidt (Leipzig, 1992), p. 4.

(*doctrix*), fulfilling a role far beyond that of simple intercessor.⁵⁹ The Virgin is also seen to later guide Margaret on absolute sin-remission, and she continues to appear in the *Vita*.⁶⁰ Moreover, despite an inevitable element of condescension, Mary can be a warm, intimate comforter. At times, she seems to act as a surrogate mother, appearing to women in lieu of absent mothers or maternal love, as she does for the fourteenth-century ascetic Jane Mary of Maillé (1331-1414), when she was a six-year-old girl beside the body of her dead mother.⁶¹ Immediately after Christina of Markyate receives a brutal beating at the hands of her mother Beatrix, she has an exquisite night vision in which she is comforted by the Virgin Mary (pp. 74-76).

Furthermore, Mary offers contemplative women a unique experience of intimacy with her Son.⁶² Christ comes as a small child to comfort Christina, and she attaches ('astrinxit') him to her chest (*pectus*). This visceral connection of mother and infant is then replaced by an ineffable infusion of Christ within herself (pp. 118-119). Christ appears repeatedly to Marie d'Oignies (c. 1167-1213), in various forms appropriate to certain feasts. At the Nativity, he appears as a baby, suckling and in a cradle, and at the Feast of Purification he appears as a young boy.⁶³ The thirteenth-century nun Ida of Nivelles († 1231), known as 'Ida the Compassionate', is given the baby Christ to nestle in her chest.⁶⁴ The recluse Dorothy of Montau (1347-1394) also

⁵⁹ Indeed, Mulder-Bakker (2005) also notes the significance of the usage of these terms (p. 152).

⁶⁰ *Vita der Margareta* (1992), pp. 6, 9, 24, 27ff.

⁶¹ *AASS*, III March 28, 758. See further Kieckhefer (1984), p. 94.

⁶² Petroff (1986) has revealed Mary's dominance in the lives of various female mystics, particularly in their learning curve of Love (p. 11).

⁶³ *AASS*, IV June 23, 659F-660A.

⁶⁴ *Send Me God: The Lives of Ida the Compassionate of Nivelles, Nun of La Ramée, Arnulf, Lay Brother of Villers, and Abundus, Monk of Villers, by Goswin of Bossut*, trans. Martinus Cawley (Turnhout, 2003), p. 68. See also Rubin (2010), p. 260.

has the opportunity to hold the baby Christ, a ‘delightful thing’ Mary puts into her arms after her desperate pleas.⁶⁵

The evolution of the Holy Mother’s painful compassion in textual and visual portrayals of the Passion has received thorough scholarly attention, but a brief summary of this work is germane here. It is now a commonplace that from the late eleventh century onwards, depictions of the Crucifixion gradually became more graphic, with greater emphasis on the magnitude and depth of suffering.⁶⁶ The body of the Man of Sorrows is no longer whole and strong; it is shown to be broken, his limbs contorted, his anguish easily visible on his face and body. Alongside this development are changes to depictions of Mary. As Rubin summarizes it:

Representations increasingly considered Mary’s pain, and the disruption that it caused to her mind and her body. [...] The chief mediator of Christ’s pain was Mary, and her co-suffering was offered for the imitation of the audiences. As Jesus’ pain was made more graphic so was Mary’s agony in beholding it.⁶⁷

Furthermore, the number of witnesses of the Crucifixion multiplied. As noted in Chapter 4, Binski has argued that the affective gestures and expressions of these witnesses in visual images are germane to the audience’s own affective engagement

⁶⁵ Johannes von Marienwerder, *The Life of Dorothea von Montau, a Fourteenth-Century Recluse*, trans. Ute Stargardt (Lewiston, 1997), Book II, Chapter iii: pp. 82-83. See also Rubin (2010), pp. 265-266.

⁶⁶ This straightforward linear model must be tempered, however. It should not exclude the Anglo-Saxon images which portray the suffering of Christ, nor the later emphases on Mary’s composure and self-control. On this latter point, see Rubin (2010) on the Franciscan Marquard of Lindau († 1392), p. 247. For an example of an Anglo-Saxon image conveying Christ’s pain, see the illumination from a Psalter with Old English gloss (London, British Library, MS Arundel 60, fol. 52v), reprinted in *Christ Within Me: Prayers and Meditations from the Anglo-Saxon Tradition*, trans. Benedicta Ward (Kalamazoo, MI, 2008), p. 32.

⁶⁷ Rubin (2010), pp. 244, 246.

with the Passion.⁶⁸ Affective response could be enabled through the audience's sensory participation with the visual media. The *Pietà* of the later medieval centuries harboured an especially tactile potency. These 'sculptures of compassion', as described by J. E. Ziegler, engaged devotees in a 'language of touch'.⁶⁹ Devotees 'conversed' in this language with the grieving mother cradling her Son.

More than a witness to the Crucifixion, Mary is herself depicted as suffering a crucifixion in her compassion, no doubt stemming from the scriptural basis of Simeon's Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35).⁷⁰ We might remember here the perception of Goscelin and the Trinity 32 homilist of compassion as a form of crucifixion, an image also presumably based on the Luke reference. In 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame', Mary requests to be physically crucified with her Son— the irony being, perhaps, that she is already crucified affectively:

Fiz duz, kar oiez vostre mere e me recevez ovecke vus en vostre passion, si ke nus qu'avom vesqui en une char e avom amé [en] un amur morum de une mort. O cheitive [o]juaille, purquei m'esparnez vus puis ke vus n'esparniez mun duz fiz? Crucifiez mei avec li ou mei tuez d'aucun autre mort, kar il ne me chaut de quele mort jeo more fors ke jeo morge orendreit, kar il n'est pas dreit qu'il morge sul.
(p. 186)

⁶⁸ Binski (1996), p. 45. See also Rubin (2010), p. 248.

⁶⁹ J. E. Ziegler, *Sculpture of Compassion: The Pietà and the Beguines in the Southern Low Countries, c. 1300- c. 1600* (Brussels, 1992). Ziegler affirms that the 'sculpted *Pietà* becomes the setting for a private enactment of basic human feelings', arguing for its transcendence (pp. 15, 16-17). Her focus are the Beguine communities of the Low Countries: 'These women had a special fluency in the language of touch [...] In the case of medieval sculpture, and specifically the *Pietà*, the language of spectatorship was pre-eminently one of touch, that is, one demanding fluency in tactile matters' (pp. 95-96); see also p. 106.

⁷⁰ Warner, in her now-classic book (2000), examines an Italian poem by Franciscan Jacopone da Todi (c. 1230-1306) in which Mary expresses herself as being 'abbracciati on the same crucifix' as her son (p. 213).

(Sweet son, cast your ears to your mother and receive her with you in your Passion. Since we have lived in one flesh and loved with one love, we should die with one death. Oh wretched sheep, why do you spare me since you do not spare my sweet son? Crucify me with him, or kill me with any other death, because I do not care what death I die as long as I die immediately, because it is not right that he dies alone.)

In such an affective crucifixion, Mary is a model for the anchoress, whose figurative crucifixion is partly physical, but dominantly affective— as discussed in Chapter 1.⁷¹ Mary offers the anchoress a priceless devotional gift: affective access to the scene on Calvary.

Engagement with Mary's affective stirrings figures prominently in Passion meditation. At the climactic scene on Calvary, Aelred encourages the anchoress to move closer to the Mother:

Ac tu, virgo, cui maior est apud Virginis Filium confidentia a mulieribus quae longe stant, cum Matre uirgine et discipulo uirgine accede ad crucem, et perfusum pallore uultum cominus intuere. Quid ergo? Tu sine lacrymis, amantissimae dominae tuae lacrymas uidebis? Tu siccis manes oculis, et eius animam pertransit gladius doloris? Tu sine singultu audies dicentem Matri: *Mulier, ecce filius tuus*, et Ioanni: *Ecce mater tua*, cum discipulo matrem committeret, latroni paradisum promitteret?
(671)

(But you, virgin, who is of greater confidence in the presence of the Virgin's Son than the women who stand at a distance, approach the Cross with the Virgin Mother and the virgin disciple, and at close quarters look upon the face imbued with pallor. What then? Will you be without tears, when you see the most loving lady weeping? Will you not flood your dry eyes, when her soul is pierced by the sword of sorrow? Will you be without sighs when you hear Him say to his Mother: *Woman, behold your son*, and to John, *Behold your mother*? When the disciple was committed to the mother, the robber promised to paradise?)

⁷¹ Fulton (2002) has observed the relevance of Mary's primarily affective pain to devotees (p. 199).

The virginal anchoress is brought in close proximity to Mary (and Mary's adopted son), and she is invited to contribute to the weeping. Whilst in 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame', John has the privilege of also feeling the sword— 'li gleives lur aveit ja trespercé les quers' (the sword had pierced their hearts (p. 188))—, the heart of Aelred's anchoress is not pierced by the Sword of Sorrows, as mentioned in Chapter 3. She only weeps as she observes the Mother experiencing the Sword's incision. Aelred's anchoress and Mary are co-sufferers, co-feelers, but their suffering can never be identical. The anchoress desires only to share in 'some' of this pain.

In Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum', the meditator addresses the standing Mother to discern her affective movements:

Domina mea misericordissima, quos fontes dicam erupisse de pudicissimis oculis, cum attenderes unicum filium tuum innocentem coram te ligari, flagellari, mactari? Quos fluctus credam perfudisse piissimum vultum, cum suspiceres eundem filium et deum et dominum tuum in cruce sine culpa extendi et carnem de carne tua ab impiis crudeliter dissecari? Quibus singultibus aestimabo purissimum pectus vexatum esse, cum tu audires: >>mulier, ecce filius tuus<<, et discipulus: >>ecce mater tua<<? Cum acciperes in filium discipulum pro magistro, servum pro domino?
(8)

(My most compassionate Lady, what can I say of the fountains that erupted from your most pure eyes, when you saw your only Son, your innocent flesh bound, scourged, slaughtered? What do I know of the flood that permeated your most tender face, when you viewed your very own son and God and Lord, crucified without guilt, stretched out, and the flesh of your flesh cruelly dissected? How can I estimate what sobs vexed your purest breast, when you heard: *Woman, behold your son*, and the disciple, *Behold your mother*? When you accepted as a son the disciple for the master, the servant for the lord?)

The meditator acknowledges her inability to understand Mary's suffering, but is no less determined to gain some insight into the Mother's anguish. Within the meditator's insistent questions to Mary resides a fierce and desperate attempt to gauge her affective experience. The meditator joins each of Mary's affective responses with

a sight or event on the Cross: her tears are in response to her son being beaten; the flood on her face is linked to her son being stretched on the Cross and cut; her sobs coincide with Christ's words to her (John 19: 26-27). This is a clear attempt by the meditator to deconstruct Mary's affective movements, and in so doing to co-feel with her. Such efforts are also powerfully present in the thirteenth-century English anchoritic texts— though more prominently in the *Wooing Group* than in *Ancrene Wisse*.

Co-feeling with Mary in *Ancrene Wisse*

Whilst the Mary of *Ancrene Wisse* does have an important role in the nourishment of the anchoress' co-feeling, the relationship she shares with the anchoress is primarily a formal one, liturgically structured and focused on Mary's exemplarity: her role as a 'forbisne' for the anchoress. She is not the companion she is for Yvette of Huy, the pedagogue she is for Margaret of Magdeburg, or the mother-figure she is for Jane Mary of Maillé. The *Ancrene Wisse*-author subtly puts the Virgin Mary at the centre of the text: she forms the conceptual core of the anchoresses' devotions in Part I, as argued and diagrammatically illustrated by Grayson.⁷² The anchoress devotes a large part of her devotional routine to Mary's Joys, at the heart of lyrics Brown 18 and 41. In *Ancrene Wisse*, the joys are defined as the Conception and Birth of Christ, his Resurrection and Ascension, and Mary's Assumption (14-15: 315), followed by a comprehensive regime of Marian prayers (15-18). The anchoress is expected to say fifty or a hundred *Ave Marias* (16: 347), in addition to Psalms and canticles selected

⁷² Grayson (1974), p. 37. This concentration on the Little Office suggests a connection with later Books of Hours directed at a lay audience, investigated by Millett (2000), pp. 21-40 (see particularly pp. 22, 29, 32).

to correspond to the five letters of Mary's name (see 17: 353-354). As Millett explains, this is achieved by taking the first letter of each line of scripture, collectively forming 'Maria': 'Luke I: 46-55 *M*(agnificat), Ps. 119 *A*(d Dominum), Ps. 118-17-24 *R*(etribue), Ps. 125 *I*(n convertendo), Ps. 122 *A*(d te levavi).'⁷³ The author also ends *Ancrene Wisse* with a request for direct prayers to the Lady (165: 348).

Between Part I and the end of Part VIII, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author also casts Mary as a paradigmatic anchoress, in her silence and in her solitude. Part II makes reference to Mary's silence. It is first mentioned as a contrast to the garrulous Eve (27: 284-290), and then expounded more fully:

Vre deorewurðe Leafdi, seinte Marie, þe ah to alle wummen to beo forbisne, wes of se lutel speche þet nohwer in Hali Writ ne finde we þet ha spec bute fowr siðen; ah for se selt speche hire wordes were heuie ant hefden mucche mihte. [...] Hire forme wordes þet we redeð of weren þa ha ondswerede Gabriel þen engel [...] Hire oþre wordes weren þa ha com ant grette Elyzabeth hire mehe [...] Þet þridde time þet ha spec wes ed te neoces; ant ter [b]urh hire bisocne wes weater iwent to wine. Þe feorðe time wes þa ha hefde imist hire sune ant eft him ifunde[.]
(31-32: 442-459)

In Part III, the author holds up Mary as the model for the solitary life, linking it to her silence:

Vre leoue Leafdi, ne leadde ha anlich lif? Ne fond te engel hire in anli stude al ane? Nes ha nohwer ute, ah wes biloken feste. For swa we ifindeð: *Ingressus angelus ad eam dixit, Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus* [*The angel entered to her and said, Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women*]; þet is, 'Þe engel wende in to hire.' Þenne wes heo inne in anli stude hire ane. Engel to mon iþrung ne eadewede neauer ofte. On oðer half, þurh þet nohwer in Hali Writ nis iwriten of hire speche bute fowr siðen, as is iseid þruppe, sutel prufunge hit is þet ha wes muchel ane þe heold swa silence.
(62: 575-583)

⁷³ Millett, trans. (2009), p. 180, n. I. 129.

Given the emphasis on her ‘anlich life’, the author almost states that Mary was an anchorite, comparable with the image of Christ-the-Anchorite sealed in his mother’s womb (VI, 142: 424-425).⁷⁴

Mary-the-physician, who cures Christina of Markyate, also features in *Ancrene Wisse*.⁷⁵ She appears in the story of the three sick men in Part VI, probably a Cistercian *exemplum* in origin.⁷⁶

A dei, as ha þreo weren ifolen o slepe, ant lei bitweone þes twa þe þridde þet Ich seide, come þe Cwen of heouene, ant twa meidnes wið hire. Þe an as þah hit were ber a letuaire, þe oþer of gold a sticcke. Vre Leafdi wið þe sticke nom ant dude i þe anes muð of þe letuaire, ant te meidnes eoden forðre to þe midleste. ‘Nai,’ quod ure Leafdi, ‘he is his ahne leche; ga ouer to þe þridde.’ (139-140: 313-319)

Her intercession at the feast of Cana (John 2: 1-11) is also explored more fully in this part, having been briefly mentioned in Part II as one of the four instances in which she speaks:

Bi þis nome ‘Marie’ nim eauer ‘bitternesse’. Þurh Maries bone wes ed te neoces weater iwent to wine; þet is to understonden, þurh bone of bitternesse þet me derheð for Godd, þe heorte þe wes weattri, smeclles, ne ne felde na sauur of Godd, na mare þen i weater, schal beon iwent to wine, þet is, ifinden smecl in him swete ouer alle wines. (141: 388-393)

⁷⁴ See also Renevey (1993), p. 78.

⁷⁵ When the ailing Christina is considered beyond help, Mary cures her (pp. 120-124). The Virgin acts as a celestial midwife in other texts. In one of the famous Marian legends, she delivers the baby of an abbess, protecting her from her community’s retribution. Giles Constable describes this vision in the context of Aelred’s rendition of the story of the nuns of Watton. See Giles Constable, ‘Aelred of Rievaulx and the nun of Watton: an episode in the early history of the Gilbertine order’, in *Medieval Women*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford, 1978), pp. 205-226. As he states of the legend, the ‘earliest known version is in the collection of Mary miracles compiled by Dominic of Evensham, probably in the early 1120s’ (p. 213).

⁷⁶ On the origins of this story, see Millett, ed. (2005-2006), II, 249-250: 6/307-19.

Her ‘bone’ is not quoted by the *Ancrene Wisse*-author, no doubt in order to help the anchoress to model her silence on Mary.

Despite the formal relationship cultivated in *Ancrene Wisse*, founded upon Mary’s exemplarity for the anchoress, the Mother’s painful compassion is not erased from the text. Two of the Latin antiphons in Part I of *Ancrene Wisse* refer to Mary’s compassion (16: 333, 346), both dating from the eleventh century, as noted by Millett.⁷⁷ In Part II, there are two references to the Virgin’s (as well as John’s and the other Marys’) tears, tears which cause Christ’s suffering. First, it causes suffering in his sight: ‘In his sihðe, þa he seh his deorewurðe moder teares, ant Sein Iuhanes Euuangeliste, ant te oðre Maries’ (42: 851-853). Second, it causes suffering in his spiritual feeling, as explored in Chapter 1: ‘Þis stiche wes þreouald, þe ase þreo spere smat him to þe heorte. Þe an wes his modres wop ant te oþre Maries, þe flowen o teares’ (45: 961-963). At this scene of the three spears wounding the Saviour’s heart, a two-way access is formed between Christ and Mary, both suffering in compassion for the other. Christ’s sensation of pain is emphasized more than once: ‘In hire he felde þe stiche of sari sorhe ant sorhful, þet dude him sike sare’ (45: 959-951).

This two-way compassion between Christ and Mary situates itself in broader devotional trends. Lotario dei Segni (1160/1-1216), later to become Pope Innocent III,

⁷⁷ See Millett, trans. (2009), p. 180, ns. 1.120 and 1.126. On the first antiphon, Millett notes: ‘It became widespread (with some textual variation) in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and its sequence of five *Gaudes* led to its being linked, as here, with the Five Joys of Mary’. The second, she notes, is ‘sometimes attributed to Herman of Reichenau (d. 1054)’.

laments that even in his tomb, Christ ‘infremuit spiritu’ (‘groaned in spirit’) on hearing his mother’s tears.⁷⁸ Lyrics Brown 45 and 47 focus on Christ’s and Mary’s anguish stemming from the sight of the other in pain. Christ’s sight of his mother’s grief is identified as a wound among his other tortures, and indeed, a particularly painful one:

Sore and arde he was iswungen,
 feth and andes þurew istungen,
 Ac mes of alle othre wunden
 im dede is modres sorwe wo.
 In al his pine, in al his wrake,
 þat he drei for mannes sake
 he sei is moder serwen maken—
 wol reufuliche he spac hire to. [...]
 (p. 77, ll. 17-24)

The Son speaks ‘reufuliche’ to his mother, asserting the necessity of his suffering (pp. 77-78, ll. 25-32). The technique of dialogue is even more powerfully present in Brown 49. In both its most complete version, found in London, British Library, MS. Royal 12 E. 1, and its other version found in London, British Library, MS Digby 86, half of each stanza is given to Jesus’ dialogue, the other half to Mary’s. As it begins in the Royal 12 version:

‘Stond wel, moder, vnder rode,
 bihold þi child wyth glade mode,
 blyþe moder mittu ben.’
 ‘Svne, quu may bliþe stonden?
 hi se þin feet, hi se þin honden,
 nayled to þe harde tre.’
 (p. 89, ll. 1-6)

Christ continues his attempts at reassurance, and Mary continues to resist the possibility of comfort, alluding to Simeon’s sword:

⁷⁸ *De miseria condicionis humane*, ed. and trans. Lewis (1978), pp. 134-135.

Svne, hi fele þe ded stunde,
 þe swerd is at mine herte grunde,
 þat me byhytte symeon.
 (p. 89, ll. 10-12)

In the third stanza, Christ strikingly suggests that the sight of his mother's tears causes him greater pain than death itself; as such, he pleads for her pity:

Moder, reu vpon þi bern!
 þu wasse away þo blodi teren,
 it don me werse þan mi ded.
 (p. 89, ll. 13-15)

But Mary is unable to stifle her tears, transfixed as her gaze is on the blood flow from her son's heart to her feet (p. 89, ll. 16-18). When Christ begs her to allow him to die, Mary requests to die before him, since 'his pain pains her to death':

Sune, wat sal me to rede?
 þi pine pined me to dede,
 let me deyn þe bi-foren.
 (p. 90, ll. 34-36)

Mary's presence as compassionate sufferer is again alluded to in Part VI of *Ancrene Wisse*— though here more subtly, as argued by Grayson.⁷⁹ The author soberly contemplates that 'Hwer-se muchel dunt is, hit bulteð a3ein upo þeo þe þer neh stondeð' (138: 265-266). The standing sufferer would seem to allude to the *stabat mater* who suffers even though she is not literally crucified. This silence arguably has its own power within the strategies of this text. In line with the author's praise in Part II of the fact that 'nohwer in Hali Writ ne finde we þet ha spec bute fowr siðen', Mary also suffers inaudibly. As her brevity of speech means that 'hire wordes weren heuie ant hefden muche mihte', so does her silence add puissance to her pain— differently from the vocally anguished Mary seen in Brown 49 and the Anglo-Norman 'Les

⁷⁹ Grayson (1974), p. 163.

lamentations Nostre Dame'. In this silence, *Ancrene Wisse* differs markedly from the famous Brown 1. It has been claimed that this lyric is 'typical of the early poems in its [...] depiction of a mother who grieves in silence'. But now that this lyric has been resituated in its multilingual context by Ardis Butterfield, it is clear that Mary does speak, with the voices of Noemi (Ruth 1:20) and the Bride of the Song of Songs (1:5).⁸⁰

E pur ço poet el dire de soy
 ço ke dit Noemie:
 'Ne me apelez mes bele tant ne quant,
 mes amere me apelez desoreenavant,
 kar de amertume e dolor grant
 m'ad replenie le tut poissant.'
 Meymes cele tenir
 dist ele en la Chaunsun d'Amur:
 'Ne vus esmerveillez
 ke suy Brunette e haslee
 kar le soleil m'ad desculuree.'
 E pur ço dist un Engloys en teu manere de pité:
 Nou goth sonne under wod, —
 me reweth, marie, þi faire Rode.
 Nou goþ sonne vnder tre, —
 me reweþ, marie, þi sone and þe.⁸¹

(And because of this she can say of herself
 That which Noemi said:
 'Do not call me beautiful at all,
 call me bitter from this moment,
 because the All Powerful has filled me
 with bitterness and great sorrow.'
 This same subject

⁸⁰ Ardis Butterfield, 'The Construction of Textual Form: Cross-Lingual Citation in the Medieval Insular Lyric', in *Citation, Intertextuality and Memory in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Text, Music and Image from Machaut to Ariosto*, ed. Yolanda Plumley, Giuliano Di Bacco and Stefano Jossa (Exeter, 2011), pp. 41-57 (see especially pp. 45-47). Butterfield has demonstrated that 'it is misleading to read it in linguistic isolation: its English is the product of a wider process of exegesis in which the English words have a hinterland of French and Latin writing.' (p. 47). The comment that this lyric is 'typical' in its depiction of a silent Mary is made by McNamer (2010), p. 156; McNamer was writing before the publication of Butterfield's important findings.

⁸¹ This is quoted from Butterfield (2011), pp. 45-46, and Brown, ed. (1932), p. 1, ll. 1-4.

she speaks of in the Song of Love:
 ‘Do not be amazed
 That I am brown and dried up,
 Because the sun has discoloured me.’
 And because of this, an English man says in this manner full of pity:
 Now go sun under wood:
 I pity, Mary, your fair Cross.
 Now go sun under the tree:
 I pity, Mary, your son and you.)

Ancrene Wisse does not even use the resources of the Bible to voice Mary’s anguish:
 in this anchoritic text, her compassion is perfectly silent.

Co-feeling with Mary in the *Wooing Group*

Mary makes an appearance in all five *Wooing Group* texts. As seen in Chapter 2, she is the focal point and central love-object of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, stimulating profound desires in the meditator. Her position as anguished mother is explored in key passages in *Ureisun of God* (fol. 126r; pp. 8-9, ll. 130-155) and *Wohunge* (fol. 132ra-b; p. 35, ll. 554- 568). In both texts, the respective passage is kept separate from the meditation as a whole, since in both cases, the meditations are more focused upon gaining intimacy with Christ. *Lofsong of ure Louerde* has several references to the Virgin as providing the flesh of Christ, and as compassionate spectator of the Crucifixion (fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 1-8, 15-18). Although *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* is framed as a meditation spoken to the Virgin, her role is almost exclusively confined to that of intercessor between the anchoress and Christ. However, she is also established in this meditation as the flesh-giving force behind Christ’s incarnation (fol. 127r; p. 17, ll. 41-42). The depth of attachment to the Virgin enjoyed by Yvette of Huy, Christina of Markyate, and Margaret of Magdeburg is not recreated in the *Wooing Group*. In four of the five meditations— *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *Ureisun of God*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* and

Wohunge— the anchoress addresses the Virgin directly, as ‘þe’/ ‘þu’. But even though the anchoress sees the Virgin, it is not clear that the Virgin sees her. She is invisible to the Virgin, yet she occupies a place where she can see and speak to the Holy Mother directly. Like the Anselmian meditator, who runs panting after an elusive Mary in the third prayer (21), the anchoress reading the *Wooing Group* never hears Mary’s reciprocal voice, nor receives any comfort from her.

The Holy Mother’s role does not lack versatility, however. Foremost, the anchoress yearns for Mary’s valuable intercession. That is the Mother’s basic role in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*. The anchoress asks Mary to intercede, though the Mother remains silent— as in *Ancrene Wisse* where her ‘bone’ at the feast of Cana is not quoted in the text:

þuruh alle ich biseche þe godes deorewurðe moder þet heore mihte helpe me .
 7 hore strençðe go forð. þer min offringe wonteð. for min bileue is þet ich
 schal þuruh ham beon iboreuwen.
 (fol. 127v; p. 18, ll. 70-74)

The speaker in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* is preoccupied with imploring Mary to ‘bisech’ for her (see fols 127r, 127v-128r; p. 17, ll. 37-40, p. 18 ll. 71-85). Her power is again fundamentally vocal, though she never speaks through the text. It is a role also alluded to in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*:

haue merci of me 7 iher mine bonen. þuruh þe selie bonen of þine milde
 moder 7 seint iohanes ewangeliste. 7 alle þine halewen.
 (fol. 128v; p. 11, ll. 31-34)

This does not demarcate the absolute limits of the Mother’s role. *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* is unique among the *Wooing Group* texts in that the central love-object is Mary, not

Christ. In this sense, it has a particular affinity with Anselm's trio of prayers, and the numerous thirteenth-century lyrics predicated upon adoring the Virgin, including Brown 60 and 61. Noticeably however, it is lengthier and more detailed than either of these lyrics. The opening of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi* indicates its intensity of devotion:

Cristes milde moder seynte marie,
 Mines liues leome, mi leoue lefdi,
 To þe ich buwe & mine kneon ich beie,
 And al min heorte blod to ðe ich offrie.
 Þu ert mine soule liht & mine heorte blisse,
 Mi lif & mi to-hope, min heale mid iwisse.
 (p. 3, ll. 1-6)

Mary's love is the sole driving force of the meditator's spiritual existence:

Vor þine luue i swinke & sike wel ilome,
 Vor þine luue ich ham ibrouht in-to þeoudome,
 Vor þine luue ich uorsoc al þet me leof was[.]
 (pp. 5-6, ll. 97-99)

It is this Marian emphasis of *Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, perhaps more than its male speaker, that distinguishes it from the other *Wooing Group* texts. But as demonstrated in Chapter 2, it engages in subtle dialogues with the other Nero meditations. This is particularly clear in the fleeting reference to Mary's suffering in the Crucifixion:

And ek ich ðe biseche uor ihesu cristes blode,
 þet for ure note was i-sched o ðere rode,
 Vor ðe muchele seoruwe ðet was o ðine mode
 þo þu er ðe deaðe him bi-uore stode,
 þet tu me makie cleane wiðuten & eke wið-innen,
 So þet me ne schende non kunnes sunne.
 (p. 5, ll. 87-92)

Mary has an unprecedented access to Christ in the other *Wooing Group* texts also. Her most powerful connection with Christ is as compassionate sufferer in the Passion, the mother martyred with her son.

The *Wooing Group*-authors encourage the anchoress to discern the roots of Mary's compassion, that 'tender and inseparable group of mother and son'.⁸² The close bond between the Virgin and Christ is the anchoress' key to understanding and experiencing Mary's compassion: the anchoress must co-suffer with her and her Son. The anchoress is encouraged to reconstruct the mother-son bond from its formation to its development, in a language of joining, in order to discern and feel some of her pain. The bonding of Christ and Mary is portrayed with the genitive 'moder sune' in *Wohunge* (fol. 127vb; p. 21, l. 55). The profound bodily unity of Mother and Son is stressed at the opening of *Lofsong of ure Louerde*:

Iesu crist godes sune soð godd 7 soð mon of þe eadie meiden iboren maria .
 þet is meiden 7 bute make moder . ich of alle sunfulle am on mest ifuled of
 sunne ase ich drede . ich bidde 7 biseche þe wið inwarde heorte þurh þin
 akennednesse ine meidenes licame of þe holi goste. 7 þuruh þin iborenesse
 wiðuten bruche of hire bodie [...].
 (fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 1-8)

The lack of 'bruche' alludes not only to the painlessness of the pregnancy and birth, but also to the fact that their two bodies are so fused that no 'breach' could result. *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* most clearly expresses this development from fusing at birth-point to Mary's compassion by the Cross. The speaker gently moves from Christ's 'flech founge of þine eadie bodie', to a flesh that is being destroyed in the Passion *tableaux* (fol. 127r; p. 17, ll. 41-42, 45-46ff). By the progression of the meditation, the

⁸² Rubin's term (2010), p. 243.

Virgin feels Christ's torture in her very flesh.⁸³ Amy Neff has revealed that Mary's Swoon in medieval visual and textual cultures resonates with imagery of childbirth.⁸⁴ Whilst it is not made explicit in the *Wooing Group* that Mary experiences the pain of childbirth in her compassion, it is clear that her maternal body amplifies her agony.

Beyond this bodily fusion, *Ureisun of God* and *Wohunge* both portray moments of affective intimacy shared between Mother and Son. In *Ureisun of God*, this intimacy occurs on Calvary (fol. 126r; pp. 8-9, ll. 130-155). In *Wohunge*, in the section on Christ's poverty, it is not the adult Christ reaching out to his Mother from the Cross, but the infant Christ suckling at his mother's breast. The suckling image in *Wogunge* is as visually potent as that in the one-stanza lyric Brown 68 (p. 127, ll. 3-4):

Poure þu wunden was i rates 7 i clutes 7 caldeliche dennet in a beastes cribbe.
Bote swa þu eldere wex; swa þu pourere was. For i þi childhad hafdes tu þe
pappe to þi fode. 7 ti moder readi hwen þu pappe 3erndes.
(fol. 130ra-b; p. 29, ll. 327-334)

The anchoress of the *Wooing Group* does not have the opportunity, as Aelred's sister does, to take part meditatively in the nursing of Christ, to play with the infant, to kiss his feet, or to bask in the adult-Christ's tenderness on the Cross.⁸⁵ Unlike Aelred's

⁸³ Even the mentioning of Christ's circumcision—which results in 'purification' from the maternal in Kristevan thought—fails to rupture the bond. See Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay in Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (NY, 1982), p. 99.

⁸⁴ Amy Neff, 'The Pain of *Compassio*: Mary's Labor at the Foot of the Cross', *Art Bulletin*, lxxx, no. 2 (1998), 254-273.

⁸⁵ As Aelred's anchoress engages in the first meditative manoeuvre of turning to the past, she is involved both as spectator of, but also participant in, the life of the Virgin Mother. This is encapsulated in the account of the Annunciation. Before Gabriel's entrance, she is with Mary reading; the preposition 'cum' clarifies that this is in a participatory capacity. She then voices the annunciation with the angel (662-663). The anchoress' participation continues through the birth of Christ (663-664), where she

sister, she does not seem to have the confidence to move closer to the Cross. But the anchoress attempts to gain access to this ‘tender and inseparable group’ (Rubin), through cultivating her compassion for both mother and son.

From this basis of mother-son closeness, Mary is defined as the source and nurturer of the anchoress’ own compassion. As mentioned earlier, the coupling of Mary and John in *Lofsong of ure Louerde* occurs in their shared compassion for Christ’s pain. Compassion becomes a unifying force, bonding together a mother with her new ‘son’. This dimension of compassion as the force which couples together Mary and John is more powerfully asserted than in Anselm’s (8) or Aelred’s (671) use of John 19:26-27:

7 þuruh ðe ilke rode ihalewed of þine deorewurðe limen. ðet þu on hire mildeliche streihtest. 7 þine moderes ream 7 sein i[o]hanes soruwe þo þu somnedest ham ase sune 7 moder. uor rewðe of þine pinen[.]
(fol. 128r; p. 10, ll. 13-17)

It is in *Wohunge* that the anchoress openly acknowledges the power of Mary’s compassion. Mary comes into full meditative focus after the chronological Passion scene. The anchoress ‘zooms out’ of the Wounded Heart and looks instead upon the anguished mother standing outside Christ’s body. She moves from Christ’s open Heart of love letters to his mother watching the cleaving open of this rich space, addressing her directly:

participates as travel companion and midwife to Mary, and celebratory observer of the birth; she also has physical access to Christ’s infant body. The anchoress and Aelred are still present as Christ grows into a child (664-665), inhabiting a murky area between participation with and spectatorship of Mary: they accompany her on the search for her lost boy, but are also affectively moved by her words (from Luke 2:48).

Lauedi moder 7 meiden þu stod here ful neh 7 seh al þis sorhe vpo þi
 deorewurðe sune. was wiðinne martird i þi moderliche herte. þat seh to cleue
 his heorte wið þe speres ord. Bote lafdi for þe Ioie þat tu hefdes of his ariste þe
 bridde dai þer after; leue me vnderstonde þi dol 7 herteli to felen sumhwat of
 þe sorhe þat tu þa hefdes 7 helpe þe to wepe. þat i wið him 7 wið þe muhe
 imin ariste o domes dai gladien 7 wið 3u beon iblisse þat he me swa bitterliche
 wið his blod bohte.
 (fols 132ra-132rb; p. 35, ll. 554- 568)

Like the meditator in Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum' and the anchoress in Aelred's *De institutione inclusarum*, the *Wooing Group* anchoress attempts to reconstruct and inhabit the Virgin's space of suffering ('þu stod here ful neh'), as does the speaker of *Ureisun of God*, where Mary is the 'stondunge lefdi' (fol. 126r; p. 9, l. 154). This invokes the haunting figure, *stabat mater dolorosa*. Forming the basis of a popular hymn in the thirteenth century, it encapsulates Mary's wilful abiding: an essential aspect of her compassion that the anchoress must imitate.⁸⁶ Standing in grief with the mother, the anchoress also attempts to feel the compassion from a mother's perspective; she specifically appeals to Mary's 'moderliche herte'. As Albert Magnus († 1280) says of Mary in his *Postilla super Isaiam*: 'Tunc enim per cordis intimum dolorem scivit, quid fuit matrem esse.' (Then indeed she knew, from the pain in her innermost heart, what it is to be a mother).⁸⁷ And it is here in *Wohunge* that we have the clearest reference to Luke 2:35 in the *Wooing Group*: a direct pain is charted from Christ's torn heart to Mary's 'martird' motherly one, invoking Simeon's agonizing sword.

⁸⁶ See Rubin (2010), pp. 244-245.

⁸⁷ *Alberti Magni Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Postilla super Isaiam*, ed. F. Siepmann (Monasterii Westfolorum, 1952), Chapter 7.4, 110: 49-50. This text is included in the present thesis as an analogue. See further Neff (1998), 257.

The anchoress hungers for the special participation and access the Virgin Mary has with and to Christ, in all her mother's agony. The anchoress wants to deconstruct the workings of the Sword, so that she can inhabit the mother's heart as the sword pierces it: 'leue me vnderstonde þi dol 7 *herteli* to felen sum hwat of þe sorhe þat tu þa hefdes 7 helpe þe to wepe' (emphasis added). The adverb 'herteli' refers to eagerness and completeness in an action, as 'heartily' in modern English. Yet its usage in this instance might also draw attention to the anchoress' heart, significant given that the Mother suffers the wounding in her heart. As the anchoress yearns to feel Christ's pain, she also yearns to 'to felen sum hwat of þe sorhe' the Virgin Mary experiences, to return to the quotation that opened this chapter.⁸⁸ Pain and pleasure exist intimately, as joy infuses into the sorrow (fol. 132rb; p. 35, ll. 566-68). The cyclical nature of liturgical time is once again useful in interpreting this meditative passage: the Virgin's sorrow and joy are melded together. Although expressed in the past tense, the Mother's sorrow remains present for the anchoress, who co-feels in the present sorrow and also in the joy that is to come.

Lofsong of ure Lefdi possibly takes the anchoress a step further. In adopting the Mother's perspective of her 'seli sune', the anchoress shares the same view as Mary (fol. 127r; p. 17, l. 37). Given that this meditation is addressed to the Virgin, the anchoress attempts to see each isolated image of the Passion from the perspective of the Mother, perceptible in the opening of the Passion *tableaux* (fol. 127r; p. 17, ll. 40-42). As in the lyric Brown 47, the anchoress aims to adopt the Virgin's optical perspective as a step towards entering her affective space. There is no dialogue in Brown 47, with speech seeming to fail here too. Instead, the speaker first establishes

⁸⁸ For the layers of meaning of 'felen' in Middle English, see Renevey (1997), pp. 58-59.

Mary's viewpoint (p. 83, ll. 1-6), and then proceeds to recount the torturous details of the Crucifixion from Mary's perspective, asserting her affective suffering through her sight. The lyric moves from generally referring to Mary's appalling pain ('drieriere nas neuerre no wif / þan þu were, leuedi' (p. 83, ll. 8-9)), to describing Christ's blood-filled wounds which in turn wound Mary's heart in accordance with Simeon's prophecy:

þo þu seye hise bludi wundes,
and his bodi o rode don.
Hise wundes sore and smerte
stungen þureu and þurw þi herte,
as te bihichte simeon.
(p. 83, ll. 14-18)

This is followed by Mary's sight of Christ's bloody and nailed body (p. 83, ll. 19-24). Subsequently, there is Mary's sight of the scourging, a sight which actively pains her heart:

Nu his bodi with scurges beten,
and his blud so wide hut-leten
maden þe þin herte sor.
War-so þu castest thin eyen,
pine strong þu soie im dreien—
ne mithte noman þolie mor.
(p. 83, ll. 25-30)

As in Anselm's 'Oratio ad Christum', this conjunction of torture-moments with specific instances of Mary's affective agony serves to powerfully convey the co-suffering, co-feeling shared between Mother and Son, in which the devotee is encouraged to participate. In *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, seeing enables the anchoress' co-feeling.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ For more on sight and compassion, see McNamer's (2010) discussion of 'beholding' (p. 135).

This final chapter has focused on the anchoress' co-feeling, an affective process by which the anchoress opens her heart to bring pain in. Mary's own compassion is a crucial model for the anchoress, who not only learns the art of co-feeling from the Mother, but also co-feels with Her, in her 'moderliche' pain. The command in *Ancrene Wisse*, 'habbeð reowðe', is one that could not go unnoticed in the anchorhold. Theodore Zeldin suggests that compassion, more than sex, has been deliberately stunted throughout history: 'All sorts of philosophies and prejudices have been like chastity belts, keeping it firmly under control.'⁹⁰ And yet, the thirteenth-century anchoress seems to turn Zeldin's model upside-down. Whilst she does keep her sexual urges under rigorous control, she actively cultivates her compassion for humanity, her Lover, and the Queen of Heaven— that co-feeler by profession, to invoke Mulder-Bakker's terms once more. In nurturing her co-feeling, the anchoress begins her spiritual journey to the bright intimacy of Heaven. There, she is rescued from the dark estrangement of earth, and brought to an affective access that is both unfettered and unpolluted:

Clara omnibus erunt omnium cogitationes et corda. Tunc quisque loquetur secreta, atque Deus reserabit pectora luci, et inuicem loquentur ac respondebunt dulcissima affectuum pignora, nec ullius inique cogitationis, omnibus scandalis et offendiculis stygyo demersis, intercurret nebula.
(Goscelin, *Liber confortatorius*, 116)

(Clear will be all the thoughts and hearts of everyone. At that time, everyone will speak secrets; and more than this, the Lord will unfasten chests to his light, and the sweet pledges of affection will speak and respond to each other in turn, with no cloud of hostile thoughts interposing, all temptations and obstacles submerged in Styx.)

⁹⁰ Zeldin (1998), p. 243.

Conclusion

As her capacity for affective stirrings, the anchoress' heart takes on a remarkable range of forms. Her heart can be, for example, soft and sweet (48: 3) or rough and bristling (49: 47). It can be a wild animal (20:8-13), a nest cradling a gemstone (54: 236-242), or a store-cupboard sheltering the 'swete spice' of hope (32: 482-483). The heart possesses eyes (*Ureisun of God*, fol. 126r; p. 9, l. 151), and it also has implied teeth: the anchoress can chew ('cheoweð') hope in her heart (32-33: 493-495).¹ But above all, her heart is earth. The anchoress is an affective farmer: she can nurture the land of her heart to create a fertile terrain, or by neglect she can leave it to degenerate into a wasteland. In cultivating her heart, the anchoress nourishes a refined capacity to feel intense but also carefully shaped affective pain, and the present thesis has sought to demonstrate this through close analysis of a small group of early thirteenth-century texts. It has also suggested that the 'affective literacy' cultivated in *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* is primarily English in nature. Whilst the *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* authors are not nationalistic writers, they are consciously developing a vernacular language for the affections. As she feels in English, the reading anchoress nurtures a range of affective stirrings, attempting to bring herself closer to her loving Lamb.

Chapter 1 of this thesis focused on the confessional and penitential processes formulated in Parts V and VI of *Ancrene Wisse*. Situating the procedures in a wider context of Dominican literature, this chapter revealed that spoken confession must be

¹ Julian also ruminates not upon texts, but upon the visions gained during her Revelations, 'shewed to a simple creature unletterde' (p. 125).

underpinned by a thorough cognitive self-examination. And it is a range of affective phenomena—including contrition, fear, and hope—which brings about a genuinely potent auricular confession. With its analysis of Part VI, this chapter also demonstrated that physical pain must be coupled with affective pain in the anchoress' penitence: in the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's terms, physical hardship must be accompanied by an inner bitterness (140: 343-346). Chapter 2 moved from *Ancrene Wisse* to the *Wooing Group*, studying the pain of the anchoress' 'game' of intimacy and distance in these lyrical meditations. Her anguish is nurtured both as she comes closer to Christ and his mother, and as she is pushed away from intimacy—the wall of her sins becoming a distressing barrier (*Ureisun of God*, fol. 125r; p. 7, ll. 89-90). The anchoress is the pained outsider, watching Christ reach down to his mother (*Ureisun of God*, fol. 126r; p. 9, ll. 146-149); but she is also the confident Bride who asks for her Beloved's right arm (*Lofsong of ure Louerde*, fol. 130r; p. 13, ll. 117-124), and the broken-hearted lover who is present at the moment that Christ's Heart is wounded by Longinus (*Wohunge*, fol. 132ra; p. 34, ll. 543-4).

Chapter 3 took as its focus the fundamental imagery of wounds and woundedness across *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Wooing Group*, and the *Katherine Group* hagiographies. Christ is wounded both physically and affectively, and in engaging with His Wounds the anchoress attempts to cultivate her own affective wounds, coming close to the Holy Mother's Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35)—though she is never said to receive the *sponsa Christi* love-wound (Canticles 4:9). She is, however, wounded by sin, dangerous lesions which can become infected (*Ancrene Wisse*, 104: 1373-1374). The sin-wounds are fought with the defensive weaponry of penitential wounding. Through the hagiographies, the anchoress learns to use wound imagery

productively. She turns away from Eleusius' frenetic and self-destructive wounds of lust; she turns instead to the wounds that Margaret and Juliana inflict on the devil, the painful wounds that Margaret rubs away in order to define her spectacle of martyrdom, and the maiming of empress Augusta which, Katherine says, gives rise to eternal bliss (p. 112, ll. 787-789).

At the core of Chapter 4 was the assumption that the anchoritic existence is both performance and spectatorship. The hagiographic legends of the *Katherine Group* invite a spectatorship predicated on defamiliarization. The anchoress is encouraged to detach herself from the overload of violence and the implication of bodily torment it suggests, reading instead of God's beauty and powers of salvation. Her spectatorship of the Passion, however, is based on affective immersion—a difference encapsulated by two contrasting bodies foregrounded in this fourth chapter. Juliana is imaged as a whole fish, smooth and slippery, with the anchoress unable to grasp or penetrate her, just as she is dissuaded from uncritical affective engagement with any of the *Katherine Group* saints. Christ, on the other hand, is a dovecote, open and accessible, with the anchoress becoming 'caught' affectively in his many apertures. The anchoress attempts to internalise the pain of Christ and key spectators of the Passion through textual *tableaux* and through pursuing imagined tactile contact with her Lover; this parallels her potential use of church wall paintings, such as those still surviving in Kent, Oxfordshire, and Sussex. This chapter ended with an assessment of the *Katherine Group* text *Hali Meiðhad*, which focuses on pain with no redemptive potency. In undergoing an 'embodied simulation' of the extreme pain of a wife and mother, the reader is painfully deterred from marriage and childbirth. Chapter 5 then closed this thesis with an exploration of the affective phenomenon of

compassion in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*. It argued that a distanced and superficial ‘pity’ is not the anchoress’ goal: rather, she nurtures her capacity for ‘co-feeling’, to appropriate Kundera’s term. Christ stimulates compassion in the anchoress, and also emanates compassion for her. Mary is an essential figure in the anchoress’ cultivation of co-feeling, and the chapter ended with an assessment of the Mother’s role in helping the anchoress to become a sophisticated co-feeler.

Across all five chapters, this thesis has avoided a framework of pathology in understanding the pain of the thirteenth-century anchoress. For it is a pain that carries with it the potential of salvation— a redemptive pain embraced actively by the anchoress. The pain she nurtures in herself comes from her own agency. She is the fortress carrying the banner of hardship that so terrifies the devil; she is the anguished dove looking into the river to see the circling hawk; she is the martyr decidedly crucifying herself on the cross of compassion.² She attempts to advance into the Passion scene, a scene drenched in inescapable and unbearable pain, and there she seeks out the Holy Mother to ask if she may feel some of Her sorrow.³ She enters into Christ’s bleeding Heart so that she may read his love letters, and she breaks her own heart as she sees her Lover in pain.⁴ Taking her heart, she crushes it, like an alabaster box, upon Christ’s loving and beloved head.⁵

² These images are from *Ancrene Wisse* (137: 222-227), *De institutione inclusarum* (654), and *Liber confortatorius* (42) respectively, mentioned at various points of this thesis.

³ See *De institutione inclusarum* (670 and 671) and *Wohunge* (fol. 132rb; p. 35, ll. 562-563).

⁴ See *Wohunge* (fol. 132ra; p. 35, ll. 546-551, and fol. 131va; p. 33, ll. 489-491).

⁵ *De institutione inclusarum* (667).

Bearing this materialist sensitivity in mind, future work on the anchoress' painful affective stirrings could include a study of the essential and interrelated affective phenomena of love, sorrow, and compassion in the vocabulary and imagery of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, with a particular focus on the way the language of the early English texts relates to and interacts with Latin and Anglo-Norman devotional material. These are painful affective stirrings which are fundamental to the anchoress' existence, stirrings she does not endure passively but rather cultivates intently. This study would be a further contribution to the flourishing research area of the history or cartography of affections, enabling greater insight into how a thirteenth-century anchoress uses texts across languages to cultivate her love, her sorrow, and her compassion.

This thesis ends with a quotation from Jodi Picoult's 1993 novel, *Harvesting the Heart*. Picoult's novel is not about anchoresses and bears no relation to anchoritic texts, but it functions as an apt conclusion to this thesis in its focus on affective stirrings, crystallized most powerfully in the central image of the heart. The author of this novel creates a character, Paige, who has a unique artistic ability: she is able to intuitively understand people's innermost secrets, and paint this in her work. Paige describes one such painting as follows:

[...] I drew a simple Chicago skyline in art class. But I had covered the pale clouds with visions of deep, empty halls and gaping doors. And in the corner, nearly invisible, was a castle and a tower and a woman in the window with her hands pressed to her heart.⁶

⁶ Jodi Picoult, *Harvesting the Heart* (London, 1993; repr. 2011), p. 4.

This woman by the window, with hands pressed against her heart, reminds us of a thirteenth-century anchoress looking out of her anchorhold. In this enclosed space, the anchoress focuses on that most treasured of possessions, her heart, and nurtures its tillable earth. The anchoress is neither passive nor insentient. She is, in all possible ways, a cultivator of her heart.

Appendix I: Affective Terms Across Languages

Middle English	Latin	Anglo- Norman	Modern English
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1. Psychological locations

heorte	<i>cor (cordis)</i>	<i>quer, corage</i>	heart
sawle	<i>anima</i>	<i>alme</i>	soul
wit, mod	<i>mens (mentis)</i>	<i>?memoire, corage</i>	mind
inwit	<i>conscientia</i>	<i>conscience</i>	conscience
munegunge	<i>memoria</i>	<i>memoire</i>	memory

2. Affective phenomena

affectiun, luue	<i>affectus, affectiones</i>	<i>amur</i>	affection, love
luue, chearite luue (v.)	<i>caritas, amor diligere (v.)</i>	<i>amur, chearité amurer (v.)</i>	love to love
lust, wil (n.) 3irne (v.)	<i>desiderium, cupiditas, appetitus, amor, diligere</i>	<i>desir</i>	desire
delit	<i>delectatio, voluptas</i>	<i>delit, delices</i>	pleasure, pleasures
rewðe	<i>compassio, pietas, misericordia</i>	<i>compassiun, pité</i>	compassion, pity, mercy

fearlac, ugge, dred, eie	<i>timor, mentus</i>	<i>pour, dute douter (v.), espoenter (v. in reflexive form)</i>	fear
wreaððe, teone	<i>ira, furor</i>	<i>ire</i>	anger
scheome	<i>pudor, verecundia, turpitude</i>	<i>hounte</i>	shame
joie	<i>gaudia</i>	<i>joye</i>	joy

sorhe, seoruwe, sar	<i>dolor, tristitia</i>	<i>dolur, tristesse</i>	sorrow, sadness, grief sorrowful, grieving
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		<i>anguisse dolente</i> (adj.)	
heorte bireowsunge	<i>contritio</i>	<i>contrition</i>	contrition
? no clear term for this phenomenon	<i>compunctio</i>	<i>compunctio</i>	compunction

hope	<i>spes sperare</i>	<i>esperance</i>	hope to hope
unhope	<i>acedia, tedia</i> <i>desperatio</i>	<i>acedie,</i> <i>tristesse</i> <i>desesperance</i>	depression despair

3. Cognitive procedure

þoht þencheð (v.) cogitatuon	<i>cogitatio, mens,</i> <i>(mentis), anima</i> <i>cogita</i> (v.) <i>cogitationes</i>	<i>pense</i> <i>penser</i> ?	thought to think, fleeting thought
skile, wit	<i>ratio</i>	<i>raisun</i>	reason

4. Other

wil	<i>voluntas</i>	<i>volonté</i>	will
consens	<i>consensus</i>	<i>consent,</i> <i>consentir</i> (v.)	consent
pine, wa, sar, teone, ango[i]sse	<i>dolor</i>	<i>dolur,</i> <i>torment,</i> <i>peines</i> <i>suffrir</i> (v.)	physical pain, general pain

The sub-categories dividing the phenomena are used solely for the reader's convenience. As noted throughout the thesis, it is impossible to distinguish 'affective' and 'cognitive' phenomena—nor can memory, for example, be simplistically defined as a 'location'. The early English authors' interaction with affective terminology in Latin and Anglo-Norman is a subject that requires an entire thesis of its own. As such, this table is highly selective, both in the selection of texts, and in the definitions derived from these texts.

The Middle English terms are taken from *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, and correspond to terms used in the *Katherine Group*; the term 'cogitatiunes/cogitationes' is based on the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's translation of Bernard of Clairvaux in Part IV. The Anglo-Norman terms are based principally on the French *Ancrene Wisse* translations/versions; the Passion narratives 'Les lamentations Nostre Dame' and the editorially titled 'The Minstrels' Passion'; the confessional manual given the editorial title 'On Penance'; the Marian texts 'Young Mary', 'Thirteen Joys', and 'Assumption'; 'A Woman's Prayer' (all edited and translated in Hunt, ed. and Bliss, trans. (2010)); and the life of Catherine of Alexandria by Clemence of Barking (*The Life of St. Catherine*, ed. William MacBain (Oxford, 1964)). The Latin terms are derived primarily from Aelred and Goscelin, in addition to the later Latin version of *Ancrene Wisse*, the *Vita* of Christina of Markyate, various sermons of Bernard of Clairvaux, various penitential manuals studied in Chapter 1, Peter Abelard's *Ethica*, and Hugh of Saint-Victor's *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*.

**Appendix II:
Sword of Sorrows in Glasgow, University
Library, MS Hunter 231 (U. 3. 4)**

This image (overleaf) on fol. 53 is reprinted here by kind permission of University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections.

Appendix III: Church Wall Paintings

- a) St Mary's Church, Brook, Kent:
Part of Passion cycle

- b) St Michael's Church, Great Tew, Oxfordshire:
Part of Passion cycle (1)
Deposition panel (2)
'Noli me tangere' panel (3)

- c) St Mary's Church, West Chiltington, Sussex:
Part of Passion narrative (1)
Resurrection underneath Carrying of the Cross (2)

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