Leeds Studies in English

New Series XLVII

2016

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Leeds Studies in English

<www.leeds.ac.uk/lse>
School of English
University of Leeds
2016

The Wounded Beloved: Affective Wounding in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*

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In her *Seven Manieren van Minne* (*There are Seven Manners of Loving*), the Flemish nun and prioress Beatrice of Nazareth (1200–68) describes the protracted violence that love inflicts on the heart:

> at times love becomes so boundless and so overflowing in the soul, when it itself is so mightily and violently moved in the heart, that it seems to the soul that the heart is wounded again and again, and that these wounds increase every day in bitter pain and in fresh intensity.[2]

This 'fifth manner of loving' is likened to a process of continual wounding. Affective wounds also mark six English texts composed during Beatrice's lifetime: the anchoritic guide *Ancrene Wisse*, and a related group of lyrical meditations known as the *Wooing Group*.[3] Whilst the guide and meditations should not be treated uncritically as a cohesive unit, they may be viably connected in a study on wound imagery. For the female readers of these texts, wound-images are at once signifiers, thresholds, weapons, bodily 'effluvia', protective alcoves, and points of intersection.[4] The images form the borderline between penetration and sensation— between weapon and agony—yet also correspond with the weapon itself.[5] A reader thinks upon images of wounds, inflicts imagined wounds on herself in sin and in penitence, and glimpses the potential for *Brautmystik* ('bridal mysticism') as she enters imaginatively into wounds. The first section of this article provides a framework rooted in the theory of conceptual metaphor and the anchoritic readership of the texts, while the second section offers an overview of wound devotion during this period. The third, fourth, and fifth sections will examine the wounds of Christ, the wounds of love, and the wounds of sin respectively.

[1] I would like to thank Dr Annie Sutherland and the anonymous reviewers of this article for their very valuable feedback.

[2] *Mediaeval Netherlands Religious Literature*, trans. by E. Colledge (New York: London House & Maxwell, 1965), p. 23.

[3] This article studies the following four *Wooing Group* texts, referring to each with an abbreviated title: *Ureisun of God*, *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *Lofsong of ure Louerde*, and *Wohunge*.

[4] The description of wounds as bodily 'effluvia' is Karma Lochrie's. See her *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), p. 40.

[5] See Elaine Scarry's comment on torture: 'what atrocities one's own body, muscle and bone structure can inflict

I. Conceptual Metaphors for the Female Recluse

Burgeoning scholarship on wounds has demonstrated their status as 'potent signifiers' in medieval European cultures.[6] Research into Christ's wounds, in particular, has foregrounded their role in 'devotional literacy'; two articles in the sole collection of essays on the *Wooing Group* have also highlighted the importance of devotion to Christ's blood in the texts' sensorial and purifying strategies.[7] Situated in this scholarship, the present article argues that the female reader's engagement with wound imagery is a fundamental aspect of her 'affective literacies', to use Mark Amsler's term: her constellation of emotional, somatic, and behavioural responses to texts.[8] It addresses this component of her affective literacies in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* in much more detail than has yet been attempted, and thus seeks to contribute to nuanced knowledge of thirteenth-century reading practices. This study especially negotiates the ways in which flesh-based wounds act as 'conceptual metaphors' for affective pain. The conceptual theory of metaphor, pioneered by Mark Johnson and George Lakoff, affirms that metaphors are not inessential and deceptive ornamentations to meaning; rather, they are central to its formation. This is closely related to Paul Ricoeur's work.[9] Indeed, Sarah Covington aligns herself with the Ricoeurian notion of metaphor in her monograph on the imagery of wounds in the seventeenth century.[10] Writing on emotion, Zoltán Kövecses also explains how metaphors do not 'simply reflect a pre-existing, literal reality', but rather work to 'create or constitute our emotional reality'.[11] Medieval writers were not oblivious to the idea that metaphor can create affective meaning.[12] The work of Johnson, Lakoff, and Ricoeur would thus not have been unthinkable to the authors of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*. For these authors and their readers, wounds act as conceptual metaphors for love, compassion, and remorse.

A clarification is needed on the readership of these texts. The *Wooing Group* comprises five English Passion meditations, now concretized in Catherine Innes-Parker's recent edition.

on oneself': *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 48.

6 *Wounds in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Anne Kirkham and Cordelia Warr (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), p. 1; and The Blood Project: Interdisciplinary and Collaborative Theories of Blood (http://www.thebloodproject.net).

7 For wounds in 'devotional literacy', see Anne Kirkham and Cordelia Warr, 'Introduction: Wounds in the Middle Ages', in *Wounds in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Kirkham and Warr, pp. 1–14 (p. 3). For the articles on the *Wooing Group*, see Susannah Mary Chewning, 'Speaking of Flesh and Soul: Linguistic and Spiritual Translation in the *Wooing Group*', and Michelle Sauer, ' "Þe blod þ[at] bohte": The Wooing Group Christ as Pierced, Pricked and Penetrated Body', in *The Milieu and Context of the Wohunge Group*, ed. by Susannah Mary Chewning (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), pp. 48–65 and 123–47.

8 See Mark Amsler, *Affective Literacies: Writing and Multilingualism in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), especially pp. 103, 113–16.

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

10 Sarah Covington, *Wounds, Flesh, and Metaphor in Seventeenth-Century England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), especially p. 5 and chapters four and five.

11 See Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 1.

12 See *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c. 1100–1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. by A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott, with the assistance of David Wallace, rev. edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988; repr. 1991), especially pp. 205–6 and 239–40.

All but one of the texts are found in the same manuscript (London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. xiv). These meditations are still under-studied, though scholarship in the past few years has begun to address this neglect. Their textual association with the anchoritic guide *Ancrene Wisse*, along with references within the texts that strongly allude to enclosure, suggest that the meditations are likely to have been read by anchoresses.[13] However, whilst the groundbreaking work by Caroline Walker Bynum, Amy Hollywood, and Karma Lochrie has shown that medieval female spirituality is powerfully and painfully embodied, it must be remembered that both *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* had a wide-ranging readership in their transmission history.[14] Despite the focus of this article, it must be remembered that wound devotion was not the terrain of female readers alone.

II. Wound Devotion in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

It is now a scholarly commonplace that by the early thirteenth century, Christ's body was imaged in both textual and visual cultures as being scarred and torn, bloodied and wounded.[15] From this Wounded Body emerged five wounds of special significance. This 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*, for example, is only one instance of the wider use of the Wounds in Anglo-Saxon textual and visual imagery.[16] But devotion based on the Five Wounds did intensify in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Bernard of Clairvaux (†1153) was centrally involved in this process, and the devotion was also encouraged and propagated by Francis of Assisi's (1182–1226) stigmatization on Mount Alverna in September 1224.[17] The most cataclysmic and precious Wound became that inflicted on Christ's Heart due to the Side Wound. A distinct devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus evolved, entering the Benedictine, Cistercian, Carthusian, Franciscan, and Dominican orders.[18] Devotion to the Heart expanded in the thirteenth century, with the two Helfta nuns Gertrude the Great (†1301/2) and Mechthild of Hackeborn (†1298) being major players in the development of this devotion.[19] John Bainvel posits that it is in the writings of these two women, along with the *Vitis mystica* by Bonaventure (1221–74), that devotion to the

[13] For the recent edition, see *The Wooing of Our Lord and the Wooing Group Prayers*, ed. and trans. by Catherine Innes-Parker (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2015), For a recent overview of the readership of and scholarship on the *Wooing Group*, see pp. 17–23 and pp. 45–56 of Innes-Parker's edition; and A. S. Lazikani, *Cultivating the Heart: Feeling and Emotion in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Religious Texts* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015), pp. 8–10.

[14] See especially Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991); Amy Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy: Mysticism, Sexual Difference, and the Demands of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); and Lochrie, *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh*.

[15] See further chapter 2 of Ellen M. Ross, *The Grief of God: Images of the Suffering Jesus in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). For caution against combining wound and blood devotion carelessly, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 14.

[16] *The Vercelli Book*, ed. by G. P. Krapp, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, 2 (London: Routledge, 1932), 61: 7–9. See further Barbara Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), for example plates ii, ivb, vb, viii, ix, xi, and xiv.

[17] See *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. by Berard L. Marthaler and others, 2nd edn, 15 vols (Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2003), xiv 860, cols 1–2; and Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques*, pp. 79–80.

[18] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, xii 499.

[19] Bynum, *Wonderful Blood*, p. 14.

Heart 'seems to acquire substance'.[20] Written during this period of intensifying devotion to Christ's wounds and the Wounded Heart, *Ancrene Wisse* and the related *Wooing Group* show unmistakable marks of influence from this climate, as I will now discuss.

III. Christ's Physical-Affective Wounds

Christ's wounded body pervades the English anchoritic texts, including the anchoress' prayer-routine. Early in Part I of *Ancrene Wisse*, the anchoress is told: '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*' ('fall on your knees to your crucifix with these five greetings in memory of God's five wounds: We adore you, Christ, and bless you because through the sanctified Cross you redeemed the world').[21] A simplified version is also provided: '[h]wa-se ne con þeose fiue segge þe earste, *Adoramus te* [We adore you], cneolinde fif siðen' ('whoever does not know these five, say the first, *We adore you*, kneeling, five times'; 8: 56–57).[22] It is also likely that Christ's wounded body was visually prominent for the anchoress, with the author adjuring his anchoritic reader to kiss the 'wundestuden' (wound-places) on the crucifix in her anchorhold (54: 250–52).

Crucially, however, Christ's wounding on the Cross is portrayed in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* as both physical and affective in nature, a fact recently observed by Elizabeth Robertson in her work on 'touch'. In Part II of *Ancrene Wisse*, Christ is wounded not only in his flesh, but also in his 'seli sawle' (innocent soul) through three 'spears of sorrow'. Sorrow is likened to a process of wounding.[23] After revealing Christ's sorrow-wounded soul, the text portrays Christ weeping through his entire body, basing its account closely on Bernard's third sermon *In Ramis Palmarum*:[24]

> 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*. 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)
>
> And here Saint Bernard says that he does not weep only with his eyes, but, as it were, with all his limbs. *It seems as though, he says, he wept with all limbs*. For so full of anguish was

[20] John Bainvel, *Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: The Doctrine and its History*, trans. by E. Leahy (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1924), p. 134. For a detailed assessment of the religious of Helfta, see Mary Jeremy Finnegan, *The Women of Helfta: Scholars and Mystics* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1991), especially chapter 9.

[21] *Ancrene Wisse: A Corrected Edition of the Text in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402 with Variants from Other Manuscripts*, ed. by Bella Millett, Early English Text Society, o. s. 325–26, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005–6), pp. 7–8 (ll. 34–55); all subsequent references (to page and line numbers respectively) are to this edition.

[22] Quoting E. J. Dobson, Millett clarifies the liturgical context of these salutations (*Ancrene Wisse*, ed. by Millett, II 18: 1/37–40). For the liturgical context see also *Ancrene Riwle: Introduction and Part I*, ed. and trans. by Robert W. Ackerman and Roger Dahood (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1984), p. 93, n. 13ff.).

[23] For detailed examination of this passage, see further Elizabeth Robertson, '*Noli me Tangere*: The Enigma of Touch in Middle English Religious Literature and Art for and About Women', in *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture*, ed. by Katie L. Walter (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 29–55; see also Lazikani, *Cultivating the Heart*, pp. 17–18.

[24] See *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. by J. Leclercq, C. H. Talbot and H. M. Rochais, 8 vols (Rome: Editiones

> that same sweat of distress that descended from his body, about the anguished death that he should suffer, that it seemed red blood. […] Moreover, so abundantly and so intensely flowed that same bloody sweat from his blissful body, that the streams ran down to the earth.

Sweat, blood, and tears converge.[25] As Christ releases moisture from all the orifices of his body, his 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 born from his Wounded Side.[26] In his commentary on St John's Gospel, Augustine (354–430) 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.[27]
>
> 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.

In the same vein, a passage in the *Wooing Group* text *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* deconstructs the chronology of the Passion to form an array of multivalent images. The 'hokerunge' ('mocking') and the 'scornunge' ('scorning'), repeated twice, develop into more direct indications of affective pain: 'bi hi schome' ('by his shame'), 'bi his sor' ('by his sorrow/pain').[28] These affective stirrings are interspersed among the references to Christ's bodily wounds. In the anchoress' reading, Christ's affective pain thus becomes merged with and indistinguishable from his wounded anatomy (pp. 17–18, ll. 40–67).[29]

In *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, Christ's physical-affective wounds are not sites of a painless attack, as Hilary of Poitiers (c. 315–67) attempted to suggest in his *De Trinitate*.[30] Christ's passible nature is unquestionable for the anchoritic authors. As seen in the passage quoted above, his sorrow-wounded soul feels 'pine', and he suffers a pang ('stiche' (45: 958–62)). In Part IV, the *Ancrene Wisse*-author explores the depth and breadth of Christ's physical wounds:

> ant he, o Munt Caluaire, steah ȝet 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 ȝont al his leofliche lich, nawt ane o þe schonken. (98: 1147–53)

Cistercienses, 1957–77), v 54–55; all subsequent references are to this edition.

[25] On the interchangeability of bodily fluids in medieval medical thought, 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. by Linda Lomperis and Sarah Stanbury (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 142–67 (p. 150).

[26] See Louis Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques ascétiques du moyen âge* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1925), p. 93; and Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, pp. 92–101.

[27] *PL* xlv, 1888. See further Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography*, p. 119, and n. 53.

[28] *Þe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*, ed. by W. Meredith Thompson, Early English Text Society, o. s. 241 (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 17, ll. 49, 50, 52, and p. 18, l. 65; all subsequent references to *Wooing Group* texts are to this edition. Abbreviations (with the exception of the *Tironian nota*) are expanded, word-spacing is modernized, and *p* is rendered *w*.

[29] See also *Lofsong of ure Louerde* (pp. 10–11, ll. 1–30).

[30] See further Kevin Madigan, *The Passions of Christ in High-Medieval Thought: An Essay on Christological*

> And he, on Mount Calvary, ascended on the Cross even higher; no man toiled so fully nor so painfully as he did that same day that he bled on five sides, brooks of wounds so broad and deep — not to mention the head veins which bled on his head under the sharp crown of thorns, and not to mention the same pitiful gashes from the wicked scourging all over his lovely body, not only on the legs.

Apart from his wounds being 'brade' and 'deope', Christ toils 'sare'; the thorn-crown is 'kene', and the gashes of the scourging are 'reowfule'. In the images of the Passion in *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, Christ's wounds are modified with the adjective 'sore' (p. 17, ll. 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. ⁊ þe eadie flod þet of ham fledde. þuruh ðe irene neiles ⁊ þe þornene crune. ⁊ þuruh þe pinen ⁊ þe schomen' ('through your five wounds, and the blessed flood that flowed from them, through the iron nails and the crown of thorns, and through your pains and your shames', p. 10, ll. 9–12).

Wohunge, in particular, focuses on the pain of Christ's wounding. The meditator is brought close to the nailed hands and feet on the Cross, and Christ's agony is made plain (p. 23, ll. 137–38; p. 34, ll. 511–14). He does not utter a word in self-defence, declares the speaker in an invocation of Isaiah 53:7, despite his '*pinfule* wundes' (p. 25, ll. 199-205, emphasis added). The wounds are 'pinfule' and Christ experiences 'wa'; affective and physical pain are once again interlinked with 'schome' and 'pinfule wundes' juxtaposed. There is an outflow of blood when the scourging is enacted, and the meditator watches the blood issuing from Christ's nails as they are bound fast, invoking the testimony of saints to ratify the image: 'ha þe bunden swa hetelifaste þat te blod wrang ut at tine fingerneiles as halhes bileuen' ('they bound you so fiercely [or, scornfully] tight that the blood wrung out from your fingernails, as saints believe', pp. 32–33, ll. 467–82).[31] Later, the anchoress perceives Longinus cleaving Christ's side; like the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's concentration on the breadth and depth of Christ's wounds, here the centurion creates a '*wide* wunde' (p. 34, ll. 541–43, emphasis added). Though immersed in the pain of the Wounds, the meditator of *Wohunge* cannot forget its cause. The wounding process 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 ⁊ of sunne' ('comes flowing out of that wide wound the blood that bought, the water that washed the world of sickness and of sin', p. 34, ll. 543–46).

On Calvary, Christ is not alone in his vulnerability to painful wounds. Those who observe him, though physically whole, are susceptible to violent affective wounding. The greatest sufferer of affective wounding is the Holy Mother herself. Her affective wounding is made explicit in *Wohunge*, where her 'moderliche herte' suffers a wound in conjunction with her Son's, a powerful recollection of Simeon's Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35): 'lauedi moder ⁊ meiden þu stod here ful neh ⁊ 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' ('lady, mother and maiden, you stood here so near and saw all this sorrow upon your precious son. You were martyred within, in your motherly heart, which saw His heart cleaved with spear's point'; p. 35, ll. 554–59). Sorrow ('sorhe') is upon Christ, yet the Virgin is wounded within. Sorrow becomes externalised, visible on Christ's skin, whilst the wounding takes place far below the skin,

Development (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), particularly chapters 5 and 6.

[31] See also *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, p. 18, ll. 61–64.

within the recesses of the Mother's heart. This direct transferral of wounding, Christ's flesh-wound to Mary's wounded heart, is demonstrated perfectly in an image on fol. 53 of Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 231 (U. 3. 4), later in date than *Wohunge* c. 1325×35).[32] It is a decorated initial beginning a tract on Mary's compassion ascribed to Bernard (though likely to be pseudo-Bernard), and comes opposite a page of anonymous hymns on Mary's sorrows. In this image, a sword protrudes from Christ's Side Wound, piercing Mary's chest at the place of her heart. 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. The connection between Christ's and Mary's wounds in *Wohunge* also features in an 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' in Carleton Brown's terms.[33] Mary's heart bleeds as she is forced to see the wounding of her Son: 'Hire herte bi-gon to bleden, | Teres hoe wep of blod' ('her heart began to bleed, | tears she wept of blood', p. 36, ll. 81–90). Her heart is so severely wounded that she cries tears of blood, much like Bernard's and the *Ancrene Wisse*-author's Christ, whose body weeps all moistures. In this image, the boundary separating physical 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.

The anchoress' own affective wounding is less explicit. No meditator can experience the Mother's Sword of Sorrows; this affective wound is preserved for Her alone. In his *Liber confortatorius*, Goscelin of Saint-Bertin (c. 1035–1107) 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. Aelred of Rievaulx (1110–167), in his anchoritic guidance text *De institutione inclusarum*, suggests only that the anchoress should weep in response to the Lady's Sword.[34] The uniqueness of Mary's Sword does not entirely deter the meditator in Anselm of Canterbury's (1033–1109) 'Oratio ad Christum'. The meditator's agonized spectatorship of Christ's piercing is referred to as an affective wounding: 'cur, o anima mea, te praesentem non transfixit gladius doloris acutissimi, cum ferre non posses vulnerari lancea latus tui salvatoris?' ('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?').[35] But even here, the meditator only imagines her own sword of sorrow, lamenting that she has not yet been wounded by it. Instead, the meditator engages in a two-layered spectatorship, witnessing Christ's slaughter from Mary's anguished viewpoint (8). Despite the uncomfortably voyeuristic appraisal of Mary's face, the Anselmian meditator does attempt to capture the

[32] 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. For a reproduction of the image, see Ross, *The Grief of God*, p. 52; dating follows that given in Ross' footnotes (p. 149, n. 50).

[33] See further *English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century*, ed. by Carleton Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. xx. References are to this edition.

[34] Goscelin of Saint-Bertin, 'The *Liber confortatorius* of Goscelin of Saint Bertin', ed. by C. H. Talbot, *Studia Anselmiana*, 37 (1955), 1–117 (31); and Aelred of Rievaulx, *De institutione inclusarum*, in *Aelredi Rievallensis Opera Omnia: 1 Opera Ascetica*, ed. by A. Hoste and C. H. Talbot, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1971), 671. All subsequent references are to these editions.

[35] Anselm of Canterbury, *Orationes sive meditationes*, in *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, ed. by F. S. Schmitt, 6 vols (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1968), III 7; all subsequent references are to this edition.

mother's response to the Passion — and in so doing, to come closer to her affective wound. The anchoress also imagines her own affective wounding by adopting Mary's perspective in the *Wooing Group*. In an indication that the anchoress is progressing closer to the Holy Mother's Sword of Sorrows, the meditator of *Ureisun of God* observes the nails being driven into Christ from his mother's viewpoint: 'þi sune was ituht on rode. þurh driuen fet ⁊ honden. wið dulte neiles. blodi his side' ('your son was tied on the Cross, blunt nails driven through [his] feet and hands, bloody his side'; p. 9, ll. 152–53). In *Wohunge*, as the anchoress watches Christ's torture, her heart breaks and water flows from her eyes: 'nu min herte mai to breke. min ehne flowen al o water' ('now my heart may break; my eyes overflow with water'; p. 33, ll. 489–91). Within the pervasive imagery of the broken and torn Christ, the anchoress' affective response is depicted as a form of wounding. Her heart breaks, causing, instead of the flow of blood, a flood of water from her eyes. Christ's painful physical-affective wounds inspire the anchoress' own affective wounding; in the anchoress's reading, flesh-wounds act as potent conceptual metaphors for compassion and sorrow. Wounds are fundamental to the anchoress' amorous bond with the Spousal Lamb, a significance to which I now turn.

IV. 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 women are affectively wounded through love. *Ancrene Wisse* in Part VII cites as an example of immense love the human mother who is willing to offer a salvific 'beað of blod' (bath of blood) to save her dying child, as Christ did (149: 156). The Mother-Christ's blood is shed from Love and carries the potential for life; hewn from 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, as witnessed in the opening of this article with Beatrice of Nazareth's writings:

> 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'.[36]

For the anchoress, love and pain cannot be disentangled: love is painful, and the way to love is pain. However, whilst Teresa of Avila (1515–82) 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* love-wound is not applied to her.

The precise meaning of being 'wounded in Love' warrants further attention. Gertrude the Great has an entire chapter entitled 'De Vulnere Amoris' (On the Wound of Love, Book

[36] Nancy M. Martin and Joseph Runzo, 'Love', in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. by John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 310–32 (p. 319). The term 'transformative potential' is Martin and Runzo's (p. 318).

II, Chapter 5). In a painting of the crucified Christ in a book ('depicti in folio'), Gertrude perceives a ray of sunlight with a sharp point like an arrow ('in modum sagittae acuatus') spread out and then draw back. Christ appears unexpectedly ('ex improviso'), implanting a wound in her heart and bidding it to be stabilized in his love ('infigens', 'stabiliantur in amore meo').[37] For Gertrude, the Wound of Love is thus a higher step in her evolving relationship with Christ. After receiving the Love-Wound, Gertrude's Love for Christ reaches a greater level of confidence and maturity. Through the Wound, she ensures that all the stirrings of her heart are organized and secured in Christ's love. Goscelin also envisages love-wounding at the core Eva's anchoritic existence: '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' (' "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'; 28). Like Gertrude, Goscelin understands wounded love as an confident, mature, unfaltering 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). Aelred, on the other hand, never cites Canticles 4:9 or refers to being 'wounded' in love in his anchoritic guidance text.

Like Aelred, the *Ancrene Wisse* and *Wooing Group*-authors never refer to Love-Wounds; yet the love is no less sophisticated than that explained by Gertrude and Goscelin. In a passage based on Deuteronomy 11:24 in Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse*, love has the power to subsume every entity into itself:

> luue haueð a meistrie biuoren alle oþre, for al þet ha rineð, al ha turneð to hire ant makeð al hire ahne. *Quemcumque locum calcauerit pes uester—pes videlicet amoris—uester erit*. 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)
>
> Love has a mastery above all others, for all that it touches, it turns it all to her and makes it all her own. *Whichever place your foot treads on — that is to say, the foot of love — will be yours.* […] Reach [out] your love to Jesus Christ, and you have won him. Touch him with as much love as you had one time for some man, and he is yours to do with all that you want.

Focused on this all-powerful love, Part VII reveals the many actions of love within the heart. Love 'schireð' ('shines') and 'brihteð' ('brightens') the heart; the anchoress can 'tilie' ('cultivate') love in her heart; love bestows the heart with 'briht sihðe' ('bright sight'; 145: 3, 14–15, 20); the anchoress can 'ontenden' ('kindle') 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' ('peaceful and clean'; 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: 660–61). A reference to being 'wounded in Love' seems out of place in the consciously tempered

[37] Gertrude the Great, *Œuvres spirituelles*, ed. by Pierre Doyère, 5 vols (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1967–86), II

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* galvanises the anchoress to banish the flea-bitten 'helle-dogge' (hell-dog) in Part IV, Christ's wounds are invoked as protective alcoves in which she can hide (110: 1614). The author encourages the anchoress to fly to the wounds as she continues her offensive against that 'dogge-deouel' (dog-devil): 'nempne ofte Iesu; cleope his passiunes help; halse bi his pine, bi his deorewurðe blod, bi his deað o rode; flih to his wunden' ('call often to Jesus; cry out for his passion's help; beseech by his pain, by his precious blood, by his death on the Cross; fly to his wounds'; 111: 1627–29). Christ's broken body is imaged as a sanctuary from a harsh 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' ('greatly he loved us, he who let such holes be made in him, in which to hide us. Creep in them with your thought — are they not all open? — and with his precious blood bloody your heart'; 111: 1629–31). With her 'thought' harnessed as she enters these spaces, the anchoress 'bloodies' herself with Christ's blood. Although it has been translated as 'drench', the verb 'biblodge' can more literally be translated as 'bloody'.[38] Placed directly after the 'blod' of Christ, this verb appears to explicitly merge the anchoress with Christ in the arena of his Wounds; she becomes bloodied by her blood-immersed Lover.[39]

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'.[40] 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' ('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'; II, 149). 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: ' "*Ingredere in petram, abscondere fossa humo*." "Ga into þe stan", seið þe prophete, "ant hud te i þe doluen eorðe", þet is, i þe wunden of ure Lauerdes flesch' (' "*Enter in the rock, hide in the buried trench*." "Go into the rock", says the prophet, "and hide yourself in the dug up earth", that is, in the wounds of our Lord's flesh'; 111: 1631–34).[41]

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38 *Guide for Anchoresses: A Translation Based on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402*, trans. by Bella Millett (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2009), p. 111.

39 Instances cited in the *MED* of the verb 'biblodge' are all from the *Ancrene Wisse* Group [accessed 14 October 2011].

40 See E. Ann Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), p. 137.

41 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 *Ancrene Wisse*, ed. by Millett, II 197/4 1631–32. For the source-text, see *Bernardi Opera*, II, 159.

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*, 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: 1635–39).[42]
>
> *They dug my hands and my feet.* That is, 'They dug holes in me, both the feet and the hands'. He did not say 'pierced', for according to the letter [i.e., literally], as our masters say, the nails were so dull that they dug into his flesh and broke the bones more than 'pierced', to pain him more sorely.

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: 'he him seolf cleopeð þe toward teose wunden. "*Columba mea, in foraminibus petre, in cauernis macerie*": "mi culure", he seið, "cum hud te i mine limen þurles, i þe hole of mi side" ' ('he himself calls you towards these wounds. "*My dove, in the cleft of the rock, in the hollows of the wall*". "My dove", he says, "come hide yourself in the holes of my limbs, in the opening of my side" '; 111: 1639–42). The love contained in these speaking sites of pain is clear: 'muche luue he cudde to his leoue culure, þet he swuch hudles makede' ('much love he makes known to his dear dove, that he made such refuges'; 111: 1642–43). 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 evolving intimacy with Christ. In Thomas of Cantimpré's *Vita* of the Benedictine/Cistercian Lutgarde of Aywières (c. 1182–1246), the holy woman hears Christ's wounds calling to her and draws near to drink in their sweetness.[43] Unlike Lutgarde, 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).

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' ('he pierces his side, cleaves that heart'; pp. 34–35, ll. 542–43).[44] In the vocabulary of Christ's wounded body in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, his agony and his self-disclosure become inseparable, a coupling evident in texts throughout the Middle Ages.[45] The Side Wound formed by Longinus' spear is linked immediately with the accessibility of the heart it cleaves (p. 34, ll. 543–44). 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 ⁊ in to

[42] On the parallel with a Lombardian gloss, see *Ancrene Wisse*, ed. by Millett, II 197: 4/1636–39, drawing on E. J. Dobson.

[43] *AASS*, III June 16, 239E, 244F.

[44] Caution is needed when applying the label of 'mysticism' to this passage: cf. Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques*, p. 106.

[45] See further Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques*, p. 95.

redden trewe luue lettres. for þer i mai openlich seo hu muchel þu me luuedes' ('Ah sweet Jesus, you open (for) me your heart to know truly, and to read in it true love letters. For there I may openly see how much you love me'; p. 35, ll. 546–51). It has been suggested that this image in *Wohunge* is inspired by the romance motif of epistles shared between lovers.[46] 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 Parisian sermons.[47] 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.[48]

This moment in *Wohunge* is famously paralleled in Part VII of *Ancrene Wisse*: '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' ('his lover beholds there how he bought her love: [he] lets his shield be pierced, opens his side, to show her his heart, to show her openly how inwardly he loved her'; 148: 125–27). 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. 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'.[49] The emphasis in the anchoritic texts is not on mystical union, but on affective entrance into Christ's body.[50] There is no *annihilatio*: the anchoress is still present with 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 'inwardliche'. With this sense, Christ's 'inward' love, and the anchoress' 'inward' meditation on this love, is opened up for public view.[51]

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, and is 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 seems to be of greater significance.[52] In *Ancrene Wisse*, though the love within the Wound is 'openliche' available to her, the anchoress remains external to the Heart. *Wohunge* moves her

[46] Eric Jaeger, *The Book of the Heart* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 91. Jaeger's description of *Wohunge* as a 'mystical text' is not adopted in this article.

[47] See Bella Millett, 'The "Conditions of Eligibility" in *Þe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*', in *The Milieu and Context of the Wohunge Group*, ed. by Susannah Mary Chewning (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), pp. 26–47.

[48] See further Denis Renevey, '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), p. 91.

[49] Wolfgang Riehle, *The Middle English Mystics*, trans. by Bernard Standring (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 46.

[50] See further *Guide for Anchoresses: A Translation Based on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402*, trans. by Bella Millett (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2009), p. 178, n. I. 100; and Renevey, 'The Moving of the Soul', p. 70.

[51] These are all cited among the possible senses in the *MED* entry for 'openli'.

[52] On the two traditions, see Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques*, pp. 98–99.

a step closer. 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.[53] Unlike the later *Charters of Christ*, these love letters in *Wohunge* are amorous documents that foster an intimate interaction between Bridegroom and Bride.[54] 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.[55] As Catherine Innes-Parker hypothesizes, *Wohunge*'s account of the lover-knight 'represents its author's perception of the way in which an anchoress would read the parable', a representation that involves a higher level of participation from the anchoress.[56]

A further parallel can be drawn with a passage in Bonaventure's *Vitis Mystica*. Given that Bonaventure lived slightly later than the assumed compositional date of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, he is not treated as a source here, but as an important indicator of affective devotion to the Wounded Side and Heart during this period.[57] 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 diligat? Quis tam amantem non redamet? Quis tam castum non amplexetur? Diligit profector vulneratum quae mutuo illius amore vulnerata clamat: *Vulnerata caritate ego sum*. Redamat Sponsum amantem quae dicit: *Nuntiate dilecto, quia amore langueo*. 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 impoenitens amoris sui vinculo constringere et iaculo vulnerare dignetur.[58]

> 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.

[53] For this tradition, see Vincent Gillespie, *Looking in Holy Books: Essays on Late Medieval Religious Writing in England* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 124–26. See also Jaeger, *The Book of the Heart*, p. 108.

[54] For an edition of the *Charters*, see *The Middle English Charters of Christ*, ed. by Mary Caroline Spalding (Pennsylvania: Bryn Mawr, 1914).

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

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

[57] As Gougaud notes, passages from the *Vitis Mystica* were presumed to have been composed by Bernard of Clairvaux (*Dévotions et pratiques*, p. 98); see also the remarks on authorship by an 1889 translator of the *Vitis Mystica*: *The Mystic Vine (Vitis Mystica)*, trans. by Samuel John Eales (London: Sonnenschein, 1889), p. iii.

[58] *Vitis Mystica*, in *S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia*, ed. by A. Lauer and others, 10 vols (Quaracchi, Florence: Ad Claras Aquas, 1898), VIII 164–65.

> 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.[59]

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. The anchoress who enters Christ's Heart in *Wohunge* does not voice such woundedness. Slightly later, however, she desires to hang with Christ on the Cross, anticipating a crucifixion within her enclosure: the affective-literate goal of her reading (p. 36, ll. 590–95). She is never said to receive the mystical love-wound of the Canticles, but she is 'wounded in love' through her affective crucifixion. Through this wounding, she is able to move towards — and at times into — her Spouse. Such imagined entrance or near-entrance into the openings of his body is crucial to the anchoress' affective literacies, as it is vital to her intimacy with him. Whilst mystical union within the Wounded Heart may not be the focus of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*, the anchoress' love for Christ is no less intense, and no less distinguished.

V. Sin-Wounds

Christ's Wounds to Sinner's Wounds

Although she does not receive a mystical love-wound to the heart, the anchoress does sustain wounds of sin. This is a major goal of her affective literacies: healing the sin carved in her soul. Whilst the previous section examined the role of love-wounds in the anchoress' relationship with Christ, this section turns to the ways in which the anchoritic reader employs sin-wounds to rationalize her penitential existence. It should be noted at this point that the image of a 'sin-wound' is not unique to these anchoritic texts. Pre-1215 penitential and theological texts contain images of sin-wounds and priest-doctors, as in Hugh of Saint-Victor's (c. 1096–1141) *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*: 'Peccata sunt quasi vulnera' (Sins are like wounds).[60] These images form part of what Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa has termed the 'unique interface between medicine and religion' in spiritual healing, created by the pre-Cartesian connection of body and soul.[61] Such imagery was given impetus by the Fourth Lateran Council 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.[62]
>
> 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

[59] *The Mystical Vine: A Treatise on the Passion of our Lord by S. Bonaventure*, trans. by a friar of S. S. F. (London: Mowbray, 1955), pp. 21–22.

[60] *PL*, CLXXVI 1150C.

[61] See especially Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, '*Post-mortem* Care of the Soul: Mechtild of Hackeborn's the *Booke of Gostlye Grace*', in *Medieval and Early Modern Literature, Science and Medicine*, ed. by Rachel Falconer and Denis Renevey (Tübingen: Narr Verlag, 2013), pp. 157–70 (p. 157).

[62] 'Concilium Lateranense IV 1215', in *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, ed. by Albergio Giuseppe (Basil:

> 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, permeates the Lambeth and Trinity homilies — texts which are geographically and linguistically associated with the *Ancrene Wisse* Group.[63] Most notably, in Trinity 6, the devil is described as inflicting wounds on Adam's five organs as he consumes the forbidden fruit (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.[64] By it, sin is no longer simply likened to a wound: sin becomes a wound. In this conceptual metaphor, sin is a painful and life-threatening disease, yet also an ailment that can be remedied.

Indeed, wounds are not arbitrary signifiers of sin — a fact again given credence by the growing body of scholarship on medicinal language in spiritual healing. M. K. K. Yearl has remarked on the 'concept of medicine as duplex', with particular reference to Hugh of Fouilloy (d. c. 1172) and William of Saint-Thierry (c. 1075–1147/1148): 'knowledge of the body was thought to provide a useful tool for those engaged in treating the wounded soul because of a prevailing cosmology that accepted correlations between all aspects of the universe'.[65] And as Jeremy J. Citrome asserts, the image of sin-wounds also had a basis in medieval 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'.[66] As he rightly notes, the confessor 'encourages the internalization of a pained and wounded self-image'.[67] Our texts encourage the anchoress to develop a 'wounded self-image' in the nurturance of her affective literacies. She feels the pain of her sin-wounds, regarding these with the same urgency as wounds suffered on her flesh.

There is a linkage between Christ's woundedness and the anchoress wounded in sin. As Jocelyn Wogan-Browne observes, 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 article (98: 1146–50).[68] Wogan-Browne's case for connection is fundamental to reading the sin-wounds in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*. In these texts,

Herder, 1962), p. 221.

63 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. by Wendy Scase (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 43–64. See *Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Richard Morris, Early English Text Society, o. s. 29, 34, 2 vols (London: Trübner, 1867–68), pp. 23, 29, 83. See also *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Richard Morris, Eearly English Text Society, o. s. 53 (London: Trübner, 1873), pp. 33–35, 41, 57, 77–79.

64 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. by George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, 3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 24: 756–57; for the full development of the sin-wound image, see ll. 756–71a. See also Roger Fowler, 'A Late Old English Handbook For the Use of a Confessor', *Anglia*, 83 (1965), 1–34 (27: 319).

65 M. K. K. Yearl, 'Medicine for the Wounded Soul', in *Wounds in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Kirkham and Warr, pp. 109–28 (p. 110).

66 Jeremy J. Citrome, *The Surgeon in Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 7.

67 Citrome, *The Surgeon*, p. 17.

68 Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, 'Chaste Bodies: Frames and Experiences', in *Framing Medieval Bodies*, ed. by Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 24–42 (p. 30). Wogan-Browne is

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' ('bloody soul') of all the sins with which it is 'iwundet' ('wounded'), in subtle employment of the *Christus medicus* concept (11: 152–53).[69] In *Ureisun of God*, Christ's lesions harbour an indispensable healing balm.[70] The meditator also observes 'þe large broc' ('the large brook') flowing down his 'softe side' (p. 7, ll. 98–99). By emphasising Christ's softness, the speaker draws attention not only to Christ's injuries, 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 sensitivity inherent in 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? (pp. 7–8, ll. 100–6)
>
> Is it not to wash sinful souls? Is it not to heal (those) sick in sin? Who is then unwashed, who has this healing moisture inside his heart? Who remains unhealed who has so great a salve, as often as he thereto has true belief?

God is referred to as the anchoress' 'heouenliche leche' ('heavenly doctor'), even transforming himself into a form of medicine: 'makedest us of þi seolf so mihti medicine' ('you made of yourself so mighty a medicine'; p. 8, ll. 106–7). It is medication of the highest potency, for 'a drope of þine deorewurðe blode. muhte weaschen awei alle folkes fulðe' ('a drop of your precious blood can wash away the filth of all people'; p. 8, ll. 111–12). From this crowd, the anchoress emerges to reveal the transactional wounding from Christ to her permeable body:

> þeoilke fif wellen of þine blisfule bodie sprungen ⁊ striken dun strundes of blode. weasch mine fif wittes; of alle blodie sunnen. of al þet ich habbe misiseien mid eien ⁊ mid min earen iherd. wið muðe ispeken. oðer ismauht ⁊ wið noese ismelled . wið eni lim mis iueld. ⁊ wið fleschs isuneged. (p. 8, ll. 113–19)
>
> Those same five wells of your blissful body spring and strike down streams of blood, wash my five senses of all bloody sins, of all that I have wrongly seen with eyes, and with my ears heard, with mouth spoken, or sensed and smelt with nose, with any limb wrongly felt and with flesh sinned.

The wounds of Christ's body, sources of a medicinal balm, are mapped onto the anchoress' body, appallingly burdened with sins. Christ's wounds are directly transferred onto the wounded soul in an affective-literate process: 'þine wunden helen þe wunden of mine soule' ('your wounds heal the wounds of my soul'; p. 8, ll. 119–20).

Several of these images also occur in *Lofsong of ure Louerde*. In the incantatory opening, Christ's 'iblescede blode' ('blessed blood') is one of the images by which the meditator pleads, stressing the medicinal value of Christ's wounds (p. 10, ll. 25–26):

responding to Lochrie, *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh*, pp. 23–27, 26. See also Lotta Sigurdsson, 'Death Becomes Her: Writing and Reading the Mortified and Dead Body in the *Ancrene Wisse* and Related Works', in *Fleshly Things and Spiritual Matters: Studies on the Medieval Body in Honour of Margaret Bridges*, ed. by Nicole Nyffenegger and Katrin Rupp (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), pp. 141–63 (pp. 150–52).

69 On the healing power of Christ's wounds and blood, see Yoshikawa, '*Post-mortem* Care of the Soul', pp. 159–60. See also her earlier article 'Holy Medicine and Diseases of the Soul: Henry of Lancaster and *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*', *Medical History*, 53 (2009), 397–414; on background to *Christus medicus*, see p. 399.

70 On the Side/Heart Wound as 'eucharistic [*sic*] medicine as revealed in the sacrament of the Mass', see Yoshikawa,

> [as]e a drope of þine deorewurðe blode þet tu o rode scheddest were inouh to weaschen alle folkes fulðe. þeo sterke stremes ⁊ þet flod þet fleaw of þine wunden. moncun uor to helen; clense ⁊ weasch mine sunfule soule þuruh þine fif wunden iopened o rode . wið neiled uor driuene ⁊ seoruhfulliche fordutte. hel me uor-wunded þuruh mine fif wittes wið deadliche sunnen. ⁊ opene ham heouenliche king touward heouenliche þinges. (p. 11, ll. 43–53)
>
> As a drop of your precious blood that you shed on the Cross was enough to wash all people's filth, the strong streams and that flood that flowed from your wounds (were) to heal mankind. Cleanse and wash my sinful soul through your five wounds opened on Cross, nailed, driven in and sorrowfully closed up. Heal me, all wounded through my five senses with deadly sins, and open them, heavenly king, towards heavenly things.

Christ's 'eadie flod' ('blessed flood'; p. 10, l. 10) of blood is directly placed on the sin-wounds of the anchoress in a process of healing: 'þeo sterke stremes ⁊ 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 gateways of the senses/organs are instead exposed to 'heouenliche þinges'. As touched upon above, the emphasis remains on Christ's body as the source of healing liquid, rather than nourishment.[71] Through the anchoress' affective literacies, Christ's wounds are mapped onto the sinner's wounds in a curative process. But this is not an easy transaction, which poses another challenge in her affectively literate reading.

Sin-wounds are repeatedly characterized by their aggression. In Part IV, the *Ancrene Wisse* proclaims that a God-sent illness 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 ȝef secnesse hit ne lette' ('thus is sickness the healing salve of the soul's wounds, a shield so that she does not get more, as God sees that she should if sickness did not prevent it'; 69: 68–70). In the *Ancrene Wisse*, bodily disease becomes a shield to prevent sin-wounds, infinitely more perilous than any physical ailment. As Part IV progresses, the author formulates a taxonomy of sin-woundedness. He differentiates bodily and spiritual temptations or sins as a 'fot-wunde' (foot-wound) and 'breost-wunde' (chest-wound) respectively (74: 204–6). This conveys not only the greater danger in the chest-wound — its 'peril' as the author says (74: 205) — but also its heightened painfulness. The taxonomy is later expanded: 'prude ant onde ant wreaððe, heorte sar for worltlich þing, dreori of longunge, ant ȝisceunge of ahte — þeose beoð heorte wunden, ant al þet of ham floweð, ant ȝeoueð deaðes dunt anan buten ha beon isaluet' ('pride and envy and wrath, heart-sorrow for (a) worldly thing, dreariness from longing, and coveting possessions — these, and all that flow from them, are heart-wounds, and give death's blow immediately unless they are treated'; 104–5: 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:[72] '*Putruerunt, et cetera.* "Weilawei! mine wunden, þe weren feire ihealet, gederið neowe wursum, ant foð on eft to rotien" ' ('*They rot, etc.* "Alas! My wounds,

'*Post-mortem* Care of the Soul', pp. 159–60 and pp. 165–66.

[71] On Christ's blood as nourishment, see Rudolph M. Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), p. 25; Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: the Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 177–79; and Ross, *The Grief of God*, p. 50.

[72] See also Psalm 37:3 and 18.

that were beautifully healed, collect new pus, and begin to rot again" '; 104: 1373–74). Whilst carnal temptation is imaged as the enemy hurting the anchoress 'o þe vet' ('on the feet'), there is still the risk of inflammation 'up toward te heorte' (104: 1392–94), due to renewed sin (104: 1368–75) and failure to confess (V, 124: 373–74). This image reminds the anchoress that a bodily wound is not a passive mark, a sign of pain already inflicted and passed. A wound can be infected and thus harbour further danger in itself. Virtues can protect the soul from being 'i-wundet', a protection shunned at the risk of the sinner (91: 873–74).

As is clear in this statement, the sinner's agency is essential both to sin and to its remedy. According to Abelardian precepts, all sin is harmless without the agency of the sinning self.[73] As the sinner wounds herself in sin, so must she harness the agency of confession to reveal these wounds. The emphasis on revealing sin-wounds during confession 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' ('whole'). 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' ('like the man who has on him many deadly wounds, and shows the doctor all and lets him heal all but one — from which he dies, as he should from all'; 119: 220–22). The Pharisee is presented as the epitome of an unsuccessful confessant due to his failure to reveal 'hise wunden' (124: 409–11).

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' ('wicked men and devils; they have fastened on me many wounds, which slay my soul'; p. 16, ll. 12-14). This unusual use of the past participle 'ifestned' seems, at first glance, to show a sinner lacking in agency. She is wounded by her inattentiveness rather than the creation of sin in her soul, paralleling the concept of 'sins of omission'.[74] But the sinner's agency is not entirely absent from this meditation: 'flesches fulðe ifuled me. þus ich am lodliche ihurt ine licame. ⁊ ine soule; wið alles cunnes sunnen. for þauh þet werc nere in þe bodie; þe wil was in þe heorte' ('flesh's filth befouled me. Thus I am horribly hurt in body and in soul, with all kinds of sin, for though the deed was not in the body, the will was in the heart'; p. 17, ll. 30–34). The 'wil' 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 — or, in Abelardian terms, her consent to her will — causes her sin-wounds.

The centrality of her will underscores the need for agency in the counter route of confession; the anchoritic speaker immediately affirms to the Virgin Mary, 'þis ich i *cnouelechie*' ('this I confess/acknowledge to you'; p. 17, l. 34, emphasis added). 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 ⁊ wilnunge of pris; me habbeð sore iwunded' ('pride and desire for renown have sorely wounded me'; p. 16, ll. 21–22). It is a wounding with reference to the pain of sin; she is '*sore* iwunded' (emphasis added). The aggression of sin-wounds demands agency in the reading process. The anchoress aggresses against sin-wounds through her affectively literate reading, as I will now consider.

[73] See *Peter Abelard's Ethics: An Edition with Introduction, English Translation and Notes*, ed. by D. E. Luscombe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 22–24.

[74] See Odon Lottin, *Morale fondamentale* (Paris: Desclée, 1954), p. 479.

The Anchoress' Penitence

Penitence is represented in the texts as self-laceration, but the modern scholar must not assume an overly literal reading. Self-mutilation without clerical approval is expressly prohibited in Part VIII of *Ancrene Wisse*, particularly in its revised version in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402, intended for a broader anchoritic readership (158: 121–27). Furthermore, the anchoress is never shown to receive stigmata, and her heart is never said to be emblazoned with the sign of the Passion.[75] This does not prevent the author from employing the conceptual metaphor of wounds to describe the potency of the anchoress' penitence, however.[76] In Part III's account of the 'wreaðful' pelican, confession is a process of self-wounding. After slaying its 'ahne briddes' ('own chicks'), the pelican is so overcome by remorse that it resorts to wounding itself, resuscitating its chicks through its own blood (48: 7–11). Like the enraged pelican, the anchoress must attack her own breast with her beak:

> 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 bibled 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)

> That is, with confession of her mouth by which she sinned and killed her good works, draw that blood of sin out of her breast, that is, of the heart, in which resides the soul's life; and thus after, (she) shall awaken her slain chicks, which are her good works. Blood signifies sin; for as a man stained with blood is grisly and horrible in man's eye, so is the sinful before God's eye. In addition, no man may judge blood well before it is cooled. So it is with sin.

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 curative and resuscitative fluids.[77]

This metaphorical wounding is also employed in relation to penitence more broadly, beyond spoken confession. After exploring the need for both physical pain and shame in the penitential processes (134–35), the *Ancrene Wisse*-author develops an image of the 'torn' penitent body based on his reading of Isaiah 18:7. These torn people are equated with a 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 haueð muche dred þrof, as Ysaie witneð. (137: 222–27)

[75] See further Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, p. 187, n. 28; and Lochrie, *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh*, p. 13.

[76] On metaphorical versus physical beating, see further Sigurdsson, 'Death Becomes Her', pp. 154 and 160.

[77] The association of blood with death has parallels with medieval attitudes to menstruation: see further Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 174. On arguments for the significance of menstrual blood in the anchoritic existence, see Sauer, ' "Þe blod þ[at] bohte" ', pp. 123–47, and Kristen McQuinn, ' "Crepe into that blessed syde": Enclosure Imagery in Aelred of Rievaulx's

> Ease and gratification of the flesh are the devil's marks. When he sees these marks in man or woman, he knows the castle is his, and goes boldly in where he sees such banners raised up, as one does in a castle. In the torn people, he cannot find his marks, and he sees in them God's banner all raised up (that is, hardship of life), and he has much fear of it, as Isaiah witnesses.

The tearing does not cause fissures in the 'castel': it rather 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.[78]

Within the wider discussion of the 'totoren folc' ('torn folk') in Part VI, 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 aȝeinwardes' ('so that the beast of hell, when he snakes towards you to bite you, they [i.e. the thorns] hurt him sharply and drive him back'; 143: 436–40). 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*'.[79] The thorn-wounds of penitence thus become not only a form of protection, but also a form of weaponry. The anchoress does not passively withdraw into this 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.[80] The anchorhold itself has been reinterpreted as a representation of the undamaged hymen of the virginal body, sealed or 'opened' as desired by a man.[81] In this wounding space safeguarded by thorns, however, the anchoress herself devises and enforces the sealing. The anchoress nourishes her affective literacies so that she can image herself wounded in sin, yet also image herself as one of the 'torn folk' who so alarm the devil. The conceptual metaphor of the wound again fosters a proactive reader.

Conclusions

Unlike Beatrice of Nazareth, our anchoritic readers are never said to receive a *sponsa Christi* love-wound (Canticles 4:9), but their engagement with wound imagery is no less vigorous. The present study has responded to recent research which conveys the 'myriad ways in which [wounds] functioned in medieval society', interrogating their multifaceted affective readings in *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group*. It has sought to examine wound imagery in these

De Institutione Inclusarum', in *Anchorites, Wombs and Tombs*, ed. by Liz Herbert McAvoy and Mari Hughes Edwards (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), pp. 95–102 (especially p. 99).

78 Christiania Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 91. See further Christopher Cannon, *The Grounds of English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 159.

79 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. by G. Kratzmann and J. Simpson (Cambridge: Brewer, 1986), pp. 192–208 (p. 205); emphasis added.

80 Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, 'The Virgin's Tale', in *Feminist Readings in Middle English Literature: The Wife of Bath and All Her Sect*, ed. by Ruth Evans and Lesley Johnson (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 165–94 (pp. 168–69); Lochrie, *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh*, p. 127.

81 Wogan-Browne, 'The Virgin's Tale', pp. 168–69.

texts more closely than has yet been attempted. I have argued that, in her reading of wounds as 'potent signifiers' — as representations of physical trauma as well as conceptual metaphors for affective pain — the anchoress enriches her sophisticated 'affective literacies'.[82] Such findings support scholarly awareness, reinvigorated by Amsler, of the active nature of thirteenth-century reading practices. Sections I–II of this study offered a critical framework and an overview of wound devotion during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Section III then demonstrated that Christ's painful wounds stimulate the anchoress' own affective wounding as she meditates on him. The anchoress' Lover is wounded for her both physically and affectively; in engaging with his wounds, she cultivates her own woundedness, coming close to the Holy Mother's Sword of Sorrows (Luke 2:35). Section IV examined the anchoress' entrance (or near-entrance) into Christ's wounds. Whilst the anchoritic reader does not receive the mystical love-wound, she undergoes an affective crucifixion in her reading that brings her nearer to her Spouse. Through this form of love-wounding, she cultivates a sophisticated intimacy with him. Finally, Section V highlighted the aggressive nature of the sin-wound metaphor, an aggression fought through the anchoress' penitential 'wounding' or 'tearing'. As a miscreant, she feels her sins as wounds in her soul, yet she also heals these injuries with penitential thorns. It is clear that the anchoritic reader of *Ancrene Wisse* and the *Wooing Group* is not an inert figure dragged into wounds against her will; she is not a feeble combatant of her sin-wounds, nor does she remain placid as her heart is immersed in Her Lover's blood. She tirelessly flies to and enters the Wounds — in *Wohunge*, dwelling within the Wounded Beloved himself.

[82] For the quotations, see Kirkham and Warr, 'Introduction: Wounds in the Middle Ages', pp. 1 and 11.